

Rob Bell: 'Is God Going to Be Left Behind, Like Oldsmobiles?'

Controversial pastor Rob Bell compares God to an Oldsmobile in a recent YouTube video promoting his new book, *What We Talk About When We Talk About God*.

The former Mars Hill Bible Church pastor begins the video by describing the car he had when he was 20: a silver, four-door Delta '88 he and his friends called "the sled." He goes on to explain that Oldsmobile factories had to shut down because the car company "couldn't keep up with the times."

He continues: "I tell you about the sled because, for a growing number of people in our modern world, God is a bit like Oldsmobiles."

"Things have changed. We have more information and technology than ever. We're interacting with a broader, more diverse range of people than ever. And the tribal God, the only one many people have ever heard of, appears more and more small, and narrow, and irrelevant—and in some cases just plain mean—and other times not that intelligent."

Bell then goes on to give examples of influential Christian leaders teaching on controversial topics, such as beliefs that women should not be leaders in the church, all homosexual people go to hell, and that God created the earth in a literal six days.

"This is a problem," he argues.

Bell says that over the last 20 years of being a pastor, he's continually seen "people with a growing sense that their spirituality is in some vital and yet mysterious way central

to who they are as a person.”

He asks: “Is God going to be left behind, like Oldsmobiles?

“I don’t think so,” he answered, “because I believe there are other ways—better ways—of talking about God and understanding God.

“Because I believe God is with us and for us, and I believe God is actually ahead of us, calling us and drawing us and inviting and pulling us all—every one of us—into a better future than we could ever imagine,” he concludes.

Click below to watch the three-minute video.

Bell’s message in the video coincides with the message of *What We Talk About When We Talk About God*, which released Tuesday. According to HarperOne publishers, his latest book “explains why both culture and the church resist talking about God, and shows how we can reconnect with the God who is pulling us forward into a better future.”

Bell’s book tour will begin in Grand Rapids, Mich., in close proximity to Mars Hill Bible Church, which he founded in 1999.

According to *The New Yorker*, Bell said he left the Grandville, church in “search for a more forgiving faith” after fallout with the congregation surrounding his previous book, *Love Wins: A Book About Heaven, Hell, and the Fate of Every Person Who Ever Lived*. The congregation lost 3,000 members over the controversy.

In *Love Wins*, Bell argues that God loves people too much to banish them to hell.

He writes: “At the center of the Christian tradition ... have been a number who insist that history is not tragic, hell is not forever and love, in the end, wins and all will be reconciled to God.”

Though the book became a *New York Times* best-seller, it drew widespread criticism for his rejection of the notion of hell and his nods to Universalism.