

Emma Stark: The Three Dangers of Secularism

There is a spiritual entity crippling the church behind the scenes.

In a message on resisting evil, Emma Stark discussed how the spirit of secularism has crept its way into the church and is steering it away from the core of the gospel.

“We have built our church world within the constructs of secularism,” Stark says. “Therefore, secularism is our ruling spirit. Not just out there, but also in here.”

Instead of making God the central, core part of our theology, Stark says the modern-day church uses God as a self-help tool to make our lives, marriages and families better for our own sake. It is no longer about Him at all, but rather, it’s about ourselves.

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“We have secular church where God is believed in, but the fullness of His weight is somewhat outside,” Stark says.

Secularism, as Stark puts it, is not atheism. Secularism does not deny God. Instead, it takes Him out of His rightful place as King of kings and Lord of lords. Secularism brings its own issues to the church that are dangerous and devastating.

“The first issue, number one, is that in a secular church...we are instinctively suspicious of authority,” Stark says. “Secularism says find your identity in yourself.”

Another problem that secularism brings is it kills the atmosphere of worship. Stark says it doesn’t matter which

nation she's been to around the globe, a lack of intimate worship is a killer to the church.

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"You can only really worship fully and extravagantly if you can say, 'I'm created,'" Stark says. "The response of true worship then...is I come with gratitude and I pour myself out."

The last issue that secularism brings to the church is the problem of focusing on wealth instead of on Christ. Wealth is no longer about giving to care selflessly for others the way Christ did for us. Instead, it's become all about our own wants and desires.

"It [the spirit of secularism] forgets that Jesus gives compassion to apply your riches. It forgets that Jesus gives you the power to get wealth. It forgets that wealth is from Christ, to Him and for Him and for His kingdom. It misses the centrality of Jesus and it starts to give us a wealth entitlement problem," Stark says.

The best way to stay clear of these dangers of secularism, then, is to keep your eyes set first on the reality of the gospel. Because we have erased a biblical worldview from today's culture, it has allowed secularism to sweep in.

"It's a lack of understanding how the wisdom of the Bible is applied to living today," Stark says. "Meaning defined by God will keep you all your days."

This warning against secularism should be a wake-up call for all of us in the church today. God desires our hearts—fully and completely. Instead of worrying about all of our wants and needs, we must be reminded that He is the cornerstone on which our lives can be built. In Him we lack no good thing. Through Him we receive the best gifts that will lead us to a life of flourishing.

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Abby Trivett is content development editor for Charisma Media.