

Getting to the Root of Modern Heresies and Strange Teachings

Hyper-Grace

Proponents of hyper-grace teach that the moral law (found in the Ten Commandments) has no relevance in the New Testament church era. This leads to the heresy of Anti-Nomianism (without law), which—as I wrote in Part 1 of this article—eradicates all biblical standards and ethics. Consequently, its proponents can theoretically sin without fear since everything is based on grace, without consideration for the moral law of God. (Some even teach that since Jesus died for all your past, present and future sins, you don't even need to confess your sins because that is works and not grace—to which I would point them to 1 John 1:9.)

Whenever a church only preaches the love and blessings of God in Christ without ever mentioning the need to repent and or the consequences of sin in the life of the believer, there is a good chance that is a hyper-grace church. One of the worst things many proponents of hyper-grace teach is that the teachings of Jesus as found in the Gospels are not relevant for the church today. They believe that the teachings of the Gospels fall under the Old Testament dispensation since it was before His resurrection.

This ridiculous assertion doesn't take into mind the fact that the epistles were written for the church to apply the life and teachings of Jesus—not to give additional, unconnected revelation. This is why even a cursory study of the epistles of Paul, James, Peter and John show that they reiterate obedience to the Ten Commandments (as a standard for ethics, not for salvation) as well as the words and teachings of

Jesus.

Christianity Light: Syncretism

By “Christianity light,” I am referring to a preponderance of attractional churches who have collapsed their teaching down to 20-minute sermonettes. Their only motivation is to draw crowds by making people feel good with “motivational messages” that are bereft of any theological substance (and, as a stand-alone, can lead to biblical illiteracy, moral relativism and syncretism—which is when a believer mixes both Christian and pagan beliefs as their core values).

Although I believe pastors should consistently deliver evangelical messages focused on bringing new people to Christ, I also contend that the church needs teaching on Sundays that will ground Christ followers in sound doctrine. Since most people only attend church on Sundays, we cannot merely depend upon small group discipleship and or mid-week services and Bible institutes. Unfortunately, with most church attendees, the Sunday sermon is the only exposure they will get to biblical teaching. Although it takes some skill, pastors can minister effectively to both saint and sinner with Sunday sermons so unbelievers can be saved and saints can mature.

Full Preterism

Full preterism (also known by some as “kingdom now”) is the doctrine that teaches all Bible prophecy (including the second bodily return of Christ) has already been fulfilled. They believe that since Jesus already ascended into heaven and returned (when He judged Israel in 70 A.D.) all prophecy has been fulfilled and we are now living in the fullness of the kingdom age. (They assert that Jesus is already fully reigning from heaven irrespective of the condition or politics of nations—since His reign is from heaven and is spiritual.)

Without getting into detail regarding this view, I will only say here that this extreme teaching can de-motivate its

adherents regarding global evangelization and transformation since. According to them, everything Jesus promised has already been fulfilled. Consequently, it leads to a mystical kind of Christianity without practical goals nor any phenomenological handles to grab hold of.

It also flies in the face of the historic biblical beliefs of the church and General Councils (such as Nicaea and Constantinople) as well as the Apostle's Creed—that affirm the future, second, bodily return of Christ (and by implication, that the fullness of the kingdom on earth is a future event predicated by the bodily return of Jesus Christ as Lord of all).

Hyper-Zionism

Although I believe in the future restoration of all Israel (as found in Rom. 11:26, 27), I don't base my life and ministry upon the political restoration of the nation of Israel. (Of course, I desire that all Jewish people come to a saving knowledge of their Messiah—and I will be forever indebted and honor the Jews for giving us the sacred Scriptures, and for bringing the Messiah into the world as the promised seed of Abraham (see Gen. 3:15 and Chapters 12-17 as well as Rom. 3:1, 2; 9:1-5)).

Hyper-Zionist believers (mostly non-Jewish conservative evangelicals) have a hyper dispensational view of Bible Prophecy (I call it Hal Lindsey eschatology as illustrated in his best-selling book *The Late Great Planet Earth*) that renders the church as second-class citizens to people of biological Jewish origin (whether said Jews are followers of Jesus the Messiah or not).

Therefore, much of what they preach and do revolves around political Israel as God's chosen people. (Even though God calls the church His chosen New Man made up of both biological Jews and Gentiles—see Eph. 1:4; 2:11-22, which shows that the

Jew/Gentile Christian is participating in the Tabernacle of David that God has already restored since Jesus's ascension and birth of the church; see Acts 15:15-18.)

Consequently, the Scripture teaches that the Messiah, after His bodily ascension, makes both Jewish and Gentile believers "one new man" that becomes the "Israel of God"—which is not based on physical circumcision but is a circumcision of the heart. (See Gal. 6:15-16; Romans 2:28-29; 9:6-9.)

Hence all Messiah followers are presently part of the heavenly Jerusalem which is above (see Gal. 4:26) in which all Christians, both Jew and Gentile, are chosen and partakers of Mt. Zion, the New Jerusalem as the church of the firstborn; see Heb. 12:22,23).

As an example of the problem with hyper-Zionism, I remember one time in a significant city-wide prayer gathering, a national prophetic figure put cold water on a powerful meeting when he said that unless we minister to the Jew first, revival will not come to our churches and our regions. After that statement, the whole meeting died!

Although I believe in ministering to Jewish people and believe our nation should be a strong ally with political Israel, I also believe strongly in ministering to the Arab peoples. I do not presently center my whole ministry upon the restoration of the Jewish nation to Messiah-like others specifically called of God to do so (like some of my dear friends and partners in ministry).

In spite of this, God has greatly blessed our church and ministry as He has thousands of other churches and leaders throughout church history who never focused their whole life and ministry in Jewish evangelism or the restoration of political Israel. (Most of the Protestant Reformers and revivalists of the First and Second Great Awakening did not focus on Jewish evangelism and or the restoration of political

Israel either, and God blessed their labors, and many contemporary orthodox Jews don't even believe political Zionism comports with their view of Scripture.)

Of course, God never blesses anti-Semitism, and He still has a special place in His heart for Jewish people and the land of Israel, that I believe will one day be restored as a joy to the whole earth in accordance with many of the Old Testament prophecies.