

General Topics :: Neo-Reformists

Neo-Reformists - posted by DesiJr, on: 2008/7/8 17:23

I came across this article.

Do you think the author's thoughts correct? Is there that vast of a difference from the Old Reformers doctrine and today's Neo-Reformists teachings?

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Here is the article:

1. Neo-Sovereignty -- Neo-Sovereignty teaches that every good or bad event is under the control of God and is ultimately God's will made manifest upon the earth. This differs from the teachings of the old reformers in that they refused to submit to the lies of Rome and would not accept that a wicked Church should rule the earth. Through prayer and personal sacrifice the Reformers turned a darkened world upside down.

(Remember that when we say that all things work together for good we are affirming that God is all-powerful and good. He takes the worst the Devil can dish out and miraculously transforms it into an unlikely blessing. The sinner totally lacks this unique hope!)

Ultimately, the Reformers changed circumstances and nations through mighty prevailing prayers. The Sovereignty they preached was that in which the Hebrew Children placed their trust. They knew that God was more powerful than man was and that God would sustain them no matter what man might do. The power that prevailed in Babylon also prevailed for the Old Reformers. That power is still available to those that will cast their all upon Christ. Christ will still answer prayer today and turn nations back to Christ.

Most have forgotten that the reformers believed that if they failed to preach and act upon God's word, the victory God planned would not arrive. They understood that God's plan for his people might go unfulfilled. In our day people are neglecting prayer and dedication because they believe that God's Sovereign will shall be accomplished in spite of Christian indifference. This was not the opinion of the Reformers.

2. Neo-Election -- Today's modern definition of election stands in stark opposition to the faith of the old reformers. Today, many wrongly suppose that God will save all that are elected and little can be done to avoid or seek God's predestinated choice. Similarly, many are presumed to be outside of God's fold and have no hope of salvation.

The old reformers viewed election as something totally different. They understood election to be the Divine move and conviction of the Holy Ghost upon an unconverted heart. That heart might belong to either a Heathen or to a baptized Church member or an ordained Christian minister. In any case they understood that a powerful move of the Holy Ghost was necessary to effect true conversion. They understood that without such a move God's election had not been realized and salvation was not a reality. They also knew that "prevailing prayer" might move the hand of God and initiate the move of the Holy Ghost and the conversion of souls. Such a move was not likely to happen in the absence of such prayer.

During the time of the old reformers many clergymen assumed that they were Christians but were in reality only Christians in culture and not in heart. Because the Church of Rome was in such a poor state the Reformers felt justified in leaving that great apostasy of presumption. We should take the same position today!

Revelation 18:4 "And I heard another voice from heaven, saying, Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues."

The Reformers understood the Roman Church to be the Mystery Babylon of Revelation. We affirm that modern teachers that deny the power of God are part of the same!

3. Neo-Grace -- There are two major areas in which today's neo-Grace Theology turns away from old reformation truth. These two are, Holiness through Personal Suffering and Holiness in spite of Wicked Living. The old reformers understood that true Holiness was imputed and imparted by a miracle (sovereign act) of God. They also understood that the believer appropriated his personal sanctification by the Blood, the word and the Spirit.

Holiness Through Personal Suffering

"Holiness through personal suffering," is perhaps the most insidious form of modern Reformed neo-grace. This teaching agrees with new age theology and both have their roots in ancient Hinduism. In this errant teaching, we are informed that our personal suffering cleanses and empowers us for ministry. During the dark ages the Monastic system fully embraced this thinking and inflicted all manner of pain upon its adherents. The Flagellants plumbed its depths as they beat their own bodies to attain holiness and acceptance with God. In the end "Holiness through personal suffering," nullifies the Cross of Christ.

Today's modern reformed Theologians do not normally move to the depths of the flagellants. However, they are certainly walking on the edge of spiritual sadism when they deny the power of God to deliver. For example one Theology Professor, Dr. Bowdle (of the Church of God's Lee University, Cleveland TN, Graduate of Princeton) states that Prayer does not change circumstances but it does change the prayer giver. The nationally known Dave Wilkerson states that it is better to suffer sickness than to be healed. In either case the power of God to heal and or work physical miracles is belittled and the benefit of personal suffering is elevated. This thinking certainly takes the first step on the road to self-flagellation unto holiness.

Remember that we should never willingly carry a load that Christ has already born for us. Jesus came to heal the sick, set at liberty the oppressed and cast out demons. The old Reformers also practiced Jesus' ministry and yet their predecessors fail to grasp that old time message of life!

Holiness is possible in spite of wicked living

Finally, grace is also perverted in the teaching that Holiness is possible in spite of wicked living. The old reformers left Romanism because of this false assumption. All of the old reformers believed in God's imputed righteousness but once that righteousness had come the tree of morality was always expected to bare good fruit. In addition to faith, right living and holiness were the message of the Reformation. The self-righteous works that the reformers preached against were the substitute offerings of the Roman Church. They rejected indulgences, purchased prayers, self-inflicted pain to pay for sin, and all sorts of relics and idolatrous substitutes for the Cross of Christ. Once at the cross the reformers all saw a new way of living must follow the man of God.

Re: Neo-Reformists - posted by theopenlife, on: 2008/7/9 0:06

Hello, Desi. Would you please cite any significant "Neo-Reformists" teaching these things, preferably with audio, text, or video clips to substantiate their involvement with these teachings?

I do not want to seem to rash, but this reads more like a slander piece. Being somewhat familiar with the writings of a number of "old reformers", such as Calvin, Luther, Owen, Spurgeon, Whitefield, Ryle, Pink, etc. and with a number of the modern Calvinists, such as Earnest and John Reisinger, Rolfe Barnard, John Piper, Paul Washer, etc., I must state that whoever wrote this article must have someone in mind that I have never heard of.

Re: - posted by DesiJr, on: 2008/7/9 1:31

I can't site anyone because I am not familiar with the difference between modern reformed doctrine and old reformed doctrine.

I came across this article and it made me wonder if this article truly defines what the "new" Calvinists believe. I was hoping that someone who currently wears the title of a Calvinist also aligns themselves to the beliefs spelled out in the article cited or if that is not a true representation of their theology.

I guess to make the question simple....does this article truly represent two current denominations of Calvinists...the old and the new?

I am not bashing either or...just wondering.

What do you think?

Re: - posted by theopenlife, on: 2008/7/9 2:04

I suppose my only difficulty is figuring out who the "new" ones are?

John Piper is the most famous of American Calvinists and his soteriology (beliefs about salvation) are generally accepted in all Reformed circles. He is more or less the front runner of the Reformed "wake up" that's happening, though there are many other significant players. Perhaps you should read his "What we believe about the 5 Points" and compare that to George Whitefield's "Letter to John Wesley", which more or less describes Calvinism in the 1700's.

Here's Piper's page, expect it to take 45 minutes, but well worth it:

(http://www.desiringgod.org/ResourceLibrary/Articles/ByDate/1985/1487_What_We_Believe_About_the_Five_Points_of_Calvinism/) What we believe about the 5 Points

And here's what Whitefield wrote to John Wesley, which is even better:

(<http://www.spurgeon.org/~phil/wesley.htm>) Whitefield to Wesley

God bless you, Desi.

Re: Pedantic - posted by Compton (), on: 2008/7/9 9:37

Quote:
-----I came across this article and it made me wonder if this article truly defines what the "new" Calvinists believe...I guess to make the question simple....does this article truly represent two current denominations of Calvinists...the old and the new?

I find that many educated people have this unfortunate (and unhelpful) compulsion to construct tidy little boxes to put people in. The purpose of their taxonomic schemes aren't to help explain reality, but to help them make sense of their own private experience. It's a form of self-therapy for them.

This is all well and fine until they publish these artificial labels as some kind of scholastic research or scientific fact. Very few people will actually fit neatly into any of this...so the ultimate outcome is more division and atomization of Christians who for the most part, would otherwise be having blessed primitive fellowship and communion on the essentials of the faith.

MC

(edit: I realize this article wasn't posted with that intention in mind! :-))

Re: - posted by DesiJr, on: 2008/7/9 17:39

Amen!

Re: - posted by Compton (), on: 2008/7/9 23:18

:-) Bless you DesiJr.