

# The Emergent Church and Last Days Ecumenism

By Dr. Andy Woods



Adapted from Roger Oakland, *Faith Undone* and *Moody Handbook of Theology* pps. 689-99

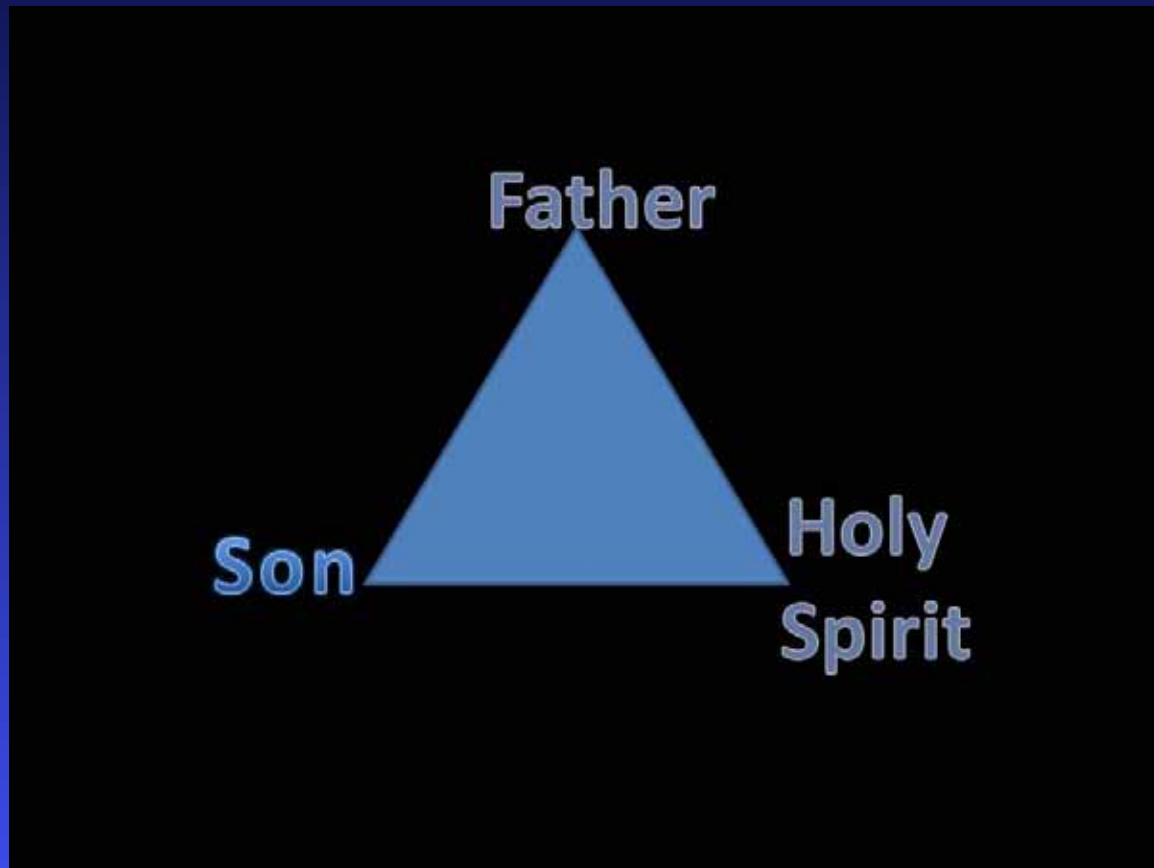
# Emergent Ecclesiology: Male Headship



“In the emerging church, the role of women in the church is a huge issue. People in the emerging generations think of churches as male-dominated and oppressive to females. So whatever your theology may be about the role of women in the church, I would still highly encourage you to have females in up-front roles as much as possible, whether it is teaching, giving announcements, leading worship, sharing testimonies, or reading Scripture. This is critical for the emerging church.”

Dan Kimball, *The Emerging Church*, 150

# Trinity



# IV. Church

A. Worship gathering

B. Nature of the Church



# Emergent: Kingdom



“The Kingdom of God is a central conversation in emerging communities... And let me tell you ‘Kingdom of God’ language is really big in the emerging church” (Italics added).

Doug Pagitt, cited in Oakland, 163.

# Emergent: Kingdom



“If Revelation were a blueprint of the distant future, it would have been unintelligible to its original readers...In light of this, Revelation becomes a powerful book about the kingdom of God here and now, available to all.”

Brian McLaren, cited in Oakland, 158.

# Emergent: Kingdom



“I stand before you confidently right now and say to you that God is going to use you to change the world...I'm looking at a stadium full of people right now who are telling God they will do whatever it takes to establish *God's Kingdom* "on earth as it is in heaven.” What will happen if the followers of Jesus say to Him, “We are yours?” What kind of spiritual awakening will occur?.”

Rick Warren, cited in Oakland, Kindle edition.



# Biblical: Kingdom

- Kingdom cannot come through human effort
- Matt 23:37-39
- Premillennialism





# Prophecy Panorama



**Great White  
Throne  
Judgment**

Rapture

Messiah's Coming  
& Death



(CHURCH  
AGE)

Old Testament

Second  
Advent

Tribulation

Dan. 9:27  
Rev. 6-19

Kingdom

Rev. 20

Eternal  
State

Rev. 21-22





# Emergent: Social Gospel



“The church has been preoccupied with the question, ‘What happens to your soul after you die?’ As if the reason for Jesus coming can be summed up in, ‘Jesus is trying to get more souls into heaven as opposed to hell, after they die.’ I just think a fair reading of the Gospels blows that out of the water.”

Brian McLaren, cited in Oakland, 203.

# Emergent: Kingdom



“He selected 12 and trained them in a new way of life. He sent them to teach everyone this new way of life...Even if only a few would practice this new way, many would benefit. Oppressed people would be free. Poor people would be liberated from poverty. Minorities would be treated with respect. Sinners would be loved, not resented.”

Brian McLaren, *A Generous Orthodoxy*, 111.



# Emergent: Kingdom



“Industrialists would realize that God cares for sparrows and wildflowers—so their industries should respect, not rape, the environment. The homeless would be invited in for a hot meal. The kingdom of God would come—not everywhere at once, not suddenly, but gradually like a seed growing in a field, like yeast spreading in a lump of bread dough, like light spreading across the sky at dawn.”

Brian McLaren, *A Generous Orthodoxy*, 111.

# Biblical: Social Gospel



- Priority of evangelism and discipleship (Matt 28:18-20)
- The world will remain in Satan's grasp (2 Cor 4:4) until the Second Advent (Rev 11:15)

# Ultimate Exodus (Rev 11:15)

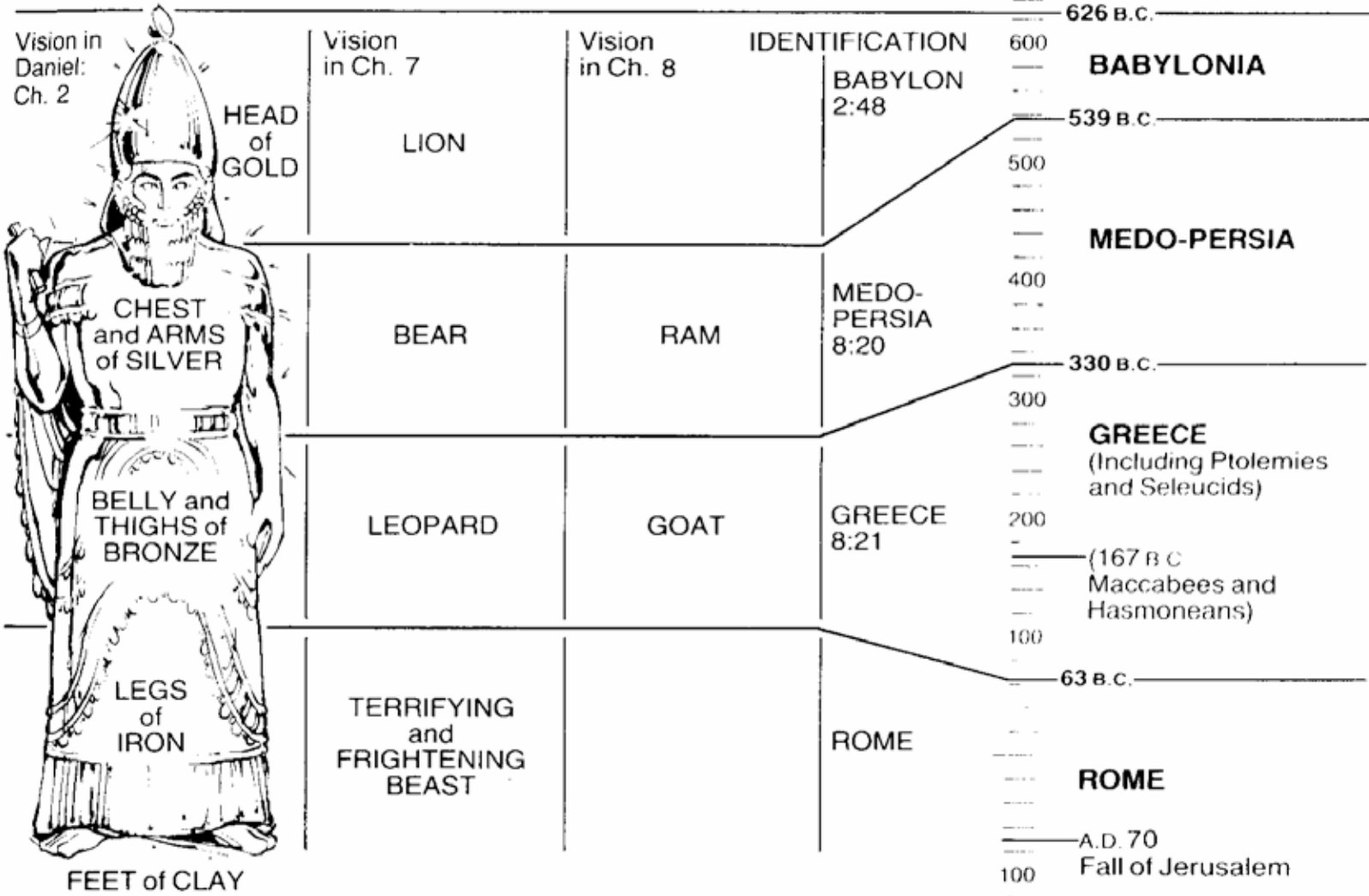
- Sores: 6<sup>th</sup> plague (Ex 9:8-12), 1<sup>st</sup> bowl (Rev 16:1-2)
- Rivers to blood: 1<sup>st</sup> plague (Ex 7:19-21), 3<sup>rd</sup> bowl (Rev 16:4-7)
- Darkness: 9<sup>th</sup> plague (Ex 10:21-23), 5<sup>th</sup> bowl (Rev 16:10-11)
- Hail: 7<sup>th</sup> plague (Ex 9:22-26), 7<sup>th</sup> bowl (Rev 16:17-21)





# Identification of the Four Kingdoms

# Chronology of Major Empires in Daniel

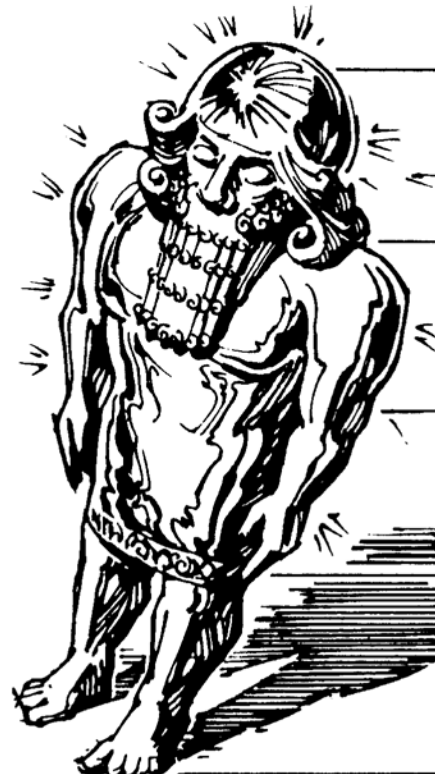


# Statue & Stone

2. A Statue  
and a  
Stone



Statue is  
destroyed by a  
great stone,  
which represents  
Jesus Christ



HEAD  
**GOLD**

WORLD POWER  
**BABYLON**  
606-539

CHEST AND ARMS  
**SILVER**

WORLD POWER  
**PERSIA**  
539-331

STOMACH AND THIGHS  
**BRASS**

WORLD POWER  
**GREECE**  
331-323

LEGS AND FEET  
**IRON & CLAY**

WORLD POWER  
**ROME**  
322 B.C.—A.D. 476  
**FUTURE**

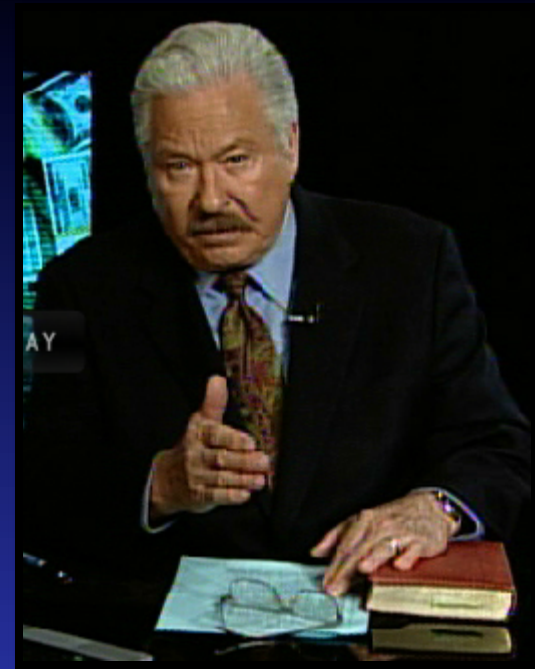
# Purposes of the Local Church

- Glorify God (Eph 3:21)
- Edify the saints (Eph 4:11-16)
- Fulfill the Great Commission (Matt 28:18-20)



Bestselling author Hal Lindsey warned what could happen to the church in the last days if she began to see herself as the establisher of God's kingdom: “The last days of the church on the earth may be largely wasted seeking to accomplish a task that only the LORD Himself can and will do directly.”

Hal Lindsey, *The Road to Holocaust*, 269



# Emergent: Ecumenism



“A goal for evangelicals in the postmodern world is to accept diversity as a historical reality, but to seek unity in the midst of it. This perspective will allow us to see Catholic, Orthodox, and Protestant churches as various forms of the true church-all based on apostolic teaching and authority, finding common ground in the faith expressed by classical Christianity.”

Robert Webber, *Ancient Future Faith*, 85

# Biblical: Ecumenism

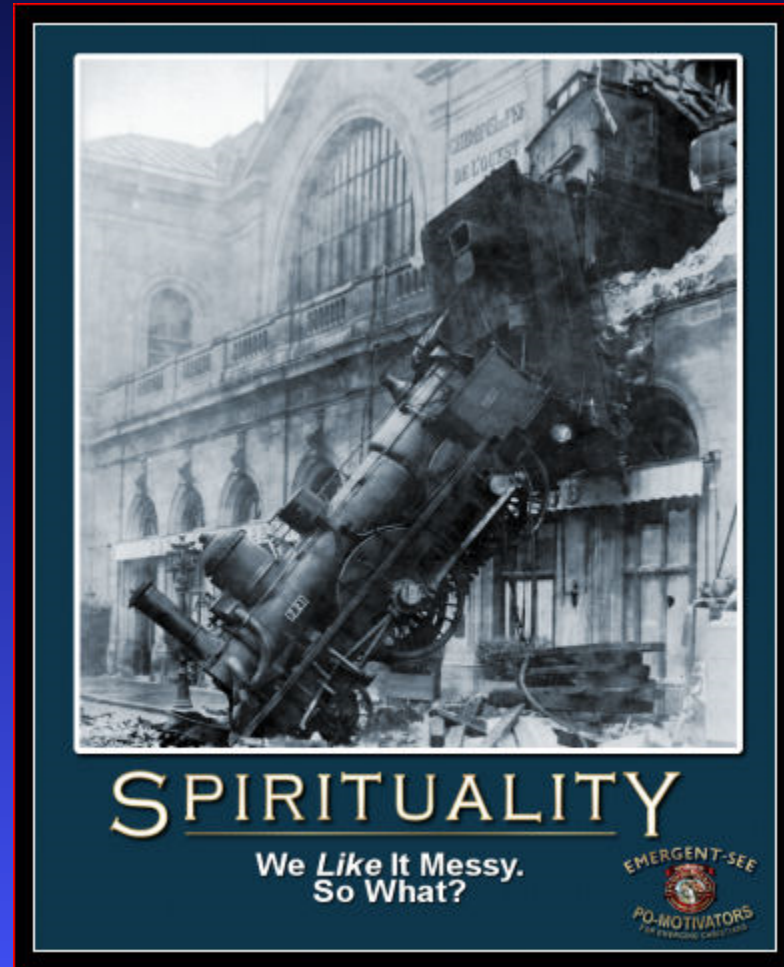
- John 17:17, 19, 20-23
- Acts 2:42 vs. Gen 11:1-9
- Step toward a one-world religion?





# Eight Areas of Redefinition

- Missions
- Knowledge
- Scripture
- Church
- Salvation
- Christ
- Prophecy
- Worldview





# Emergent Soteriology: Regeneration



SALVATION

“I learned this way of having a born again experience from reading the Catholic mystics, especially *The Spiritual Exercise of Ignatius of Loyola*...Like most Catholic mystics, he developed an intense desire to experience a ‘oneness’ with God.”

Tony Campolo, *Letters to a Young Evangelical*, 30

# Biblical Soteriology: Regeneration

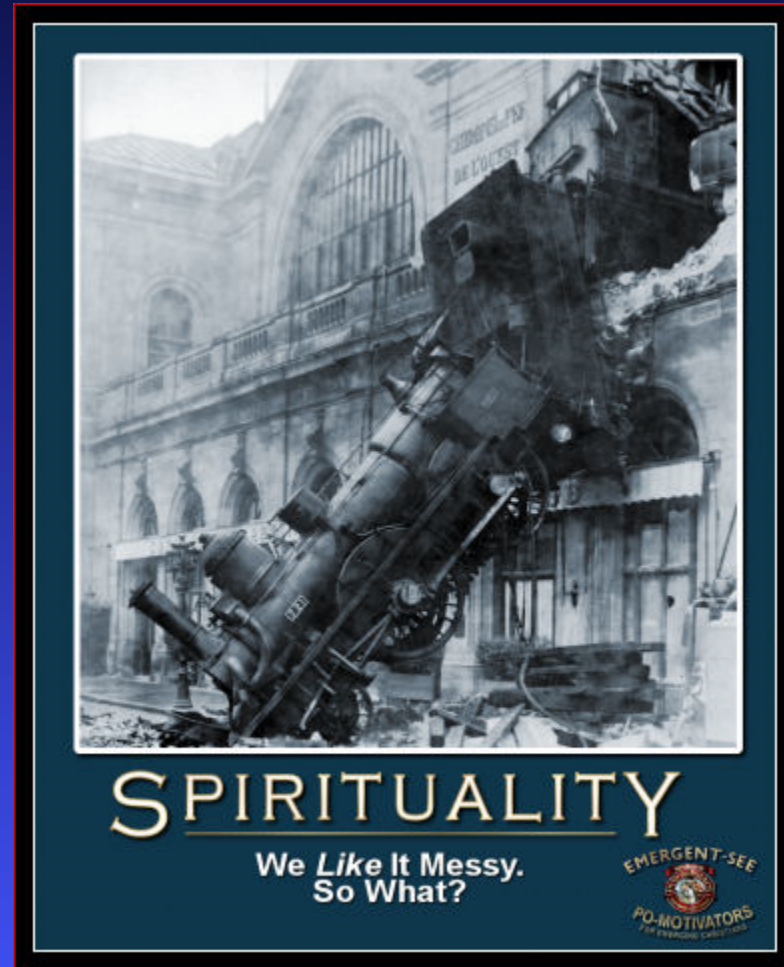
- John 3:3-6

- Rom 8:9

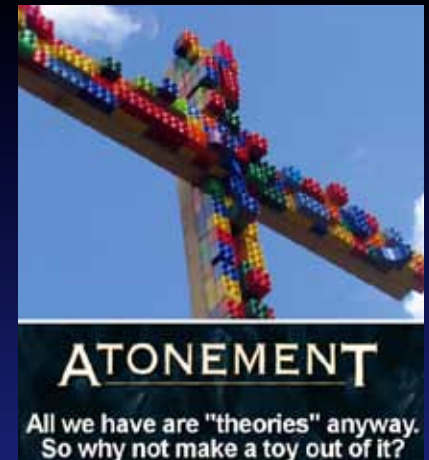


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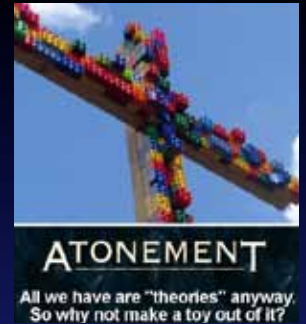
# Emergent Christology: Atonement



“And there’s a certain sense that, a common understanding of the atonement presents a God who is incapable of forgiving. Unless He kicks someone else.”

Brian McLaren, *The Bleeding Purple Podcast*, part II, cited in  
Oakland, Kindle edition

# Emergent: Atonement



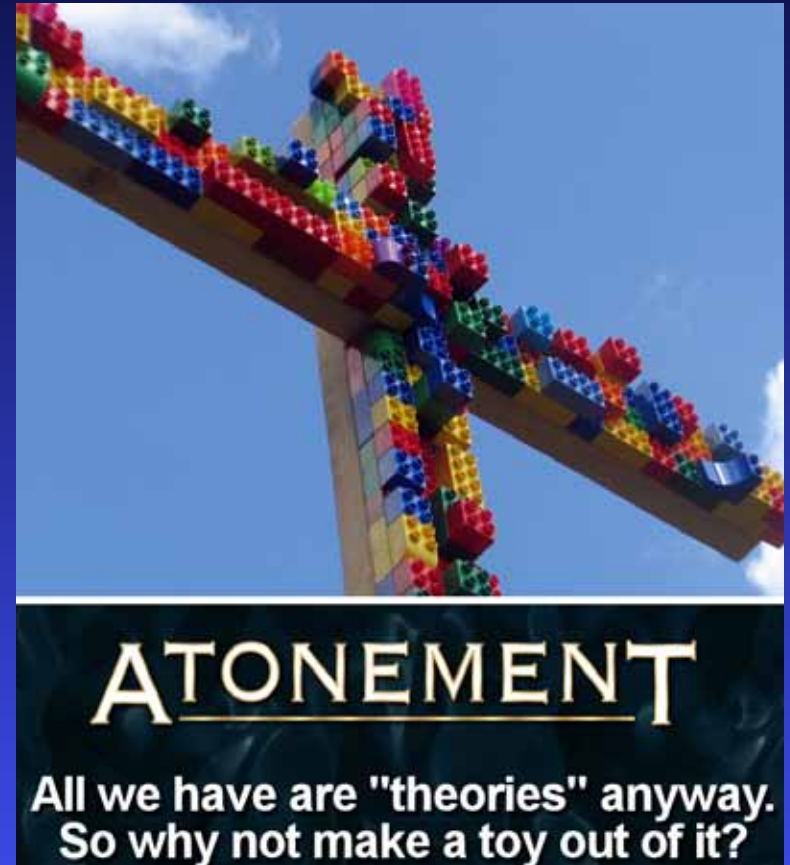
“a form of cosmic child abuse—a vengeful Father, punishing his Son for an offence he has not even committed ...If the cross is a personal act of violence perpetrated by humankind but borne by his Son, then it makes a mockery of Jesus’ own teaching to love your enemies and to refuse to repay evil with evil.”

Chalke and Mann, cited in Enns, *Moody Handbook of Theology*, 694.



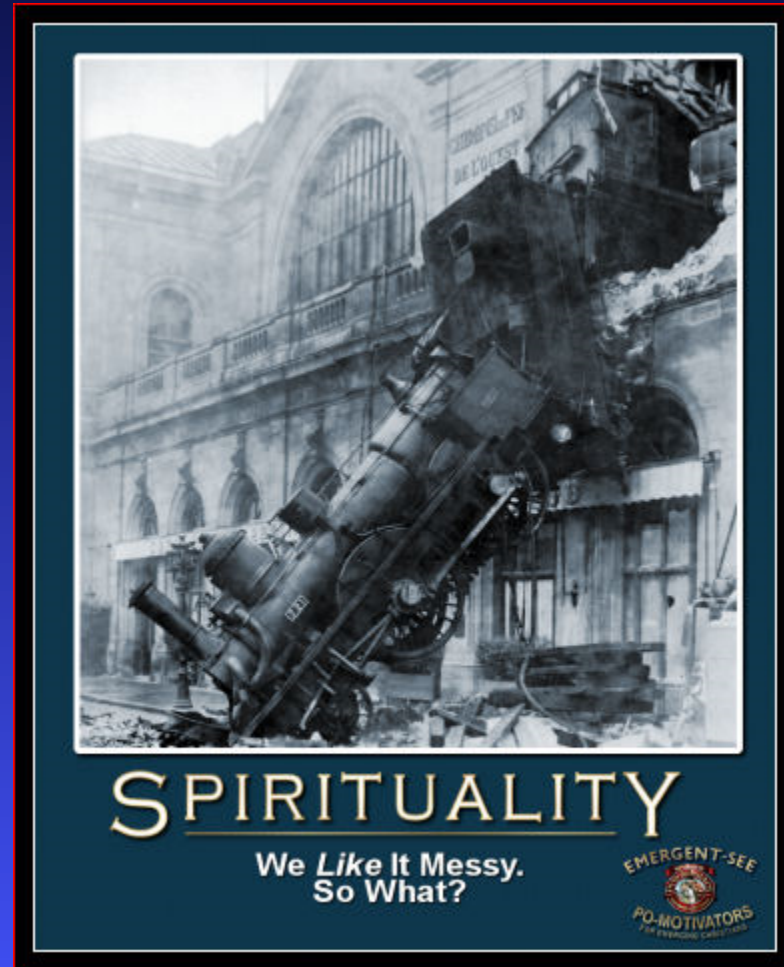
# Biblical Christology: Atonement

- Penal substitution
- Gen 3:21
- Heb 9:22
- Isa 53:5; 1 Pet 2:21



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# Emergent Prophecy: Importance

“Biblical signs such as baptismal identity and Eucharistic thanksgiving will take on new meaning. *The church will be less concerned about having an eschatology* and more committed to being an eschatological community” (Italics added).

Interview by Jordan Cooper with Robert Webber, cited in Oakland,  
136.

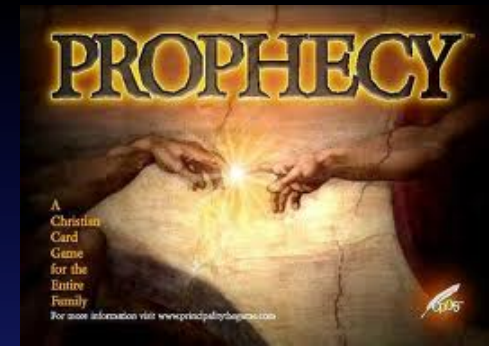
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Brian McLaren, cited in Oakland, 158.

# Emergent Eschatology: Importance



“An eschatology of abandonment, which is how I would characterize certain streams of the left behind approach, has disastrous social consequences...Any project geared toward improving the world long term is seen as unfaithful, since we're supposed to assume that the world is getting worse and worse.”

Interview by Planet Preterist with Brian McLaren, cited in  
Oakland, Kindle edition

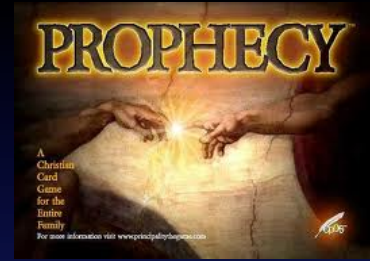
# Biblical Prophecy: Importance

- 27% of Scripture was prophetic at the time it was written

- 2 Pet 1:19



# Emergent Eschatology: Genre



“The book of Revelation is an example of popular literary genre of ancient Judaism, known today as Jewish apocalyptic. Trying to read it without understanding its genre would be like watching *Star Trek* or some other science fiction show thinking it was a historical documentary...instead of being a book about the distant future, it becomes a way of talking about the challenges of the immediate present.”

Brian McLaren, *The Secret Message of Jesus*, 175-76



# Apocalyptic Genre Versus Revelation

## Apocalyptic Genre

- Pseudonymous
- Pessimistic about the present
- No epistolary framework
- Limited admonitions for moral compliance
- Messiah's coming exclusively future
- Does not call itself prophecy
- *Vaticina ex eventu*
- Primarily concerns a future generation (1 Enoch 1:2)

## Revelation

- Not pseudonymous
- Not pessimistic about the present
- Epistolary framework
- Repeated admonitions for moral compliance
- Basis for Messiah's coming is past
- Calls itself prophecy
- Futuristic prediction
- Concerns both the present generation of the author (Rev 2–3) and a future generation (Rev 4–22)

Adapted from Thomas, *Evangelical Hermeneutics*, 338

# Emergent Eschatology: Hell



“For years, Smith Jr. said, he had preached about hell uncomfortably, half apologetically, because he couldn’t understand why a loving God would consign his children to eternal flames. It felt like blackmail for a pastor to threaten people with hell-scapes from the Middle Ages to induce piety. Now he came to believe that the biblical images used to depict hell’s torment such as ‘the lake of fire’ and ‘the worm does not die’ were intended to evoke feeling rather than a literal place.”

Los Angeles Times, 9/2/2006

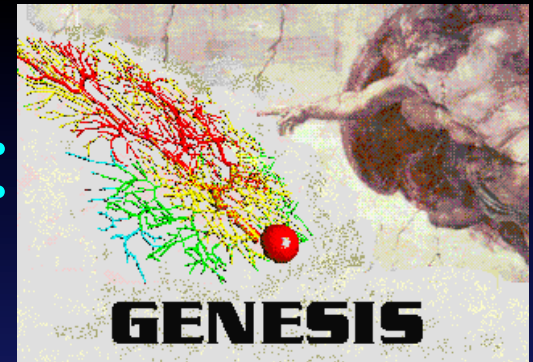


# Biblical Eschatology: Hell

- Jesus spoke more about hell than any other subject
- Matt 25:41, 46
- Dan 12:2
- Rev 14:11
- Rev 19:20; 20:10



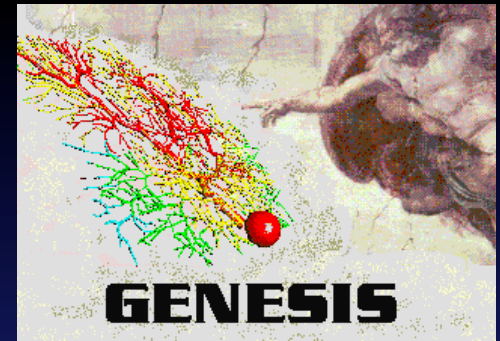
# Emergent Eschatology: Protology (2 Pet 3:3-7)



“I think many of us are in this kind of rethinking process-some starting from the beginning part by rethinking perhaps the relation of faith and science in relation to young earth creation and evolution...some starting from the middle as they examine what the gospel of the kingdom is supposed to mean, or the idea of an integral or holistic mission...and some starting from the end, re-examining eschatology...”

Interview by Planet Preterist with Brian McLaren, cited in  
Oakland, Kindle edition

# James Barr

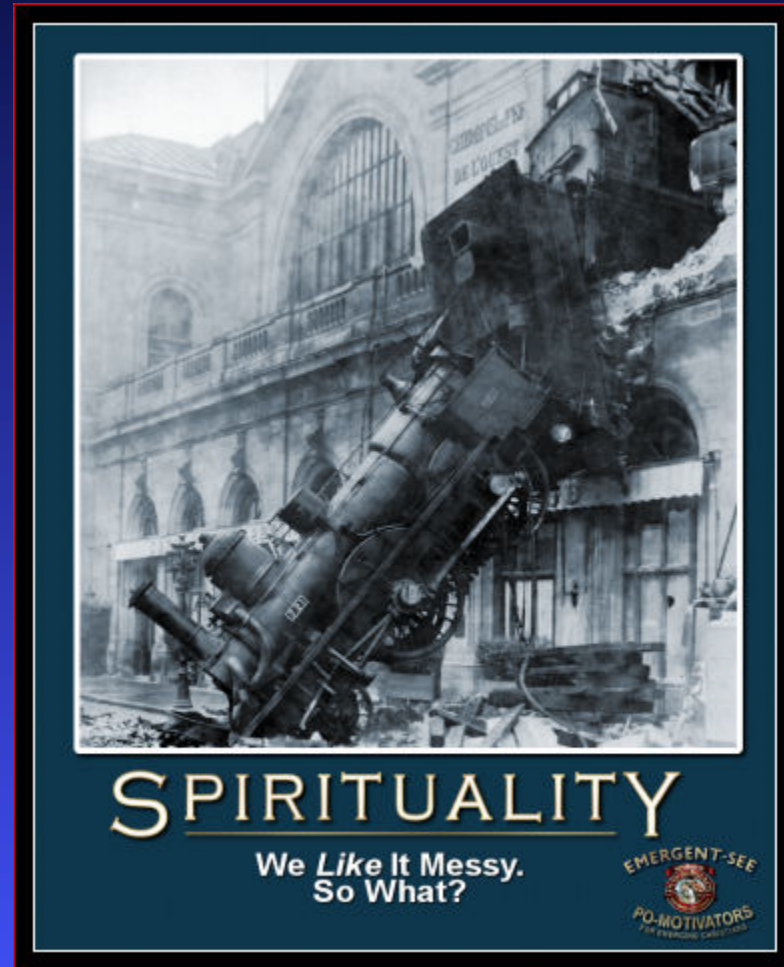


- “...probably, so far as I know, there is no professor of Hebrew or Old Testament at any world-class university who does not believe that the writer(s) of Genesis 1-11 intended to convey to their readers the ideas that creation took place in a series of six days which were the same as the days of 24 hours we now experience, the figures contained in the Genesis genealogies provided by simple addition a chronology from the beginning of the world up to later stages in the biblical story, Noah’s flood was to be understood to be world wide and extinguish all human and animal life except for those in the ark.”

J. Barr, letter to David C.C. Watson, April 23, 1984.

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# Emergent Worldview: Homosexuality



“Because this is such a huge issue in our culture, and because all of the tension and discussion on this issue is over what the Bible says about it, we can no longer just regurgitate what we have been taught about homosexuality... We must approach the Bible with humility, prayer, and sensitivity, taking into consideration the original meaning of Greek and Hebrew words and looking into the historical contexts in which passages were written... we can no longer with integrity merely quote a few isolated verses and say ‘case closed.’ ”

Dan Kimball, *They Like Jesus but Not the Church*, 137



# Biblical Worldview: Homosexuality

- Gen 1:27
- Lev 18:22; 20:13
- Matt 19:3-6
- Rom 1:26-27
- 1 Cor 6:9-11
- Jude 7



# Emergent Worldview: Leftist Ideology

“Liberals were heroic for tackling tough issues often several decades before conservatives. For example, in terms of science and learning, they tackled issues like evolution and the age of the earth long before their conservative counterparts...Liberals took action on the issue of women in the ministry decades before most conservatives began to rethink their position. The same could be said about the stewardship of the earth, concern for the poor, sensitivity to the plight of the Palestinians, and a questioning of unconditional support for Israel. And although the debate has been agonizing, liberals have blazed the trail in seeking to treat homosexuals and transgender persons with compassion.”

Brian McLaren, *A Generous Orthodoxy*, 138.





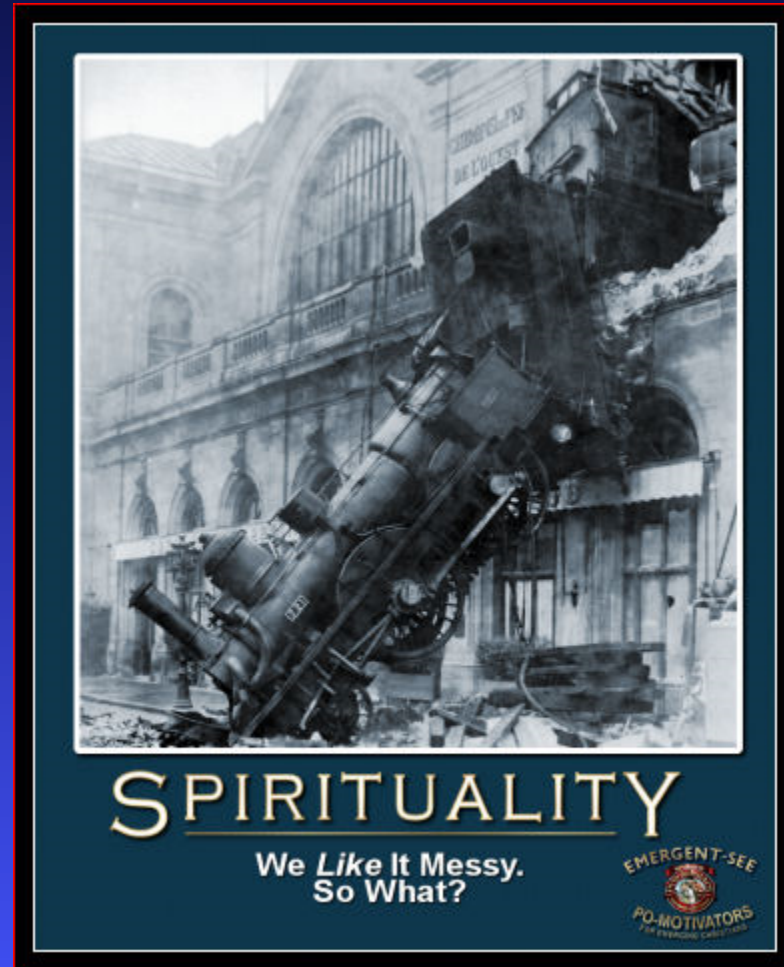
*"If the Arabs put down their weapons today, there would be no more violence. If the Jews put down their weapons today, there would be no more Israel. "*

*Benjamin Netanyahu*



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# Apostasy Impacts Those Who Have Not Taken Preventive Measures

- Study God's Word (2 Tim 2:15; 3:17)
- "Test all things" (1 Thess 5:21)
- Renew your mind (Rom 12:2)
- "Put on the whole armor of God" (Eph 6:11)
- "Contend earnestly for the faith" (Jude 3)

