

BIBLE

"Beloved, when I gave all diligence to write unto you of the common salvation, it was needful for me to write unto you, and exhort you that ye should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints."

Jude 3

X. Two things cause these movements to move away from the fundamentals.

- A. **Unwillingness to accept the stigma of either extreme:** Either position has a stigma. If a man is a strict fundamentalist, the great host of society calls him a radical. Most people do not want to be considered fanatical.

The evangelicals came along and taught fundamentalists how not to be radical. The evangelical movement was not founded because of conviction. It was founded because the evangelical people were not willing to be branded for Jesus' sake. They did not want to bear the stigma.

The further from fundamentalism the Devil can brand as radical, the better he likes it. He likes it when more liberal Christians are called fundamentalist because it moves the line of what a radical is considered to be. If you are not a fighting fundamentalist, you are an evangelical.

The neo-orthodox movement is the same thing to liberalism as the Evangelical movement is to fundamentalism. It is a way to avoid being in the extreme of a movement.

In Washington, D.C., you will not find many old-fashioned conservative Republicans nor will you find many staunch liberals. The same concept applies. Everyone wants to be moderate so they will not be considered radical.

The evangelical movement is nothing more than fundamentalists who use liberal terms. The neo-orthodox movement is nothing more than liberals who use fundamentalist terms. New evangelicals are those who meet somewhere in the middle.

TEACHER'S TOOLBOX: Teach the children that a stigma is often attached to those who hold strongly to their beliefs. While they should not hold beliefs in order to get a stigma, neither should they flee those beliefs that are unpopular by the majority of the unsaved world just because those beliefs "brand" the Christian.

BIBLE (cont.)

- B. **A desire to gather a larger following:** Many people make the mistake of believing that they will grow more by appealing to a wider scope of people. In reality, people are drawn to that which is distinct. Most people hold to extreme beliefs and are thrilled to find an institution that has not compromised those beliefs. That has been the secret of the success of the First Baptist Church of Hammond. We have done nothing to try to appeal to crowds other than proclaiming the uncompromised truth of the Word of God. Many men who had great and growing ministries saw the opportunity to enlarge their outreach and changed their position more towards the middle. In most cases the ministries diminished.


TEACHER'S TOOLBOX: We should teach our children the dangers of doing anything *just to get a crowd*. Our desire in life should be to propagate the truth of the Gospel of Christ. Surely we would rather give the Gospel to two people than to just one or to two hundred rather than one hundred; however, we must be very careful not to compromise truth in order to reach more people. The reaching of people is God's work. Our job is to proclaim the truth to as many people as possible; then let God do the reaching. Some have resorted to using so-called "Christian rock" music, movie stars who profess Christ, and other questionable methods to reach more people. These methods water down the message of the Gospel and do more harm than good because they are not condoned by God Himself.

BIBLE

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Jude 3

XI. Let me make a few observations.

- A. **The Devil wants to bring the term radical toward the center.**
- B. **Let us thank God for every group that broke with their original group when it got liberal and went back to what it used to be.**
- C. **Let us hold to our Baptist distinctives.** They do matter. Baptism does matter. It is in the Great Commission. Soul winning does matter. It is in the Great Commission. The Lord's Supper does matter. It is one of the church ordinances. It does matter. The doctrine of the church does matter. Let us hold dear and treasure our Baptist distinctives while at the same time admiring those who are willing to take a stand in their denomination.
-  D. **Let us not be ashamed of being considered radicals.**
- E. **We had a stronger nation when each did its own work alone and the rest of us admired each other from a distance.** I am a Baptist. I thank God that I am a Baptist. I thank God for my Baptist heritage. I thank God for Baptist distinctives. I thank God for the men who died for them. If they can be martyred for these Baptist distinctives, the least I can do is believe them.

TEACHER'S TOOLBOX: Take time to talk to the children about the right kind of Baptist church to which they should belong. The church should be one that stands for the Bible as the Word of God. It should hold high God's standards of dress and morality. It should be a church that is actively seeking to win people to Jesus Christ. Teach the children that they should be actively upholding all these standards, too. They are not to sit back and watch the adults doing all the work but should be involved as dedicated Christians in the work, too.