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## CHAPTER 6 Refreshing Evangelism *Adds to Church of the Firstborn.*

Not only does refreshing evangelism add to the only church roll of any real importance, that of "the assembly {or church} of the firstborn written in heaven" (Hebrews 11:4), but also it does not brag on its gift--you know like the leg over the arm or head saying "we don't need you", or of pastors saying to "prophets", appointed just like pastors and evangelists by the Ascended Christ (Ephesians 4:11) but ignored today for some reasons which must be explained. Granted it more often in the American church the gifted of healing that take the haughty attitude to other gifts in the church of saying "we are winning people to Christ" as ahead of other gifts in the body of Christ {particularly the fundamentalists and Bible Baptists now entrenched in the SBC} flaunt this approach as the main justification for their existence and to convince their own people and denomination of their worthiness in spite of some other questionable behaviors<sup>1</sup> and primarily attitudes.

Sorry for a necessary reality and spiritual reality check, but we must in all intellectual honesty ask, "Who are they winning these converts to?" The local church which goes no further than their isolated building or even the equally, like civil service workers, denomination for status or gain. Or perhaps they are being won to the influence of the pastor or to the denomination? If Campbell could ask some years ago "Where are the Converts?" perhaps today with the influence of

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1. The fighting against what they call "moderates" but who simply disagree with them on rapture and millineum, the same lack of love for brethren that caused the split of the SBC into 3 denominations.

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the Falling Away on churches and denominations, we should ask "What are they converted to?" The strange effect of Bible Baptists on the SBC is that the churches and professional leaders become more and more isolated in an archaic perspective unlike what B.H. Carroll told Scarborough about keeping Christ at the center of all! For example in SBC bookstores, seminaries, writings, and churches, there is an obvious effort to eliminate all the classics of the past like Ramm on Christian evidences and apologetics, like Wayne Oates on the pastor and religious dimensions of personalty, like Summers and "The Meaning and Message of Revelation"; and if you don't watch them, it will be no long before they remove influences of men like Truett, Lee, and Carroll.

Although Commager called fundamentalists "paranoid"--and that needs some explanation, they are consistent on an isolated or exclusive a perspective: (1) while others were struggling their way through real Bible eschatology, their backwoods beginnings bought the Scofield Bible notes as a quick and ease way to believe and preach, ignoring the dubious beginnings from Darby, an Irish Catholic priest, and Scofield, a divorced lawyer who pastored First Congregational Church in Dallas and used a free correspondence course across the Bible belt and California<sup>1</sup> to influence generations<sup>2</sup>; (2) they consistently cry literalism on the Bible and on their only brand of evangelism, while they (a) do isogesis by reading into the Bible the Scofield notes, and a "rapture" and millineum that are not even Bible words, (b) do a hunt and peek system on the Bible while they ignore the most of ALL SCRIPTURE, (c) maintain a limited perspective on the ministry that excludes at least half of "reach, teach, win, and develop"<sup>3</sup>; and (d) unfortunately as American education was falling behind 18 other nations on fundamentals, Bible baptist wee setting there ready for a public whose reading level dropped rapidly from the sixth grade level to the third grade level.

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1. Commager states fundamentalism was started by a group of California millionaires.
  2. The Scofield Bible Association in Memphis works full time to extend that influence, and perhaps is the money behind the continuation of programs by the dead Adrian Rogers despite another pastor has been at Bellevue for many years. Perhaps you do not recall thar it was Rogers, Criswell, and Stanley who lead the fight on Christian brethren at Seminaries and in the pastorate.
  3. Most of you in the SBC are probably too young to remember from the Sunday School Board, a marvelous little study course book called "Outreach for the Unreached" which based on the concept of the ministry as a ministry of the whole church like in Ephesians, stressed the fourfold work of the great commission and refreshing evangelism in the Bible as "reach, teach, win, and develop". Modern pastors, under the influence of the Falling and the Falling Away of their churches, have learned for popularity and pats on the back, to stress winning as the only reaching. Yet if there were more of the teaching and development of refreshing evangelism, there would be in less churches the putting of live bitties under a dead hen.

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*6-1: Now how much of this present condition of American evangelistic churches can be proven from the Bible. At least for Baptists, the history and covenants have always been "The Bible as the sole criterion for faith and practice". Of course we must start with our primary text of refreshing evangelism, Acts 3:19-21, then get some examples of what New Testament churches are supposed to be from the examples in Acts; and then true to one of the main goals of refreshing evangelism, spread out to ALL SCRIPTURE.*

1. How can there be a real start on refreshing evangelism, times of refreshing, and restoration of all things--the real hope of all those truly evangelized--if the primary text is ignored of Acts 3:19-21.

**"Repent therefore and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, that times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord." (Acts 3:19)**

Well, repentance and conversion is obviously necessary, continuously for church members as well as the souls they would seek to win. Surely there should be "times of refreshing from the presence of the Lord" in any local church or denomination that is involved in refreshing evangelism.

**"and that He may send Jesus Christ, who was preached to you before." (Acts 3:20)**

It must be a Jesus Christ that was preached by Peter, by the other Apostles, and recorded in the Bible. There are so many methods that work to increase numbers and glory to the local church, it is equally easy to slip to another Jesus "of a different kind".<sup>1</sup>

2. It is a reality and spiritual reality of every church today except your own, that they must be corrected by Paul and the Word like the church at Ephesus was, in that "they have not so learned Christ" (Ephesians 4:20) Today, like then, Christ and Christian faith has become a compromise with world, called "other Gentiles" in Ephesians 4. You may notice that your converts today and the

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1. "I marvel that you are turning away so soon from Him Who called you in the grace of Christ {He who called you into grace is also the He of the sender of times of refreshing}, to a different gospel, which is not another; but there are some who trouble you and want to pervert the gospel of Christ. But even if we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel to you than what we have preached to you, let him be accursed." (Galatians 1:6-9)

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church into which you put them is still "walking like other Gentles walk. How? (1) "In the futility of their mind"; (2) obviously their understanding has to be darkened as they are alienated from the life of God; (3) Ignorance of the Word; (4) Coming from the blindness of the heart which can not be overcome with literalism, mucho mediocre and superficial Bible classes, and piddling on the Word; (5) Gone beyond proper feeling into "lewdness"; and (6) "working all uncleanness with greediness (Ephesians 4:17-19)

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*6-2: Contrary to many preachers today, Peter was well aware of his spiritual environment there in the Temple, surrounded by the most religious people of all time, yet who had rejected Jesus.*

**"But you denied the Holy One and Just, and asked for a murderer to be granted to you, and killed the Prince of life, whom God raised from the dead, of which we are witnesses." (Acts 3:14,15)**

1. Yes, the spiritual environment of preachers today is worse than that in that apart from the vivid imagination they exercise among themselves to deny the extent of the great apostasy today called the Falling Away (II Timothy 3:3,4), and how even the first stage of intolerance toward sound doctrine of themselves and their supporters--"they will not endure sound"--affects their preaching of the real Jesus as well as the whole spectrum of Bible doctrine. This great and present falling away of church members from real Jesus, real Bible, and real God in favor of "other gods" or idols, can easily be marked some where around the 1970s, that period where the preaching of Billy Graham became much less popular.

It was much more noticeable even in 1968 as seemingly evangelistic churches were having fired preachers for Sunday dinner, massively running off the preachers of sound doctrine with years of faithful service to Christ. {out of their own wants shall they heap up teachers with itching ears", stage 3 of the Falling Away} in favor of preachers that would tickle their ears with words of comfort and ego building. {You know, often reminders of how they are the people of God, and how the sinners that need repentance and conversion are still out there in the highways and hedges.}

2. Where is American Christianity today? Obviously, if you get out of the closet of your imagination to look at the real condition of your churches today,

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you will notice that you are in the fourth stage of the Falling Away, the "turning away from truth", about to plunge over the fifth stage of "being turned into fables". There are always more Bible Baptists like Falwell, who exercise their imaginations to find signs of revival like Ted Haggard, the former head of the national evangelistic association, like the deceptions of the non-biblical words of "rapture" and "millineumism" {See the "Demonic Veil of the Rapture" for the effects on preachers and churches.}, and church revivals with the "purpose driven wants" of church members replacing Christ or Spirit driven motivations in churches.

**NOTE:** You and your church members are living in your imaginations, part of the turning away from truth process, if you can not see these as unsound doctrine, as "itching ears" teachings, and as the inevitable results of a people that have become intolerant of sound doctrine {"will not endure sound doctrine"}.

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*6-3: Have you carefully noted what comes before C {C for CONVERSION} is B {B for BE}. It will bless your soul and biblical insight, like a time of refreshing to get the full impact, even Bible theology, of the Be and C from several Scriptures, which really speak of how times of refreshing do come today, as in the NT times of Peter and the other apostles as recorded in the book of Acts} from the presence of the Lord, such as...*

1. Real conversion is more than adding members to a local church. It is a CHANGE in heart, mind, and behavior.
2. Conversion like baptism {salvation} is a life time process fro church members as much as sinners out there in the highways and hedges. This is why the real ministry of reaching, teaching, winning, and developing {a summary of the great commission}, is at best only 50% carried out when "winning" becomes the sole priority of preachers.
3. The "BE" speaks more of the work of God, the "times of refreshing from the presence of the Lord" if you please" than it does of any methods or message<sup>1</sup> of preachers.

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- a. The "BE" in our primary text of refreshing evangelism, Acts 3:19.

**"Repent therefore and BE converted..." (Acts 3:19)**

Obviously, the repent is what the converted sinner must do in order to receive salvation, and the "BE CONVERTED" is the work of God, a work that is still possible for a few<sup>1</sup> in this day of the Falling Away, and as a time of refreshing from the presence of the Lord, right up to the time of the withdrawal of the Holy Spirit<sup>2</sup> from earth.

- b. The "BE" in "Believe and BE baptized of Mark 16:16.

**"And He said unto them, 'Go into the world and preach the gospel to every creature He who BELIEVES AND IS BAPTIZED will be saved, but he who does not believe will be condemned.'" (Mark 16:15,16)**

Our homiletics and theology for preaching the real Jesus for salvation is a little mediocre {to say the least} if we fail to realize that "Baptism" is another word for salvation. No, well have you ever noticed that in the seven ONEs of major doctrines in Ephesians<sup>3</sup>, there is no mention of "salvation". What are we preaching if we are not preaching salvation as a major doctrine in the sound preaching of the real gospel and Jesus.

**NOTE: For more on the large subject in the Bible, please see the third volume of the LEARN CHRIST commentaries, entitled, "Believe and Be Baptized, the Life and 14 New Testament letters of the Apostle Paul. Or**

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1. The methods have already been mentioned of questionable motivations to make a show and add to the church rolls, the message is presently being developed which questions how any group of fundamentalists could preach a sound Jesus who are head over heels in a Falling Away that they don't admit; and also an eschatological theology and extra biblical teachings of Scofield Notes, which they use to judge salvation and the criterion on which they destroyed careers and reputations of Christian brothers whom they accused of "moderation" or "liberalism". Brother, if you want to know what real liberalism is, it is adding non-biblical thoughts and words to your theology and preaching like rapture and millineumism!
  1. We can not be so cynical as to think that zero churches today are victims of the Falling, especially since 2 out of the 7 churches of Asia Minor in Revelation 2 and 3 were not threatened by Christ with their candlestick removal from the kingdom of those written in heaven.
  2. You can hardly expect any real conversions after the withdrawal of the Holy Spirit from earth as Paul writes about in II Thessalonians; after all it is the Spirit, not overly aggressive for numbers preachers, that we rely on to "convict the world of sin, or righteous, and of judgement." (John 16:6)
  3. "There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, ONE BAPTISM, one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all." (Ephesians 4:4-6)

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participate in the free online Bible study of "The Life and Letters of the Apostle Paul".

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*6-4: You want some real literalism from the Bible and in your preaching, then notice the priority of the ONEs of Ephesians 4:4-6 is on God Himself, whereas today there is sort of a Christology that seldom speaks of God the Father.*

1. For years, as I preached, pastored, or interim pastored at over 16 churches, a reaction of the congregation--especially among those more bent toward Bible Baptist than real Southern Baptist--when I Corinthians 15:24-28 was read on the proper relationship between Christ and God the Father.
2. Granted as from the beginning of the life of Christ on earth, and now, Christ has been the only means of salvation as ordained by God the father.

**"There is no other name under heaven where men must be saved."**

Even here, notice that it is "under heaven" which means under God.

3. Try it from your pulpit with a simple and straightforward, without comment reading of I Corinthians 15:24-27, and see the reaction of your congregation. It will tell you volumes about your congregation and your preaching; about their real understanding of the Bible and of Jesus; about who is literal, moderate, or is a practitioner of itching ears homiletics and theology.

**"Then comes the end, when He {Christ} delivers the kingdom to God the Father, when He puts an end to all rule and all authority." (I Corinthians 15:24)**

**NOTE:** This latter "put to an end" is the negative and necessary before side of the restoration of all things. It puts to an end of Satan and all those of the world who rejected the salvation of God in hell and the lake of fire, and as a preliminary to the great blessings then allowed for those born of God and members of the eternal kingdom because their names have been previously written in the roll of heaven and the tablets of stone, enrolled in the assembly of the firstborn. There are going to be a lot of shocked authorities and powers when they find out that there are no eternal points

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for the rich and worldly, even national leaders. {See "National Leadership Drunk on Power and Privilege" as part of the online Bible Studies on "Jeremiah and Prophecy", and now in a paperback book on amazon.com under the twin title of NATIONAL DENS OF THIEVES, Jeremiah and Prophecy.}

"For He must reign till He has put all enemies under His feet." {I Corinthians 15:25}

Fundamentalists are to be applauded for an emphasis on how the Christ must reign over the kingdom of Christ and over the individual life here on earth until the restoration of all things, Obviously there is a big gap in their understanding of the WHEN of "all enemies under His feet". It is at the Seconding Coming at the end, the same time of the restoration of all things. Often, they don't want to preach a step forward as the reign is turned over to God the Father!

"The last enemy that will be destroyed is death." (I Corinthians 15:26)

NOTE: You see how this destroys all the enemies at the end with the restoration of whole and complete life as before originally in the Garden of Eden.

"For He has put all things under his feet." {In 15:27 and quoted from Psalm 6:8}

NOTE: God the Father has put all things under the feet of Christ. If you doubt that, then read it in the total context of Psalm 6, and utilizing one of the fundamental principles of hermeneutics, the science of biblical interpretation; that is, comparing scripture with scripture. However this is not required as with all quotes in the NT from the OT, then the Bible, Christ or an apostle give the proper in the same recommended and authorized method of I Peter 1:21. This proper and authorized interpretation, you will find net in 15:27b and 15:28.

"But when He says 'all things are put under Him' (Psalm 6:8), it is evident that He who puts all things under Him is excepted." (I Corinthians 15:27b)

NOTE: Both literal and clear fundamentalists, right! We are just reading what it says, and allowing it to speak for itself, the ultimate in real literalism!

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"Now when all things are made subject to Him {Christ at the end and the restoration of all things}, then the Son Himself will also be subject to Him {God the Father} who put all things under Him, that God may be all in all." (I Corinthians 15:28)

4. Of course if you make a habit of practicing "intellectual honesty", you will notice that this portion of Bible violates the majority concept of eschatological {last things} matters, so that the reaction of your congregation will be as much here as it is on Christology; that is they have not faced up to our text of Acts 3:19-21, and how God is holding Christ in heaven to the end, at the restoration of all things, obviously eliminating the false concept of so many fundamentalists enamored with the Scofield notes that there will be a rapture and a millineum long before the restoration of all things.

**NOTE:** Now be reasonable and honest on your Bible understanding and interpretation, if God is holding Jesus in heaven until the end of all things, how could He possibly allow for a rapture and millineum before the end? {Please see the two PDFs, "The End part 1" and "The End part 2" available for download on [www.biblecombibleman.com](http://www.biblecombibleman.com).}

5. Consider it, what does "the restoration of all things" mean. Simply {as one professor of Bible at Ouachita was in the habit of saying, "just let the Bible say what it is trying to say}, it is the restoration of all things that were lost at the Fall when man first sinned in the Garden of Eden.

a. Primarily through Christ and the salvation He provided in the shedding of His blood on the cross, a restoration of close fellowship with God. In the cool of the evening, God would come down from heaven to have close fellowship and communication with God.-

b. One of the great blessings of the restoration of the New Jerusalem on Mount Zion and on the restoration of the new earth, is the restoration of God dwelling on the new earth and in the New Jerusalem with man.

"Now I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away. Also there was no more sea. Then I, John, saw the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. And I heard a loud voice from heaven saying, 'Behold the tabernacle of Gods is with men, and He will

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dwell with them, and they shall be His people. God Himself will be with them and be their God." (Revelation 21:1-3)

c. Perhaps you would right now have another time of refreshing from the presence of the Lord as you real more about the final restoration of all things: restoration of real happiness among humanity instead of sorrows {"God will wipe away every tear from their eyes"}; restoration of life with the annihilation of death, and of sorrow and of crying, and of pain.

One way to summarize the restoration of all things, is with the concluding words of all these blessings from the restoration, "for the former things are passed away" (Revelation 21:4). All these things are part of the "one hope of His calling", please do not allow some over zealous fundamentalists off on a tangent robe you of all these hopes for the end of time in favor of the tall tales of Scofield that have been bought in the Scofield Reference Bible. When the source is so dubious, originating first with a Roman Catholic priest in Ireland and a divorced lawyer and pastor of the First Congregation church in Dallas, then the methods and message is also dubious.