

Fundamentalism in Dallas: A Presbyterian Perspective: Part III

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Seminaries of Local Importance with Fundamentalist Roots:

Dallas Theological Seminary

Redeemer Seminary

Reformed Westminster Theological Seminary

Grace Presbytery's Policy on Theological Education

"Preference is given to PC(USA) programs of study, led by PC(USA) teaching elders & schools with PC(USA) study programs, led by PC(USA) teaching elder(s).

Ordinarily, students or graduates of Reformed Theology Seminary, Redeemer Theological Seminary, or Dallas Theological Seminary will not be taken under care of Grace Presbytery or cleared to seek calls in Grace Presbytery. These seminaries teach and affirm doctrines inconsistent with the Constitution of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)."

Rob Allen, Director of Communications, Grace Presbytery

Defining Evangelicalism in Contemporary Times

From the Institute for the Study of American Evangelicals at Wheaton College:

<http://www.wheaton.edu/isae/defining-evangelicalism>

- I. Four specific hallmarks of evangelical religion include:
 - conversionism: the belief that lives need to be changed;
 - activism: the expression of the gospel in effort;
 - biblicism: a particular regard for the Bible; and
 - "crucicentrism:" a stress on the sacrifice of Christ on the cross.and some consider a fifth:
 - trans-denominationalism; the evangelicals' pragmatic penchant for cooperation in support of shared projects and evangelistic efforts.
- II. "Evangelical" denotes a style as much as a set of beliefs, and an attitude which insiders "know" and "feel" when they encounter it. As a result, groups as disparate as black Baptists and Dutch Reformed Churches, Mennonites and Pentecostals, Catholic charismatics and Southern Baptists can all come under the evangelical umbrella—demonstrating just how diverse the movement really is.
- III. Evangelicalism is a label for a largely Midwest-based coalition that arose during the Second World War. This group came into being as a reaction against the perceived anti-intellectual, separatist, belligerent nature of the fundamentalist movement in the 1920s and 1930s.

Importantly, its core personalities (like Carl F.H. Henry, Harold John Ockenga and Billy Graham), institutions (for instance, Moody Bible Institute , Wheaton College, and Fuller Theological Seminary), and organizations (such as the National Association of Evangelicals and Youth for Christ) have played a pivotal role in giving the wider movement a sense of cohesion that extends beyond these "card-carrying" evangelicals.

The Questions

Recently, historian Molly Worthen has suggested that another way to understand evangelicals that goes beyond a strict theological, denominational, or sociological definition is to see them as Protestants that have historically been "circling around three questions":

- 1.) How does one reconcile faith and reason?
- 2.) how does one become sure of salvation; and,
- 3.) how do Christians reconcile their personal faith with a society that is increasingly pluralistic and secular?

Fundamentalism and Evangelicalism in the Family

Fundamentalist churches:

The Orthodox Presbyterian Church

The Bible Presbyterian Church

The Evangelical Presbyterian Church

Ordination of women left to local congregation; property owned by congregation, charismatic

The Presbyterian Church in America

eg. Park Cities Presbyterian

No women; property owned locally, "the fundamentals,"

Evangelical Covenant Order of Presbyterians

eg. Highland Park Presbyterian

Women can be ordained; inerrancy

<http://eco-pres.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/05/ECO-Essential-Tenets-Confessions.pdf>

The New Capital of Evangelicalism

"Move over, Wheaton and Colorado Springs— Dallas, Texas, has more megachurches, megaseminaries, and mega-Christian activity than any other American city."

Christianity Today, May 21,2002

Specific resources

What Presbyterians believe about Dispensationalism: Donald K. McKim, *Introducing the Reformed Faith*, Westminster John Knox Press (2001), 246

What do Presbyterians believe about the end of the world? Eugene March, *Presbyterians Today*, January/February 1999

What do Presbyterians believe about eschatology? What can we hope for? Lee Barrett
June 1994 issue of the *Presbyterian Survey* (now *Presbyterians Today*)

For a great historical overview of Fundamentalism in Texas, see the article on the Texas Historical Society website.