

EXAMINING OUR MALAISE

The fragility of the Christian identity today

EBS — Session 3

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Syncretism

It means putting together different ideas that don't belong.

It means combining the message of Jesus with the values of the world around us.



Ben Sixmith

“The Sad Irony of Celebrity Pastors”

“There is mainstream culture, celebrities, fashion, music, modish political activism and a message of self-love, but with a twist of Christianity. Most people stick with mainstream culture because they can have all those things and premarital sex.”

“We can see the ‘...with a twist of Christianity’ trend elsewhere.

[Jerry] Fallwell was a representative of the right-wing, business-oriented evangelicals who offer capitalist self-enrichment and hubristic jingoism [arrogant nationalism] ...with a twist of Christianity.

Then there are progressive Christians...who promote the usual left-wing causes...with a twist of Christianity.”

“While different in beliefs, such people share patterns of thought:

...the former [right-wing evangelicals] believe secular individualists mysteriously share God’s wishes for what should be done with money.

...while the latter [Christian progressives] think that secular progressives mysteriously share God’s wishes for what should be done with bodies.

So, if Christianity is such an inessential add-on, why become a Christian?”

“I am not religious, so it is not my place to dictate to Christians what they should or should not believe. Still, if someone has a faith worth following, I feel that their beliefs should make me uncomfortable for not doing so.

If they share 90 percent of my lifestyle and values, then there is nothing especially inspiring about them.

Instead of making me want to become more like them, it looks very much as if they want to become more like me.”

—Ben Sixmith, “The Sad Irony of Celebrity Pastors”

Is it you...or is it Christ?

What makes our Christian identity so fragile?

I. Global factors

II. Personal factors

I

Global Factors

Political Gospels



Rising Secular Ideologies



Pluralistic Spirituality



Modern Identity Formation



II

Personal Factors

Babylonian Digital Captivity



Impaired Attention →

← Low Bible Input



Suffering

What is the REMEDY to all this fragility?

The resiliency that comes from...

...abiding in Jesus (John 15).

...building our house, our life, in the rock (Matthew 7).

...restoring our *imago dei* as image bearers (Genesis 1).

The RESULT?

A Christian identity that is resilient and countercultural.

Fragile
Christian

THE WILDERNESS

Resilient
Christian



Q&A

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