

WHAT IS A BIBLICAL FUNDAMENTALIST?

INTRODUCTION: Review dictionary definition and explanation – Militant radical, terrorist concept – current misunderstandings, *in contrast to* –

DEFINITION: A “*fundamentalist*” is one who believes everything that is **CLEARLY** taught and obeys everything that is **CLEARLY** commanded in the Scriptures.

IMPORTANT CLARIFICATIONS !

- ◆ Genuine, biblical fundamentalism is not primarily a relationship to men and movements, but rather a relationship to the Word of God! At issue is the absolute authority of the Scriptures over all that we believe and practice. Our relationship with men and movements is the resulting outcome of the kind of relationship we have with the Word of God.
- ◆ The fundamentalist does not limit what he considers to be fundamental to the *irreducible minimums for salvation*. To the fundamentalist, all that is clearly taught, whether for belief or conduct, is fundamental and therefore essential to the Christian faith.

Tragically, many limit their concept of the essentials of fundamental belief to the context of the irreducible minimums for salvation: the virgin birth, the deity of Christ, the blood atonement, Christ’s bodily resurrection etc. And tragically to many, obedience to the commands of Scripture is not only nonessential but also irrelevant.

Should not the essentials of fundamental belief and practice rather go beyond these irreducible minimums for salvation and be defined in the context of the whole body of truth revealed in the Scriptures, the Word of God? Is not everything that is clearly taught in the Word of God essential for belief? Is not every clear command of Scripture essential for obedience?

- ◆ A fundamentalist takes seriously the clear command to love his brethren and to promote biblical unity and harmony among those who believe and obey fundamental truths of Scripture.

How is it possible to exhibit due reverence for the Word of God and not insist on believing all that it clearly teaches and obeying all that it clearly commands? Fundamentalists must be fully devoted and submitted to the authority of the Word of God pertaining both to what they believe and what they practice. To the Fundamentalist, the only option in regard to clearly stated truths is to believe, propagate and defend them as truths given by God. To the Fundamentalist, the only option in regard to clearly stated commands is to obey and insist on obedience to them as commands given by God.

Authentic Fundamentalism indeed goes beyond merely believing the core of irreducible minimums for salvation. A truly biblical faith demands that the scope of belief and practice be governed by the whole of God's revelation to man. All that is clearly taught and all that is clearly commanded is essential to biblical Fundamentalism!

- ◆ A fundamentalist will separate on the basis of any kind of denial of that which is clearly taught. He will not compromise that which is fundamental. He will separate on the basis of two distinct categories:
 1. Heresy – on the basis of *belief*
 2. Willful disobedience – on the basis of *practice*
- ◆ A fundamentalist will separate from either unbelievers or believers who violate fundamental truths or commands of Scripture.
- ◆ A fundamentalist will **fellowship** with all who believe and obey what is clearly taught.
- ◆ A fundamentalist will **participate** with other fundamentalists to the extent that agreement on other non-fundamental beliefs renders it possible.
- ◆ A fundamentalist operates on the basis of **principle** (what is involved), not **personality** (who is involved).

WHAT IS A NEW EVANGELICAL?

EIGHT CHARACTERISTICS OF NEW EVANGELICAL THINKING (As given by Dr. J. B. Williams)

1. They emphasize love and unity to the exclusion of the truth of separation.
2. They will not separate from religious groups on the ground of doctrinal error.
3. They emphasize scholarship and intellectualism.
4. They praise liberal theologians for their scholarship.
5. They emphasize participation in politics and in social and moral issues.
6. They criticize the fundamentalist even more than the liberals do.
7. They remain strangely silent about apostasy and its evils.
8. They are success oriented -- the end justifies the means.