

chooses to use, there is no question that a cultural transition is facing our world and having great impact on the Lord's Church. Post modernism is such a vast and complex subject, it's hard to sum up what it really is in just a sentence or two, but if we attempted to do so, we would probably say that Post Modernism is a philosophy that *refuses* to accept that *any* opinion, belief or action is evil, incorrect or unacceptable. In the Post Modern era, one must tolerate *everything* — everything that is *except* those who *reject* this view of tolerance. You may say; "that doesn't sound so bad — we *should* be accepting of the ideas and opinions of others." While on one level, this is true, let's look at it *this* way before you accept that it's a good idea. Wouldn't you say that having sex with children is *wrong*, that committing murder is *wrong*, that stealing is *wrong*? If your response to those questions was yes, Post Modernists would claim that you have *based* those answers on *your biases* — which were *formed* from a Judeo-Christian standard of morals. That means you're not *capable of deciding* that those things listed above are *wrong* for those who *do not accept* Judeo-Christian standards. So let's carry this scenario out to its next level. Suppose those who are in power are Post Modern consumed — suppose *they* see nothing inherently evil with incest or rape or sex with children or killing "infidels" who believe differently than they do — all of a sudden, there are no laws against those behaviors. Remember, that without accepted *standards* (such as those found in the Bible) there *are no* moral absolutes — none at all. Should we not fear a society that no longer has any *standard* to distinguish right from wrong — good from evil — unless it involves one's *own* self interest? We *must* understand that America's *traditional moral absolutes* have been *formed* by an *objective* and *absolute* value system that *originated* from Judeo-Christian principles. Post Modernism is *removing* objective and absolute values and truth from our culture. So before we buy into the belief that it's a good idea to accept the concept that *no* opinion, belief or action is inherently evil, incorrect or unacceptable, be aware of exactly what it is that we are buying into.

The greatest enemy of the Post Modern era is Truth. One of the ways in which Professors at our Universities have been able to sow seeds that encourage students to embrace new beliefs and philosophies *uses* the methodology of Post Modernism, i.e. don't let your *biases* hinder discovery of new and perhaps different information than was taught to you by your parents. Bible literacy is at such a low point, *we* might *also* employ *their* request for open mindedness as a way to *re-introduce Absolute Truth* of the Bible as an option that could *now* be considered "new and exciting." Perhaps being in tune with the mindset of many people today is the tool we *need* to push forward.

Nest Issue — Conclusion — Post Modernism — A Slippery Slope — Part Eight

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DILIGENCE

"We want each of you to show this same diligence to the very end, in order to make your hope sure." — Hebrews 6:11

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Post Modernism — A Slippery Slope — Part Seven

In the previous issues of *Diligence*, we have discussed some ways in which the Lord's Church is being effected by the Post Modern philosophy. In the last issue we left off somewhat in the middle of considering how to go about sharing the Gospel in the Post Modern climate. If you would like to refresh your memory on the observations made in that issue, you may go the web address listed at the bottom of page four of this issue and do so. Let us continue now however with the subject of sharing the Gospel — or for that matter, discussing *any* religious topic with Post Modernists.

The **first** rule for us to follow is that we must have an *intense interest* in what Post Modernists have to say about *their* belief. This is important. If you recall in Part Two of this series — we stated that even if we so much as *question* the validity of the belief of a Post Modernist, it is *disparaging* that *individual* because he or she is *the source* of that belief since it was "constructed" in his or her own intellect. This means that if we show no interest in his or her *belief*, we show no interest in the *person*. If the first message we emit is one of disinterest, our soul saving efforts will probably be ill-fated from the beginning.

The **second** rule we must follow is to remain neutral and not make judgments (or express shock or surprise) about *whatever* is said concerning the person's belief. We must instead use what is said for the purpose of gathering an understanding of the views of the Post Modernist. Our *understanding* of his or her belief must come about from the information that is given to us by the *person* — or in Post Modern terms — by his or her *source of belief*. As our understanding of his or her belief grows, we become better equipped to *know* what makes that individual "tick." By virtue of our *willingness* to learn about the person and the belief he or she holds, it is quite likely that *we* may then be *invited* to share *our* point of view. If and when that occurs, we should do so — at that point of the conversation — with a *similar* level of detail as was used by the friend with whom we are speaking. The objective is to briefly explain our belief *and* the reason for the trust we place in it.

Working through the process of attempting to reach the Post Modernist is a bit similar to working in a laboratory and *experimenting* with various thoughts and ideas. The healthy *exchange* of beliefs is likely to — from the Post Modernists view — make the Christian an interesting "lab partner." The *Christian* in that situation however, can be sure that the Post Modernist is outnumbered.

Christians are not alone when making an effort to carry out the Great Commission. They have the edge if they don't get in *God's* way.

So the **third** rule Christians need to follow when discussing a religious topic with Post Modernists is to include fervent prayer as a part of the effort — prayer that we will not be drawn in a direction, or say things that might alienate the friend further from God — and prayer that we will be good stewards of the knowledge of our Lord and Savior.

The over-riding key as to why all of this “adjusting” is *necessary* in our attempts to share the Gospel is that the Bible is no longer seen as The Word of God by many in today's culture. In times past, it could easily be referenced very early in such conversations and was generally received with an “I didn't *know* that” response. Therefore, *our* job was one of “imparting” information from the Scriptures that could lead to conversion. That is no longer the case. *Today* — it may — in some instances be necessary to wait and introduce the Scriptures into the conversation at the time the other individual *shows* some degree of receptivity to understanding and learning more about *our* beliefs. Remember — the Post Modernist believes that his or her belief is *equally* as valid as is the Christians. That means that the Post Modernist — by his or her *own* standard — *must* allow the Christian the *right* to his or her paradigm or be a bigot — by his or her *own* definition. And *this* Post Modern paradigm is an *important* tool available for Christians to use — and use it wisely — we *should!*

If we are able to actually reach the point where the friend at least *considers* the possibility that the Bible *may* be “God-Inspired” — perhaps by mentioning fulfilled Old Testament prophecies concerning a Messiah — we have made tremendous progress. That very thin foundation can then be built on as we attempt to explain the reasons why we choose to place faith in the Bible *as* God's own Word. Keep in mind however, that this is a *huge* step for our friend to make such an acknowledgement so it will most likely take a *great* deal of time and effort on our part. A goal we need to reach with a Post Modernist is to get him or her to consider (and eventually admit) that the *Bible* is *more credible* than *all* of the *other* “religious works” he or she may currently be reading. The Bible *is not* a “religious work among *other* religious works.” The Bible is *God's* work. It is the *only* religious work that is *from* God. This seems like a small obvious step for the Christian but is one of monumental significance for the Post Modernist.

There's no question that evangelism in a Post Modern world is difficult at best. That doesn't however relieve Christians from the command to “go and teach.” The fact that the Lord's Church itself is undergoing much turmoil *because* of Post Modernism serves to *further* complicate our efforts to share the Gospel with others. In this series of articles, we have looked at *several* areas that are being effected by this new philosophy that is sweeping our world. Unfortunately, the Church has certainly not been immune to its consequences. There are debates,

disputes and deep divisions *in the Church* between those who *have* accepted the Post Modern philosophy and those who have not. We should not expect those problems to go away anytime soon. They will not. They do however make it uncomfortable to wholeheartedly launch into evangelistic efforts. The gnawing question of “how do I explain these problems to a new Christian?” repeatedly rears its ugly head and too often, evangelistic enthusiasm dies a quiet death. As Christians, we must have faith that we don't have to have all of the “what if” answers before we follow His command to “go and teach.” We can leave that up to God to help us deal with those questions *after* we have reached a soul.

BIBLE CLASSES — BIBLE STUDY — The effect of Post Modernism on this area of the Church is probably obvious at this point of our study. Since the Bible is no longer considered to be the Word of God that contains Absolute Truth for us to comprehend *through study* of its contents, why would anyone want to spend time attending a class dedicated to the study of a “religious work” that just happens to be the *teacher's* choice for his or her “path to God?” Since Post Moderns “construct” their own belief from a *variety* of sources, there is no reason to “waste” precious time listening to a teacher discuss that particular “religious work” from a position of his or her *own* biases. Remember in Part Four of this series we noted that the repercussion of this philosophy is that *Christians* become convinced that the Scriptures are nothing more than a product of the *church* rather than a product of the Holy Spirit. This means that *whatever* is taught in any given class is nothing more than a viewpoint from a teacher who “*blindly accepted* the rationalistic views of another era.” [Phil Sanders in *Adrift* - pg 32]

This view of Bible Study has also taken a serious toll on the level of respect young Christians have for the Bible knowledge held by those who are older than themselves. Young Post Modernists see no value whatsoever in knowledge held by their elders since it was *all* “constructed” from *biases* to which those elders were oblivious. The full extension of this entire thought pattern regarding the Bible then is that Post Modern Christians actually believe that those who have engaged in thorough and in depth Bible study have made the *Bible* their “object of worship” rather than God. If Truth is relative anyway — why study?

Numerous other areas of the Church — things such as the role of women, type of leadership, sermon topics, etc. are being effected by Post Modernism but we think the few we have discussed are enough to help us recognize the Post Modern influence when we see it. We believe that just *understanding* this philosophy will help us comprehend *why* some of these difficulties are surfacing in the Body of Christ. A better understanding then, might give us a better grasp of how to deal with them.

Throughout this series, *we* have mostly referred to Post Modernism as a “philosophy.” In reality however, there are probably as many definitions of Post Modernism as there are people who use the term. Some claim it is more likely a set of hermeneutical observations rather than a philosophy. Whatever definition one