

# Christian Fundamentalism - 4

by Anton Bosch

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*The sermon emphasizes the importance of upholding biblical principles, thinking in opposites, and conforming to Christ in a world that promotes holistic thinking and cultural diversity.*

**Scripture:** 1 Thessalonians 5:26

**Topics:** "Biblical Principles", "Christian Apologetics"

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## Description

Professor Malan, continuing the series on Christian Fundamentalism, emphasizes the importance of upholding biblical principles in a changing world, where cultural expressions may vary but the core values remain constant. He highlights the need for Christians to think in opposites, distinguishing between light and darkness, good and evil, as taught in the Bible, amidst a world moving towards unity and convergence. The sermon also stresses the defensive stance Christians must take against attacks on their faith and the rejection of positive thinking that may compromise biblical truths. Furthermore, conformity to Christ's life, upholding a biblical view on gender roles, and respecting cultural diversity are key aspects discussed in the message.

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## Transcript

We continue the series by Professor Malan on Christian Fundamentalism.

Biblical principles and culturally determined practices. Biblical principles for human behaviour never change, but culturally determined expressions of these principles may vary from culture to culture and from time to time. In the first century, women had to cover their heads when worshipping the Lord, as an indication that they subject themselves to the authority of their husbands. Today, the wearing of a hat is not in the least regarded as a symbol of accepting authority; therefore, this principle should be enforced in other ways. Men have to greet one another heartily. During the first century, they did this by kissing one another (1 Cor. 16:20; 1 Thess. 5:26). Today, there are other ways of greeting one another heartily! Clothing has also changed. The principle is that we should be dressed modestly. In the first century, men did not wear jackets and suits but long garments. We have completely different ways of dressing properly. But we should always remain committed to honour biblical principles in our own culture.

Thinking in opposites. The Bible teaches us to think in opposites. Fundamental Christians should always be able to distinguish between light and darkness, righteousness and sin, beautiful and ugly, good and evil, truth and lies. To be able to do so they need spiritual and moral guidelines which can be applied to every situation to draw a line between acceptable and non-acceptable phenomena or ideas, as taught by

the Bible. In the emerging new world order, and also in the New Age Movement, there is a paradigm shift towards holistic thinking, which leads to convergence and the unifying of all things. Boundaries are no longer drawn as they disturb the mutual unity of all things. The emphasis is now on the building of bridges, reconciliation and unity. All religions, for instance, should join hands in terms of the holistic idea that we all worship the same God. In the same way, all cultures and ideologies should converge in order to replace the existing diversity by an all-encompassing unity. This way of thinking is diametrically opposed to biblical thinking which is based upon clearly defined concepts. God divided light from darkness and He expects of us to understand the defining characteristics of different categories of things so as not to confuse or mix them (cf. 2 Cor. 6:14-18).

A defensive (apologetic) disposition. The message and demands of the Bible are in opposition to a depraved and sinful world. For this reason, we as Christians should shine as lights in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation (Phil. 2:15) while fighting the good fight of faith (1 Tim. 6:12). We are the salt of a corrupt earth and the light of a dark world (Matt. 5:13-16). It is obvious that we should defend the Lord, His Word, our faith and a Christian lifestyle against attacks from a hostile world. False teachers who have deviated from the truth of the Word, also incessantly question and discredit the Bible and its doctrines. Paul says, "Preach the word! Be ready in season and out of season. Convince, rebuke, exhort, with all long-suffering and teaching. For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine" (2 Tim. 4:2-3). We are appointed to the defence of the gospel (Phil. 1:17). In the true sense of the word, we should be Protestants who keep on protesting against all forms of doctrinal deception and corrupt practices.

Rejection of positive thinking. The antithetic way of thinking which is entertained by fundamental Christians commits them to give full recognition to the existence of negative, sinful thoughts and works. We should be discerning Christians who are able to identify and resist evil things, particularly religious deception. A sinner should be called a sinner, despite the fact that it is a negative label. Likewise, God's judgements upon sinners should be proclaimed together with the solution to this problem. However, liberal churches, as well as the ecumenical movement, regard fundamental Christians as a big threat to their programme of promoting unity with Roman Catholics and the non-Christian religions, and present us in a negative way as intolerant and intent on sowing seeds of conflict and discord. In so doing, we pose a threat to their efforts of becoming conformed to the world. From our position, we reject their humanistic-driven positive thinking because they are deceived and unable to discern between good and evil.

Conformity to Christ. It should be our highest aim to be conformed to the life of the Lord Jesus: "He who says he abides in Him ought himself also to walk just as He walked" (1 John 2:6). The Lord Jesus did not live for Himself but for others: "Whoever desires to be first among you, let him be your slave - just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life as a ransom for many" (Matt. 20:27-28). We should be servants of the Lord Jesus who proclaim the message of His saving grace to all people. We should do things which have value for eternity, and not be busy accumulating perishable, earthly treasures. We should also be prepared to suffer if necessary, after the example of Christ (1 Pet. 2:21). We should not be followers of other people, including the church fathers, unless they, themselves were dedicated followers of Christ, like Paul (1 Cor. 11:1).

Upholding a biblical view on gender. God has ordered society and the church with different roles for men and women (not superior and inferior, but different). This applies to the home, the church and society at large. According to the Scriptures same-sex unions are an abomination and homosexuals are thus

prohibited from holding office in the church."

Cultural diversity. The Lord has determined boundaries between nations and He expects us to honour them (Acts 17:26). That is a continuation of the confusion of tongues which occurred during the building of the Tower of Babel (Gen. 11:5-8). It was wrong in the eyes of the Lord that the Babylonians were building a world state with only one official language, so He gave every group their own language. They consequently dispersed and each settled in their own territory under their own government. This was the beginning of different cultural groups among the nations. The recognition of cultural diversity is the only basis for healthy relations among nations. In our commission to evangelise the world we are sent to every tribe and tongue and people so that each group should (preferably) be evangelised in their own language. In the end-time, under the instigation of Satan, the Antichrist and the false prophet, a world empire will be established with only one government, one religion and one economic system (Rev. 13:1-18). The emerging new world order expressed itself in favour of a system of global control. That will be a serious infringement of God's order of independent and self-determining nations, and for that reason the Lord Jesus will, at His second coming, destroy the evil lifestyle, holistic social order and satanic empire of the Antichrist.

(To be continued)

Prof. Johan Malan, South Africa (February 2008)

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