

Call to Obedience #285
 PO Box 299 Kokomo, IN 46903 USA
www.schultze.org

The New Evangelism!
Contemporary... Sleek... Appealing... and ABOMINABLE!

By Pastor Reimar Schultze

“So shall they fear the name of the LORD from the west, and his glory from the rising of the sun. When the enemy shall come in like a flood, the Spirit of the LORD shall lift up a standard against him” —Is. 59:19

“For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine... And they shall turn away their ears from the truth...” —2 Timothy 4:3–4

Dr. A. W. Tozer remarked on this text about 50 years ago, “Any Evangelism which by appeal to common interests and chatter about current events seeks to establish a common ground where the sinner can feel at home is as false as the altars of Baal ever were.”

Too many men are willing to make some compromise with Baal to gain an advantage over their fellows. The desire to be “successful” is very strong in any man’s heart born on this side of eternity. It is bound up within a man’s nature to want to compete, to conquer, to rise to the top. Any man who does not have a sense of success feels unfulfilled, restless, discouraged and depressed.

It is this “let’s do something great” attitude that brought man to the tower of Babel. Because this attitude is a noble attitude perverted by sin, man seeks something great for himself rather than for God. It is this sense that is at the root of all competitive sports. It is this that drives the business machine. Men want to be first, if not in this or that, then in something else—but surely somewhere. If not first on the moon, then perhaps first at a game of chess with a family member, or at being the best driver in the neighborhood, or at being the kindest man in church. Only those who struggle to the top are assured of a promising posterity. It is this spirit for success in competition coming from perverted human nature that drives many a preacher to do whatever it takes to fill up his sanctuary and to expand it.

Jesus said, “My kingdom is not of this world” (John 18:36). What is given to us naturally, being corrupted by sin, is in direct opposition to that which is given to us supernaturally. This is what Paul means when he says, “For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other...” (Gal. 5:17). Jesus addressed this conflict even more drastically when he said, “For whosoever will save his life shall lose it: and whosoever will lose his life for my sake shall find it” (Matt. 16:25). The natural life with all its instinct to advance itself must be crucified and be replaced by the spiritual life God has in store for us or we shall never be his disciples.

Yet, American Christianity is mistaking natural attributes as a blessing or as a gift of God. It is inconceivable to the American “Christian” that a man who is six foot six

inches in height should not be a basketball player or that a man with the chest like a barn door should not play football or that a man with iron lungs should not be a soccer player (for all the rest of us Christians to watch on Sunday afternoon television). We assume that this is all given by God for us to enjoy, not realizing that it is merely our competitive carnal nature trying to get on top of others and preventing us from keeping the Sabbath Day holy.

If we can't win the world with the old standards, with the old gospel, then let's turn that old gospel into a new gospel. If people will not endure sound doctrine, then let us give them something less than that to save ourselves from the embarrassment of a Noah who, by refusing to become contemporary in his age, won no one to God in about one hundred and twenty years of preaching. We just cannot endure such humiliation. We just cannot have people turn away from us when we preach sound doctrine. We cannot afford to look like losers, and so we run after them with a Christianity that offers them what they want rather than what God wants:

If they want ten minute sermons, we give them ten minute sermons. If they want sermons that don't convict, we avoid stirring them where they need to be stirred. If they want professional singers dressed in Hollywood attire, we give them professional singers—saved, sanctified, or not! If they want church or prayer meetings canceled for the sake of a ball game, we do so. If they want rock music mixed with Christian lyrics, we do the mixing for them. When people want drama and entertainment on the platform, we give it to them. If they want divorce and remarriage justified, we bless them in the name of Jesus (there are now as many divorces in church-going families as in non-church-going families in the United States). The bottom line is, we do not want to lose them—at any cost!

My friend, let's be aware of this compromising new evangelism where we raise children who know all the statistics of dozens of ball players but who cannot name a simple hero of the Christian faith, a trailblazer like Augustine, Savorola, Luther, Wesley, William Carey, Hudson Taylor, Jonathan Goforth, or Mary Slessor. Their views and their talk is about ball games and the latest accomplishments of their favorite team, and not about the great saints of old who were ablaze with the glory of the Lord, changing their communities and even their nations. Would it not be wonderful if our boys, instead of following ball games on Sunday afternoons, would get lost in the books of high spiritual adventures of the mighty warriors of the Lord throughout history?

When women want to come to church dressed to attract men, carrying their Bibles, we let them do so. When men come to worship the holy God, and they wear the same garments they did to the last ball game, we let them do so. In essence, it does not matter what you look like on the outside, it is what you are inside that matters.

That sounds good at first, but the fact is that what you are on the inside will show on the outside. Jesus did not say, by their roots you shall know them, but by their fruits. The roots reflect the inside, the inner life; but the fruit is the outside, the visible. The words are: if the roots are holy, so will be the fruits. Remember that.

Paul said, "For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears, And they shall turn away their ears from the truth..." I believe that the time Paul is referring to is

now. And that being so, it is not time to compromise with the world, to mix Baalism with Christ, to keep them at any cost. Rather, it's time for us to hold steady, to go deeper, to pray more earnestly, to take the remnant and let them be in white heat for their love of Jesus. Then the day will come when the fire will fall and sinners will be converted in their automobiles, in the taverns, in the college classrooms, in the factories without even a sermon or an altar call being given, as it was in the case of the Welsh revival.

In the Welsh revival, seventeen men refused Baalism in Christianity, they refused to lower the standard, they refused to go after people with chicken feed; and on that memorable night in 1904, the fire came. Within a month, those seventeen men who prayed and held steady produced a fruit of 37,000 who repented to receive Christ. And within five months, 100,000 had been swept into the kingdom of God. Then even Welsh newspapers began to include columns of the names of those born of God. Again, this revival did not come by compromise, by making the lukewarm or sinner feel comfortable and "at home" in the church. This revival came by holding steady until the Pentecostal flames had cleansed every sin, spot, and blemish out of every heart of the committed remnant of God.

Or consider the mighty work of God in the Hebrides Islands revival from 1948 to 1952. It was equally powerful. Here, seven men in a barn and two elderly sisters in their home decided to hold on and see the salvation of the Lord. Listen to this little excerpt of what it was like in those days:

"The little band of prayer warriors made their way to the farmhouse to plead the promises of God. Just after midnight Duncan Campbell asked John, the local blacksmith, to pray. John rose to his feet with his cap in hand and prayed a prayer that will never be forgotten by those who were present.

"In the middle of his prayer, he stopped and raised his right hand to heaven and continued, 'Oh God, you made a promise to pour water on the dry ground, and Lord, it's not happening.' He paused again and then continued, 'Lord, I don't know how the others here stand in your Presence; I don't know how these ministers stand, but Lord, if I know anything about my own heart, I stand before you as an empty vessel, thirsting for thee and for a manifestation of Thy power.' He halted again, and after a moment of tense silence cried, 'Oh, God, your honor is at stake; and I now challenge you to fulfill your covenant engagement and do what you promised to do.'

"Here is a man praying the prayer of faith that heaven must answer. There are those in Arnol today who will verify the fact that while the brother prayed, the dishes on the dresser rattled as God turned loose His mighty power. Then wave after wave of divine power swept throughout the room. Simultaneously, the Spirit of God swept through the village. People could not sleep and houses were lit all night. People walked the streets in great conviction; others knelt by their bedsides crying for pardon." (Bright and Shining Revival, by Kathie Walters; Good News Fellowship Ministries, Macon, Georgia, pp. 11–12)

The word is not "compromise"— not to blend in with the values, the mores, and the customs that people are comfortable with. The word is "stay put, dig in, get hotter, close

the ranks” and pray and obey and live as if it is a matter of life and death for the church of Jesus Christ and a sinful world.

Wait and see the salvation of the Lord. But don't pollute yourself to get success. Success in ministry is not gathering crowds, it is not making ourselves look good, it is not competing, but it is dying out to do the will of God second by second. We will never get to great revivals by compromise, by giving people what they want in our churches, by making them comfortable in our sanctuary. The key is no compromise!

This drastic attitude was reflected most clearly by our Lord than when he turned to a multitude and said, “If any man come to me, and hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple. And whosoever doth not bear his cross, and come after me, cannot be my disciple” (Luke 14:26–27). Jesus never compromised the standards for discipleship, and he never stooped to do any of his work through anyone who refused such strict standards. Oh, my friend, let us not build lukewarm churches, knowing that Jesus will spit every one of those lukewarm ones out of his mouth (Rev. 3:16).

Man, by his perverted nature, is seeking success, a piece of glory, and as long as any of this element is alive in any preacher, he is the most dangerous man in town, and he has no business being in the pulpit. Modern evangelism is a compromising, Baalish evangelism that is self-seeking, flesh-glorifying, masquerading in a Hollywood spirit, void of the supernatural power. It holds no promise for the “fire” to fall again. The spiritual pastor has and is continuing to crucify the flesh and to seek no glory for his own but only that of the Triune God for him and for his people. He does not give the church what she wants but what God requires of her.

So, let me close with some more words of Tozer on this subject: “Every effort to smooth out the road for men and to take away the guilt and the embarrassment is worse than wasted: it is evil and dangerous to the souls of men.” (Renewed Day by Day by A. W. Tozer, February 7, Christian Publications, Inc.)

Please pray for me!

www.schultze.org
Call to Obedience #285
PO Box 299 Kokomo, IN 46903 USA
www.schultze.org