Review Of *The Second Incarnation*

Intro: While there are some good points that Shelly and Harris make in *The Second Incarnation*, the basic premises to which they hold offsets any good points they make in the book.

I. **Who They Know.**

   A. **Faithful older preachers spoke of liberal preachers:**
      1. Said they knew Bultmann, Barth, Bonhoeffer (quoted several times by Shelley and Harris), Harnack, Schleiermacher, Tillich (quoted a couple of times by them), et al., more than they knew Paul, Peter, James, et al.
      2. Shelly and Harris only quoted one member of the Lord's church to my knowledge (Alexander Campbell and that was simply a story Campbell had written to show that Christian's lives must be transformed prior to trying to teach those who are not Christians).

   B. **Shelly and Harris have drunk in the wine of denominationalism instead of Truth.**
      1. Denominational thinking and leanings permeate their writings.
      3. Examples:
         a. In discussing sound hermeneutics
            (1) They recommend and quote from the book by Gordon D. Fee and Douglas Stuart (27)
            (2) They ignore the book by D. R. Dungan, *Hermeneutics*.
         b. In discussing the need to have “understanding of the church’s identity as the spiritual body of Christ” (60).
            (1) They quote the Baptist, E. Glenn Hinson.
            (2) They never mention one who is a member of the Lord’s church.
      4. I believe this shows a distain on the part of Shelly and Harris for the Lord’s church and the men and history of those who brought us out of denominationalism and their part to return us to the shackles of denominationalism.

II. **Second Incarnation?**

   A. **Incarnation means:**
      1. Random House dictionary: “a living being embodying a deity or spirit.... the Incarnation, *Theology*, the doctrine that the second person of the *trinity* assumed human form in the person of *Jesus* Christ and is completely both *god* and man.”
      2. This event, the second person of the Godhead assuming human form in the person of Jesus of Nazareth, happened one time and only once.
      3. Since the Bible only records the Incarnation of our Lord, we must let them tell us what they have in mind.

   B. **What they mean:**
      1. They discuss that God has revealed Himself through nature, the Word, and through Christ.
2. They then write, “But, while God’s revelation of himself reached its zenith in the Incarnate Word, it continues through the church. As the spiritual body of Christ visible in local congregations, the church perpetuates, with the aid of the Holy Spirit, the process of incarnation. Jesus remains incarnate in his church” (4).

3. In the chapter trying to identify the church, they write, “that the church’s identity is inseparable from Jesus Christ himself and that the church must discover and affirm its identity in him.... focus believers on the person and work of Christ as the starting point for discovering what the church is supposed to be” (43).
   a. In discussing this they ask, “In what sense, however, does the *ekklesia* ‘represent’ God in the world?” (46).
   b. Their idea with this question is expressed later when they write, “Just as the invisible God made himself visible and tangible in Jesus Christ, so the now-invisible Christ is making himself visible and tangible to the world through his church” (48).

4. After discussing the church as the body of Christ, they state: “If there is legitimacy to Paul’s metaphor and the theological rationale behind it, there is at least some sense in which we may call Christ’s church a *second incarnation*” (48).
   a. What they are getting at is seen when they state, “What he *would* do in our world, we *must* do in order to be faithful as his body” (52).
   b. Notice the connection they make: “When that church is healthy and engaged in its proper work, it becomes Christ’s very presence in the world” (54).

C. **They are stating that the church is to carry on the life of Christ in the world.**
   1. “We are called to belong to the church that carries on the life of Christ” (54).
   2. Notice who they view this aspect of the church and the disrespect they should for the church: “What Luke provided us are occasional glimpses of the church’s attempt to carry on what Jesus started. Some of the episodes are glorious and exciting, worthy of the Christ in whose name they were done. Many others, however, are depressing and second-rate, altogether unworthy of Christ” (55-6).
      a. They did not tell us those things that are “depressing and second-rate, altogether unworthy of Christ.”
      b. Sin would be classified as such, but we would have liked to know what they considered falling into this category.
   3. Their summary:
      a. They tell us that Jesus alone is the paradigm for the church.
      b. Then they inform us that the church is “to stand in for Jesus Christ in the world” (240).
      c. They continue: “Just as Hollywood uses stand-ins and ‘body doubles’ for its stars, so the church is attempting to represent Christ within its environment. As God was incarnate a first time in him, so he seeks to be incarnate perpetually through the church that dares to wear his name” (240).

D. **Yet, they emasculate the ability of the church to represent Christ in the world by rejecting the Biblical pattern.**
III. NO BIBLICAL PATTERN

A. They continually emphasize this.
   1. “We reject a rigid ‘pattern theology’” (31).
   2. “Scripture... certainly does not present an absolute blueprint for building a church” (36).
   3. However, they cannot avoid some form of “pattern theology.”
      a. “There are surely some patterns and steps and structures to be discerned in Scripture. But none of these—not all of them taken together—constitutes the church” (66).
         (1) No one every argued that the church is the pattern.
         (2) However we must follow the pattern to be the church.
      b. “In the ecclesiology to be presented in this volume, there is a form of ‘patternism’ present” (34).
   4. It is hypocritical of the authors to “reject a rigid ‘pattern theology’” and at the same time present a form of patternism.
   5. They do not mind having a pattern; they simply want a pattern that changes.
   6. If there is a Biblical Pattern, their whole system falls.

B. They cannot escape some form of pattern.

C. In the chapter: “Worship: The Church Relates To God”
   1. “Against the danger of being misunderstood by calling Isaiah 6 a ‘paradigm for God-directed worship,’ we do not mean to imply that it is a rigid pattern” (128).
      a. They have some excellent material regarding our worship is to be God oriented and the respect we must have for God.
      b. They destroy everything by continuing to deny that worship to God, “is a rigid pattern.”
   2. They call Isaiah 6 a “paradigm for God-directed worship,” but they do not want it to be considered a rigid pattern.
   3. They want their “paradigm” (pattern) to be able to change with the times and with the individual.

D. They want a “paradigm” that is continually changing.
   1. It is their desire in this “paradigm” to allow their view of grace to override any rules.
   2. “We have proposed a shift from institution to person, pattern to principle, deed to motivation. It is an affirmation of grace over our tendency to find and bind rules. It is an affirmation of freedom, under Christ’s headship, over bondage to an imagined prototype or blueprint for the church” (65).
      a. In their desire for freedom from any prototype or blueprint, they end up with no rules.
      b. A person, according to this “paradigm” can do anything he might so desire and call it worship and their view of grace will take care of it.

E. God
   1. He rejected Cain’s offering; Gen. 4:3, 5 “And in process of time it came to pass, that Cain brought of the fruit of the ground an offering unto the LORD... 5But unto Cain and to his offering he had not respect. And Cain was very wroth, and his countenance fell.”
   2. He put Nadab and Abihu to death:
      a. He had a “tendency to find and bind rules” and did not make an “affirmation of grace” for them.
b. Lev. 10:1-2 “And Nadab and Abihu, the sons of Aaron, took either of them his censer, and put fire therein, and put incense thereon, and offered strange fire before the LORD, which he commanded them not. And there went out fire from the LORD, and devoured them, and they died before the LORD.”

3. To receive an “affirmation of grace,” from God, he must be obedient to God and His Word.
   a. Noah:
      (1) God determined to destroy man; Gen. 6:5 “And GOD saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually.”
      (2) Noah received “affirmation of grace.”
      (3) Gen. 6:8 “But Noah found grace in the eyes of the LORD.”
      (4) Why did Noah find grace in God’s eyes?
         (a) The rest of mankind was engaged in sin.
         (b) Noah lived a life of obedience; Gen. 6:22 “Thus did Noah; according to all that God commanded him, so did he.”
         (c) Noah conformed to a “rigid pattern.”
   b. Joshua:
      (1) God gave Jericho to Israel.
      (2) Jos. 6:2 “And the LORD said unto Joshua, See, I have given into thine hand Jericho, and the king thereof, and the mighty men of valour.”
      (3) They received God’s grace when they obediently marched around the city for 7 days.

F. Is there a “rigid pattern” or not?
1. If there is any pattern, it is a “rigid pattern.”
2. The authors actually argue for no pattern at all.
   a. As long as one is showing or giving praise to God in whatever form, it is acceptable to God.
   b. Their statement that when one comes to an awareness of God that He is “greater than anything the human understanding can approach, and too magnificent to explain, he bows low before that God and whispers, ‘Holy!’ Or he dances before him and shouts, ‘Holy!’ Or he weeps before him and cries, ‘Holy!’ Or he is too struck with awe to say anything at all” (118-9).
3. There is a pattern and it is rigid in nature:
   a. Do not eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil
      (1) Gen. 2:17 “But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die.”
      (2) They ate; they died.
   b. God refused to accept Cain’s offering:
      (1) Gen. 4
      (2) Gen. 4:7 “If thou doest well, shalt thou not be accepted? and if thou doest not well, sin lieth at the door. And unto thee shall be his desire, and thou shalt rule over him.”
      (3) If Cain had followed the pattern, his offering would have been accepted.
   c. Noah and the building of the ark:
      (1) God gave a detailed and rigid pattern; Gen. 6:13-21
(2) Noah followed it to the saving of his family:
   (a) Gen. 6:22 “Thus did Noah; according to all that God commanded him, so did he.”
   (b) Gen. 7:5 “And Noah did according unto all that the LORD commanded him.”

d. Numerous “according to” statements in the Old Testament (see: Exo. 12:35, 50; 17:1; 39:42; Num. 9:5, 12, 20; Deu. 1:3; Jos. 1:8; 4:10 et al.).

e. Since God had a strict or rigid pattern under both dispensations covered in the Old Testament, why would anyone think He would not have one for man today?

4. Heb. 8:5 “Who serve unto the example and shadow of heavenly things, as Moses was admonished of God when he was about to make the tabernacle: for, See, saith he, that thou make all things according to the pattern shewed to thee in the mount.”
   a. Moses had to make sure he made things according to the pattern under an inferior system, then under the greater system things would have to be made according to the pattern.
   b. Winford Claiborne wrote, “Is the author of Hebrews teaching that God has given patterns for the church of our Lord? If he has not, what is the point the divinely inspired author of Hebrews wants us to understand?”

5. Paul’s statements:
   a. Tit. 2:7-8 “In all things shewing thyself a pattern of good works: in doctrine shewing uncorruptness, gravity, sincerity. Sound speech, that cannot be condemned; that he that is of the contrary part may be ashamed, having no evil thing to say of you.”
   b. 2 Tim. 1:13 “Hold fast the form of sound words, which thou hast heard of me, in faith and love which is in Christ Jesus.”
      (1) Form means pattern or blueprint.
      (2) There is a pattern of words we are to cling to.
      (3) It is the sound words found in the New Testament to which each Christian is to cling.

6. We are to follow this rigid pattern and not change or alter it in the slightest.
   a. Deu. 4:2 “Ye shall not add unto the word which I command you, neither shall ye diminish ought from it, that ye may keep the commandments of the LORD your God which I command you.”
   b. Pro. 30:6 “Add thou not unto his words, lest he reprove thee, and thou be found a liar.”
   c. Mat. 15:3, 9 “But he answered and said unto them, Why do ye also transgress the commandment of God by your tradition?... But in vain they do worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men.”
   d. Gal. 1:6-9 “I marvel that ye are so soon removed from him that called you into the grace of Christ unto another gospel: Which is not another; but there be some that trouble you, and would pervert the gospel of Christ. But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed. As we said before, so say I now again, If any man preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed.”
   e. 2 John 9-11 “Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God. He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son.”
   f. Rev. 22:18-19 “For I testify unto every man that heareth the words of the prophecy of this book, If any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book: And if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book.”
IV. **ONGOING CHANGE**

A. **They argue for ongoing change:**

1. They write, “Is there either the need or theological warrant for ongoing change in the church? Our answer is affirmative to both elements of this question” (xv).

2. In explaining why we need ecclesiology (“the study of the doctrine of the church” xi), they write of the need to be “constantly rethinking what it means to be a church” because “we are enmeshed in an ever-changing world. Doctrine works between the two poles of faithfulness to Scripture and relevance to the present age. The task of being the church for our age must be rethought continually” (xii, emphasis in original).

3. They argue that since the world changes, the church must change.

4. They agree God and the Bible are unchangeable.

5. They say the church does not contain that unchangeable nature.

   a. They write, “Unlike our perfect God or his inscripturated Word, the church is not immutable. It has no once-for-all complexion” (7, emphasis in original).

   b. After informing us the church “In all its instantiations, the church has been (and is) flawed,” they go on to add, “It is not a fixed, static institution. It has no once-for-all form” (6).

   c. They believe “the church is a process” (6).

   d. Thus the church has always been and is flawed.

   e. Being flawed, they do not believe there is any “historical prototype” for man to look back on.

   f. They write, “For the corporate body of Christ, there is no historical prototype of the church for duplication.... In all its instantiations, the church has been (and is) flawed. It is not a fixed, static institution. It has no once-for-all form” (6).

B. **There is no church we can pattern ourselves after.**

1. They write, “But there is no perfect church to study as a model for imitation. Jerusalem was racially narrow and biased. Colosse was tainted with doctrinal heresy. Corinth was beset with immoral behavior. What we must realize is that there is no finality for the church in any of its corporate manifestations” (63).

2. They fail to realize there is a pattern for each of those to follow or else there could be no charge against any of them.

3. An absurd imaginary dialogue they claim is “quite believable”:

   a. “If the church today should be like the one we read about in the New Testament, do you mean we should have open fornication and abuses of the Lord’s Supper like in Corinth?” (20).

   b. Without a “rigid pattern” there would be no abuses of the Lord’s Supper and why liberals have made changes to it.

      (1) Changing the day from the first day of the week; Acts 20:7 “And upon the first day of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread, Paul preached unto them, ready to depart on the morrow; and continued his speech until midnight.”

      (2) Changing the elements from unleavened bread and fruit of the vine to something else.

      (3) The principles of this book would allow both of these abuses along with any other abuse.
c. Even the fornication at Corinth could be justified using the principles of this book.
   (1) Corinth housed the temple of Aphrodite where 1000 temple priestesses (cult prostitutes) would daily ply their profession in the city.
   (2) The way in which they worshiped was by the committing of fornication with the priestesses.
   (3) Change Aphrodite to Jehovah God and if their committing of fornication is the way they are recognizing the awesomeness of God and praising Him, then that fornication must be acceptable.
   (4) While ludicrous, it is the end result of the doctrine they propose.

C. The church takes on a totally different appearance.
1. They write, “Thus we have the right to reconsider our identity under the Pauline metaphor of the church as body of Christ and trace out some of the implications it has for us. Worship, life, mission, and evangelism all take on new appearances” (241).
2. Anyone can do whatever he or she likes without any limits.

V. REJECTION OF THE CHURCH
A. The church and kingdom are the same organization.
1. Mat. 16:18-19 “And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. 19And I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven; and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven.”
2. Col. 1:13 “Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son:”
   a. He said this to the saints at Colosse; Col. 1:2 “To the saints and faithful brethren in Christ which are at Colosse: Grace be unto you, and peace, from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.”
   b. Those called saints comprise the church; 1 Cor. 1:2 “Unto the church of God which is at Corinth, to them that are sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be saints, with all that in every place call upon the name of Jesus Christ our Lord, both theirs and ours:”
3. Heb. 12:23, 28 “To the general assembly and church of the firstborn, which are written in heaven, and to God the Judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect,... 28Wherefore we receiving a kingdom which cannot be moved, let us have grace, whereby we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear:”
4. Rev. 1:4, 9 “John to the seven churches which are in Asia: Grace be unto you, and peace, from him which is, and which was, and which is to come; and from the seven Spirits which are before his throne;... 9I John, who also am your brother, and companion in tribulation, and in the kingdom and patience of Jesus Christ, was in the isle that is called Patmos, for the word of God, and for the testimony of Jesus Christ.”
5. While the terms have different meanings, they apply to the same group of people.
   a. Church is the called out.
      (1) 1 Pet. 2:9 “But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light:”
      (2) They are called by the Gospel; 2 The. 2:14 “Whereunto he called you by our gospel, to the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ.”
   b. Kingdom identifies the same group as those who have submitted their will to God and allow Him to rule in their heart.
B. They hold the church is not the kingdom.
1. They write, “Thus we affirm that the church and the kingdom of God have a conspicuous and important relationship to one another, but they are not one and the same thing” (75).
2. In writing of the church, they state, “it is an assembly called together by God. For what purpose? To pursue the kingdom” (76).
3. Also, “Christ’s church is a reality. Oh, it is not a fully established kingdom yet; it is still in the process of forming” (101).
4. Again, “If the church were to claim to be the complete realization of the kingdom, its claim would be idolatrous... and appear hypocritical” (76-77).

C. They define the church as a “pilgrim church.”
1. They write, “The nature of the church is that of a pilgrim. The pilgrim church is never a static accomplishment, but always a moving process” (71).
   a. To a relationship between this “pilgrim church” and the kingdom they quote the liberal Swiss Catholic priest Hans Kung’s definition of the kingdom of God (71).
   b. This shows an underlying problem with the authors—they have no respect for God and His Word and all the respect in the world for liberal denominational authors.
2. Implications of viewing the church as “a pilgrim church.”
   a. “First, the church’s nature is best understood as movement toward an ideal, not the full embodiment of that ideal” (76).
   (1) There is thus no “golden age” of the church.
      (a) They state, “An original ‘golden age’ is historical fiction. The church in its concrete existence has never fully embodied the ideal of God” (78).
      (b) By “golden age” they mean a time in which “the church of the New Testament corresponds perfectly to God’s ideal” (77).
   (2) They write, “The pilgrim church approach recognizes that the task of becoming the people of God is never fully accomplished” (80).
      (a) 1 Pet. 2:9-10 “But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light: 10 Which in time past were not a people, but are now the people of God: which had not obtained mercy, but now have obtained mercy.”
      (b) Only people of God are going to receive God’s rest:
         (i) Heb. 4:9 “There remaineth therefore a rest to the people of God.”
         (ii) If “becoming the people of God is never fully accomplished,” then no one will ever enter into that rest.
   (3) They write: “The notion of the pilgrim church also leads to a different approach to church unity” (80).
      (a) They eventually end up with ecumenism.
      (b) They present two approaches.
         (i) The first is the word them with an arrow pointing to the word us.
         (ii) The second graphic is a cross between the two words with arrows from both words pointing to the cross.
      (c) They thus show there is no difference between them and us (their two groups), except the religious heritage one comes from.
      (d) They write, “Is it possible that we all need to spend a little time calling our own religious heritages back to Jesus Christ? If the church is a pilgrim
church, this task must be reevaluated in every new generation. Just maybe, if each religious tradition would spend one generation trying to do nothing but be a more Jesus-like body, a generation from now inter-religious dialogue might take on a new tone” (81).

(c) There is no calling of anyone to an objective standard of right and wrong.
(i) No call to leave one’s “heritage” to accept nothing but the Truth.
(ii) One can remain in whatever “heritage” he might have as long as they “be a more Jesus-like body.”

(f) But, there is only one body:
(i) Eph. 4:4 “There is one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling;”
(ii) Every other body or religious “heritage” is in opposition to that one body.

b. “Participation in the kingdom is the theological foundation for all of the church’s activities” (82).

c. “The church is unable to bring the kingdom to consummation” (82).
(1) What they mean: “When one looks at the utopian passages from the Old Testament prophets that depict the reign of God, we begin to see how insufficient any human effort would be to bring it about” (82).
(2) Thus, “This is a work that only God can accomplish” (82).
(3) God already accomplished this when He raised up Jesus from the dead and set Him at His own right hand.
   (a) Mat. 28:18 “And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth.”
   (b) Eph. 1:20-23 “Which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places, 21Far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come; 22And hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the church, 23Which is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all.”
   (c) Thus, Jesus built His church, the kingdom of Christ, and gave us His Word so we would be able to enter it and live acceptably to God in it.

VI. THE CHURCH’S WORSHIP

A. They basically allow anything since they reject a “rigid pattern.”

B. Their view of our present worship:
   1. They write, “The tired, uninspiring event called worship in our churches must give way to an exhilarating experience of God that simultaneously exhibits and nurtures life in the worshippers” (13).
      a. They omit how this “exhilarating experience” is going to be achieved each week.
      b. No way to consider individual tastes:
         (1) What might be an “exhilarating experience” to one person might be a sickening experience to another.
         (2) What they view as tired and uninspiring might be a very exhilarating experience to the next person.
2. The only sure thing is that what we presently do in worship must be changed.
3. However, they are not sure what to change.
   a. They write, “Corporate worship of this sort is a form of collective wonder and awe before God that is expressed in culturally relevant ways” (135).
   b. Then add: “When the Spirit of God is present, it will not always be possible to determine the atmosphere in advance. Leaders may intend and prepare for a service of one sort, and God may bring about another end to his glory” (135).

   (1) The “exhilarating experience” is going to be accomplished by God, not the worshipers.
   (2) If it is “tired and uninspiring” it cannot be blamed on the worshipers but on God (God didn't do what was necessary to make it what they think it should be).

C. Worship is to be done in “culturally relevant ways.”
   1. Thus worship will change with the culture.
   2. If culture dictates that unleavened bread and fruit of the vine are no longer relevant, then change the elements.
   3. They write: “In our churches the Lord’s Supper has long been separated from its original setting—the fellowship meal” (219-20).
   4. Women in leadership roles:
      a. They write, “What about a dramatic presentation by 15 men and women that communicates the will of God? Or a quartet?” (9).
         (1) In this they also denigrate the proclamation of God’s Word.
         (2) By inserting the idea of a quartet, they show their desire to move away from the reciprocal singing God requires.
   5. Solemnity and dignity is foreign to them.
      a. They write concerning our worship, “There will be jubilation on occasion—perhaps with applause and cheering” (140).
      b. They would make our worship more like a sporting event.
      c. Could it be that raucous demonstrations are what they meant by “exhilarating experience”?

VII. THE CHURCH’S WORK
   A. The work of the church is saving souls:
      1. Expressed by Jesus; Luke 19:10 “For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost.”
      2. It is spiritual in nature not physical; John 18:36 “Jesus answered, My kingdom is not of this world: if my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the Jews: but now is my kingdom not from hence.”
      3. It is carried out by:
         a. Preaching the Gospel to the lost
         b. Edifying those who are saved
         c. Benevolence

   B. These authors have a far different view: It is the epitome of the social gospel.
   C. The chapter dealing with the church as it relates to itself (141-61).
      1. They “examine the three most basic components of church life—compassion, encouragement, and confession” (141).
2. No one would denigrate these.
3. They are not the “most basic components of church life.”

1. They write, “We submit that there are three aspects to the church’s mission of modeling transcendence, even in the mundane” (165).
2. The three aspects are: demonstration, holiness and justice, and prophetic aspect.
3. Speaking of demonstration:
   a. They write, “The first aspect of the church’s relationship to the world is loving, nurturing service with no strings attached” (165).
   b. It is physical, not spiritual, showing the social gospel view.
   c. They explain: “The call to follow Jesus’ example of self-emptying service is the justification for every kind of help program that churches wish to pursue. Counseling, day care, literacy, food and housing, drug and alcohol treatment programs—all are ways of caring for and nurturing people” (166).
   d. They add: “Some are concerned that the church will become just another human do-good agency. But the church must be a do-good agency” (166).
4. Under holiness and justice:
   a. They state, “The church must not speak for the privileged; its voice must be raised instead on behalf of the oppressed. It is not a political weapon for the powerful but the voice of God for the weak” (171).
   b. They add: “Perhaps it is time for the church to take a vow of poverty in imitation of her master who had no place to lay his head” (173).

E. Regarding evangelism:
1. They write, “The mission of the church is never merely the perpetuation of an institution but the continuation of the work of Christ” (179).
   a. There is no way to continue the work of Christ without perpetuating the institution He built and died for.
   b. It is another attempt to denigrate the beautiful body of Christ—the church of Christ.
2. Their view of evangelism:
   a. They say it is “the responsibility of the Christian community to bear witness to the saving work of God in Christ” (181).
   b. Their view is the denominational encounter with Jesus.
      (1) They write, “Our total contribution to the salvation task is to make possible an event of encounter between Jesus and lost people” (182).
      (2) In their minds, they present denominationalist as having that encounter, so there is no need to make it possible for them.
3. Unity with denominations:
   a. They write, “We must learn to exhibit unity in Christ. We must find a way to forgo rancor and quarreling about our denominational traditions” (201).
   b. Those in denominations have no need of salvation.

F. They deny man’s obedience to the Gospel as having anything to do with one’s salvation.
1. They write, “It is a scandalous and outrageous lie to teach that salvation arises from human activity of any sort. We do not contribute one whit to our salvation” (207).
2. Yet, salvation is for those who obey Him:
   a. Heb. 5:8-9 “Though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered; 9 And being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him;”
   b. Rom. 6:17-18 “But God be thanked, that ye were the servants of sin, but ye have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered you. 18 Being then made free from sin, ye became the servants of righteousness.”
   c. 1 Pet. 1:22 “Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit unto unfeigned love of the brethren, see that ye love one another with a pure heart fervently:”

3. Those who do not obey will be eternally lost; 2 Thes. 1:8 “In flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ:”

4. We will be judged by our actions:
   a. Rom. 14:12 “So then every one of us shall give account of himself to God.”
   b. 2 Cor. 5:10-11 “For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad. 11 Knowing therefore the terror of the Lord, we persuade men; but we are made manifest unto God; and I trust also are made manifest in your consciences.”
   c. Rev. 20:12 “And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works.”

Conclusion: These men left the moorings of the Lord’s church years ago and became denominational in their thinking. They are now desirous of destroying the Lord’s church and leading it into denominationalism. While they profess to love the church, they only love those who will accept their changes. If any refuse to accept their changes, then they hold them in contempt and ridicule.

They believe they have “the right to reconsider our identity” and in doing so they admit that “Worship, life, mission, and evangelism all take on new appearances” (241). They are correct in this. The church itself takes on new appearances, but it is not the church that our Lord died for, built, and is head over.

These men need to be honest enough to leave the church if they will not repent. They will do nothing but destroy the good works of men of years gone by, destroy the church of our Lord, and lead those who follow their path to eternal destruction.