

## **The Emergent Church Could Submerge Yours!**

By [Jan Markell](#)

A not-so-funny thing happened on the way to the 21st century. In the late 20th century, certain leaders came out stating that we needed a "new way of doing church." That old time religion wasn't good enough. So in came new gimmicks replacing the solid gospel. We have seen the rise of the "seeker-sensitive" church movement that offends no one. The "religious left" has become more prominent promoting their social gospel. And then there is the Emergent Church (that also stresses the social gospel.)

If you ask nine out of ten Christians just what is this Emergent or Emerging Church, they will likely be clueless! Nonetheless, it is devouring entire denominations and churches that were once solid.

So what is this phenomenon all about? First, it is "mystical." It draws upon things that the "ancient desert fathers" embraced such as contemplative prayer, breath prayers, walking the maize known as the labyrinth, Yoga -- all to get closer to God. Some of these practices send one into an altered state of consciousness. The Emergent Church really is not interested in doctrine; rather, they want things you can feel, touch, and smell such as incense and icons.

This movement reinvents Christianity by taking eyes off of the cross and onto experience. Scripture is no longer the authority. There are no absolutes, not even in the Bible. They will state that in order to take the world and church forward, we must go backward in church history and embrace Catholic beliefs. Their doctrine is actually closer to Buddhism, Hinduism, and "New Age" than it is to traditional Christianity.

Hell, sin, and repentance are downplayed so no one is offended. Besides, they will tell you there aren't enough absolutes to even talk about hell, sin, and Heaven.

They are trying to provide "meaning for this generation." What does that mean? In the late 20th century there arose a burden to reach the postmodern generation. Get to know the term postmodern! It's the under age 30 generation and in order to reach them, old traditions must be tossed! To the postmoderns, a solid gospel message is too dogmatic and arrogant. Emergents would say that a more moderate gospel had to be invented to be accepted by the masses within this younger generation.

Unfortunately, the "gimmicks" they chose to do this are more in line with divination than anything else!

Their emphasis is on the Kingdom of God now and not on the warnings of Scripture about the imminent return of Christ and a coming judgment in the future.

Now we get to a major problem. These people are called "evangelicals." As a matter of fact, *Time* magazine called Emergent leader Brian McLaren one of the top 25 evangelicals influencing the world. One of McLaren's most recent books is titled *Everything Must Change*. So there you have it from a leader himself: The church must change to conform to the modern day culture. Old ways must be discarded.

Another prominent leader is Rob Bell. He is turning up in all sorts of evangelical churches with his DVDs. He has become a hot topic, one that church Bible studies gather around to examine and embrace as a cool 21st century Christian with new ideas. The problem is, one of his many outrageous statements is, "This is not just the same old message with new methods. We're rediscovering Christianity as an Eastern religion." In another, he promotes the feminine side of God.

Other prominent Emergent Church leaders include Doug Pagitt, Dan Kimball, Tony Jones, Dallas Willard, and Robert Webber. There are more and the list is long.

In a nutshell, social action trumps eternal issues and subjective feelings are over absolute truth. Experience trumps reason and sound doctrine.

Now you have just some of the basics before you. Spread the word that a relatively new movement is seducing millions and that it is unsound, unbiblical, and alarming. This Emergent Church just might submerge yours!

You can't say you weren't warned.