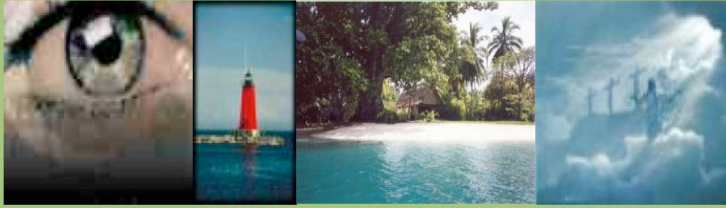


# Haven Newsletter



March 2006

## When God Died...Revisited

**The newest "new hot thing" on the church scene is the *Emerging Church*.**

Self consciously identifying itself, at least in some important ways, as "postmodern" the Emerging Church (EC) claims that it has an antidote for what ails the Church worldwide - the evil demon of "modernism". Seen as a synonym for Enlightenment thought of 17th - 19th century European thought, Modernism becomes the anchor that has weighed down the church. Modernism, we are told, is concerned with truth, certainty, individualism, colonialism, objectivity and a host of other evils. Postmodern is a rejection of all these and is to some of the prominent writers in the EC, the cure for the morass of the Church. Led by people like Brian McLaren, Leonard Sweet, Tony Jones and others, the EC tells us that the culture is already postmodern and therefore to minister to it we must both identify and to a great extent live out the postmodern value system ourselves. Should we welcome this new turn or is the cure worse than the disease for which it is proscribed?

I wrote in the last newsletter that the person oft considered to be the grandfather of post-modernity is Friedrich Nietzsche. His understanding that "God is dead" led him to deny that there is any "God's eye viewpoint", that is a place where one could successfully de-

*"War is Peace  
Freedom is Slavery  
Ignorance is Strength"*

*-George Orwell*

scribe what the "real" or "true" situation was about the world and life. That being the case, there are no "truths" which apply to all of us, no absolute moral ethical concerns, only opinions and perspectives. He argued that this had always been the case but that mankind had deluded itself into thinking there was a God, and that therefore a transcendent voice was in place and the religious and then Enlightenment thinkers could discover these truths. Usually seen as a species of Existentialist thinker, Nietzsche has been interpreted through Nazi philosopher Martin Heidegger's eyes, which was then interpreted through thinkers like Derrida, Lyotard, Ricouer and others. It is not accidental that these latter thinkers are virtually all disillusioned Marxists, who lost their "faith" during the student riots in Paris in 1968. Obviously there is so much more to all of this but for brevity's sake this will have to do.

One of the more critical points in postmodernism is the idea "the Author is dead". In a nutshell, this is the idea that once a "text" is "written" (this could be a poem, song, dissertation, a work of art or whatever) the "author" of that text is "dead". What this means is that since the author is themselves a byproduct of a culture and language, as well as other events which shaped them, that it is impossible for the reader of the text to get into the head of the author. Classic hermeneutics (rules of interpretation) strove to understand what the author,



film maker, artist was trying to say in their "text". This of course meant that ideas could successfully navigate their way across the prison walls of language and culture. So we could understand what the author was trying to say. This has been denied with a vengeance by the pomo writers. There is then no authoritative interpretation to any and all texts. The author is truly dead.

What then replaces the author's intent, unknowable to us all? Well what is left is different versions of what is called "reader" response theory. What this means is that the reader of the text brings to the text their community's values, language games, experiences, ethical concerns or lack thereof. The question then for example is not "What was the Apostle Paul trying to say when he speaks about propitiation in Romans 3?", but rather "What do I/we think Paul was saying, based on our communities values and concerns. So one might answer (and they have) that as a lesbian, feminist community our understanding of the Bible is based on our values and understandings and we say that Paul is a homophobic, sexist, patriarchal evil white man, who was seeking power over us with his claims to "truth". By the way this kind of thing is standard thought at many liberal seminaries in the country.

I think there is a direct connection between Nietzsche's death of God and the Pomo writers death of the author. In both cases there is a denial of any authority (no truth giver) which or who sits above that of the autonomous human (the singular man in Existentialism and the community of humans in PostModern circles) and therefore all we are left with is the much tamer opinion or perspective. This of course is easily dismissed since all have perspectives and no perspective is any closer to an alleged "truth" than any other.

To the extent that the EC is buying the Pomo Farm, it is a direct attack on the authority of the Word of God. Most of the writers are much too subtle to say that out loud, but there is a straight inference from one to the other and it is hard to imagine, other than by sheer arbitrary choice, what will keep the logic from following through. The subtlety can be seen in some of the EC writers who argue that they still believe that the Bible is authoritative, and still claim to believe that Bible is the actual word of God, all the while denying that anyone can actually say what the Bible means. God spoke to us, but we haven't a clue as to what he said. So the values of the community become the substitute authority, replacing the dead author. Consensus is sought and it alone speaks with any sense of authority and gives value and meaning

to life, unless of course you just disagree and join another. Autonomous Humans are now truly Free. As another atheistic interpreter of Nietzsche Jean Paul Sartre saw, the death of God really does mean we are free. And we are so free, that all of our choices are completely without any eternal value or meaning. Sartre sees this not as ultimately liberating but as something which led him to write Nausea. His freedom made him sick.

The EC has not faced up to the bloodlines of the new marriage it is busy consecrating. One can only imagine the progeny of this marriage from hell..

#### **NEW ADDRESS**

Our housing situation has changed again. Our new address is 24563 E. Crestridge Place. Aurora, CO 80016. There has been an amazing story to all of this. Someday I will share it with y'all.

#### **Non Prophet Update**

On a more serious note - a group appears to have moved right next door to us in Parker, CO. From everything I am gathering, this "House of God" is very manipulative and controlling as well as having aberrant theology. Please pray for them as we may be soon dealing with a few of them.

#### **Speaking Schedule**

- April 4,11,18,25. Bible Study at our House!
- April 3,10,17,24, Romans - Legacy College of the Bible.
- April 8-9 Rocky Mountain E. Free Church-Estes, May 28 Dillon Community-The Da Vinci Code, Gnosticism and the Real Jesus;
- April 21, May 12 - Conversation and Cuisine - Lakewood, CO.
- April 22 - Psychic fair in Colorado Springs.
- May 1-3 - Rocky Mountain Calvary Chapel Pastors Conf. - Colorado Springs.
- May 1,8. - Romans - Legacy College of the Bible.
- May 2,9,16,23,30.- Bible Study at our House!
- May 10 - Golden Gate Seminary Class
- June 3 - The People's Fair - Downtown Denver.
- June 6,13,20,27. - Bible Study at our House!

### **Prayer Requests**

- 1) Please continue to pray for our family. Our older sons are doing much better (Thank the Lord!) but our youngest Jonathan has really been a problem for Terri. I recently had to cut short a speaking trip because of his virtually uncontrollable behavior. He has a terrible time respecting and obeying his mother. He doesn't act this way at school or when I am around, so he is capable of doing what is right. I have instituted "Camp Honsberger" and his life is a mess until at least June. Pray that he responds well to this.
- 2) Most of the marriages that we have been praying for have ended up in divorces. Sad what sin and bad teaching will so often do. Please continue to pray for repentance and reconciliation of these people from the different cults - such as Bruce, Mark, Cheryl, Brad, Jeanette, Michael, Pam and others.
- 3) Pray for our friends with different diseases and Chronic Fatigue type situations - my wife Terri, Rebekah, Sherri, Liz, Julie, Josh.
- 4) Please continue to pray for our soldiers at war. Some we know are already back home, while others may be called up again.
- 5) Pray for Christians around the world who are suffering for their faith. Especially Gospel for Asia Pastors in India and many Christians in Muslim countries and those in China.
- 6) We are so excited that a young man with whom I spent some time one afternoon is now following Christ and involved in a Free Church in the Springs. He had been raised in a Hindu group - Self Realization Fellowship - and we had a great talk about some of the important issues with that. Remember to keep praying for JW's Bruce and Bianca, New Agers like Zach, Tim, Denver, Cathy, Fausto, Jason and numerous Mormons we have talked to recently. Also pray for our atheist friend Frank and for a Bahai I have talked a lot to this past year.
- 7) Nothing has been done on the proposal yet. Please pray that I get that done and SOON!
- 8) Please pray for our new staff missionaries and interns. Since our last letter we have added another intern Jonathan Jolly who was raised in the very legalistic Church of Christ and has a heart to reach out to people! Pray that the staff will be fruitful and that many will come into the Kingdom of God because of their faithfulness.
- 9) I mentioned in the last letter about an atheistic computer programmer named Heather who had come to Christ recently and that our Conversation and Cuisine meetings had played a big role in that. We are now in the process of doing three more different sets of the C and C meetings at three different homes. These are so fun as you never know who the Lord will bring there. We have had Muslims, Mormons, Jews, Roman Catholics, Atheists and others come to hear talks like - "Is there Truth?" and "Are all religions the same?" and "Why the Bible?". Pray that, like Heather, many will come to Christ and others emboldened in their faith through these meetings.
- 10) We are so thankful for so many of you who are so faithful in your giving to Haven Ministry. We are always amazed at the grace of our Lord as people support sinners like us. We are also still in need of more people who might consider Haven ministry as worthy of their support as well. We already are experiencing a monthly shortfall and need to build up the general fund. Please pray that the Lord will raise up many who see the value in this kind of ministry and will become part of the team. Please let your Christian friends and churches know if you think this ministry is a good thing. We charge no one for what we do, and so we trust that our Father will honor the effort and keep the doors open. Thanks for your consideration in this.

**Our Thanks -**



•First of all we thank our Lord for his grace and mercy in using us in ministry. Absolutely amazing that He can and does

•Second, we thank you for your prayers and support and encouragement. So many of you write and call, email and sometimes just walk up to us and tell us of your appreciation. We are grateful that the Lord has put you in our lives to lift us up.

•As we approach Resurrection Sunday, let us all remember what the Cross really meant - that the Lord's righteousness and mercy were together in this one event, bringing our justification and that in the Resurrection we see the Lord's power which can make us holy as well. He is Risen!

He is Risen Indeed! Well said Church!

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