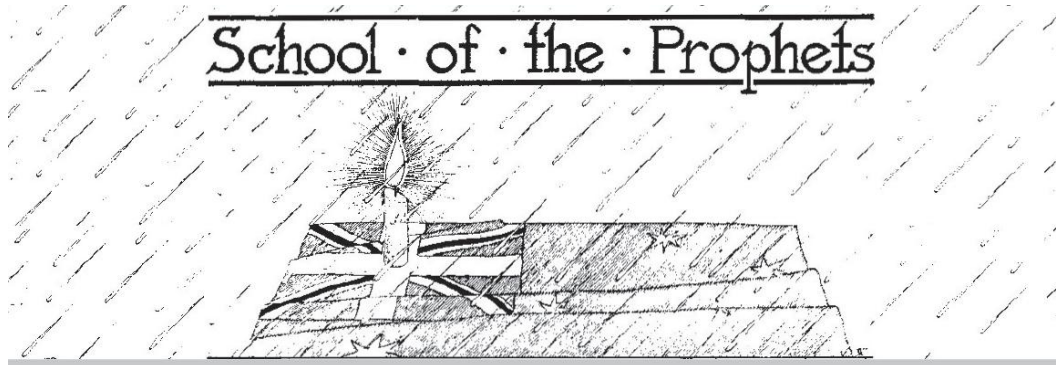


School · of · the · Prophets



Theological Animation for Discipleship

School of the Prophets (SOPs) 2nd May 2010 - Session 5 @ Ultimo University Church – Brief Notes and Summary

The Phenomena of Fundamentalism

Biblical Texts: Ephesians 3:18-19
1 Peter 3:15

"You can safely assume you made God in your own image, when it turns out that God hates all the same people you do." (Anne Lamont)

Definition: fun-da-men-tal-ism (fŭ'dæmĕ'tl-ĭz'əm)

1. A usually religious movement or point of view characterized by a return to fundamental principles, by rigid adherence to those principles, and often by intolerance of other views and opposition to secularism.
2. a) An organized, militant Evangelical movement originating in the United States in the late 19th and early 20th century in opposition to Protestant Liberalism and secularism, insisting on the inerrancy of Scripture.
b) Adherence to the theology of this movement.

Postmodern world

Fundamentalism takes place in a postmodern world. Post modern theorists supposed that religion as a vitalising force was going to die out; that it would become one voice among many competing totalisms. They were wrong. Religion is very apparent in the world today, and does not seem to be losing energy. In fact, it seems to be gaining energy.



Reactive Features of Fundamentalism

Fight Back – about the disbelief; the rampant relativism and secularism, that exists the world in which we live today.

Fights For – the reinforcement of their worldview as it relates to the intimate zones of life (e.g. Family, gender roles, understanding of God and country).

Fight With – the content of their doctrines, turning them into weapons.

Fight Against – others, objectifying them as "enemies".

Fight Under – God, with divine or transcendent right.

There lives more faith in honest doubt, believe me, than in half the creeds. (Alfred Tennyson)

Five descriptors about Fundamentalism

- 1) A concretised, fixed mindset.
- 2) Obscurantism – tunnel vision/ blocking of self
- 3) “True Believer” mentality
- 4) Sacred dishonesty
- 5) Non-scientized attitude

Types of Fundamentalism

Fundamentalism is often portrayed as primarily a religious phenomena, particularly associated with Christianity and Islam. It should be noted, however, that fundamentalism is something that can (and does) occur in most, if not all belief systems. It can exist in areas such as atheistic, political, economic or even environmental fundamentalism.

*There will be no world peace if
fundamentalisms prevail!
There will be no world peace without
religious peace. (Athol Gill)*



People to Read

- Karen Armstrong – Writer in comparative religion. A former Catholic nun, her works include *A History of God* and *The Battle for God: Fundamentalism in Judaism, Christianity and Islam*.
- Anne Lamott – Novelist and political activist. Her works include *Hard Laughter* and *Bird by Bird: Some Instructions on Writing and Life*.
- Martin E. Marty – American Lutheran scholar. Author of *Righteous Empire: The Protestant Experience in America* and the encyclopaedic five-volume *Fundamentalism Project* (co-written with R. Scott Appleby).
- Eric Hoffer – American social writer and Philosopher. His works include *The True Believer: Thoughts On The Nature Of Mass Movements* and *Before the Sabbath*.

SEE YOU AT THE NEXT SOPs MEETING

School of the Prophets Session 6

When: Sunday 6th June 2pm - 4pm

Where: Ultimo University Church, Cnr Bulwara Rd & Quarry St, Ultimo