



Paul R. Smith
Teacher of the Jesus Path to Awakening

Leading Change and Causing Trouble

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(This was originally a chapter in my book *Integral Christianity: The Spirit's Call to Evolve* from Paragon House. However, the editors felt it was not positive enough and left it out. I believe that being realistic is ultimately a positive thing.)

What institutions do best is defend themselves against change. Churches do it particularly well because they think they are defending God. “Come weal or woe, we want our status quo.”

What can we expect of our religious leaders in moving our churches into higher levels? Often, not much! The pastors, staff members, priests, bishops, denominational personnel, seminary professors, and lesson writers of our faith and churches are most often in their positions because they are *not* change agents. They may be dedicated, saintly, pastoral, intellectual, or gifted. But they were hired to preserve the religious institution, not change it. They are hardly ever hired with the words, “Listen to what the Spirit is saying and make some trouble for us.”

The authors of many Christian books fear they would lose their audience if they really said what they thought about controversial issues. How do I know this? Because I know a number of these pastors, professors, and authors. In personal conversations they have often told me they agree with much of my theology, but they cannot publically acknowledge that. The progressive ones say that they are already in enough trouble and can't afford any more attacks.

The problem of combining the primary leadership and teachers of churches with the economic livelihood of those leaders cannot be overestimated. Pastors and priests are hired to stop trouble, not make it. Many pastors, denominational workers, seminary professors and authors cannot even consider the idea of changing their minds about their practice or theology because it would threaten their jobs and therefore their income. The larger the church or the higher up the hierarchy one goes, the less likely one is to explore the spiritual frontiers of the Spirit's call to evolve.

We forget that Jesus and Paul worked at other jobs for a living. Maybe there was a reason for that. And who opposed them? The professional religionists! When the institutional church moved to the “rent a shepherd” system of leadership in the fourth century, it set itself up for resisting the Spirit's ongoing call. Once you have entered “the ministry,” you usually don't get to change your beliefs or practices without “leaving the ministry.” Even *exploring* change can create a conflict of interest.

Change can only come from current church leaders if they are wisely brave, sufficiently outraged, and, at times, willing to lose their jobs. In addition, the most difficult challenge is that they must be willing to do their own inner work so that when they press for change they are not just being obnoxious. Ego parading as higher truth is quickly stomped on. As leaders embrace their gifts, stop their projections, and learn to listen to the Spirit, they *can* make a difference. Courageous leaders may either work for change within the existing churches or start something new outside of it.

The early church, with all of its diversity and problems, managed an incredibly significant change from centuries of tradition when it decided to not make the new Gentile followers of



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Jesus keep the traditional Jewish law. In my book, *Is It Okay to Call God Mother? Considering the feminine face of God*,¹ I outlined eight principles I found in the account in Acts 15 in navigating that momentous change back then. See that book for a detailed presentation. I call it “Smith’s Salient Saying for Switching Sullen Systems and Shifting Sensitive Saints.”

1. Ministry is messy
2. Good leaders cause trouble.
3. Good leaders work in teams
4. Talk and listen more than you want to
5. Time is on your side.
6. Ask what God is doing
7. Build on spiritual power and relationship strength
8. Compromise allows togetherness while the change is coming about

Let’s look briefly at the first two.

Ministry is messy.

“This brought Paul and Barnabas into sharp dispute and debate with them.”² The participants in this church fight were not bad people. They were doing the best they could. At least, instead of arguing over what color to paint the sanctuary, they were arguing over something really important. Did the Gentile Christians need to become Jews in order to follow Jesus? This threatened the deeply held traditions of the Jewish Christians. This same thing occurs today in moving a church from one level to the next. Deeply held beliefs are at stake. All significant change is accompanied by some degree of conflict.

Following the Spirit’s call to evolve the church today is like remodeling your house – it takes longer than you thought, costs more than you planned, and makes a bigger mess than you ever thought possible!

Good leaders cause trouble

Jesus caused trouble wherever he went. His first sermon almost got him killed.³ His encounters with religious leaders were always trouble filled. His standing up and speaking out finally did get him killed. John listened to what the Spirit said about evolving and passed it on to the churches in the book of Revelation. I am sure that those first three chapters of Revelation caused lots of trouble. Leaders cause trouble by listening to the Spirit’s call to evolve in the churches today, too.

Jesus often predicted the trouble that comes from seeking the Spirit and the divine evolutionary impulse. I love the way he described the spiritual journey in the Gospel of Thomas: “Jesus said, ‘Those who seek should not stop seeking until they find. When they find, they will be disturbed. When they are disturbed, they will marvel, and will reign over all.’”⁴

¹ Smith, *Is It Okay to Call God Mother?*, 229-250.

² Acts 15:2.

³ Luke 4:16-30.

⁴ Gospel of Thomas, Saying 2.



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Notice the “they will be disturbed” part. The truth will set us free. But first it makes us damn mad! Religious people don’t like leaders who lead them into the “disturbed” stage.

If you’re one step ahead, you’re called a leader.

If you’re two steps ahead, you’re called a pioneer,

If you’re three steps ahead, you’re called a martyr.

And on your tombstone it will read, “Killed by friendly fire.”

I have had to wrestle with this. I, like many pastors, am plagued with terminal niceness. As pastors, our psychological makeup is to get along and take care of people. We have been taught that leaders are to be servants and not troublemakers. But those two are not exclusive of one another. We are to serve God and not our selfish ambitions. And sometimes serving God means making trouble. The challenge is to “maintain a mindful balance between being a caretaker of what’s valuable in the status quo and risking it all to indulge in creative destruction that brings an overall benefit.”⁵

My experience

In my, currently, forty-eight years of pastoring and leading change at Broadway Church in Kansas City we have regularly seen some degree of turmoil. Each of the dozen or so significant changes, about one every three or four years, has seen people get upset enough to leave.

Moving to dozens of small groups in the 1960’s killed our adult Sunday School and some were upset. I had always suspected the only reason many endured dull Bible study was for the fellowship with others it provided. When we offered to mainline *koinonia* in small groups, no one wanted to bother with boring Sunday School classes anymore. Some left.

Openness to the charismatic movement created tensions along with more life-giving worship. Moving to contemporary worship (in the 1970’s, before it was the “in” thing) lost us members. One member, a wealthy businessman, said, “I wish people here didn’t have to sing so loudly and clap their hands. I can’t bring my business associates here to visit.” We weren’t about to stop enthusiastic singing and he finally left to go to a church where they didn’t sing loudly or clap at all.

Moving to team leadership was constantly difficult because leaders with different visions would get upset when what they wanted didn’t happen. They would leave and take part of the membership with them. I like to say that we were so mission minded that we accidentally started five other churches over the years.

Deciding that good psychotherapy could be used by God ended up with half the congregation of four hundred in professional therapy while the other half simmered in fear, muttering, “What’s wrong with all those people? Why don’t they just pray more?” Some left.

In the 1970’s, we moved, with much discussion and finally by congregational vote, away from the Southern Baptist tradition of only men serving as deacons and pastors to recognizing the leadership gifts of women, including our first women pastors on the pastoral team. That move saw a number of men running out the door saying “I won’t go to a church where women

⁵ Gordon McKenzie, Hallmark seminar, *Kansas City Star*, Feb 5, 1991.



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are taking over.” That was their translation of “I don’t want my wife getting any ideas about who’s in charge in *my* house.”

Cultural anthropologist Margaret Mead has said that the only way to solve the disruption that comes from change is with more change.⁶ So we opted for more change. If it was okay to have women pastors, then maybe God wasn’t just a big guy up there in the heavens either. We discussed the idea at length (two years of classes and discussion groups). Suddenly and spontaneously, in a worship service, one of the worship leaders referred to God as “her,” and nobody fainted. But eventually, adding “Mother” God to Father God saw some members leaving. We also added new members that were looking for a church that affirmed both the masculine and feminine in humankind and God.

While these changes saw some people leave the church, there were more attracted to the church because of them. Over a period of twenty-five years worship service attendance doubled, then tripled, and our budget quadrupled. This was not to last, however, when we tackled the most difficult issue of all - sexuality.

In 1997 we began two years of study and discussion of homosexuality. However, before the church could vote on becoming gay affirming, some of the leaders attempted a power play and campaigned to get me and four other staff members fired. Led by one particularly angry person, it was not difficult to find good church members who were tired of this discussion. These leaders were not particularly anti-gay. They just didn’t think the issue was important enough to lose church members over. They had originally come to Broadway because we had evolved beyond the traditional church. They liked that. But they didn’t like the fact that my vision was not limited, short-term evolution. It was evolution forever! Previous years had seen the congregation pay the price for the evolution they were now enjoying. But they didn’t want to pay any more price personally for the churches’ continued evolution. They rightly saw that as long as I was around, I would invite the church to continue to change and evolve. So the solution seemed, to them, to get rid of me.

They lost the vote on terminating the four of us, but over half the congregation left because the greater than necessary conflict they created was so upsetting. The remaining church members immediately voted unanimously to become gay affirming to the great joy of our much smaller but glorious congregation. A short time later the Southern Baptist Convention removed us from the denomination for performing gay unions. We had been at odds with the denomination for such a long time that this was no surprise. It was actually a recognition that we knew and they knew that we no longer wanted to be considered traditional Southern Baptists. We immediately networked with the Alliance of Baptists, a coalition of progressive Baptists. The new freedom to be ourselves was healing for our traumatized church and opened new windows for the fresh air of the Spirit.

⁶ Reported by Ellen Goodman in the *Kansas City Star*, Feb 25, 1992, p. B-5.



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Lessons from the Gospel of Luke

Standing up and speaking out for spiritual truth and protecting a vulnerable minority does produce costly conflict. However, Jesus led the way in causing trouble. Just follow the trail of these beautiful, realistic, and heart-breaking passages from the Gospel of Luke:

Jesus' inaugural sermon so enraged the religious folk, they tried to throw him off a cliff (4:16-30).

His host at supper was offended by the sinful woman touching Jesus' feet (7:36-50).

Shake the dust of those who will not listen to you from your feet (9:5).

Jesus predicted his suffering at the hands of the religious leaders (9:21).

Take up your cross (willingness to suffer) every day (9:23-25).

"I am sending you out as lambs into the midst of wolves." (10:2-3).

"When they bring you before the religious leaders...."(read that as church and denominational boards) (12:11-12).

Jesus brings fire to the earth and division among religious families (12:49-53).

The cost of discipleship (14:24-33).

Ridicule from the religious leaders (16:14-15).

The whistleblower gets killed ⁷ (19:11-27).

Weeping over Jerusalem (19:41-42).

You will be persecuted by religious leaders (21:12-19).

The religious leaders look for a way to kill Jesus (22:2-6).

Jesus sweats blood (22:44).

Jesus is arrested (47-53).

Jesus accused in court (23:10).

Jesus is killed at the instigation of the religious leaders (23:46).

After reading this list again, I realize I have had it easy! At least none of us were murdered, although a few members through the years occasionally seemed inclined toward that. I often lost friends. The church, over time, lost a huge number of members along with our denominational tradition.

All of that was a small personal and institutional price to pay for listening to the Spirit's call to evolve. In the ten years that have followed the mass migration, the church began finding a trickle of new members, gay and straight, who were looking for a place where they could follow Jesus in a church that celebrated diversity - and the continuing change that the Spirit's call to evolve brings.

The conflict over the issue of sexuality, for the first time, greatly reduced the size of our previously large and growing congregation. My ego, as senior pastor of a "big church" with a large staff that was the "in" place to go in Kansas City suffered as we became a much smaller, wounded congregation with fewer staff. When I lost my status position as the "successful" pastor of a large church, I had to give up thinking I would ever get the alumni of the year award from my Southern Baptist Seminary. Oh, well.

⁷ See the "whistleblower" understanding of this parable from Hertzog, *Parables as Subversive Speech*, 150f.



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It was time for my ego attachment to looking “successful” to die. It took me five years to finally give up my fondness for looking good. Remarkably, the church also gained new freedom to explore with a smaller but more unified group of spiritual adventurers. I found the greatest freedom I have ever had to ask how the Spirit is calling us to change. In the last ten years, since the loss of a majority of our members, I have taught the newest and the most significant changes in my understanding since arriving at Broadway Church forty-eight years ago. Those changes in our church life are represented in my book *Integral Christianity: The Spirit’s Call to Evolve*. That book itself is a direct result of my letting go of my attachment to looking successful and our church becoming a much smaller and more adventurous congregation. Interestingly, while some have come and gone, we haven’t lost any members in the last ten years over the newly emerging theology and practices I advocate in this book. I am so grateful to a church full of spiritual adventurers!

The long haul

There will be many expressions of integral Christianity and church, by whatever names, which are just now beginning to unfold. Although at Broadway Church we have been heading this direction for almost half a century, we have only been able to establish a more fully articulated integral framework in the last ten years. Listening to the Spirit’s call to evolve is a life-long journey. In my particular case, I settled in for the long haul. I have said, half jokingly and half seriously, that in most churches, if the pastor wants to personally change and grow, he or she must eventually leave to find another church that is further along that path. At Broadway, I grew and stayed - and the members left! People were initially attracted to Broadway because of the changes we had made. And then they would leave because we kept making changes!

Many, if not most, churches are not going to be open to change. A spiritual leader who wants to continue to grow personally may have to leave. My best pastor friend of over twenty years, Andy Cullen, was the pastor of a large, growing, conservative Presbyterian church. He began to embrace the feminine face of God and eventually moved to affirming all sexual orientations as gifts from God. He found himself unable to talk about these things openly in his church setting and took the courageous step to resign. He made this brave and wise decision for the sake of his own spiritual health and in order to follow what the Spirit was saying to him in his call to evolve.

A church community can pull others up to their dominant center if they are not there yet. However, more pertinently for leaders, it will also try to pull you back to their center if you try to go beyond it – the crawdad syndrome. I thought I was free to hear what the Spirit was saying, but it was not until our church left its denomination that I stopped looking over my shoulder, wondering what the other Southern Baptist pastors would think.

Whatever your situation, you must follow the Spirit’s call to evolve if you are to be faithful and filled with the life of the Spirit. We are all different, not only by having differing spiritual gifts, but we all have various hang-ups and wounds. Only God can sort it all out. I’m so glad God can write straight with a crooked pencil.



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The greatest challenge for leaders

Our greatest challenge as leaders is to actually lead the way in personally responding to the Spirit today. We leaders must be serious about the steps we take in the evolution of our own spiritual and emotional life. We transmit from the level of our own spiritual awareness. We can't fake it. As leaders, we must pave the way by doing our own shadow work and going through our own ego death. That has been quite painful for me over the years of therapy and inner spiritual work. However, I am now happier and more fulfilled than at any other time in my life.

Responding to the Spirit's call to evolve will have a cost. I have kept the following quotation, from somewhere that I cannot find now, on my desk for many years. It has helped me when I start losing more friends and companions and in the search for new ones.

In the life of every visionary, a break has to be made between him or her and the whole of his or her world; the new wine of mystical consciousness and intention cannot be contained in the old bottles of familiar, banal awareness. While family, religious, or social structures might provide exactly the kind of comfort and security that kept the world going, they can stifle or even kill any new adventure, especially one that threatens the very basis of that security and comfort, and all the distinctions and values they sustain.

One step at a time

Dealing with our own shadow and doing our own inner spiritual work as leaders is crucial. It is the only way to stop offending people because of our immaturity and to start offending people, if necessary, because we are actually listening to the Spirit's call. That way, we don't offend others except at the most necessary level so we can communicate in as inviting approach as possible. If I am at another church speaking about small groups, I may not use feminine language for God, even though I do all the time at my church. It would put up red flags and keep me from getting my primary point across. If I am at a church talking about the feminine face of God, I do use feminine language for God, but I may not bring up the issue of gays or that I believe the Bible teaches that everyone is going to heaven. You can't tackle everything all at once. It is always one step at a time.

The biggest hindrance to moving the next stage is the current one

The biggest block to moving to the next level of consciousness is the current one. The warrior stage resists moving to the much tamer and domesticated traditional stage. The traditional stage strongly resists moving to the modern stage and its rational inquiry into the Bible and the spiritual life. The modern stage steadfastly resists moving to the postmodern stage with its openness to spiritual experience. The postmodern stage doggedly resists moving to the integral level with its value of discerning those things that are more loving and healthy from those that are less. All stages are valuable, but they are not all the same or equal.

Each level thinks that the previous stages are fatally flawed and the following ones are terrible heresies. It is too early to see how much the integral stage will resist the next emerging level, but we shouldn't be surprised if it does.



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We must begin where people are and offer manageable change. This is a great burden for leaders who find new depth in following Jesus. One must decide if you are going to try to lead a group to change by staying, or if you must go elsewhere. If a group does not respond to your leadership, then it is certainly a sign that you should go where you can express your gifts. Sitting on your gifts of any kind, but especially visionary gifts, is bad for your spiritual health. Actually, it's bad for your physical health also. In the middle of the conflict over homosexuality, my heart literally stopped. It took the paramedics six tries with the paddles to get it going again. A defibrillator was permanently implanted in my chest to prevent that trauma again. Thankfully, it has never gone off in these ten years of its watchful, angelic care. The spiritual maturity of our current congregation and leadership team has vastly helped to improve my stress levels.

Information and inspiration - or transformation and transmission

Many, if not most churches appear to settle for information and inspiration. They provide education about aspects of the Christian life and information about the Bible, church history, and beliefs. They give some comfort and inspiration to make it through the next week. That is all good – unless it stops there.

Integral church comforts, informs, and inspires – but also transforms. Beliefs are useful if they lead to understanding higher levels of transformation. Seeing a new paradigm is good but only *practices* change us internally. Prayer, reflection, worship, community, inner healing, and using our spiritual gifts in service are what change us.

Wilber asserts that the forty-four million baby boomers in our country are not undergoing the profound spiritual transformation that at least half of them claim that they are. Some even talk about the integral stage, but they actually remain at postmodern. They are moving into a new mode of information, not transformation. This is what Wilber calls, “Not authenticity – or way to find actual transcendence of the self – but a new legitimacy- or way to give meaning to the self. Not a new and profound growth in consciousness, but a new way to feel good at one’s present stage.”⁸

Transmission

We all transmit energy at the level of our awareness all the time. When you feel energized around certain people this is why. When you feel drained dry around others, this is why.

Spiritual awakening can be transmitted through intentional touching such as laying on of hands, spoken words, written words, even a glance or gesture. Just being in the presence of someone operating at a higher level of spiritual enlightenment can transmit a certain kind of healthy, Light-filled energy. Jesus demonstrated this many times and passed it on to his disciples.

Those who want to lead or help others to spiritual transformation must at least be at the level at which they wish to invite others. This means *experiencing* transcendence is more important than helping others find it.

George Burns used to say, “Sincerity is the most important part of acting. When you can fake that, you’ve got it made.” *Being* is the most important part of leading others. Fortunately, we

⁸ Wilber, *One Taste* 215.



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can't fake that. We can't heal the world when we run on empty. We must do whatever it takes to stay filled up and personally answering the Spirit's call to evolve.

Coming out and speaking up for what the Spirit is saying to the churches

It is difficult to be silent about what you know to be true. Yes, there are times to be quiet, but also times to shout. There are times to be diplomatic, as when Jesus said, "I have much more to tell you but you cannot bear it now." Then there are times to be polemical as Jesus also was at times. While the integral church is appreciative of all other levels, sometimes it can also be quite pointed in its criticisms of what it considers distortions of the spiritual path. Following Jesus' model, these criticisms are only aimed at religious systems and their leaders. Jesus never criticized ordinary religious folks.

Speaking of various spiritual traditions translated into American versions, Hal Blacker says,

“. . . their profound depth is flattened out, their radical demand is diluted, and their potential for revolutionary transformation is squelched. How this occurs often seems to be subtle, since the *words* of the teachings are often the same. Yet through an apparent sleight of hand involving, perhaps, their context and therefore ultimately their meaning, the message of the greatest teachings often seems to become transmuted from the roar of the fire of liberation into something more closely resembling the soothing burble of a California hot tub.”⁹

We must come out and stand up for the truth in order to offer a more liberating way to those who suffer under the oppression of the Pharisaical versions of religion today. Throughout my book I advocate understanding and kindness towards others in various stages of the Christian faith. However, there is also a time to be clear about actual religious systems and their leaders. The Prototype of Pure Love in sandals did not hesitate to sternly criticize his own religion when it kept people from the Kingdom. He never criticized the ordinary followers of his religion. However, Jesus, the audiovisual version of God, was quite outspoken towards the leaders of his own religion.

Those at an integral level cannot maintain silence about evaluating truth claims and especially about truth claims that are made in the name of God. *The worst lie is one told in the name of God.* That was the sin of the Pharisees. That is why Jesus engaged in such polemical rhetoric with them, calling them hypocrites, snakes, and white-washed tombs who kept people away from God! While we respect the right of others to be at any stage, those parts of each stage that do not ring true must be exposed.

There is a time to be kind and a time to be harsh. Idiot compassionate must be rejected for what it is: idiotic permissiveness that supports oppression of others under the pretense of compassion. Slavery is wrong and its remnants continue to oppress African Americans. Patriarchy is wrong and oppresses women. Heterosexism is wrong and oppresses gays. I would certainly not appear on a panel to discuss slavery where a representative of the KKK was also on the panel to defend the idea of racism. I am no longer willing to be on a panel to discuss gay

⁹ Hal Blacker, Ken Wilber Online, 3 Mar. 2008. <http://wilber.shambhala.com/html/misc/spthtr.cfm/>.



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issues where there is someone present to represent the “anti-gay” side. That question is settled and I will not lend legitimacy to any discussion of it that pretends it is still open for debate.

Sharp rhetoric is necessary at times. Harsh words and actions are necessary if they protect the oppressed from their oppressors and motivate the oppressed to stand up for themselves.

A more passionate critique.

The Spirit has more to teach us. What happens if we don't learn it? Today's Christianity happens! The vast majority of Christians and Christian churches in the world are not evolving. They are not hearing the Spirit's call to us today. This results in old, brittle wineskins, previous forms of the spiritual path which cannot and do not contain the new wine of the Spirit. But even worse, it allows those spiritual paths to become tangible and relentless *hindrances to spirituality*. *Under the guise of spirituality, they become anti-spiritual!* They are harmful! The Pharisees were just following the path that had been given them. They were not evil. They just had difficulty letting God teach them anything new, anything further along. Therefore, according to Jesus, they fostered a rigid religion that actually shut people off from God. He said, “Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you lock people out of the kingdom of heaven. For you do not go in yourselves, and when others are going in, you stop them.”¹⁰

When a religion fails to evolve at least to the stage of the society it is in, it becomes dysfunctional! Jesus' vision was that we would lead the way in changing the world, *not stop the change!* The original vision of all spiritual traditions is to be a step ahead of whatever culture they are in and pull that culture up to the new level. That has actually happened in the past when the great religious traditions were first founded. But the traditional religions of the world, including Christianity, have now been around for a long time and yet have not evolved. Most often, they have de-evolved. *Therefore, they now act as a brake on spiritual growth instead of an encouragement to it!* If most religion is at a traditional stage in a modern/postmodern society, then it is a dysfunctional presence. It not only hinders the society's evolution, but it distorts the message of its founder. That, then, gives God bad breath. Nobody wants to be around that kind of God.

Jesus lived, taught, and modeled the Kingdom of Heaven. Then the church came along and tried to preserve what he taught. In the very act of preserving it and passing it on down they departed from what Jesus taught. He taught them to keep listening, to continue learning, to keep evolving. We have refused. So we have not ended up with the religion *of* Jesus. We have ended with a religion *about* Jesus. We have traded the Kingdom of God for Christianity. We have ended up with an often dead religion that uses some of Jesus' words in claiming to be the religion of Jesus. But it is not. Wilber writes:

"And therefore, all of those for whom authentic transformation has deeply unseated their souls must, I believe, wrestle with the profound moral obligation to shout from the heart -perhaps quietly and gently, with tears of reluctance; perhaps with fierce fire and angry wisdom; perhaps with slow and careful analysis; perhaps by unshakable public example - but authenticity always and absolutely

¹⁰ “Matt. 23: 14-15.



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carries a demand and duty: you must speak out, to the best of your ability, and shake the spiritual tree, and shine your headlights into the eyes of the complacent. You must let that radical realization rumble through your veins and rattle those around you. . . . And this is truly a terrible burden, a horrible burden, because in any case there is no room for timidity. The fact that you might be wrong is simply no excuse: You might be right in your communication, and you might be wrong, but that does not matter. What does matter, as Kierkegaard so rudely reminded us, is that only by investing and speaking your vision with passion, can the truth, one way or another, fully penetrate the reluctance of the world. If you are right, or if you are wrong, it is only your passion that will force either to be discovered. It is your duty to promote that discovery - either way - and therefore it is your duty to speak your truth with whatever passion and courage you can find in your heart. You must shout, in whatever way you can.”¹¹

This is my shout. The culture clash we experience in leading our churches and denominations is not between conservatives and liberals, spiritual and nonspiritual, young and old, or Democrats and Republicans. The clash is between the past and the future. The Spirit comes to us from the future. The crunch for the church comes in whether we will kindly preserve Jesus in the killing jar of the past - or bravely follow him into the dazzling future that he still proclaims in the Kingdom of God.

¹¹ Wilber, *One Taste*, 33, 34.