

Evangelizing the Western Mindset - Part 12

by Winkie Pratney

The new consciousness is a shift in the dominant worldview of the Western world, characterized by individualism, idealism, and a desire for community and conservation.

Duration: 58:38

Scripture: Proverbs 1:7, Malachi 3:16, Ephesians 3:10, Colossians 3:16, Hebrews 13:7

Topics: "Cultural Evangelism", "Church History"

Description

This sermon delves into the unique characteristics of different decades, drawing parallels between historical events and the current generation. It emphasizes the importance of understanding the new consciousness and major mission fields in today's world. The sermon highlights the need for a sense of destiny, a deep reverence for God, and a connection to the rich history of the church to effectively minister to the challenges and opportunities of the 80s.

Transcript

In the book of Ezekiel, Ezekiel is taken and shown a graveyard, and I want to use this as just a very quick summary for you of three decades. I want to give you a little bit later ways in which this generation of young people in particular are different from any other generation in history. And what we're going to be looking at in these next two and final sessions are the new consciousness.

We're going to be looking at the actual major mission field in the world today. If the Western world, for all of its inadequacies and failures, is giving leadership to, in many ways to the other two worlds, the consciousness that is dominant in the Western world and to some extent in third world and in communist world nations has become the chief mission field. We are dealing here with a consciousness.

It is not a time thing so much as an understanding. But what we need to do first is have a brief, simplified overview of the last two decades and part way through this one. I'm going to use Ezekiel then just as a very fast parable.

We have, I'll give you three parts to Ezekiel's vision. In the spirit Ezekiel is carried by the hand of the Lord and set down in the midst of a valley which is full of bones. In my mind I always wondered what it would be like to be a prophet like Ezekiel and be picked up and carried by the Lord or the Spirit of the Lord and then for a brief moment you are hanging over a valley full of bones.

One of the questions you might ask is, how did those bones get to be there and exactly what is this? Maybe it's a prophet's graveyard and how do bones get scattered like they have? Maybe they were dropped from a very large height, perhaps the one that I'm at. And then God asks you a question which is even more scary. Maybe this graveyard got to be like that by getting the wrong answer to this question.

And the question God asks him is, son of man, can these bones live? And our vision here is then a lonely prophet, just a very singular situation at this moment surveying what looked like a hopeless waste and then called to do something very radical. In the 1960s we had one characteristic to put across the 60s. It was a very individualistic decade and in some ways the 80s are like that but in a different way.

To study and understand the 60s is to understand some very key and important things about the 80s. So if you could put individual, the Lord asks him, son of man, can these bones live? This is the safe answer if God ever asks you a question like that. What if he said, well, yes, of course? Might say presumption.

Ah! Or if he said, well, obviously not, they're dead, aren't they? Unbelief. Ah! So here is the safe fundamental answer, oh Lord, you know. That is a very, very safe answer when God asks you a question, Lord, you know.

So he answers it that way. And then God asks him to do something totally strange, something completely, he said, son of man, preach to these bones. Well, you know, if you're rationalistic and materialistic and you had the mindset of the Western world, you'd say, well, that's stupid, I mean, not only can't they hear, I mean, I'm sure they've got those little bones connected there, but there's no drums, there's nothing down there.

They can't hear, they're just bones. But he was asked to do something completely different. Go preach to those bones, which he obeyed.

He just did it. So I preached as I was commanded. If we wanted one word to put across the 60s, one summary word, we'd see a whole bunch of lonely prophets.

The 60s was a group of individuals. They were a society full of people who were very lonely. Remember, all the lonely people, where do they all come from? All the lonely people, where do they all belong? And yet, with a prophet's heart, secular prophets were there.

They were saying this society was a very idealistic age. It was a generation of great despair. It looked like a wasteland.

It looked like the whole world would become a mass grave. In the 60s, technology had shown its bad face. And if we wanted one word to write across the 60s, we could probably put this word here, the radical 60s.

Everything in the 60s was radical. Radical movements and radical people and radical deodorants and radical tires, steel-belted radicals. There are some characteristics of this, I'll give you it very fast.

In the secular world, it was a very individualistic age. Secondly, it was an existential time. We already talked briefly about that whole taste and see thing.

Barry McGuire said in the 60s, when he was out in the streets, you were just given drugs, you weren't told what they did, you just ate them. The idea was try them, just taste and see, try it all out. And probably the saddest thing, this is in point two.

It was an independent age, everybody was doing their own thing. As a matter of fact, that was almost a battle cry of the 60s. Mama Cass Elliot said, you got to make your own kind of music, sing your own special song, that thing.

It was a very independent, existential, individualistic time. I've already mentioned how nobody liked plastic in the 60s. It was, you know, a great deal of idealism, but really didn't work out.

Now the 60s is not a time, it is a consciousness. There are some parts of the Western world that are just experiencing the 60s for the first time. Later on we'll get into the fundamental needs that were tempted to be met, which gave rise to the new consciousness.

But I'm going to give you this in a very fast, summary fashion. The individualism came as a reaction to the machine age, we already looked at that. Everybody thought they were machines and so that existential thing was a reaction to rationalism.

The independent thing was a reaction to mass consciousness, I am a number. Now there are many other things we could say about the 60s, but those will do for the time being. We'll come back a little later and look in detail at some of the fundamental needs there.

In the Christian church, this is true on the streets, in the Christian church there were some parallels. It was a time, for instance, in the 60s of breaking of traditions. Great deal of traditions were broken in the 60s.

There was the charismatic movement. There was the Jesus movement. There was the church renewal movement.

Old time Pentecostal churches began to seriously reevaluate their whole strategies and plans. Perfectly sane Anglicans began speaking in funny languages. All kinds of strange things happened in the 60s.

We had those three movements. The emphasis in the church during that time would be the mystical, the work of the Holy Spirit was rediscovered in the 1960s. Tremendous emphasis on the Holy Spirit.

What does He do? Experience, personal renewal. People asked, Brother, have you had an experience with Jesus? Has your church experienced the power of the Holy Spirit? Are you moving in the experiences of God? You know, that thing. It was a whole thing like that.

It's weakness in the church is the same as in the street, independent spirit. There were a great number of prophets in the 1960s who went out preaching society should get their act together and their act wasn't together. They went out telling people you should get your family straight and their family wasn't straight.

A great number of tradition breaking without the solidity. In other words, a lot of experience but very little understanding. The kids out there smoked dope and praised the Lord.

It was a real mess out there. I was on the streets preaching in the 60s in the Jesus movement and doing some stuff in the churches and it was a strange time. The greatest weakness then, an independent spirit.

I think that's the bottom line in deception, doing your own thing. A lack of a servant's heart and out of that, of course, came great hurt. There was a great deal of hurt and with it, consequent bitterness in the 60s.

And that was true just as much in the churches as it was on the streets. A lot of kids went out hoping with great idealism to start a new world. We'll preach a message that will change the world.

Everything fell apart. A tremendous lot of hurt and bitterness came out of that. Then, now if I'm allowed to rub this off, I want to put something here on the next decade.

Now understand again, we use decade just in a very loose sense. In parts of Europe, the 60s took place in the 50s. There are some parts of the world where it's 1990s now.

It's a consciousness, not a time. Matter of fact, it seemed like the 60s started in like 1958 and lasted through to 1972. It was about that time.

The next decade, the 1970s, just using our loose parable here of Ezekiel and the bones. Part two, after preaching this, here we are, just one lonely person preaching a radical message. In the 70s, the bones started coming together.

As he prophesied, as he commanded, and the bones began to link. And so using this bones coming together thing, we will put a word on the 70s. We'll call them the therapeutic 70s.

It was a decade of community. Community in the church, world community in the secular consciousness. The idea, we live in a global village.

Mankind is not a series of isolated states. We're a one world people. We've got to start thinking about resources in a global scale, and we've got to start being concerned about our brethren.

Of course, television opened up a theater of awareness in the whole world. So in the 70s, we had in the secular world, we could call this instead of communal, community communal, great emphasis in the hip movement. Kids left the streets and went up to try and found farms and forests and that kind of go back to nature thing.

We are stardust, we are gold, and they said in Woodstock, we've got to get ourselves back to the garden. There was a desire to move away from fragmented society and back into the family patterns, even if they were new style family patterns with, you know, maybe three dads and eight mothers and the Charles Manson thing was the worst examples of those kind of things. In the 70s, consciousness came that we were living in Spaceship Earth, and that there were dwindling resources, seemed like a great deal of alarm that we'd run out of fuel and food and begin to conserve things.

At the same time, tension went up. It became more and more pressure in the world. People got scared to do anything unless anything was triggered off and something really dangerous took place like a holocaust.

So in the secular world, those were some of the things. A major consequence of that, this whole conservation, dwindling resources, scary time thing, was a tremendous emphasis on self-help, all the therapies that came out during that time. Some of the major books of that decade, Thomas Harris's I'm Okay, You're Okay, Looking Out for Number One, was another one by Robert Ringer, major bestsellers, international bestsellers.

Take care of yourself. It was Tom Skinner, not B.F. Skinner, the psychologist, but Tom Skinner, the black evangelical who said yesterday's radical is today's conservative because he's so busy conserving the things he got by being radical he can't afford to be radical anymore. Many of those who were in the 60s were the leading cutting edge.

By the late 70s and early 80s, they were almost the exact clone of what they stood against in the 60s. There's Tom Hayden who used to be one of the Chicago 7 type characters and now he's running in conservative politics. Jane Fonda is now teaching yuppies how to do aerobics.

So, there was a real disillusionment with the whole idealistic thing. They realized you can't really change the world that much except by blowing it up. They weren't keen to do that, so conservatism.

What was happening in the church at this time? Well, in a parallel to this, and I often believe the secular world reflects what God is doing in the church in a perverted, twisted way. It was a time of rebuilding relationships. A great deal of seminars came out in that time.

There weren't a lot of seminars in the 60s, they were more, you know, laying hands on people indiscriminately. But in the 70s, the Gotthard seminars in the US, for instance, flowered. Tremendous, 35,000 people coming for a week to study the basics.

Not to have an experience, but to find out some reasons and facts, and the heart of the thing was building your family back, your marriage back, getting your children's life in order. Tremendous, a lot of emphasis on relationship. We could say rebuilding or building, if you like, these three things.

The marriage, the family, and the church. Emphasis on getting the church right, getting everything structured right, getting the family right, getting your marriage in order, that stuff. Major ministry things there.

Here were some of the key emphasis of the 70s, self-acceptance. Everybody began to preach messages on self-acceptance, you know, finding out who you really are. Might be in danger of turning into a cabbage, you know, discover your real identity.

Then we had healing of the memories. This was another major thing. Have all these hurt memories that you've imported from childhood.

In the secular world, there were people like John Lennon doing primal screams, you know, releasing the tensions that you accumulated in the past, singing songs like Mama don't cry, Daddy come home, you know, stuff like this. But in the church, we were much quieter. We were praying for healing of the memories.

Then we had the seminars, of course, we already mentioned. Family and marriage won by the dozen, proliferated in the 70s. The truth emphasized in this case was not the experience, the mystical side of the Christian church, but in this case, the Reformed stream.

The Reformation's great strength, of course, has always been Scripture, Scripture. What does the Word of God say? And so many serious questions were asked. Okay, you've had an experience with Jesus, but is the Jesus you've had an experience with the Jesus of the Bible or one of your own imagination? You say you've experienced spiritual gifts.

Is that a biblical spiritual gift or is that your own thing? What is the theological basis for you saying your church is in a renewal? In other words, match it back to the Word. Find reasons for why your experience is real and if not, throw it out. Its truth emphasized then was the Word of God, whereas up here it would have been the Spirit of God.

And its strength was corporate renewal, corporate renewal. Some steps were taken during that time for Christians who hadn't even talked to each other before to realize, boy, you know, we've got to work together if we're going to see anything change in this world. Its great weakness in the 70s was this.

Because people began to conserve and take care of things, and this is the dominant problem now facing us in the 80s among kids. Because the emphasis was conserve, you know, the parents were the ones who went out and threw themselves down in front of trains to stop armed shipments coming through and 65% of that generation in the US of kids used drugs and so that means roughly 65% of the parents are drug users or ex-drug users or recreational drug users and their kids grew up seeing all the consequences of that fragmentation, saw families fall apart, and even secular people are choosing much more carefully. Now partners, if they're going to get married at all, then it's going to be a long-term commitment thing and that's a conservative reaction to this whole destruction, no home family thing.

And the weakness would be apathy and materialism and we inherit that. Now a great chunk then of young people who have grown up in the 70s consciousness, their big thing is man shall live by bread alone if he can find the right bread. It's got to be good bread though.

The reason why I'm not living at the moment is because I get this wonder bread which is awful. If I could get a good organic bread then I will live by bread alone and they're all out looking for that. A new excellent article in Christianity Today by Jay Kessler who recently resigned from Youth for Christ and became president of a Christian college.

Great analysis in there of some of the things seen. Now Jay of course is a generation older than people like me who grew up in the 60s and that was my growing up period. Jay grew up a generation before that, 50s, Eisenhower era, the Fonz era.

The Fonz era with the bobby socks and the, anyway. Now we go to the third thing and that's where we come to the 80s. Apathy and materialism, the problem with the 70s.

The 80s, now the last thing, Ezekiel is watching the bones come together, flesh begins to, the muscles and the tissue and all of that. I mean you talk about a horror movie, this is kind of the body snatches in reverse, you know, the thing begins to assemble there. And then finally a word comes again to Ezekiel, a second word, prophesy to the wind, preach to the wind, come from the four corners of the earth and breathe on these slain that they may live.

And they rose and they stood on their feet and here's where we come to the 80s. An exceedingly great army, the scripture says. So I see in the 80s two key themes, there's three but at least two here.

The first one is militancy, true 80s consciousness is a militant consciousness. In this way it is a little like the 60s but different from the 60s in that the 60s was an individual militancy, they could never agree long enough to get their act together. Free speech movement, nobody could decide who was going to speak first, they all argued too much.

But in the 80s it is an organized militancy, it is a group militancy and therefore much scarier and much more effective. The second word we want to put beside the 80s because this is such a significant decade, it really deserves a double word, would be the word apocalyptic. What do we mean by apocalyptic? The sense that all of history may just come together in your time.

For better or worse this is the decade that makes it. As a matter of fact in secular consciousness there were two dates, one was 1984 which is last year and the other one was 2001. 2001 was, you see 1994 was the key year, they felt if we could survive 1994 there might be a 2001, well here we are in 1985.

During 1994 all kinds of people put out big brother is watching you type, you know, and was scared stiff and nobody killed each other for good. The world wasn't blown up in 1984. So maybe they think we still better watch very carefully because 85 we might have miscalculated by a year.

The general idea is if you survive that there might be this, and this is a millennium, this is a whole new hope, a whole new consciousness. It's men like Alvin Toffler who first did Future Shock who now did the third wave who believe that we're witnessing the destruction of one entire kind of civilization, one based on what Jeremy Rifkin calls pyrotechnology, the use of fire and it's tied in with fuels and fossils and steel and all that, and that's the industrial age and it's passing away and it's being replaced by another age, the information age. And Toffler is an optimist.

He believes that signs of destruction around are necessary because one whole kind of way of looking at the world, the West, remember, for a couple of hundred years has had this industrial revolution which has totally changed the way most of the world lives. Moved from an agricultural age which for thousands of years was true, everybody living small families growing your own food, to an industrial age where the centralized distribution, you go to the supermarket to buy your food, you go on a flight to visit your grandmother because she lives in another country and you don't know where your home is anyway because you moved 25 times in the last three years. The third age now, Toffler believes, is this information age.

And so the general idea means if we can survive this decade there may be a millennium where people will spread out to the stars and this whole thing. That's 2010. And it becomes very interesting because we see how it's picked up in that hope, a supernatural dimension we look at in a second.

Alright, what are the emphases of the 80s? In the secular world we could say it's the watershed decade. It is the decade that makes the choice. It is the decade of decision, would be a great name for it, is the one in which the choices that are made will determine the future forever, one way or another for humanity.

Secondly, there is a very real consciousness. The majority of young people today believe they are going to be in a nuclear war, World War III. They believe it will happen in their lifetime very soon.

So that's a very scary thing for kids now. Six, these people were scared of the bomb. In the 80s everybody knows what the bomb is more profoundly, it's not just an apocalyptic thing, they know what it can do, they've seen the day after, they've explored it, they've had 4,000 talk shows, they've watched reruns of Hiroshima, they just know more profoundly, they grew up with it, not just an idea, their parents grew up with it, and their parents were paranoid.

Now they've inherited all that. You can see it in the change of fears, 20 years ago kids used to be afraid of the dark, now one of the top five fears is being destroyed by an atomic bomb, and we're talking little kids, 8 or 9, we're talking about. The third thing, and this is one I want to spend most time with, is what I call psychic technology, and we'll explain that later on.

It is the new consciousness, it is the marriage of the occult and the technological. It is what C.S. Lewis called the age of the materialist magicians. What should be going on in the church now, in the cutting edge

of the 80's consciousness? Well, first of all, see these things here? Again, I believe what's happening in the secular world is a perverse reflection of what God is doing in the church.

A great army stand on their feet, a second word has come, the wind is beginning to blow again, and an army is standing on its feet. We see this in missions, we see what is going on around the world. God is raising up a whole generation, more people, it's being said often, more people will become Christians during the 1980's than any other time in the church's history.

There is an incredible reaping going on now. The worst of the whole of that is not the communist world, nor the third world nations, but the western world. So to minister to the western world is to minister to the most backslidden, hard to preach to, most difficult group of that.

I know the muslims are hard, and I know the communists are hard, but you ain't seen nothing yet till you run into a kid with a whole history of Calvinism or Catholicism and that's it. No great deep experiences of God in their life, just a form and a tradition which they've walked out on. I think it's 1,700 people give up profession, faith in God or religion or the Bible or Christ in the western world every single day.

We are the ones who drop in the curb, and there are reasons for this. Let's look at what the church's equivalent is then. First, the truth is that this is an incredible time for preaching the gospel.

It is a time for world missions. It is a time for the church to become an army, and whenever you put a militancy in your ministry or in your preaching, it strikes a chord with kids of the eighties. It just goes boing, boing, whoa, that's what I've been looking for.

You see, in many, many ways, the punkers on the street understand more about the decade than many of the ones who profess to know Jesus. They understand that all of this materialism stuff and this conservative stuff is not going to do anything. I have no answers, but they do have an analysis that is very accurate.

Something has to change. This plastic, cardboard, toothpaste world is not doing it. It's not meeting fundamental needs.

And there is a militancy I see about kids. You see it in the rising, in the United States, a rising interest of young people for the Ku Klux Klan. The Nazi thing.

You've seen the jackboots and the insignias and the very, very, even the music. If you watch some MTV in the U.S. or if you watch a radio with pictures in New Zealand or Australia or the music videos, you'll see there's a tremendous lot of militancy coming in there. There's the, some of the images that are there are patently militant.

It should be no secret to us that movies like Rambo and other movies like that pull kids out of the woodwork. And it's not just America. Rambo is the number one selling movie in Beirut, Lebanon.

This is a consciousness. It's not a cultural thing. It's a desire for heroes and for people who will stand up against overwhelming odds and win.

Terrorists think like that. I'm only one person, but I can bring the world on my knees if I have a purpose that consumes me and means more to me than my life. And they understand people like Rambo, even though he's a fantasy figure.

Then secondly, this thing here, it is a tremendous time for preaching a sense of destiny. Young people have no sense of purpose. They have no cosmic sense.

And I feel like they tie into anything, that anything means anything, that their life is just totally... The apathy of the 60s was an apathy of not knowing enough about things. The apathy of the 80s is knowing so much about it, you don't, you can't do anything. It's just so big, you think, well, what can you do? What can one person do? Doug Kessler in his interview here talks about one of the hard things, and this of course, a lot of it is 70s stuff still, and you get conservative churches are still in the 70s, some are still in the 60s, some even are still in the 40s.

Youth leaders and teachers constantly tell me you can't get kids to share their opinions in a group larger than three or four. That's why it's unusual. Don, see, they don't do that.

Kids just won't talk. One professor with a national teaching award told me if it wasn't for a middle-aged homemaker in his class, he'd have no one to talk to. The kids sit there like they're painted on the chairs.

They just stare at him because they can't share their opinions for fear of rejection. This is no cause for hate or anger. It is a reason for sadness, a symptom of almost terminal selfishness.

It's a complete self-centered thing. No sense of great, my life will count something in the cosmos, that thing. There's a hunger there for, I want my life to mean something to the whole universe, not just shrink in, lock in, and eat, drink, and be married, that thing.

So what does a church need to be preaching? Sense of destiny. You need to talk about destiny. You need to give illustrations from the past of men and women whose lives were touched by an unseen hand and then that were put onto the front stage of history and changed it, shifted it.

That's the apocalyptic sense. In its real power, it's a Christian sense of history. And then the strength of the 80s, again, would be, let's put something beside it, the sovereignty of God.

We need to study again that. I'm not a Calvinist in any way, shape, or form, but I do believe that John Calvin's contribution here is necessary. We need to get a picture, and I think people who are not Calvinists need to at least spend a lot of time developing a theology that allows the biblical God to interfere with the weird little plans of man.

Don't you think that's all right? See, a great deal of the Western world's church is humanistic. It does not really believe in divine intervention. Xavier used a powerful illustration.

Two men sitting in a room, one a Christian, one an atheist, and the room they sit in represents the whole universe. And these two men, one of them, the atheist, says, I'm going to make a study of our known universe. So he spends years and years and he collects everything there is to know about this room.

He puts it in a series of finely bound encyclopedias and the Christian reads it through and is deeply impressed. And he says, this is fabulous, but you left one thing out. And the atheist says, what? It's all in there.

And he says, no, you left out the one who designed us and put us in the room. The atheist says, there isn't any such person. I only put in what is real in this thing, not fairy stories and myths.

At that point, he says, the clock up on the wall stops. And they both look up and realize the clock is very important and they say, well, one of us is going to have to climb up there and restart that clock. And the Christian looks at the other and he says, well, there is another alternative.

And he says, you mean to leave the clock stopped? And the Christian says, no, I can ask the one who designed us and put us in there if he will start the clock. And Schaeffer's question was, do modern Christians believe that God could start the clock? And it's a very important thing because without that, you're not Christians, you're deists. You're people who believe that God wound up the universe and walked out.

And you see, we need people who are not deists, but people who believe that God still intervenes. If I didn't believe that, I'd pack up and go home. It's not worth preaching.

See, kids think, what can I do? And then humanistically, I'd have to get millions of people to make any difference in the world. You ever taken a team of 10 people into a city of 40,000? I don't care how long you preach there. See that? Now, if you take a team of a million people into a city of 20,000, you might have an impact.

But if numbers are going to do it, it's going to be a real problem. But if there's somebody there bigger than you, who is in charge of history, and your job is just plug in and get on the bus when it's going in the right direction, then that is powerful. And that has to come through to kids.

They've got to be separated from the idea, it's just me and me alone. That's the only thing, and if that's the way it is, who can do anything? They've got to be plugged into a sense of cosmic consciousness and a biblical sense. My God is going to rule the universe.

I get a chance, I can go with Him, I can get with it, or check out. But He is going to rule. He is going to have a kingdom.

I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. My image used to always be that, you know, there was a church in there and they're playing the piano louder because the devil was bashing on the gates, and quick play it louder, I think I hear him coming, and then I realize it's the gates of hell, it's not the battering rams of hell, it's not the gates of the church that shall hold up against the devil's onslaughts. It is the church out there with a big old cross-shaped battering ram, and the prisoners of hell and Satan saying, you can't have these, they're mine, and the church going, shut up, ba-boom, ba-boom, and punching holes in that thing.

That's the gates of hell shall not prevail against. It's a militancy there. The church is an army, and it needs to be mobilized.

To that we could add one more thing, because the central attack in our day of the satanic world is on the family, the Christian family. Satan knows if he can wreck the family, and Christians don't have great records here on marriages or anything else, because of this attack. Matter of fact, I don't know what it is in other countries, but in New Zealand we have Satanists and witches praying and fasting every week for the destruction of Christian families and homes.

They target key Christian leaders and actually pray and fast to Satan that that home or that family or that church or that ministry will be destroyed publicly. To break down our great statistics, if you have a Christian home and a Christian marriage, it will hold up a lot better than if it wasn't, because he knows

that's the one central attack there. So, the family.

Let's put to this, militant and apocalyptic, let's put a sense of family. We could say the father heart of God, what God is like. Now, you've got to tell kids what a real father is supposed to be like.

You can't just say God's like a father, because he's the guy that punches holes in the walls and takes mom out every Friday night, you know. You've got to, I always have to say God is a real father. He's what fathers are supposed to be like.

The truth emphasized in this case is simply church history. The testimony of the life of God down through, we'll call it the blood, understand that? Church history is really the great need of the 1980s. See, kids from the 60s, they understood who they were, but they didn't know, with, you see, this experience, mystical, here's the word, many kids who got saved in the 60s had an experience with God, then they, you know, their pastor taught them a lot of the Bible.

You know, I'm thinking of churches like Chuck Smith Church, Calvary Chapel in Costa Mesa where there were constant Bible studies and 5,000 kids would be there an hour early to, you know. So, there was a lot of both experiences and later on scripture. But what kids don't have today, and which is very, very needed, is a sense of history.

They don't have, they don't know what the church said before. They believe that everything their pastor said has got to be the inspired word of God because they don't know what the church said in the past. And that's why the Catholic Church, Roman Catholic Church, has had such strong conversions today from the Protestant world.

Because you see, the Catholic Church's big thing, Roman Catholic Church's big thing has not been either of these two but this. What does the church say? What is the historical stream of the church? Are you surprised to know that a lot of Pentecostals, a lot of Protestants, have left the Pentecostal Church or left the Protestant Church and joined the Catholic Church? Now why is that? Is it because the Catholic Church has much heavier doctrine or much better experiences? No. Os Guinness points this out.

Have you seen a windsurfer? You know what a windsurfer looks like? It's a little boat-like thing, like a surfboard with a sail on it. You know, obviously you won't have a lot of these in the middle of London. When a person's on a windsurfer, they can go in almost any direction.

You know, as the wind changes, they can flip around, they can go this way, this way. Windsurfer's a very, very agile, mobile thing, and back this way. In contrast, is it the Queen Elizabeth that they mobilized in Britain to take over for the Argentina thing? Was that the ship? Well, that's a big ship, and apparently on the way over, they lost a sailor.

He fell overboard. And by the time they found out he'd fallen overboard, he was out of sight. And so one young sailor said, we've got to stop the ship and turn it around.

They said, forget it. We can't do it. He's gone.

He said, why? He said, why? He said, because it would take, I think it took like three miles or something to turn the ship around, and it would take longer time than he would be alive in the water. It takes a, when you get a big monstrous thing like that, it can't flip around like a windsurfer. Now new movements and new ministries just started in the last, we'll say new, in the last fifty to a hundred years.

Their strength is that, hey, we move with God, you know, if God's going this way, we go this way. If he's going this way, we're not bound to any of these old traditional things. Whereas some of these old churches have been around, you know, the Catholic church, the Anglicans have been here, you know, for multiple eons.

See, now, here's what Os Guinness says, which would you rather be in, in a storm? So as the external pressures build up, people are a little scared of windsurfers. They shift into QE2s, but though they're ponderous, they've been here a long time. Now if you have belonged to a work or a ministry that's less than a century old, how do you deal with that? I'll tell you how you deal with it.

You see that the church is not your thing that you just started a hundred years ago. The church is something God has had in his heart since the beginning of time. And just because an institution's been there for multiple centuries doesn't necessarily mean it's still the church.

But you can't give to kids the sense of, hey, our thing is the hottest, newest thing, because you see, these kids have no sense of history. In the 1960s, thousands, ten thousand kids dropped out of history courses. Why? Eat, drink, and be merry.

There wasn't going to be any tomorrow, so who cared a fat about the past? You've got to give kids a sense of history. Now how do you do that? The best way to do it, I know, is to tell them how God dealt with people all through the ages, to go back into the past, to make contemporary the illustrations of the past so they feel themselves part of the ongoing stream of history. So I'm a brother to the Methodists.

I'm excited about Luther's justification by faith. I'm deeply into Calvin's sovereignty of God. I'm nuts about Finney's preaching.

I like it. Do you see that? I want to become a real eclectic, in the sense of taking that which God has done right through the past and identifying with every real move of God. I don't want to shut off one part of the body of Christ, because they didn't have the particular light we have in our enlightened time.

So what's the best thing you can do? Is start reading church history. Start soaking yourself in the biographies of men and women of God. When I did that little book, *Revival*, basically that was what that was designed to do.

It was an attempt to summarize for kids, to cut out some of the boring stuff, the stuff like on the 3rd of the 14th, 19th century, that kind of 1627, get rid of the cobblestones and the cobwebs. I wanted to go to the heart of God did this with this young person. So if it's the same God in each century, he ought to be able to do the same thing today, because all the promises of God are yea and amen in Christ Jesus.

Kids can get into that. You can read stories of God saving men like Wesley from the burning building and have 1980s kids with their hair standing on end saying, shoot, if he did that then, what could he do now? You see that? You need to read church history, you need to read biography, you need to soak yourself in the work of the church, and whatever you do, do not isolate yourself. We all have distinctives in our theology and in our direction and our methodology, but do not isolate yourself from the rest of the body of Christ, because you do that at the cost of the whole 1980s consciousness.

In other words, if you want to minister to this one, you better make sure those kids know that Christianity was not invented on the west coast during the Jesus movement. It didn't come out of a reaction to what was happening in the left bank in Paris. It is an old thing.

It goes way back. It goes back before anything else. That's why I did my galactic management card.

That's the whole point of that thing, this galactic management, associates, family owned and operated. That's my visiting card. People say, what do you do? I say, well, I'm with galactic management associates.

They say, well, what is that? I say, well, it's a very, very old corporation, but basically we're a group of associates who intend to rule and reign over the universe. They go, what? How old is this? I said, it's the oldest group I know. It's really the oldest group.

He said, I've never even heard of it. I said, well, it's all different names for it. That's what makes it so hard to track down.

He said, well, how many people are in this? I said, oh, boy, I understand that it'd be very hard to even count the number of people who are involved in this when all the chips are in it. I said, well, how do you get in? I said, it's exceptionally costly to get into this. It really costs you.

How much did it cost you? I said, it cost me everything. I said, well, how would I get in? I said, how much you got? Cost you everything you got. So I want people to understand this Christian gospel is not like Rotary Club or Lions International.

It is a galactic, it is a cosmic, it is a universal thing. C.S. Lewis, in talking to some secular science fiction writers shortly before he died, he was doing a forward to a series of secular science fiction stories, and you understand Lewis wrote some of the first science fiction, before it was even popular. Science fiction is modern man's prophecy.

It's like technology is modern man's Holy Spirit. And they were talking to him about his early novels, and one of them said, it seems to me that if religion would be cosmic or universal, that science fiction would be one of the normal natural ways to write about it. And he said, yes, and it surprises me that the rest of the church hasn't caught on on that.

In other words, I see now the reverse happening. People borrowing from biblical principles and illusions and importing them over to science fiction or science fantasy, and picking up hundreds of thousands of adherents to what is actually a borrowed, perverted fantasy from a biblical reality. I'm almost prepared to say this, that the closer you get to the real thing and clone it off in fantasy, the more power it will have to people, because what they're really looking for is the church.

As a matter of fact, I've been working on a science fiction novel, it'll be 16 years this year, which I want to make into a movie, a secular movie, not a religious movie with Billy Graham preaching at the end or anybody else, but a movie that'll make people's hair stand on end and go, what in the world is that? You know, that kind of movie. A Christian Jonathan Livingstone, Segal, Rosemary's Baby type movie. And one of the questions you have to ask when you're writing a near-future novel, because this isn't Luke Skywalker on other galaxies, it's set in the immediate future of Earth, and it doesn't have UFOs landing and lizard creatures getting out and zapping each other.

One of the questions you have to ask is, what is the place of various institutions in the future? And one of them is, what is the place of the church in the future? Is there a church in the future, and if so, how does, just in constructing that world? As I read that I laughed my head off, I thought, that's really funny. Is there a church in the future? You go far enough in the future and that's all there is, is the church. So all that's there, see? So I'll say this to you, get acquainted now with your brothers and sisters in the past, and that

will give you a solidity, it will give you a security, it will give you a sense of an authority when you speak.

You get up and say, thus saith the Lord, you're not just saying because, you know, I believe it because I had a Bible study on it yesterday, or I believe it because the Spirit moved on me to say this is true, you're saying the Spirit moved, the Word says, and the church has spoken. And you've got a three-fold cord that is not quickly broken. That will add dimension to your preaching and authority there, otherwise you'd go out feeling like, well, you know, I had Christians, and I was only saved a few years ago, so I don't really know that I've got anything important to share, but we feel that personally that this will help you, and I have got a book and we just took some stuff on apologetics that are kind of real interesting.

You know, speak like men and women who know something real to a dying and destroyed generation. Without that authority, nobody's going to listen. Kids are hungry for authority.

They're looking for somebody to stand up and go, this is it. I'm not, I think, I hope, I guess. And you get that authority, I think, from those three streams tied together.

All right? Now, having said all of that, what is the strength of the 80s? We could say a renewal of the church. This is the church's big day. I believe that you'll see great movements to network Christian works and organizations together.

Not on the secular way networks work, which is, you know, let's just have a common world government or something, but I'll give you a biblical equivalent of the secular network. Constance Cumbie doesn't like the word network, and if I use this I may be accused of being part of the New Age movement, but I'm part of the ultimate age movement. And here in Malachi 3, don't worry, I'm not going to speak on tithing, but in Malachi there is the original from which I think the secular networking concept is a clone.

Here's the way it goes. Verse 16 of Malachi 3, Then they that feared the Lord spoke often one to another. See the two things? You have an awesome reverence to God this way, and you speak often one to another this way.

You can put it like this. The kingdom of God is built on friendship. Kingdom of God is built on friendship.

That is how the kingdom of God grows. I don't mean secular humanistic friendship, I mean friendship in the fear of God. And it's a beautiful and simple thing.

It goes like this. If I want to build the kingdom of God, my first responsibility is to tune this way and get a proper fear of God. I must have a reverence for Him.

I must reverence what He says. People look at men like Yong E. Cho and they say, you know, the reason why his church is growing so much is because he's got cell groups, he's got prayer meetings. That's all true.

But I'll tell you another reason. Every man I know who's being used of God has a fear of the Lord. They're properly and genuinely afraid of God in the right way.

They're not that easy, laid back, mellow, hi God, how's tricks today type thing. It's so dominant in the western world. We're very strong in the personal, but we're not too knowledgeable today about the eternal infinite awesomeness of God, the otherness of God.

We need to know more about that. It's where the miraculous comes from, it's where the wonder comes from, it's in the mystery in the Christian church. I think because of that last loss of mystery, there are people who are lost today that we need to give an example.

Here is a young man who was nine years old. His sister Anne's fiancé was killed in the Korean War. You'd known him for years and thought of him as a big brother, a substitute for his hard working success driven dad.

It was this young man's first brush with death, a concept that had been sketched and explained to him in religious terms. Young children don't often sort out their feelings about God until forced to, but this young man was an exception. At six, he had a mystical experience, his effect still lingers with him.

It centered on God, what is God, but more than that, what is reality? What is it? So if you reach a point and suddenly you say, wait a second, what is the world? What are we? What am I? How do I function in this? What's going on here? This young man, formerly his parents were Methodists, but he loathed the religious self-serving piety and especially resented Sunday school, which was worse than regular school in his eyes. And then his housekeeper was a German Lutheran, occasionally took him and his sister to a church service and it was all this very mysterious thing and it really made an impression on him. That young man had a very close brush with death in high school and he should have been killed.

He actually survived by what could be called a miracle. His car somersaulted in the air and his steel seatbelt broke, the plate in the floor and fired him through the top of the roof that he'd cut. He'd been hit by another car, side-on, driven by one of his friends who didn't see him until too late.

The car continued to somersault and smashed itself around a walnut tree, hit it so hard it snapped it off of the roots and moved it forward six feet and the car was literally welded around, hood or bonnet down, around that tree. When he came to in hospital, he realized his life had been spared and that he had something of great importance to contribute to the world. The young man's name was George Lucas.

He'd had a Christian there beside his bed when he came to and said, George, God spared your life for a purpose. You might have a Christian filmmaker today doing Christian originals of Star Wars. The last paragraph of his biography, Bar One, Lucas thinks he's put here for a purpose but he's not sure he's fulfilled it.

He's been so successful because of his ability to transfer his vision to the screen. Now his visions are too big for the screen and maybe too big for him. Lucas has lived his life with his destiny extended before him like a carrot on a stick.

One of his least favorite fantasies is about when he dies. He thinks God will look at him and say, you had your chance and you blew it. Get out.

Let's close in prayer. Father, we thank you for the unique time in which we live but we pray that you'll make us more aware and conscious of the directions and streams that we need to develop because we need to be you to meet these needs. We need to incarnate again the word of God to touch the lives that you've called us to reach.

Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/winkie-pratney/evangelizing-the-western-mindset-part-12/>

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