

Week Four: Recent Controversies (1940s-present)



30

Neo-evangelicalism

- ▶ “Neo-evangelicalism has the same theology of fundamentalism, it’s just nicer.” —D. G. Hart
- ▶ Institutions such as Fuller Theological Seminary and Dallas Theological Seminary were formed to rival the mainline seminaries.
- ▶ Magazines such as *Christianity Today* were founded within this timeframe.



31

Free Markets Again?

- ▶ The rise of conference culture through “Big Eva” took off during the 1980s. Not a bad thing. But they tend to compete with denominational structure.
- ▶ Christian radio grew in popularity, Christian television, and Christian branding.
- ▶ How often are we guilty of manufacturing endless needs?



32

The EPC

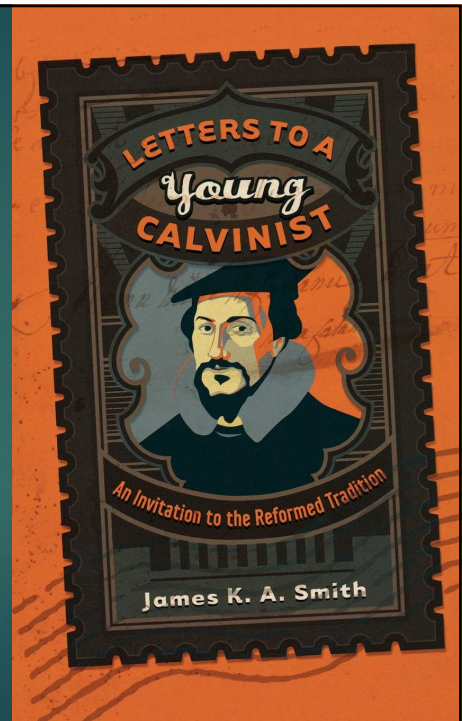
- ▶ The EPC is birthed within the movement of neo-evangelicalism and comes out of the mainline. This explains why it cannot fit neatly into a box.
- ▶ Since this is true, we need to know our EPC history well.
- ▶ I personally believe, outside of the POA, that the EPC can come across as “Vanilla Evangelicalism.”



33

Young, Restless, and Reformed

- ▶ In 2010, *Time* magazine named Calvinism one of the most influential movements in the world.
- ▶ This movement really shaped my generation.
- ▶ Hipster Calvinist pastors sprung up all over the place!
- ▶ Who inspired the movement? Tim Keller and John Piper did!



34

R.C. Sproul

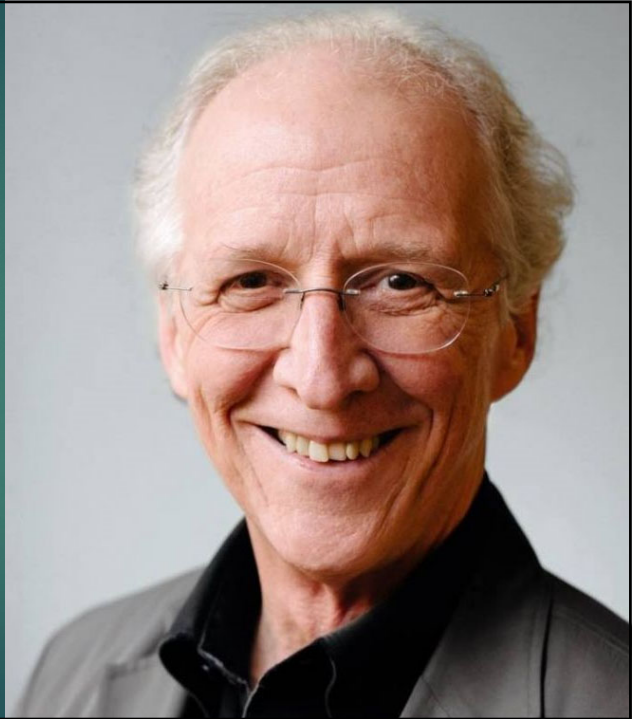
- ▶ R.C. Sproul was one of the founders of the PCA.
- ▶ He fashioned himself in the model of pastor-theologian.
- ▶ He founded Ligonier Ministries which popularized Presbyterian and Reformed Christianity.



35

John Piper

- ▶ I would argue that John Piper was the greatest preacher in his generation.
- ▶ He started Bethlehem Theological Seminary and I have heard many of the students convert from the Baptist tradition to Presbyterianism.
- ▶ He was the first figure to persuade me that preaching should be done through the Books of the Bible.



36

Tim Keller

- ▶ Presently, Tim Keller might be considered one of the most influential figures in the EPC.
- ▶ I really like Tim Keller. But, people try to “copy cat” his ministry techniques in NYC and apply them to situations that do not make sense.
- ▶ The “transformational model” isn’t for everyone.



37

Issues Going Forward

- ▶ **Social Justice:** the EPC will have a report on the “Revelation 7:11 Task Force” at the General Assembly. How will we implement its vision? Feelings are mixed.
- ▶ **Transition:** How do we transition from the leadership of the Baby Boomers to the Gen-Xers and Millennials?
- ▶ **Confessional or pragmatic?** As we have learned throughout our series, the challenge for the EPC is being both Evangelical and Reformed.



38

Conclusions

- ▶ American religion and Presbyterians need to realize that the free market mentality was there from the beginning and will always be a part of our experience.
- ▶ Who will replace Billy Graham's influence over evangelicalism?
- ▶ The church has its own culture. We need to realize this great truth!

THE
END

39