



Tent of Meeting Part 2 -- Whatever Happened to the Gospel?

By Bob DeWaay

My latest article set off a storm of protest. In the article I claimed that Beth Moore misinterpreted the significance of the tent of meeting. My specific claim was that Jesus Christ, the mediator of the New Covenant, provides the only way for us to draw near to God and I pointed to many sections of Scripture to establish that claim. I also claimed that we can only come to God through Christ's once for all shed blood and discussed many other important aspects of the gospel to complete the discussion.

For that some called me "vile, despicable," and labeled me with other invectives. Evidently, Christ and the blood atonement are too controversial to post on a site that espouses a "Christian Worldview." But note this: not one protester gave Biblical evidence that I was wrong about my description of the person and work of Christ. Not one. Has our evangelical movement come to the place where our people no longer tolerate the gospel?

The firestorm came because I dared question some teaching found on the *Be Still and Know That I Am God* DVD. To make sure I was not being unfair, I reviewed transcripts of the DVD. I used word searches to find terms related to the gospel. Here are the results: Blood = 0; Atonement = 0; Repent = 0; Believe in Christ = 0; Gospel = 0; Resurrection = 0; Faith = 4; Faith with God or Christ as the object = 0; The Cross = 1; Sin = 1. The gospel cannot be found on the DVD. The mention of sin and the cross once each were in a section about being in God's presence that does not explain the gospel.

What's my point? If someone saw the DVD in a store (promising in its title to explain how people can know God) and bought it hoping they could learn how to come to know God, they would never find out. They do not find out about Christ's pre-existence as God and with God. They do not find out about His virgin birth or sinless life. They do not find out that God's wrath is directed against their sin and that if they do not repent and believe the gospel they will end up in hell. They do not find out about Christ's death on the cross providing the blood atonement that will avert God's wrath against their sin if they put their faith in Christ. They do not find out about Christ's resurrection and ascension into heaven. They do not find out about Christ's mediatorial role, His

intercession for believers at the right hand of God, or His role in providing access to the throne of grace. In short, they find out NOTHING about how to know God. There is no gospel message on the entire DVD.

I assume that those featured on the DVD know these facts. Some of the people who responded to my article told me Beth Moore knows these facts. Perhaps Richard Foster and the others do as well. That leaves us with this question: How could such a group of evangelical luminaries put their collective talents together to produce a DVD about knowing God, and fail to tell anyone about the only way to truly know God—through the gospel of Jesus Christ?

The second question is this: Why, when I tell people these facts as I did in my last article—why do I invoke such a massive angry response? Paul rejoiced even when people with “selfish ambition” preached the true gospel (Philippians 1:15-18). Whatever people might imagine my motives to be, the article contained the truths of the gospel. I can only conclude that many contemporary Christians consider the gospel itself to be of little importance.

Is the gospel important enough to proclaim to everyone everywhere? It seems that the passion for gospel preaching has been severely eroded in the church. James Montgomery Boice discussed this shortly before he went to be with the Lord:

Very few people have anything like a Christian world- and life-view today, and we are discovering that—in a secular and increasingly hostile culture—mild evangelical consensus statements are inadequate. For all its apparent strength, evangelicalism has become weak at the center, and the result has been the surrender to the world’s wisdom, theology, agenda, and methods described earlier. Instead of reducing our affirmations in this way, we need to recover and proclaim the gospel of grace—a robust, full-orbed theology with a transcendent view of God and informed focus on the doctrines of his grace. (*Whatever Happened to the Gospel of Gace?*; page 37).

To turn this situation around, we must expect more out of our Christian leaders. Too often, when people become popular within evangelicalism, we quit expecting them to clearly proclaim the gospel. And worse still, we chastise anyone who points out that the gospel is no longer being preached. If we allow this to continue, evangelicalism will be “evangelical” in name only—not in substance.

A few years ago I wrote an article about the demise of gospel preaching in our movement [here](#). Since 2002 the situation has only become worse. When the early apostles were brought before authorities, dignitaries, or any audience of lost people, they preached the gospel. They did not tell any of these lost people, “God loves you and has a wonderful plan for your life.” They told them about the person and work of Christ, including His resurrection, and the need to repent and believe. They did not promise people reduced stress; they promised eternal life for those who embrace the message of the cross.

This is the description on [Christianbook.com](#) for the *Be Still* DVD:

Be Still is an extraordinary film that demonstrates contemplative reflection as a vital part of our everyday lives and as a remedy for the ills of the frenzied, fast-paced modern world. Featuring interviews with some of today's most highly respected authors, educators, and ministers, *Be Still* examines the importance of silent, reflective prayer as a way to truly be open to receiving God's guidance. This remarkable film also features a useful "how to" section that shows how contemplative prayer can be used by anyone at anytime to better one's life and reaffirm that which is truly important.

The DVD offers supernatural guidance and reduced stress. This is not what the gospel of Jesus Christ offers. It is no wonder the gospel is missing from the DVD; who needs the gospel to have a less hectic life? People are buying these DVD's at their local market and coming home lacking the information they need to find salvation. This is a tragic situation. The DVD promises guidance but ignores the only guidance that eternally matters, the guidance that the Son of God came to earth to give us – the gospel for the

forgiveness of sins so that we can be reconciled to God and experience eternal life with Him.

Published by Twin City Fellowship

Critical Issues Commentary

PO BOX 26127

St Louis Park MN 55426

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www.cicministry.org

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