

## Oh, What Their Joy and Their Glory Must Be

*Peter Abelard (1079–1142); tr. J. M. Neale (1818–1866)*

Oh, what their joy and their glory must be,  
Those endless Sabbaths the blessed ones see!  
Crowns for the valiant, to weary ones rest;  
God shall be all, and in all, ever blest.

In new Jerusalem joy shall be found,  
Blessings of peace shall forever abound;  
Wish and fulfillment are not severed there,  
Nor the things prayed for come short of the pray'r.

We, where no troubles distraction can bring,  
Safely the anthems of Zion shall sing;  
While for Your grace, Lord, their voices of praise  
Your blessed people shall evermore raise.

Now let us worship our Lord and our King,  
Joyfully raising our voices to sing:  
Praise to the Father, and praise to the Son,  
Praise to the Spirit, to God, Three in One.

## ΤΩ ΚΡΟΝΟΥ ΚΑΙΡΩ

### *In the Nick of Time*

#### **A Fundamentalist's Education**

*Kevin T. Bauder*

Word has come that Donald K. Campbell passed away last Sunday, January 14. Campbell was the third president of Dallas Theological Seminary, following John Walvoord and preceding Chuck Swindoll. He was still the president when I moved to Dallas to work on a Ph.D. in 1991.

At the time I was still completing a D.Min. program at Trinity Evangelical Divinity school. I had been looking for an academic doctorate, but I had not found a fundamentalist institution with a program that I considered especially responsible. I flirted with the idea of doing a Ph.D. in philosophy or intellectual history at a state school, but I really wanted to work on a bundle of ecclesiological issues. In the long run I settled on Dallas because its Ph.D. combined systematic and historical theology—disciplines that I believe are inseparable.

I wish that I could share my impressions of Campbell, but I can't recall ever having seen the man, let alone met him. I rarely attended the chapels, and other opportunities for doctoral students to interact with the president were few. I did meet Swindoll after he became president at Dallas—he actually stopped me on a sidewalk outside Turpin Library and struck up a conversation. The president at TEDS when I was there was Kenneth M. Meyer, and I never saw him, either (he actually died just over a year ago in Plymouth, Minnesota—the same town where Central Seminary is located).

My college and seminary degrees (B.A., M.Div., Th.M.) were from fundamentalist institutions. By the time I began doctoral studies, I had already taught in a fundamentalist college and held a pastorate in a fundamentalist church. Unlike many young fundamentalists (then or now) I was actually moving in a *more* conservative direction than the fundamentalism in which I had been reared. That direction is what raised the ecclesiological questions that I wanted to probe.

TEDS never had been a fundamentalist institution. Dallas was considered fundamentalist up until about 1972, when the school chose to participate in Explo '72. After that event, most of the fundamentalists exited the faculty (though Robert Lightner remained). My impression during the 1990s was that Dallas was still trying to live down its reputation for fundamentalism.



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In any case, I was given a cordial welcome at both institutions. I found myself in classes with graduates from many noteworthy seminaries and divinity schools, and I discovered that my college and seminary had prepared me as well as or better than all but a handful of them. For some reason—perhaps because I was an older student—I was never in awe of my professors, but I did enjoy the interaction with them. They covered quite a spectrum in terms of their positions and their direction. My official adviser at TEDS assigned me to an unofficial adviser from Garrett who was not even an evangelical. He was a postliberal theologian in the vein of Hans Frei. When I defended my major project, my official adviser invited me to leave the narrow world of fundamentalism for the broader pastures of the evangelical world. My unofficial adviser then interrupted him to invite me to come all the way over into the real world of mainstream ecumenism. He even offered me a job.

That was actually the only time that anybody in those schools tried to talk me out of fundamentalism (though a few fundamentalists have subsequently tried to throw me out). Instead, I found that my professors mostly considered fundamentalism to be a serious position. One even defended Jack Hyles in class. Rather than trying to argue me out of my fundamentalist ideas, these men probed and prodded to force me to sharpen those ideas. They genuinely wanted me to be the best fundamentalist that I could be.

During those years I had the opportunity to view the evangelical world at close quarters. I saw how things worked officially, but I was also privy to the kind of “closed door” conversations and meetings that reveal where the levers of power are really being pulled. What I discovered is that evangelicals were neither more nor less political, petty, and even vicious than fundamentalists. Neither were they any more or less thoughtful, generous, and even magnanimous. Human nature is human nature.

During about fifteen years in these institutions, I was never tempted to leave fundamentalism for the broader evangelical movement. I found plenty of ministry to keep me busy where I already was. I didn’t need a broader field of service, I wasn’t interested in greater prestige or respectability, and I couldn’t see that broader evangelicalism had solved any of the problems that confront fundamentalists. Furthermore, my private reading continued to move me toward a greater commitment to both separatism and methodological conservatism—certainly greater than I could find anywhere outside of fundamentalism. I came out of those two evangelical institutions more conservative and more of a separatist than I was when I went in.

That was not the case, however, for some of my peers. Both TEDS and Dallas had plenty of students who grew up in fundamentalist churches and who graduated from fundamentalist colleges. Most of them were younger than me and most had considerably less experience, though there were exceptions to this rule. Some were much brighter than me. I considered these

people friends, but I knew that they were moving in a different direction than I was. In the long run, only a few of them remained enthusiastic about the idea of fundamentalism. Many went into broader evangelicalism, and a handful have gone even further (I’m thinking of one in particular who has ended up in the American Baptist Churches USA—the mainline, liberal Baptist denomination).

I am grateful for what both TEDS and Dallas Seminary gave me. I didn’t have a single bad professor in either school. But I am also deeply concerned when I see the large numbers of young men from fundamentalism who have gone to evangelical schools and the small number of them who have ever returned.



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This essay is by Kevin T. Bauder, Research Professor of Historical and Systematic Theology at Central Baptist Theological Seminary. Not every one of the professors, students, or alumni of Central Seminary necessarily agrees with every opinion that it expresses.

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