



The Burning Bush - Online article archive

Beeke in bad company - and taking good men with him!!

In September past, Joel Beeke was advertised as preaching at Bell Creek Community Church in Livonia, Michigan, USA.

The church website contains quite a bit of information about itself. For instance, under **one link** it tells us "What happens during the church service?" "Each week is different, but some common elements include the following: Uplifting worship by a great band."



The kind of music to expect at Bell Creek Community Church

Bell Creek Community Church is firmly in the "contemporary worship" camp! Clanging cymbals and raucous guitars are all the rage there.

Links to John Piper

Resources from Desiring God

- My Dragon Skin Torn Off
- Does God Desire All to Be Saved? (New Book from John Piper)
- Meet the Miracle Next to You This Morning
- 20 Quotes from the Gospel Transformation Bible
- Six Benefits of Ordinary Daily Devotions

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Throughout this church website there are references to the "Desiring God" website as these images illustrate.

"Desiring God" is the website of John Piper. Bell Creek Community Church is clearly in the "New Calvinist" camp!

Piper has been repudiated by fundamentalists of the old school because of his music and his associations with men whose theology is questionable.

Joel Beeke places himself in the Piper camp when he preaches at a church which openly associates with and promotes John Piper's teaching.

It is not so very long ago that Dr Beeke indicated to some ministers of the Free Presbyterian Church of North America, when challenged by them about his associations with Piper, that he basically repudiated Piper's ministry and yet he is happy to promote his books through his **Reformation Heritage Books' site** and likewise promotes Piper and becomes associated with his ministry by preaching at Bell Creek Community Church.

Links to The Gospel Coalition Blog on the Bell Creek Community Church website also signify its spiritual pedigree!

This coalition is very much a mixed bag!! Amongst its **Council members** are many signatories of the Manhattan Declaration, a thoroughly ecumenical socio/religious document which prominent members of the Roman Catholic Church and other theological vagabonds have signed, as a perusal of **the list of signatories** will soon reveal.

The document quotes 'Mother' Teresa, Pope John Paul II and Lyndon B Johnson as authorities on the issues it promotes. (**Click here** to read the Manhattan Declaration)

Enough said, I think!!

Dr Beeke has become illustrative of the character in John Bunyan's "Pilgrim's Progress", Mr Facing-Both-Ways!

It just depends upon whom he is speaking to as to which way he is facing!

The Gospel Coalition Blog

- Survey: Majority of Americans Believe in the Existence of Satan and Demon Possession
- Eating, Body Image, and the Gospel
- 10 Books on Ecclesiology You Probably Haven't Read But Should
- Church Planting as Spiritual Warfare
- Don't Cancel That Short-Term Mission Trip

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Visit to England by Dr Beeke

Emmanuel Salisbury Church
 and ye shall know
 Seek God find

Salisbury Conference 2013
 Friday 27th and Saturday 28th September 2013 (God willing)
 Venue: Emmanuel Church, Wilton Road, Salisbury
 Theme: **Marriage and the Family, God's Way**
 Chairman: **Rev Malcolm H Watts** (Salisbury)

The guest speaker is to be **Dr Joel Beeke**, President of the Puritan Reformed Theological Seminary in Grand Rapids. Theme: **Marriage and the Family, God's Way**

Details of the sessions are as follows:
 Fri. 7:30 pm 1. How to love your spouse
 Sat. 10:30 am 2. How to rear your family as an office-bearer
 Sat. Noon: Lunch break - please bring your own food
 Sat. 1:00 pm 3. How to lead family worship
 Sat. 2:30 pm 4. How to handle problems at home.
 Sat. 4:00 pm Refreshments available following the final Saturday address.
 Dr Joel Beeke will preach at the Sabbath services on 29th September at 11:00 am & 6:30 pm.
 The conference will end with an After Church meeting at 8:30 pm

In September of this year, Dr Beeke visited England for a conference in Emmanuel Church, Salisbury, where the minister is Mr Malcolm Watts. He spoke at a number of meetings there on 27th and 28th September.

However, before the meeting in Emmanuel on 27th, he spoke at an Elim Pentecostal church in the afternoon.

Again, we have Dr Beeke associating himself with the unscriptural music of the modern "contemporary church" scene with its "worship band" as well as endorsing the theological errors of modern Pentecostalism.

On the Elim Christian Centre's website we are told the following concerning its ministry:

"THE MINISTRY: We believe in the ministries that Christ has set in His Church, namely, apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors and teachers and in the present operation of the manifold Gifts of the Holy Spirit according to the New Testament."

How Dr. Beeke's meetings were announced on the Emmanuel Church website.

The **website** also lists a woman as its Assistant Pastor.

Mr Hamlet Peter is **listed** as its "Worship Pastor/Elder" and says of himself that he is "in charge of the worship and sound ministry at Elim. I have a heart for worship and have a passion for God and His Church. I also play in a secular band called Tramps & Amps."

The Elim Christian Centre in Salisbury **states on its website** that it is part of the Elim Church movement. On this Elim site you have an example of the music that doubtless the Elim Christian Centre indulges in. **See this link.**

The Elim Church in Salisbury is openly in the ecumenical camp for it promotes the "Alpha Course" which is heavily endorsed by the Roman Catholic Church. Furthermore, the Elim church in England is listed as being a member of the "Churches Together in England" organisation as is, of course, **the Church of Rome.**

This is the body which replaced the "British Council of Churches" in 1990 and which **coordinates ecumenical events** and happenings in England.

Dr Beeke is really in bad company here!!

Therefore, this engagement by Dr Beeke at the Elim Christian Centre in Salisbury seems completely incompatible with his speaking, but some 4 hours later, at Mr Malcolm Watts' church conference. The music of the afternoon service would contrast greatly with the services in Emmanuel Church since it employs psalms-only without music in its worship!!

Below is an announcement taken from the Facebook site of Elim Christian Centre, Salisbury.

You are warmly invited to attend

THE OPENING OF

Pregnancy Advice
SALISBURY

Providing Christian Help in Crisis Pregnancy

FRIDAY 27TH SEPTEMBER 2013 AT 4pm

Elim Christian Centre
Dews Road, Salisbury, SP2 7SN

Speaker

Dr Joel R Beeke
Grand Rapids, USA

A short introduction to PAS followed by a viewing and light refreshments

Please RSVP to
 Foundation For Life (Salisbury)
 PO Box 2323, Salisbury SP2 2LD
 info@foundationforlifesalisbury.co.uk



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A bold and timely warning by Mr Malcolm Watts

Mr Watts, in an article entitled, **"The Crumbling of Evangelicalism"**, set forth his views on Pentecostalism and the Charismatic Movement and the harm they had done to the cause of God's Truth very clearly.

The article begins with these words:

"If the foundations be destroyed, what can the righteous do? (Psalm 11:3)

In recent years, due to repeated attacks on fundamental biblical doctrine and principle, the cause of Truth among us has been terribly undermined. The results are for all to see. Ministers and churches, once known for their faithful stand, have been moved from their formerly held positions (in many cases without realising it) and are now in a state of complete confusion.

In the evangelical world, foundations once thought unshakeable are presently crumbling before our very eyes. We must identify the movements responsible for this:"

Mr Watts then lists three movements he deems responsible for the attacks on Biblical doctrine which have resulted in the undermining of the cause of Truth - 1. The Ecumenical Movement. 2. The Charismatic Movement. 3. The Neo-Evangelical Movement.

When writing against the Charismatic Movement, Mr Watts says:

"The second movement responsible for shaking the foundations of the evangelical world is the charismatic movement. As a modern variant of Pentecostalism, this movement swept through Christendom in the 1960s and 1970s under the ministries of men like David du Plessis, Michael Harper and David Watson. It resembles Pentecostalism in its emphasis on one post - conversion experience and the consequent reception of spiritual gifts, notably the gift of tongues. It differs, however, in its international character and open ecumenical associations.

A few years ago some were saying that the charismatic movement was dying, but, phoenix - like, it seems to have risen from its own ashes, first in the form of the house church movement, and more recently in the form of the restoration movement. While maintaining its basic charismatic features it has also developed a belief in the restoration of apostolic and prophetic ministries as being vital for the establishment of God's kingdom.

Within evangelicalism, attitudes towards the charismatic movement have changed. At first there was high - level criticism and even denunciation. In the 1960s, for example, Dr Stephen Short wrote against 'the doctrinal error into which many in recent times have fallen respecting the subject of baptism in the Spirit'.

Dr Merrill Unger publicly lamented 'the widespread confusion occasioned by the charismatic movement in our times,' adding his conviction that, 'When the Word of God is given pre - eminence and when sound Bible doctrine, especially in the sphere of the theology of the Holy Spirit, is stressed and made the test of experience, the claims of charismatic Christianity will be rejected.'

However, by the early 1970s bewildered evangelicals were shifting positions. In September 1971, the editor of Crusade magazine wrote: 'In general, evangelicals have settled for a kind of open agnosticism about the movement, and in many ways this is a reasonable attitude.'

So the door was set ajar, and just six months later an article appeared in Christianity Today enthusiastically welcoming the movement. It declared: 'A new era of the Spirit has begun. The charismatic experience moves Christians far beyond glossolalia (tongues - speaking)... There is light on the horizon. An evangelical renaissance is becoming visible along the Christian highway, from the frontiers of the sects to the high places of the Roman Catholic communion. This appears to be one of the most strategic mo-



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ments in the church's history.'

Today, the phenomenon of the charismatic movement threatens to engulf the evangelical cause. 'It is indisputable,' wrote Robert Horn in an issue of Evangelical Times, 'that a large part - some would say the greater part - of the evangelical world is in some measure influenced by the various branches of the charismatic scene.'

One looks with increasing dismay at this section of 'evangelicalism', observing subordination of doctrine to experience, an obsession with signs and wonders, superficiality of belief and practice, constant claims to extra - biblical revelation, usurpation of apostleship, irreverence in public worship, carnal exhibitionism, entertainment - orientated services, orchestral music, dance, drama, and shameless antinomianism (the teaching which rejects the moral law) producing low and often appalling standards of behaviour. This is no time for euphemisms. We must recognise the charismatic movement for what it is: a modern heresy, which is being used to break up the foundations of traditional evangelical Christianity." (Underlining for emphasis by the Editor)

Mr Watts calls the Charismatic Movement "a modern variant of Pentecostalism" and of course it is just that. Charismatics hold the same basic doctrines on the Holy Spirit as do Pentecostals. The many condemnations he lists in his article against Charismaticism can, with equal justification, be levelled against the Elim Pentecostal church at which Dr Beeke spoke just before his speaking at the conference services in Mr Watts' church. That church is in the the ecumenical camp by **its links with "The Alpha Course"** and its involvement with the Roman Catholic Church.

Does this mark a shift in Mr Watts' position? Who can deny that it must!

The Salisbury Elim Centre where Dr Beeke fellowshipped holds many doctrines in common with those who are rightly condemned for their betrayal of the truth of God by Mr Watts in his article. By having Dr Beeke, Mr Watts and his church have associated themselves in fellowship with the very movements which heretofore they condemned.

What Mr Watts has to say in the first section of his article, entitled: "The Ecumenical Movement", on men changing their positions toward the errors promoted by ecumenism is worth reading carefully. It highlights in the recent past what men such as Joel Beeke are repeating in our day and which Mr Watts is apparently in grave danger of endorsing!

Near the conclusion of Mr Watts' article, "The Crumbling of Evangelicalism", he writes these words.

A need for separation

Secondly, let us contend for the biblical doctrine of separation. One of the greatest weaknesses of evangelicalism in recent times has been the failure to take a separated stand from apostasy, yet the Word of God is absolutely clear on this. We are told to separate from all co-operation in religious activities with those who deny the cardinal truths of the Christian faith, and no consideration of expedience should ever incline us to do otherwise.

The apostle Paul tells us to - mark them which cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them (that is - have nothing to do with them) (Romans 16:17). There is to be no fellowship at all with those in serious doctrinal error. We must - come out from among them, and be... separate (2 Corinthians 6:17).

We are not to receive them (2 John 10). We are to reject them (Titus 3:10). If any man... consent not to wholesome words, even the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, and to the doctrine which is according to godliness... withdraw thyself (1 Timothy 6:3, 5).

Scripture therefore forbids us to be in any kind of association with those who are doctrinally unsound;



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and to disobey the Word of God in these matters is to be guilty of sin.

Charles Haddon Spurgeon saw the issue clearly in his day, and he wrote: 'One thing is clear to us: we cannot be expected to meet in any union which comprehends those whose teachings on fundamental points is the exact reverse of that which we hold dear. Cost what it may, to separate ourselves from those who separate themselves from the Truth of God is not alone our liberty but our duty.'

This duty raises another matter. What should our attitude be to those who are apparently evangelical believers, and yet who disregard all these commands, choosing to remain alongside unbelieving people in doctrinally mixed church associations? We should certainly try, by every possible means, to win them over to the scriptural position on separation. But if they turn a deaf ear to God's Word, though we know them to be fellow-Christians, we shall be obliged to show our disapproval by restricting public and church fellowship with them. If any man obey not our word by this epistle, writes Paul, note that man, and have no company with him (literally: be not mixed up with him), that he may be ashamed. Yet count him not as an enemy, but admonish him as a brother (2 Thessalonians 3:14-15).

I am convinced that if, in these desperate days, we are to preserve doctrinal and ecclesiastical purity, we shall have to return to biblical principles and take a firm, uncompromising stand on the matter of separation. (Underlining for emphasis by the Editor)

We concur wholeheartedly with these sentiments but we believe also that they are incompatible with an associating with Dr Joel Beeke who, despite numerous warnings and admonitions, has persisted in companying with and the promotion of those whose theology and behaviour are unscriptural.

Mr Watts, it must be said, must be honoured for the sterling work that he has done for the cause of Christ through his ministerial labours and writings and also his work in The Trinitarian Bible Society. We do not hesitate to say this. It is therefore all the more distressful to see his stand threatened by his links with Joel Beeke and his compromising ministry.

Sadly, he is but one of many, who despite brotherly warnings seem to have decided to "turn a deaf ear to God's Word" and refused to heed the evidence produced to support the warnings of Joel Beeke's wrong.

No good can come of this. We are heading for a repeat of the folly wrought by many in the wake of Billy Graham's errant ways.

Mr Watts is but one of many who has been brought into company he otherwise would have nothing to do with as a result of his fellowship with Dr Joel Beeke.

When will he, and the others like him, say with Joshua, ". . . choose you this day whom ye will serve but as for me and my house, we will serve the LORD," Joshua 24:15, KJV.

No matter how our words may be construed, the Lord knows the desires of our heart.

RESPONSE TO MR MALCOLM WATT'S COMMUNICATION

I have been contacted by Mr Malcolm Watts of Emmanuel Church in Salisbury in England and informed by him that the meeting in the Elim Church premises when Dr Beeke spoke at the opening of "Pregnancy Advice Salisbury" on September 27th, 2013, was "not in any way an Elim event". He said that the Elim premises had only been rented for the event.

He condemned my article for containing "many errors and falsehoods" and that therefore our comments were libellous and misrepresented him and Dr Beeke.

Mr Watts indicated that he did not wish me to reply to him. I have therefore mounted this response for the benefit of readers.



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I have no desire to propagate lies or defend them should I inadvertently publish them. It was not my intention in my article to say or imply about Mr Watts or Dr Beeke that which was untrue. I would contend that my assumption may be justified upon the basis of the information available to me. Wilful lies and misrepresentation have no part in my witness and labours.

I cannot help but observe that if someone should conclude, as I and others did, that Dr Beeke was associated with the Elim Church and that Mr Watts and his church, through him, were likewise linked to the Elim Church because Dr Beeke was featured at an event advertised on the Elim Church Facebook page and which took place within Elim Church premises, without any indication whatever that it was not an Elim Church event and that the Elim premises were only rented, then they could not be faulted for such a conclusion.

When one sees a meeting organised in the premises of a church and advertised on a web site of that church then surely it is understandable, especially in the absence of any information to the contrary, if one assumes that the meeting is under the auspices of that church?

The only way that such a natural assumption could have been avoided was for the party organising the meeting to have clearly indicated that they were merely renting the premises though that would still leave the difficulty of the impression given by the owner of the premises advertising the meeting.

Surely an impartial observer could come to no other opinion than that this was an Elim event given that the publicity surrounding it was propagated by the Elim Church.

The Elim Church is thoroughly charismatic, ecumenical and in fraternal relations with the Church of Rome. Why would anyone who cares for their separatist reputation and testimony ever rent property from such and let the Elim Church advertise and obviously approve any gathering they then arrange in the Elim premises without indicating that this was merely a commercial arrangement? It would appear to me that those who acted so would have little grounds for complaining about being seen to be in amicable and friendly relations with the Elim Church.

Following on from Mr Watts' explanation, it would seem that he approves of hiring a room at the local Roman Catholic Church or the local Mosque and convening a Christian meeting without infringing the laws of God. What about the command given us in 1 Thessalonians 5:22? "Abstain from all appearance of evil."

I think that was I ever foolish enough to take part in a meeting in premises owned by those I believed to be guilty of propagating that which was detrimental to God's truth, I would at least make sure that everyone knew that I had merely rented the property and that it was a wholly commercial arrangement and, furthermore, I would not allow the owners of the premises to give the impression they were behind the meeting by advertising it on their website.

Mr Watts' condemnation of Pentecostalism and the part it has played in the destruction of Evangelicalism is very strong and for that reason it is all the more difficult to understand why he is so blasé about Dr Beeke being linked to a meeting in property owned by Pentecostalists. (Link to Mr Watts' article: "**The Crumbling of Evangelicalism**".)

Furthermore, the photograph and caption on the right is from the Elim Church Facebook page and strengthens the appearance of Dr Beeke's meeting being under the auspices of the Elim Church. Could anyone be faulted for believing that this meeting at which Dr Beeke



Thanks to all those who came to support the launch of the Pregnancy Advice Salisbury @ ECC today. PAS is now officially open and it's fantastic to have this ministry operating out of our Church Centre. [Photo and caption from ECC's Facebook page]



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spoke was not organised by the Elim Church in Salisbury after looking at this picture and reading the caption?? Anything I wrote in this article follows on from an honest interpretation of the evidence presented on the Elim Church's Facebook announcement of the event. It was natural to assume that if this was an Elim Church event then it would be marked by Elim type worship. My critique of that form of worship was largely taken from Mr Watts' own words.

In like manner, any observations I made on the implications of the link by Dr Beeke and Mr Watts to the ecumenical Elim Church would be justified. If, as Mr Watts claims, there was no such link, the organisers of the meeting for the opening of "Pregnancy Advice Salisbury" at least acted in such a manner as to create the impression there was.

That was foolish on their part and they must share in any blame that arises from any misunderstanding.

The implications for Dr Beeke and for Mr Watts arising from the earlier part of the article which deals with Dr Beeke's meetings in Bell Creek Community Church are just as serious and are in no way diminished by Mr Watts comments.

I would that Mr Watts would take heed to the wrongs of which he is guilty in his links with Dr Joel Beeke and acknowledge them and act to put the matter right for the sake of the honour and glory of the Lord Jesus Christ and His Word.

Rev Ivan Foster.

Wednesday, 11th October 2013.

Updated: 14th, 16th October, 2013.