

Evangelicalism Divided: A Record of Crucial Change in the Years 1950 to 2000

Iain H. Murray

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Evangelicalism Divided: A Record of Crucial Change in the Years 1950 to 2000 Iain H. Murray Why has Christian unity proved to be such a divisive topic? In the 1950s two movements- evangelicalism and ecumenism- offered differing paths to unity in the church. But as the decades have passed the influence of ecumenism has exposed a fault line in evangelicalism. Questions of critical importance have been brought to the surface: Is the gospel broader than evangelicals have historically insisted? Can there be unity with non-evangelicals in evangelism and church leadership? Does the gospel have priority over denominational loyalty? These gained high profile in the crusades led by Dr. Billy Graham on both sides of the Atlantic, and in the subsequent interaction among evangelicals in North America and Europe. At first a new policy of 'cooperation without compromise' promised an 'evangelical renaissance'. Those who feared an inevitable devalutation of the gospel were viewed as destined for the kind of isolation to which fundamentalism had been consigned earlier in the century. Evangelicalism Divided traces the fascinating saga of the personalities, institutions and publications involved in this fifty-year period. Iain Murray's account is not simply a black and white narrative. But using the mass of sources now available he shows how the new policy ivolved concessions which seriously weakened biblical Christianity. The first and greatest need, he argues, is to answer the most fundamental and divisive question of all: What is a Christian? - - - - - - - - - - -Iain Murray's historical overview of the fortunes and misfortunes of evangelical Christianity, especially in England, between 1950 and the century's end-time, will stir up both an approving and a dissenting readership. But no one can contend that it ignores some of the most vital theological issues of the time and the conflicts surrounding them. The narrative is well documented, and it details not only conflicts of perspective but inconsistencies and alterations of views by some of the leading participants in the events of the day. The names best known to Americans - Billy Graham, Martyn Lloyd-Jones, James Packer, John Stott among them - are evaluated, commended and critiqued as contributory to the present-day evangelical outlook and predicament.

Carl F.H. Henry



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