

## SOUNDS LIKE SOME OF US

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In 2002 Harold Kushner, Jewish rabbi, wrote a book titled *Who Needs God?* “Absolutely no one,” in Kushner’s view of Deity and religion, according to reviewer, Don Feder (a syndicated columnist, himself a Jew). The book is typical liberal pop-psychology “theology” that adapts God and religion to current behavior and thought patterns.

Kushner wrote: “The purpose of religion is not to explain God or to please God, but to help us meet some of our most basic human needs.” You see, understanding the Bible and obeying God are beside the point. Religion is merely sanctified psychoanalysis, helping us to “cope” by letting us face our emotions, fears, and pains (forget about that sin, salvation, Judgment, Heaven, and Hell stuff). Kushner is merely regurgitating Modernism old “Social Gospel” of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries— in current jargon. Given Kushner’s concept of God, Feder imagines God’s asking Israel at Sinai if they were comfortable with not stealing. Had they not been, surely, He would have rescinded the eighth commandment. (And how about the same procedure relative to their serving only Jehovah, bearing false witness, adultery, and the other laws?) Anything to make His creation comfortable and content here below.

Are we not hearing some of the same things from erstwhile “progressive” (liberal) brethren? Is not the attempt to meet “every felt need” by the specialized “multi-minister” staffs of large metropolitan churches (and some not so large that are aping them) an echo of Kushner? Don’t these socially-oriented churches also notoriously compromise (in some cases totally abandon) doctrinal and moral absolutes? Is it any wonder that they corrupt the worship and organization of the church, condone adulterous marriages (even encouraging them by their “singles” programs), “social” drinking, dancing, gambling, and such like, and they praise, support, and endorse false teachers? People are going to do these things anyway, so why make them feel guilty, right? Lighten up!

Surely, the Lord could not have really meant those words about self-denial and cross-bearing (**Luke 9:23**), repentance (**13:3, 5**), and obeying the Father’s will (**Matthew 7:21-23**). Why, there is just no place for such restrictions in “functional” religion. Such liberals accuse those of us who are set for the defense of the Gospel” of being “rigid,” “judgmental,” “negative,” and “humorless” traditionalists/radicals----rather rigid, judgmental, negative, and humorless accusations, one might observe. We should not miss the point that these accusations by these “sweet,” “loving,” “kind,” and “tolerant” souls apply to every faithful servant of God described in the Bible, including the Son of God (Matthew 15:1-14; 23:1-36; et al.)

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And what of those brethren who have in recent years entered the “twilight zone” of seeking to maintain a once-deserved “conservative” image while simultaneously endorsing, defending, and working in close fellowship with certain false teachers? Whereas formerly they would inveigh against error in whomever and wherever it appeared, they now profess spiritual blindness, especially concerning the errors of one brother and the institution he directs (i.e., Dave Miller and Apologetics Press). Further, when faithful brethren continue to cry out against error and its proponents without respect of persons (as they formerly did, including this brother and his errors), those who have made him their “pet” hurl at us the same terms the liberals use. Like it or not these foolish brethren, as Kushner urged, have decided they don’t “need God”-----or at least what His Word says concerning such things as respect of persons, fellowship, and bidding God-speed to false teachers (**Acts 10:34; I Timothy 5:21-22; 2 John 10-11**).

Yes, Kushner’s book sounds like some of “us,” and our brethren are just as fatally wrong as is he. It is all just a bit puzzling. Has Kushner been observing some of “us” and reading what some of “us” have been writing, or have some of “us” been reading him?