

Fundamentalism–Lite or Pseudo Fundamentalism?

To Charles Seet, the Board of Elders and the Silent Membership of Life BPC,

The first Bible Presbyterian Church of Singapore was founded by Rev Timothy Tow to stand up against Modernism/Liberalism, Neo Evangelicalism, Humanism, Charismaticism and its humanistic overflow of Prosperity/Positive mega new age false ‘Churches’ in these last days. The Life BP Church laid on this godly foundation by its founder has now floundered and failed in holding this banner of this Biblical truth. If the founder of the BP Movement had passed on to glory we could say that he would have turned in his grave. The idiom used only of a dead person, who in all likelihood would have been grievously upset had he been alive is now seeing Fundamentalism unraveling before his very eyes this side of heaven as he watches from his quarters living in the complex of his life’s history. That’s the sad irony.

One can wonder whether the present Life BPC leadership is aware of their **Doctrinal Distinctives and Positions** printed in paper is in reality imprinted in their very souls. Like the Hebrews that crossed the Red Sea to separate themselves from Egypt were a mixed mob most not having the true conviction of Moses, there are those in the Bible Presbyterians claiming to be the truest of ‘Hebrews’ but clueless to their heritage. This is a mixed bag that crossed over to the ‘Promised Land’ hanging on to the coat tails of “Moses’ but soon are longing for the smell of garlic and onions of ‘Egypt’ still hanging about their nostrils. Bible-Presbyterian once stood stoutly for Fundamentalism and Separation that contended for the faith that was once for all delivered to the saints. The ‘BIBLE’ before Presbyterian was the ‘ROD’ that marked them as God’s Defenders of the Faith. Now as ‘Moses’ slowly fades into eternity’s crossing, the new ‘bible-Presbyterians’ have started their dance around the golden ecumenical calf. They are still using the old language of ‘Moses’ but charting a new path away from its godly roots.

A recent email of a prominent elder of Life BP Church, the one who is the chairman of the **Beulah Project Committee**, the one who has written at length about false teachers and prophets in these last days in the preamble to the Beulah Building Project, the one with the grand plans to establish a Bible school to oppose ‘heretical’ FEBC of Rev Timothy Tow, has revealed the rot at the root of the Life BP Church session. First consider their position on the **Distinctives and Separation** last updated in February, 2008 (*Emphasis mine*):

“The principle of biblical separation is very important to our church.

This principle is taught throughout the Bible. This principle involves two aspects:

1. Personal separation from all worldliness and sinful activities. God commands that we be holy for He is holy. As believers, we are called to fellowship with God who "is light, and in Him is no darkness at all. If we say that we have fellowship with Him, and walk in darkness, we lie and do not the truth" 1 John 1:5-6.

2. Ecclesiastical separation from all churches or groups of churches who are doctrinally impure or compromised with unscriptural Ecumenism (2 Corinthians 6:14-18). It is necessary that we follow God’s Word closely and have no fellowship with anyone or anything disobedient to His Word, **such as counterfeit and apostate Christianity...**”

Now see excerpts of their statement on SEPARATION concerning *the Charismatic Movement* and *other Feel Good false Christianity*:

6.5 It is the duty of all true churches of the Lord Jesus Christ to make a clear testimony to their faith in Him, especially in these darkening days of apostasy in many professing churches, by which apostasy, whole denominations in their official capacity, as well as individual churches, have been swept into a paganizing stream of modernism under various names and in varying degrees.

6.9 *We are opposed to all efforts to obscure or wipe out the clear line of separation between these absolutes: truth and error, light and darkness. (See Jer 5:20; 2 Cor 6:14-18.) We refer to such efforts by New Evangelicals, Charismatic Christians, promoters of ecumenical cooperative evangelism and of the social gospel, and all churches and other movements and organizations that are aligned with or sympathetic to the Ecumenical Movement.* (Article 6 Principle and Practice of Biblical Separation (of the Constitution of Life Bible-Presbyterian Church)

This prominent elder was invited by an emailer to view a series of *YouTube* clips of **Joel Osteen**, a Charismatic preacher in the US who preaches the Prosperity Theology and the so called ‘POSITIVE’ heretical, humanistic messages couched in Christian jargon. And this is his response after he had watched several clips of this man’s preaching and the teachings:

“On Feb 12, 2008 10:06 AM, Sherman Ong <selong@starhub.net.sg> wrote:

Dear (name omitted),

The reason why I responded to you in email that you should send the same to FEBC is that while I can listen and **accept the teachings of the Osteens**, FEBC may not – because they do not subscribe to VPP! Watch Joel Osteen Online and that will turn FEBC off for sure! **FEBC will consider the Osteen's preaching humanistic, neo-evangelical, etc.**

Keep communicating with FEBC to help them to see the light of Christ and practise the love of Christ – if they do hold to the Perfect Scriptures of the Bible. They should practice it, not just judge others who do not hold to VPP. VPP or not, love never fails ... (Emphasis mine)

In Christ,

Sherman”

It is clear that this elder who wrote the preamble to the **Beulah Building Project** warning against false prophets and false teachings such as the following excerpt does not seem to know what sound doctrine really is and therefore devoid of spiritual discernment:

“We live in perilous days... One of the inevitable signs of the last days is the relentless attack by false prophets...When our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ warned in Matthew 7:15 “*beware of false prophets*”, **He literally commanded the Church to watch out for false prophets...” (Emphasis mine)**

If he is of this calibre among Life BPC’s leadership, is there hope for fundamentalism to survive even in the life time of its founder in Singapore? He contradicts his own **Church’s Distinctives and the Doctrine of Separation** and even his own grand purpose for **Beulah Building Project**. He not only endorsed a false preacher like Joel Osteen saying, “I can listen and **accept the teachings of the Osteens**” he then lambasts FEBC for not embracing this man like he did, “***FEBC will consider the Osteen's preaching humanistic, neo-evangelical, etc.***” Now that is a criticism, a comparative point and not one of a matter-of-fact statement. Since that will be an unloving act of FEBC according to him, he urges his correspondent to, “**Keep communicating with FEBC to help them to see the light of Christ and practise the love of Christ.**”

Listening to Joel Osteen for investigative purpose is one thing but to say that one *accepts his teaching* is the approval of this man and his humanistic psycho-religious error. Osteen's motives are not our concern but what he does in the name of Christ and His Word is the concern of all pastors and elders and theologians of the fundamentalist flock. Dumbing down the Word and deluding the simple, the untaught, the unregenerate and the gullible, is why this false preacher is judged. A man is judged by the words he utters in the name of Christ. God forbid if a true servant of God worth his salt of his call is envious of the apparent successes of this man to rake in people in the tens of thousands and bag American dollars to fill the lucre barns.

But for this elder, one who has grown in a fundamentalist movement like the BP Church and taught by the very one who founded Life BP Church, needs just one clip to see what this man, Joel Osteen, is peddling. The printed doctrine of his Church is not imprinted in the heart of this elder of Life BPC. If this elder is the senior representative of the session, need one guess the rest?

Here is the stench of death of fundamentalism in the leadership of this Church. Fundamentalism is not words on printed paper but an unquenchable burning of the heart for the defence of the inerrant and infallible Word of God. It is fire in the bones that will not let up. Fundamentalism is first caught in the soul, before it can be taught. Who has not heard Rev Timothy Tow's heart beat over the decades or felt his pulsing passion contending for the Faith? One rather falls in with imperfect fellow brethren of sound faith than with a false preacher. Will it be really wrong to call this elder a neo-evangelical or a lover of error?

All Bible believing fundamental Churches in the USA have both written and spoken against this pseudo preacher who is nothing but yet another 'avatar' of Robert Schuller. The Charismatic Movement keeps producing the same error and heresies but in different suits and in different faces and places. Such has come and gone in the past and many more will come in the future when people get tired of this man, Joel Osteen. Using Christian jargon in the name of Christ, he preaches *another Gospel, another Christ*. He is a humanistic preacher who preachers that God is the resource for our best life NOW. His central message is that God is a loving, forgiving God who will reward believers, HEALTH, WEALTH and HAPPINESS, right NOW, no matter who they are or what they have done! The common testimony of all his listeners interviewed is that he is all positive and that it makes them *feel good*.

Watch him on the YouTube, his slithering moves of '*I don't know*' when asked whether Jews Hindus, Muslims, agnostics homosexuals, etc, are lost in hell without Christ. When repeatedly prodded for an answer, he did not once affirm that there is no other WAY but CHRIST and that there is no other name under heaven whereby a sinner can be saved but the name of Christ Jesus. All he can squeak out is, '*I believe in my faith and other people believe in their religion. I met Hindus in India and they also love 'God'! And I don't know whether they are right or*

wrong. It is not for me to say who will be saved and who won't. I cannot judge them and I will let God judge them." But is there any other God other than the God of the Bible?

This is a man who stands in front of multi cameras in an US100 million dollar spectacular auditorium and telling millions of people in the name of Christ, lies contrary to sound doctrine, sit stumbling and stuttering and unwilling to give *Larry King* of *CNN* a straight answer. The questioner was polite, civil and was asking simple uncomplicated questions. A Sunday school child could have answered without hesitation chewing gum at the same time. Yet this man was too ashamed to name Christ as the ONLY SAVIOR of mankind (cf. John 14:6; Ac 4: 12; 1 Tim 2: 5). Is it not the filthy lucre in his mind that choked the truth in front of national TV? He who is not for Christ is against Him (Mt 12: 30). He has all the answers for HEALTH, WEALTH and HAPPINESS for everybody but bankrupt for answers about Christ.

Therefore, one can know why he is so loved by the world. It appeals to all and sundry - the agnostics and the apathetic; the irreligious to the religious pagans; to the untaught and the backslidden, televangelist shopping 'Christians' and the liberal Christian mob. He presents a POSITIVE God, the smiling Santa rewarding one and all, making '*time and chance to come together*' for everybody. Their '*marked moments are on their way*' and '*abundant life*' of endless chocolates, cream and cake without the heat of the oven. It is heaven's life NOW on earth. It is positive thinking and positive visualization with God thrown in as ones butler. This makes the 'blind' drool. He doesn't believe in preaching the negatives in the Bible, like SIN, GOD'S WRATH, HELL, SIN, REPENTANCE, SICKNESS, etc, for he complains that's what driving people away from fundamentalist churches. He says people are beaten down with sin, hell; brimstone and fire, so here are to them the words of a '*feel good*' preacher they want to hear. Joel Osteen comes across as the great 'COMFORTER' with a soothing voice of a doting mother. He said he has no theological training and therefore is unqualified to expound scriptures and that he will leave it to others who are more qualified than him but what qualifies him to tell lies for God? Where is the whole counsel of God to the whole sinful world?

Leaving the so called negatives in the Bible eliminates the redemptive heart of the Bible. It is John 3: 16 without John 3: 17-21. The love of God upon sinners and the wrath of God upon sin are the two sides of redemptive theology. The Bible is the redemptive revelation of sinful man condemned in the Edenic Fall. If not for the sin in Eden we will be still living in Eden. But the FALL necessitated the revealing of the good news because of the bad news. Without the bad news there is no good news. Without the FALL there is no CALL. Our HEALTH, WEALTH and HAPPINESS are not of this life but of the world to come, '*the new heavens and the new earth*'. The poor will always be with us as the Master said. Not all can prosper in this life. All will fall sick regularly throughout their earthly life. Even those who are made well will fall sick again. Even raised Lazarus was buried again eventually. But that's not the message sinners want to hear and the itch in their ear needs a Joel Osteen to scratch (cf. 2 Tim 4 2-5).

So, that's the 'ear tickler' formula he has learnt to rake in the 'natural man' and bagging their bulging American wallets for his own health, wealth and happiness now.

When this elder wrote about 'false prophets' in his introduction to the Beulah Building Project, he had FEBC in mind. It is not Joel Osteen, but the lecturers of FEBC, the chief among these 'false prophets' in his mind is none other than **Rev. Timothy Tow**. To Life BPC, FEBC is THE most dangerous, gangrenous heretics that have brought divisive new doctrine. What is this doctrine? They hold to a PERFECT Bible instead of holding to the position of a NOT SO PERFECT Bible like the present Life BPC does. Holding to the Received Text as the true copy of the originals is the heresy that must be stopped by them by starting a new Bible school, a Gospel 'kelong'. A 'platform' in calm waters where there is a loving place for preachers like Joel Osteen.

Whether Joel Osteen believes in the Word Perfect Preservation of Scriptures or not is not the point here but his heretical preaching that condemns him. To consider FEBC as false prophets but not Joel Osteen by this so called 'elder' is not just carnality but is diabolical. It exposes not just his ignorance on the 'Preservation' issue but also reveals his intense hatred for an institution that has refined and defined its stand on the inerrant Word of God. With all its perceived faults it is still a College whose heart is burning with the zeal of Christ. Its founder principal is still its head 'prophet'. Such venom and blatant disregard for the feelings of the one without whom this 'elder' cannot boast of his elevated position enrages even the calmest heart. Is this man, fit to hold office as an elder?

This man's hatred for FEBC is not without proof. See his reference to FEBC as the heretical institution of false prophets in his reference to the article put out by Charles Seet his pastor. This was a paper issued against FEBC:

"Therefore, any one who introduces teachings that are divisive and heretical is a false prophet! Read the article "**Mark Them Which Cause Divisions**" published by our Board of Elders to further understand what is heresy. As in the days of Samuel, he started a "school of prophets" to train young people to preach pure morality and the heartfelt worship of Jehovah, and to act along and co-ordinately with the priesthood and monarchy in guiding the state aright and checking all attempts at illegality and tyranny; now, we are looking to erect the New Beulah House as **Life Bible Centre, to be a beacon of the Gospel Light.** Life Bible Centre must be deeply rooted in Christ, the Rock (Matt 16:18, 1 Cor 3:10-11). (Emphasis mine)

Firstly, nobody knows what this heresy is or established in the article put out by them. **Secondly**, the phrase ‘*school of prophets*’, does it not infer that the FEBC now considered by Life BPC to be the ‘*school of false prophets*’ because they hold to a perfect Bible?

For this elder the doctrine of the VPI and the VPP has become a joke of derision. He then urges his emailer to “*Keep communicating with FEBC to help them to see the light of Christ and practise the love of Christ.*” That help is for FEBC to *see the light* and to practice inclusive love of the likes of Osteen and others who do not hold to the doctrine of the Perfect Bible. Is he ignorant of his own church’s distinctives and doctrines? If he is ignorant, where did he get the words for his write up for the grandiose plan for the Beulah house? Read the excerpts of what he warns concerning ‘*false prophets*’.

“We live in perilous days... the best way to understand the current situation, and appreciate the future, is to look into the Word of God and learn to apply faithfully what we read daily...One of the inevitable signs of the last days is the relentless attack by false prophets. The great task assigned to the prophets whom God raised up among the people was to correct moral and religious abuses, to proclaim the great moral and religious truths which are connected with the character of God, and which lie at the foundation of His government. When our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ warned in Matthew 7:15 “*beware of false prophets*”, **He literally commanded the Church to watch out for false prophets. Not only are we to have knowledge of their existence, but we are also to be warned ourselves and to watch out for them. How do we watch out for false prophets? “*Ye shall know them by their fruit!*”**

This is hypocrisy: what one may write, is not what one believes to be right. To mimic Rev Timothy Tow’s words doesn’t make him a fundamentalist without the heart of his founder teacher.

It doesn’t stop there; he then accuses FEBC of lovelessness towards this false preacher. “... *while I can listen and accept the teachings of the Osteens, FEBC may not – because they do not subscribe to VPP! Watch Joel Osteen Online and that will turn FEBC off for sure! FEBC will consider the Osteen's preaching humanistic, neo-evangelical, etc.*”

God forbid if FEBC do not consider this man, Joel Osteen, a humanistic preacher. This man has paganized the Word of God. He is the '*false prophet*' that this elder rambled about in his mock write up of the preamble. This elder has ripped the very heart of fundamentalism. Now this is the elder who thinks that FEBC has gone far too deep in their stand and this is while Rev Tow is still here with us. See below his email (Emphasis mine):

On Feb 12, 2008 10:00 AM, Sherman Ong <selong@starhub.net.sg> wrote:

Dear (name omitted),

The challenge at hand is that FEBC had gone far too deep in their position and I'm afraid that there will be no win-win resolution at this end of eternity.

Waiting upon the Lord,

Sherman

What is this 'heresy' of FEBC? They are calling The Received Text/Bible perfect! Now to this man and the rest of the Life BPC session this is '*gangrenous*' heresy. But holding to a '99.44%' almost perfect Bible is Fundamentalism's truth? Who has gone too far from the clarion call of the founder of this fundamentalist movement? A serious issue of *Inspiration* and *Preservation* requires humility of heart; mental tenacity to understand the issue fairly and clearly; and a godly commitment to resolve all issues for the love of God is paramount for a spiritual leadership. It is a matter of truth. It is the foundational truth where all the other redemptive truth hangs upon.

This man has not applied his mind to understand these matters in fear and trembling. Finding carnal strength in numbers, urging one another in doing wrong and in the haughty spirit of being the masters and landlords of the properties they 'inherited' by default, they are all out to root out the land mark of fundamentalism FEBC represents in Gilstead and to the ridicule of the world intend to supplant FEBC with their beaconing '*KELONG*' of FUNDAMENTALISM-LITE. If not for the legal hold of the Gilstead properties, will this elder, his pastor and session display such callous arrogance towards FEBC and disrespectfully snubbing the man whose passion and love for his Master and King made all these things happen? Yet in double speak this man makes this pious urgings to the members of Life BPC and also takes a derisive dig at FEBC in the conclusion of his preamble:

“Is Life Bible-Presbyterian Church a good tree in the Lord? Jesus says, “A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit. Every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire. Wherefore by their fruits ye shall know them.” (Matt 7:18-19)... **Lifers should adopt a loving, gracious, Christ-like attitude and seek to win souls for Christ in all that we do.** When Life Bible Centre is finally completed, we must pursue that which the Lord so desires — to bear good fruits for Christ. **Instead of breaking up churches, we will go forward to plant and build churches until Jesus Christ returns. Amen.**
—Elder Sherman Ong, Chairman, Beulah Project Committee

This elder has ‘*loving, gracious, Christ-like attitude*’ for a false preacher, but none for the man whose vision and work birthed the Life Church complex and the Beulah Building his brain child to house FEBC students. Now this arrogant elder prides Beulah as his ‘*kelong*’ project. Shameless souls will ignore all integrity of pure conscience. It is the hardened ground where the seed of truth will not take hold to germinate truth. Mimicry of Fundamentalism is not the hearing of the real thing. It will soon unravel but at the expense of the Lord’s name. Surely the Lord knows the agony of the man sitting helpless to arrest this mad slide into mud.

This is a satanic delusion. A hatred of the Devil himself engineered in and through this elder and Life BPC leadership to hurt the servant of God while he lingers by the grace of God outside heaven’s door. The Satanic horde must have planned for this for a long time. Will the fallen angel have the last laugh? Will not God raise a standard when the enemy has come in like a flood? God has raised another, not from the loins of this humble man, but another just like him. The saddest of all is the muted fundamentalist within the BP movement who seem indifferent or apathetic.

What in God’s name is the untouchable heresy of FEBC? Is it heresy to hold to a PERFECT BIBLE (The Received Text) as inerrant and infallible to the jot and tittle? Who else can claim inerrancy and infallibility to anything lesser than that? The silence is deafening!

Brutus Balan

24 Feb 2008

Hobart, Tasmania AUSTRALIA