



5. Evolutionary Christianity

Barbara Rossing

What concerns are emerging (in the Christian path)?

Philip Clayton

What if we think of Christianity as an invitation into a discussion?

BB Scott

We are divided - no civil disagreement

Rachel Held Evans

"Evolving in monkey town"

Learning to adapt, evolve, and change

Sad when people seem to feel the need to choose between their intellectual integrity and their faith

Gretta Vosper

Christianity is at a precipice - can no longer adapt (may die off)

BB Scott

Religion doesn't have enough space, right now, to discover its future

Religions tend to bring too much baggage, so there isn't space to experiment about where to go

Sanguin

Demand on spiritual leaders to be involved in their own spiritual development in a very intentional way

Spong

So often, Christians have literalized their own interpretations, and then have said they are God's creeds or doctrines or dogmas - in so doing, people create idols

BB Scott

The future doesn't look like the past
Maybe we start fresh
Take things as conversation partners, not authorities

Vosper

We are no longer in a time when the faith leaders are the only ones with access to scholarship and learning about our traditions; so we need to be open to new voices (paraphrase)

Spong

Our hymns and images throughout Christian history depend on a fallen state, and a saviour who atones.
Evolution does not need original sin - there was never a fall.
So what is relevant?
We've got to get out of the rescue/savior/redeemer mentality, and begin to see life not as fallen, but as incomplete
This can lead to a Christology that helps people become more whole, more complete, more authentic... more human

Vosper

Jesus poured his life out trying to make people matter.
So many others have, through the ages, also tried to do this - have given their lives to doing this.
Jesus would not be hung up on credit for starting such work; he would've been interested in learning from others in other contexts and helping.

Spong

Purgatory and hell are referenced only in minimal ways in scripture (Matthew and Revelation), but we've held those up in tradition
The idea doesn't make sense that God would punish through eternity people who made mistakes in lives within time

Michael Morwood

Jesus did not believe that God would withhold forgiveness
Jesus wasn't concerned with people getting to heaven
Jesus' primary concern was the kingdom of God - the here and now

Sanguin

Jesus is the universe, fully personalized and fully divinized
One with God

One with the evolving cosmos
One with humanity
Jesus is the heart of the universe, incarnate
You can't tell the story of Jesus anymore without this cosmic history
Fully human, fully divine, fully cosmic
Jesus is not an interruption of natural processes, but rather their fulfillment
Jesus emerged as a glimpse of the future

BB Scott

What are our authentic practices?
We need to teach asceticism
(As a society) we make a lot of noise
Religion is about practices, not dogma

Morwood

Where can I be nurtured?

Matthew Fox

New discovery of community
Ways of making more time in schedule for important things (eg grow a garden, be with people, political action)

Sanguin

Yearning to transcend, for more beauty... experiencing that creative principle incarnate - same spirit animated Christ
The whole universe is an incarnation (and christification) of God
Quotes Charles Eisenstein: "passionate intensity for the world that our heart knows is possible"
To yearn for the world that our hearts know is possible is already experiencing the Divine

Morwood

The heart of Jesus' preaching is that we have been set free from fear of God
Jesus was about empowering people, challenging people... to be neighbours

Closing

"Up and Becomers" (Sanguin poem)