

Conversation on Community: Conversation on Worship

By David Horner and Robert Webber

David Horner:

Thank you. Wow. Um, I want to thank you especially those of you who, would identify yourselves as emerging church people. I want to thank you for coming, and a, testing your ideas, in our midst, and I, it, it really breaks my heart, to hear that, ah, there was an anticipation, on the web, that this would be, stomp on emerging church people. But, ah, I'm sorry, you know, that that's the case, but thank you for coming, and I want to thank you especially, ah, for what you do, for your commitment to, ah, follow Jesus and to reach out to people that are being missed by the um, standard evangelical church. And I'm challenged, and ah, and encouraged by what I've read from you guys. My, as was mentioned, my area, primary area of scholarship, is in philosophy and ancient medieval, thought, and ah worship, is something to me that is a passion. It is ah, eh, great interest. It's something that shapes the way I live my life, the way I read the Bible, the way I do, theology, the way I do philosophy. And I've been involved in leading it and teaching it, and I've written a little bit about it, but I am not a world class scholar, in the area of worship, and to say that Bob Webber, is a world class scholar in the area of worship is to understate, things. Ah, eh, I have read fewer books, on worship, than he has written, on worship. And, so I just want you to know that this is not exactly an even match here, and I appreciate his, graciousness to ah, come and, and ah, do this. Ah, and I'll just give it my shot, ah, that I can. I found this, extremely hard to prepare this 15 minutes or 20 minutes that I have. Much harder than almost anything I have ever done and I, I read, a few books, and I read some blogs, and, I talked to some students

and I talked to a friend of mine who's involved in the, emerging church. Ah, I visited a couple of emerging church worship gatherings, ah from, very different perspectives, and I'm full of questions, ah, I'm, I'm full of thoughts. I'm, I have a few concerns. Um, and I feel sort of like, a mosquito in a nudist colony. [Audience laughter] I know what to do but I don't know where to begin. [Audience hearty laughter] And I actually thought about doing a narrative. Ah, and, but I, you know I decided it would take too long. Ah, I actually come from a very different background, than Spencer. I have, never wanted to be a part of a megachurch or anything like that. I've avoided that stuff like the plague. My sympathies and my, my ah, intuitions have always been much closer to what, what you guys are all about. Um, I also thought about the possibility of, ah, I thought of a knockdown, ah, drag out argument for the value of propositional, communication. I thought that perhaps I could do an interpretive dance up here... [A few chuckles from audience] ...and nothing would convince more people, of the value of propositional, communication... [Audience boisterous laughter] ...than to see me do this. Um, there is a reason Biola used to have, have a ban on dancing, and you're looking, at it. [Audience mild laughter]

03:28 Ah, as I've read these things, ah, read some, some books by Dr. Webber and by Dan Kimball, and some, other articles and so on. I have to say with respect to worship practice I have, virtually nothing but, complete encouragements, and excitement. I resonated, with virtually everything, ah, that I read and I, I would like to take my stab at, at giving two distinctives that I see of the, the emerging church movement as a whole. I know you don't like the word, "movement." Ah, and, and then maybe some, just comment on some worship practices, and then, if I have time, I'll, I'll raise, a few, ah questions that I have. What I see as distinctive are two things. Ah, the emerging church as an ecclesiological sort of movement, emphasizing

community. Moving away from ah, an individualistic orientation, to the faith, for a communal, orientation. And a moving away from a kind of systemic, picture of spiritual formation in ministry, of moving through stages in a system, as individuals, to a more organic, messy, communal, sort of, approach to it, and I owe that insight to my, ah, friend Michael Lee. Um, and I have to say I love this. Ah, community is one of the things that has been a central, conviction for me in my philosophical work in ethics. Ah, it's, it's a central conviction for me in ministry and I, as I often say to my students. If I have to say the, the single thing that I have learned, most significantly throughout, my many years of ministry and I have to, have to say that I, according to Dr. Webber's book, and the [inaudible] evangelicals, one of my friends [and] contemporaries as a younger evangelical, so I qualify for that, um. I don't have, cool hair. I hardly have hair, and ah, as a friend of mine, reminded me of how much hair I used to have, I thought of putting it that it used to, it used to be like a mop. Now it's a little bit more like a paper towel, maybe a, wet, paper towel, but any case, I love it, and I've always loved it. Well I shouldn't say I've always loved it. I was surprised to discover how much community, mattered, and how central it was to the Scripture, and ah, I'm convinced that we, we grow together or we don't grow at all, and I found that in my own, personal life.

05:59 Um, I was a pastor of a church in Boulder, back in the late '80s, that, eh, many ways embraced many of the things that the emerging church, does. And ah, one of the things that, was central to that, that I really learned in that experience was community, and I like to say that, everything I know about, evangelism, I learned at Judy Roberts' table. Judy Roberts and her family, came to Christ, at, ah, in our church. Her husband was on the faculty at the University of Colorado, and when they came, things really exploded because they had a farmhouse at, right outside of town and they had a big table, and the doors were always open, and we were always

over there, and there were always non-Christians over there. And we we're mixing it up, and we didn't hold special parties for non-Christians. We just invited them into the community, of real Christians, very messy sort of community. No questions, were, off limits. We would talk about just about anything, and people came to Christ as they saw the reality, of Jesus, in our midst, and I, I love this. I celebrate it. I'm, encouraged by what I read and I'm challenged by it because I'm, realizing as I do, ah, that my commitment to community these days is, a whole lot more, on paper, than it is in reality.

07:12 The other thing that I, I see as a, as a distinctive, that ah, Dan, and, Ryan have both talked about today, is, that the emerging church is missional. Really takes seriously the idea of, of the church, engaged in the mission to reach other people especially people, who are fallen through the cracks, ah, in the way that the church, has been operating in especially in American culture, and I've, discovered that one of the primary passages that's appealed to is Acts 17. Paul on Mars Hill. One of my favorite passages, where Paul addressed a group of people who were, philosophically and, culturally distant, from, biblical religion, and he understood their culture. He knew their poets and their philosophers. He spoke their language. He found common ground with them and was able to build bridges, from where they were to where they needed to be, and ah, I see that as, a core value, in the emerging church. And once again I'm, encouraged by that and challenged by it, because I realize that I am increasingly becoming marginalized from so many parts of my culture, and I need to practice what I preach, 'cause I preach that, that text, quite often.

08:24 Now more distinctives, more distinctively related to worship, I want to affirm a few things. Ah, it seems to me, and we've, we've [said] some good stuff, and, and so I'm gonna, sort of, be,

repeating I suppose, but, flowing out from this communal, approach, I see in, ah, emerging church worship as more communal, more participatory. Less showy, less, an event, a spectator event with people up front kind of, blowing you away. More participation, in liturgy, in ah, Lectio Divina, sharing together, pray together, in silence. Ah, a more understated kind of worship leadership. Dan Kimball has some great ideas for this. Um, worship teams off to the side, worship teams in the back, and ah, I love this! This is biblical. If you look at the biblical perspective of worship in Ephesians 5 and Colossians 3, and I Corinthians 12-14, you see a very, much a body life kind of worship with participation, ah, of, of everyone, and ah, if you've taken ah theology of worship from me you know, how I feel about silence. It, it just, frustrates me to no end, that in the, in the, ah, typical evangelical church we simply cannot be silent. We have to have keyboards going. We have to have, a prayer thrown in there. We can't, we can't have any space, and it seems to me a proper response to the awesomeness of God and the holiness of God, quite often is silence, and I love the fact that this kind of thing is, is coming back in. I, I cannot stand, showy, performance sort of, worship leadership, and I've tried to, practice that in my own. It's more physical. More use of the body, and kneeling, and being prostrate, and dancing. Ah, I totally agree with this, with, perhaps the exception of the dancing in my own case. Ah, but, as you may know, the, the primary Hebrew of great terms, that are translated worship, mean, to bow, or to prostrate oneself. We are embodied beings. We are physical, and our physicality, is a part of our, is a very important part of our response to God in worship, Romans 12:1 and 2, and many other places. Ah, more connection to history, and ah, to our roots in liturgy. Readings from ancient Christian saints, and the creeds and confessions and Lectio Divina. Again, silence. Looking to make, a more sacred space. Something that looks a little bit more like, um, a cathedral than Walmart, in the worship space. I love this! Ah, and then finally, you know by the

way I've, I'm so committed to the ancient stuff, that I have actually committed, myself, and my scholarly work to this. And, some of you who are my students know, that a secret subversive, motivation I have, in all my classes pretty much is to try to bring ancient, rich, thought, into the contemporary conversation, because I feel like we're so impoverished, from that.

11:33 And finally, more aesthetic sensitivity and awareness. The idea of sacred space, um, where we worship. Ah, eh, ah, a recollection, of, the importance of beauty, not just truth, and goodness, in our worship, and, ah, the value of, artists being able to create, worship for the glory of God, not just musicians. One of my deepest struggles with, evangelicalism and by the way if I would have done my, narrative I would've called it, "Confessions of a Post Post-Evangelical." Because about 10-15 years ago I was a post-evangelical, for many of these reasons, and I've come back to see the value in, evangelicalism. And I've come to see that, these lapse in, in contemporary evangelicalism to a great extent, are not necessary, to, evangelical theology. But one of my greatest struggles was with this, and I lived in England, and every time I come back to the United States I just felt like I was being punched in the stomach aesthetically. I was part of a, of ah, an Anglican church, in Oxford, that met in a very old building. I was drawn to worship, the beauty of God, Psalm 27:4, by, the beauty of the surroundings. And I came back, a friend of mine, ah, who teaches at Oxford, ah, one term a year from the United States, when every year when he goes over there, when he lands at Heathrow, he's asked what is the purpose of your, your visit? He says I'm, I'm seeking cultural asylum. [Audience laughter] And ah, that almost did it for me, for evangelicalism. So I, I'm excited, by this. I am encouraged by this. I want to say that it has, that, that the commitment to these things as referred today has nothing to, requires nothing in, in terms of, of abandoning eh, ah, I would even say, um, a modest foundationalism and

epistemology and all the other kind of things, and hope we continue this, this conversation in, in a good way.

13:34 I want to raise a few questions. I've gotten a five minute, note, and it's probably four minutes by now. Um, I speak as a friend. Ah, I, I want to say that I've got some questions, and I don't know for sure the answers to these things. I'm just, I guess I wanna ask, that you consider these as questions and you probably already do, and you may have some really good answers for them that I just, haven't read yet. Um, but, one thing that I'm concerned about, is the labels.

We've talked about labels a little bit today. Labels are unavoidable. They're not just a modernist thing. Ah, every time you utter a sentence you're, you're, seeing things fall under ah, a particular concept and you can't write a book without labels and so on. So the only question is really, are they good labels? Are they accurate? Are they bad? Are they being used to manipulate and control? Are they, being used to, enlarge, and, invite? And, and I, I take it that the emerging church, label, is meant to be, inclusive and, and to invite rather than to exclude. But I'm concerned about some of the, ways that the emerging church, literature, and this is not true of all of it, and, I'm making a, great gross generalization here, ah, labels, the issues, and we've seen already today that there, is, different, there are different views about what postmodernism is and so on. In fact, we can't, I don't think we can let the, we can put the cat back in the bag, but I would like to, um, advocate that we, get rid of the word postmodern, and try to come up, and modern, and try to come up with some other categories. Ah, I can't, I can't develop this, but here's, here's kinda my point. Very often, there are, that there is, eh, even in the most, winsome and, gracious, ah, emerging church literature, there are, tables, columns, "a" and "b," what, was the case and what we want to be the case, okay? It's impossible to get away from that, because it's a reformation movement, okay? You have to have something that you're trying to change. I

have, many times struggles with what ends up in the categories there. The way they're framed very often they are, false dichotomies or false alternatives that I look at and I say, I don't buy either one of those things. I think both of them aren't the case, biblically speaking, okay? But just because I, for example, think propositional truth is important, maybe I end up in, "a" and then I have to take, carry the baggage of being modern, and that has, has nothing to do with modernity in my view, as a, um, historian of philosophy.

16:07 Um, and, the categories themselves, is it modern and postmodern? Is it modern, and, emerging? I think we oughta get rid of modern, because modernity is a 500 year, movement in the church. The modern church is very diverse. I think that Dr. Webber has, really helped here by, by distinguishing between traditional churches and pragmatic churches. They're different. The pragmatic ones, the seeker ones seem to be the thing that, most, ah, emergent people are, are after, but even within traditional churches there's a huge spread. There's great, aesthetic richness in some of them. Some of them are very participatory. Ah, some of them are very liturgical. And so, ah, eh, I, I wanna say, the, the categories, are awkward and not always accurate and sometimes unfair and sometimes uncharitable, and I say that as somebody, who, probably half the stuff I'm saying right now is, um, inaccurate, and uncharitable too and I'm, totally willing to own that. But let's, let's be careful both ways how we label. Um, and I've now run out of time, so I'm gonna tell one more story. [Audience laughter]

17:20 Ah, when I was living in Oxford as a part of this, ah, Anglican church, and, and it was very robust in all of these ways. It was the best, it was the best church experience I've ever had, and I miss it. It breaks my heart, sometimes, to even think about, that I don't have it. Um, but, there was another, Anglican church in town, that had, really good preaching but the music wasn't

so good, but a lot of our American friends, friends went there. So, one day my wife and I went there, and, we were just being [various] that I'm a musician, being very aesthetically conscious, we, we were just, repulsed by it, heh-heh, and, of all things they did, the old Andre Crouch song, Soon and Very Soon. If you know that song it's gotta have a groove to it you know? [Horner sings while tapping the beat] "Soon and very soon, we are goin' to see the King." You know it was, groove-less. Totally groove-less. [Audience laughter] If you've seen the movie, The Jerk, okay? [Audience hearty laughter] And I almost, walked out of there. I was, uh it was, I mean talk about offensive. There was, there was nothing offensive theologically at all in the sermon or anything else, but I was just repulsed by it. We walked out of there and ah, we went back to our church, and I was leading a little ministry in our church and I started telling this to people, "You wouldn't believe how, how, you know, aesthetically, barren this was. It was terrible and everything," and this guy said, "Horner, those are your brothers and sisters in Christ." Oh yeah. And, I guess I would leave you with this. Some of what, I see with respect to worship, with the, the critique, that the emerging church gives, ah, a lot of it seems to me to be very aesthetic, "this is cheesy, this is cool," and I have to tell you, I totally agree with it. Heh-heh, I totally agree with it, aesthetically, but let's be careful. Let's be careful how we talk about it. These are our brothers and sisters in Christ, and, we, obviously need to learn, to do that, in our time together today and I, and I pray that we are. Thank you very much. [Audience enthusiastic applause]

Robert Webber:

19:46 Okay I'm gonna go back to the story that I told you this morning because there's a little bit more to that story that ends up in worship and I think that's probably, ah, the best place for me to

go. As you can imagine after giving up, ah, all this, ah, propositional, enlightenment, ah, oriented, theology, I was in, somewhat, of, a sense of, uh, despair and dysfunction. It's amazing to me to tell you the honest truth that Wheaton College kept me, ah, but they did. Um, probably sorry about it later, but, heh-heh, nevertheless they did. But, I remember, um, a woman, actually a woman by the name of Leanne Payne, and some of you may know her. Ah, prayed for me, and she prayed for, ah, the healing of my memories. Ah, it was a very, very significant, thing that she did for me. And at the end of that prayer, which took, um, about three hours, I recall her saying to me, Bob, she said, you know over there at St. Barnabas Episcopal Church, ah, that's a place of the Spirit. Now, I, I had not been to, um, liturgical churches for quite some time, and so, I decided, on, her suggestion. She didn't really tell me to go there but I just decided after what she said, maybe I oughta give it a shot. Ah so, um, most Episcopal churches have an 8am service, and so I went over there for an 8am service, on, a Sunday morning, and then met my family and we went to the church that we normally go to. Well this went on for three weeks, and, something was beginning to happen inside of me and I wasn't exactly sure, what it was, and ah, but I remember at the end of the third week I said to the pastor of that church, I'll be back next week. I'm gonna bring my family, and I did, and we stayed in that church, and, that was probably about 1972 or 1973, ah when that happened.

21:41 Now, I, I'm not trained, ah, as a liturgist. I am trained, ah, in the field of historical theology, but there was something that, began to happen to me in the context of that liturgy, and that, I, later began to reflect on. What was really happening to me as it was, there was my, my inner, self, my, my whole self, ah was finding a new kind of healing. A new kind of, of ah, vision of reality. A new attachment to faith. A new passion, ah, about, about the gospel, and actually it, it's that, ah, particular instance that, caused me to begin to study the subject of, uh, worship from

an academic point of view and to write and speak about it. But I want to ah, say, that in my teaching at Wheaton College which was historical theology, I began to look, at, the early church and to understand that the early church, theologians were all liturgists. That is to say, uh, that in the early church, um, ah, pastoral leadership, theological thinking, um, worship and liturgy, ah were all tied together. They didn't do what we do in the enlightenment period, in, which we put ah, liturgy over here in a cubby hole, and theology over here in a cubby hole, spirituality in another cubby hole, evangelism in another cubby hole. Everything in the early church is kind of, mixed, ah, mixed together within the context of the great, story, of from which, ah, the Christian faith, ah, derives.

23:18 Now I'm going to, ah, reflect on this in two ways. The first, is I wanna reflect on what's been happening in, the, ah, contemporary worship over the past, 30 years, and then I'm gonna reflect on the recovery of story, and the impact that that makes both in worship and also, ah, in evangelism. First of all let me reflect, on what's been happening in the last 30 years. Seems to me that what has happened is that worship has become divorced from theology, and that spirituality has become divorced from theology. Now if you've read Christopher Lasch's book on the culture of narcissism, you know that the fundamental, aspect of Lasch's book is, that as soon as we depart, from, history and tradition, there is nothing, left, to reflect on, but the self. Now I'm critical of a lot of contemporary worship. I think there's a lot of good, contemporary worship out there, but I think that, much of contemporary worship and even much of the way in which we think about worship, is we think about God as the object. I'm, here, to worship, that, object, and therefore, worship has become, primarily, narcissistic. Now what I mean by that, is not so much that it's directed toward me, but the assumption is, that there's something inside of me, where I can, reach, down, into, the depth of my being, and somehow, pull that, up, and say, "Okay God!

I'm here, to worship you!" And that's how if you'll look at a lot of the contemporary songs, it's I, worship you. I enthrone you. I extoll you. I magnify you. I seat you on your throne. Now, what I'm, trying to, reflect here, is that, that narcissistic, notion of worship, derives from the idea, that God is an object that sits in heavens, and even spirituality. Let's go with spirituality. Spirituality, many of us think about spirituality as kind of a, a journey into self, like, I'm gonna take a deep, journey, down into myself and I'm gonna get in touch, with the spirituality that is in, there, and I'm gonna release that spirituality, and I'm gonna find myself being a spiritual person, taking this journey in the self. Now note, worship and spirituality, divorced from theology, is always going to become, narcissistic.

26:20 But the theology that I'm talking about here, is not, some, scientific, form, of either reformed, or Arminian, or some other kind of theology, but the theology that I'm talking about here, is the theology, of story. That is to say, that, worship, is situated, in the story of God. Spirituality is situated, in the story of God. Now if that's true, then we have to say something about, story. So let me tell you another, story, to get, to story. This past summer, I had the occasion to have dinner with four young people, none of whom were confessing Christians, and in the context of our, meal, we, we did a lot of talking about a variety of things, and one of these young people turned to me and said, Bob, what are you, what are you writing now? 'Cause they knew that I, that I write, and I said well I'm writing a book on spirituality, and the moment I said that, all heaven, broke loose. [Audience sighs]

I mean, for the next 30 minutes I sat back and I listened to them reflect on spirituality. One person said, well I have mystical feelings so I think that I'm probably a very spiritual person. Another person said, I don't believe in any of that stuff, and I said, well are you an

atheist? And he said, no, I'm not an atheist I just don't think you can know anything. I said so you're an agnostic and he said, yeah that sounds pretty good, I think I'm an agnostic. The third person said, you know when I was a little girl I stood in front of a building and I saw written real large over that building, "All, Paths, Lead to God." And she said ah, that made a lot of sense to me and I've always thought that way, and of, I still think that way that every religion leads, like ah, different paths to the very top of the mountain. And then the person to my left said, yeah he said, there's anything I hate it's those, Christians who think that they have the one way. Well these, I'm, just picking out a couple, statements out of a, longer conversation, and then, finally the same person that said that turned to me and said, so, what do you believe? [Audience sporadic chuckles]

And I said, well, I'm a Christian. Of course they knew that, and then I said I happen to be one of those Christians who believes that Jesus, is, the Way, the Truth, and the Life. It's the only way to the Father. And the jaws dropped, like, whoa, where's this guy coming from? After all of their relativism and their pluralism and, spirituality which is found in the self, for me to sit, sit there and say that to them. It was jarring, and there was a kind of, pause, embarrassed, pause, and then the person to my left said, well, explain yourself, and I said okay I'll be glad to do that. Now, obviously you think I'm gonna pull out all of the philosophical arguments, all the rational arguments, all the scientific arguments, and sock it to them, huh? Ah-heh you know from my experience in 1968. I'm not gonna do that. So I said, well to explain this to you, ah, first of all let me tell ya, tell ya a story. He goes, I love stories! I'll listen to what you have to say. Now, a second thing I said is that, I can't prove my story, and he said, ah! And I [hate] people who say that they can prove their stories. I'm even more willing to listen to your story. So for the next, probably about an hour, we, talked back and forth, about the story. And I'm just gonna give you a

little bit, of what I said, maybe, you know, get at the heart, of what I said in that story.

30:45 I said, God lives in eternal community of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. It's a community of love, and God has so much love that God decided to create a world, to dwell in, to inhabit, and a community of people, to enter into the life of the Triune God to participate in God, to do God's will on earth, to unfold the creation after the purposes of God. But I said there's a problem and the problem is rebellion, against the purposes of God, and then we went off into a long discussion about, the origins of evil, but then we talked about the fact, that we live in a dysfunctional world. The Bible itself, in those early chapters of Genesis shows how the world, goes awry, and is dysfunctional, and how all of the war, and the hate, and the greed, and the lust, and the murder, and the violence, that surrounds us, is an extension of our rebellion against God. And, then I said, you know, this, this is really a bad fix that we're in, 'cause unfortunately there is not, a thing that we can do about this. We, we cannot, restore, that union that we had with God in the garden. That's been lost, and not a single person here who can do anything about that, and, everybody just sort of reflected on that. Anyhow, there isn't really anything that we can do about it, and then we talked about God and God's mercy. Seeing this plight. Seeing this fix. Seeing this dysfunction of humanity. God says, I will do for you what you cannot do for yourself. I will become one of you. I will become incarnate in the womb of the Virgin Mary. I will become a man, and as a man, I will reverse, what it is that Adam did to you all. Reverse the fix. I will enter into your suffering. I will die for you. I will be raised, in resurrection of new life for you, and we talked about that, and after we had finished talking about that, one person goes, I got it! I got it! I got it! Three times. I've never heard the story like that. I've never heard Christianity as a story. I got it! God did for me what I cannot do for myself, and the woman to my right says, what should

we do? Then I thought I was back in the Book of Acts, you know? [Audience chuckles] And if you look at Peter's sermon in Acts chapter 2, is a story. It's a story about God worked in history to restore us, and to recover us. Now what I should've said this, should have said to her, was, same thing that Peter said, I should have said, repent, be baptized, for the forgiveness of your sins, and receive the gift of the Holy Spirit, but I talked, to them, about trusting in Jesus. I probably should've have gone more deeply into baptism, but I do want to say that, I'm in contact with all of those people. They're still thinking about it, but they heard a story.

34:42 Now back again to worship and spirituality. What does worship do? Worship is not me, offering my, [fallen] praise to God, but worship is doing, God's story. Telling God's story, and acting God's story. Worship, is not God as an object, but worship is God as the subject. God the subject, who speaks, and acts, in worship, and shapes, and forms me, into Christlikeness, the one, true, human being, that has come to this earth, to restore, our humanity. To take our humanity into himself, and lift our humanity, through him by the power of the Spirit to God, and spirituality, is, being in, union with God, through Jesus Christ, by the Spirit, and then, living in the context to, of community, and living, out, life according to the purposes of God. So when we get back to that story, which I have found in my witness, is, people are ready to hear that story, and when we get back to that story, and we put everything back together again. The story, and worship, and spirituality, and the church, and all that we do proceeds from that one, metanarrative. That one, true, metanarrative, that tells about, the entire, history of the world, and tells about the meaning of human existence, and when we enter into that story, in faith and baptism, we live that story, not only, in, the doing of worship, but also, in our spiritual life within the context of the world.

36:42 Now let me say, you see I have five minutes and I'll say this in one, so that if there's any, ah, question I can take it. That's a paradigm shift? I know it's a paradigm shift because I've lived it, and I've struggled with it, and I'm still struggling with it. I'm not gonna say that there are no, propositions, within the context of that story. I've been thinking about that because people are always asking me that. There are propositions there. God is. God created. We fell. God became involved in, history and Israel. God became incarnate. God became, um, one of us in Jesus. Jesus died for us. Jesus was resurrected for us. Jesus ascended for us, and we with him, and Jesus will come again to restore and renew the entire created order. Here's what I want to say. When we take it all apart in this little pieces, then we feel like we have to get into some kind of, um, philosophical, or rational, or evidential argument for every piece of it, and what I'm saying is let's go. Let's just simply go back, and put it all together again, and just simply tell that story, which is the true story, of the meaning of the world, and then let's, situate, our worship, and our spirituality, and our church, and everything else that we do within the context of that story. And then I think we'll be moving in the direction, where people will ah, be willing, to listen to us, within the context of the postmodern world, that no longer, privileges, reason, and science. Amen. [Audience applause]

Michael Anthony:

38:32 Is ah, Paul Engle, from ah, Zondervan back there? Paul won't you come on up here for a moment please. I'm gonna ask you to ah, have a word of prayer for us for our lunch and, briefly mention some of the products that you brought [inaudible] here for us. A couple of announcements, just as we do break for lunch. Those of you who have not yet picked up your nametag, you want to make sure you do that, because that nametag is your ticket to be able to

obtain lunch. So in just a few moments as you walk through the line if you got your nametag on, then ah, you want to make sure that ah, you have that in a prominent place. If for some reason you don't have your nametag, during the prayer time, that's when you reach over and grab your neighbor's. [Audience laughter] Those of you who are students, ah, will be able to take a break in a moment. You can run over to the cafeteria. We'll be reconvening at ah 1:30. We wanted to make sure that we, structured in enough time to give you, ah, some, some, plenty of opportunity to interact and dialog together with peers. Those who are in the process of, ah, conducting an emerging church service, this will be a great time for you to get together with others, who are also going through that process to share ideas with them. Those kinds of things. Also, if you've not already ah, taken a moment to do so, I just want to remind you that these blue cards in the center of your table will give you an opportunity, to follow up some of our discussions and dialogs with some of our participants today. There's a box at the registration table. If you'd drop that card in, after lunch, we'll be sorting these cards out. We want to try to, structure the, the panel discussion time a little bit so we eliminate some of the, ah repetitive questions, but we want to try to prescreen those a little bit so we can balance out the ah, opportunities for people to be able, to be able to respond. So if you could drop that card in the box, that would be great.

40:11 Paul would you come up, ah, and ah, share a little bit with us please? Paul is an author, an editor. He comes to us today in his role as a, ah, publisher's representative from Zondervan. For those of you who have been ah, ah, have been, been keeping abreast of the literature in the field of the emerging church, ah you know that Zondervan is probably the leading publisher in this particular field. We're very pleased that ah, Paul has flown out all the way from Michigan to be able to be with us, to share with us some of his products. So Paul, if you'll come and ah share briefly about what you brought and then also lead us in a word of prayer for lunch please.

Paul Engel:

40:45 Thanks, Michael. Greetings from the, west coast publisher, Zondervan. That is the west coast of Michigan. We are, delighted to have been a, leader in publishing resources for, and about the emerging church. I've been able to travel around in my acquisitions role, and meet a number of the key, ah, leaders in the movement and visit their churches and, we feel that our role is to be a broker of ideas, as a communications company. A broker of ideas within evangelicalism so we have books that are supportive of the emerging church, others that are analytical and critical of it, and what we want to do is to help, to foster the conversation. For years we've been a friend of pastors and the church leaders, and we like to keep up with what is happening, and appreciate the opportunity to able to serve you and provide resources to equip you. And if any of you are potential authors I'd ah, love to have a chance to chat with you this afternoon if you have feedback, comments, criticisms, of any of our books, or software, or products. We'd be glad to ah, talk to you as well. There's some samples on the table back there, and ah, some of the ones, one of the newest books is a book called, ah, Becoming Conversant with the Emerging Church by D.A. Carson. It is already into its second printing only out a couple weeks. Somehow we didn't arrange to get it here but, available online, or, perhaps in some local stores as well.

42:15 Good to be here today. We invite you to join us now as we return thanks to the Lord before we, ah, before we eat. Let's pray. Father we acknowledge that you are the, source of every good and perfect gift that comes from you, the Father of Lights with whom there is no shadow of

turning. We thank you Father for the gift of Jesus Christ, and though we come from various streams within evangelicalism, though we have, variety of perspectives and views, we are committed to, to love, and to follow Jesus Christ and to please him. We pray that the, conversations we have today might further, our ability to be involved in the building of, Christ's kingdom, and we pray that you will, direct, and each of our conversations even over the lunch period that it might help further that goal as well. Thank you Father for the food that's been provided, for the opportunity to be here today for the openness of Biola to have this gathering. Direct, and each of the speakers who participate even later on this afternoon. For we pray in Christ's name. Amen.