

Young, Restless, and Reformed**By Collin Hansen**

The young, restless, and reformed (YRR) movement is reactionary. This group of 20-30 some things, grew up drinking “doctrine light” from the mega church movement. They have sipped the postmodern wine of doubt. They have observed more and more people converting to less and less of Christianity. They have realized that the Moralistic, Therapeutic Deism that has become Christianity in America, cannot save, or give hope or purpose. Man centered religion and the “Seinfeld” culture of everything being about nothing has found Christians, in despair and looking for a true understanding of God. This generation has rejected the fluff, and they have gone searching for substance. Enter onto the scene people like John Piper, C.J. Mahaney, Al Mohler, and Mark Driscoll. These men are different in so many ways, but yet passionate about the truth, passionate about God, and His absolute sovereignty over all things. They preach Calvinism, not as it has been stereotypically understood, as evangelism killing, dead theology, but instead as life giving, God centered, heat producing worship, that inspires global evangelism. Young people are flocking to this message in droves. YRR. has carved out a new but yet old way of life that is driven by theological convictions -- and they don't shy away from the tough theological convictions, that previous generations tried to ignore or avoid, instead they preach them loudly, and sing them even louder. Election, predestination, definite atonement, irresistible grace all of these doctrines make God very big. Heavy theology is preached, taught, and sung. YRR. is not a seeker sensitive movement. They recognize that God does the saving, and so they simply want to get to know him and worship him, and invite others to do the same. God is the main attraction, not bigger and better marketing strategies.

Like with any reactionary movement, anger, and arrogance will tend to get in the way, YRR is not exempt from these vices. Frustrated by Christian movements that seem to be turning people away from a deeper knowledge of God, and convinced that they are absolutely correct in their understanding of Scripture, YRR can have a tendency to “blast away” at other Christian groups who don't have the same theological bent. Humility and grace is what must characterize this movement. Humility is after all, what Calvinism should produce. Salvation is all of God, and none of man, -- it is only because of God's mercy that one could even dream to enter eternal life. For all of the “harsh soil” of Calvinism, the springing up of humility is one of its most blessed fruits.

There will probably be a counter reaction at some point in the future. YRR doesn't solve the theological tensions of Scripture, they will always remain, but they are bringing their positions on them to the front burner once again. The climate is right, many have grown tired of the weak, flimsy, flat evangelical landscape, the time to climb the mountains of God has come again, and the YRR with books by Edwards and Owen stuffed in their backpacks are leading the climb.

Hansen doesn't really touch on the influence of YRR on fundamentalism. But I would add that it is for similar reasons that many young fundamentalists are becoming YRR. A growing distaste for the “separate first, ask questions later” mentality, a rejection of issue oriented Christianity, a general frustration over flawed hermeneutics, and shallow preaching and a resistance from the old guard to even engage in some of these thorny discussions, has left many fundamentalists hungry for more of God and less of everything else.

