

Sounds Like Some of Us

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Harold Kushner, a Jewish rabbi, wrote a book titled, *Who Needs God?* According to reviewer, **Don Feder**, (a syndicated columnist) in Kushner's view of deity and religion, "absolutely no one." The book is typical liberal theology, which adapts God and religion to current behavior and thought patterns.

Kushner writes: "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 and salvation stuff). **Kushner** is merely regurgitating the old modernistic "social gospel" of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. 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 Had they not been, surely, He would have rescinded the eighth commandment. Anything to make His creation comfortable and content here below.

Are we not hearing some of the same things from "progressive" 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**? Are not these socially oriented churches also notoriously soft (if not actually digressive) concerning doctrinal and moral absolutes? Is it any wonder that they condone adulterous marriages (and even encourage them by their "singles" programs), "social" drinking, dancing, gambling, and such like, and that 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 he spoke about self-denial (Luke 9:23). Why, there is just no place for such in "functional" religion.

Do not such liberals accuse those of us who are "set for the defense of the Gospel" with being "rigid," "judgmental," "negative," and "humorless" traditionalists (a rather rigid, judgmental, negative, and humorless accusation, one might observe)? We should not miss the point that these charges by "sweet" and "loving" brethren would apply to every faithful servant of God described in the Bible, including the Christ (Mat. 15:1-14; 23:1-36; et al.).

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 he been observing some of "us" and reading what some of "us" have been writing, or have some of "us" been reading him?

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