

## A RELIGIOUS RUMMAGE SALE

One of the most distinguished modern times author/theologians of our day, Phyllis Tickle, in her book, *The Great Emergence*, quotes The Right Reverend Mark Dyer, an Anglican bishop, as saying, "...that about every five hundred years the Church feels compelled to hold a giant rummage sale." Thinking back upon the evolving church since its founding, it's easy to recall those historic times of 'church cleansing' when dramatic changes were demanded and, often, grudgingly given.

Without question the greatest 'religious rummage sale' of all time was the one occasioned by Jesus the Christ some two thousand years ago. His gospel message not only challenged and changed the old order of worship, but also introduced a new way of understanding the God we worship; thus from the 'old covenant' to the 'new covenant'; from the labor of law, to the liberation of grace. Christ insisted on uncluttered and unobstructed access to the worship of God and drove the accumulated appendages of religion out the front door of the Jerusalem Temple.

But, over time, things have become cluttered again; the old strictures of the law have sneaked in again through the back door of the church; a new cleansing of religion seems to be called for. An up-to-date rummage sale of religious rules and regulations would get rid of some of those divisive and exclusionary dog-eared dogmatisms, thus making more room for a grace-filled gospel which was originally intended and is so desperately needed in this twenty-first century.

You may be asking, "What 'divisive and exclusionary dog-eared dogmatisms' need to be removed from the church?" Well, I'm tempted to suggest a long list for your consideration, but decided to leave that to your own imagination. If, however, after your rummage sale, there still remains some of that old religious restrictive stuff standing between seekers and their Savior, rent a U-Haul and dump it all into the nearest landfill. Good riddance of bad rubbish!

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