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“An Evangelical Manifesto” — Continuing the Conversation

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The release of “[An Evangelical Manifesto](#)” represents an opportunity to revisit the continuing issue of Evangelical identity and to continue a conversation. I was very pleased to welcome author and social critic [Os Guinness](#), one of the Manifesto’s authors, to Monday’s edition of *The Albert Mohler Program* [[listen here](#)].

Os Guinness is a major intellect in the Evangelical world, and a perceptive critic of the anti-intellectualism and cultural captivity that marks so much of the Evangelical movement. In our conversation, Os clarified several issues. He said that the statement in the Manifesto concerning believers who represent “caricatures of the false hostility between science and faith” did not specifically refer to young earth creationists. He did, however, criticize those behind at least some efforts to include Intelligent Design in public school curricula. In any event, the statement is likely to be perceived by the public as a strong criticism of any young earth position.

He also explicitly affirmed his own belief in the exclusivity of the Gospel, making very clear his own conviction that salvation comes only to those who come to Christ by faith. Beyond this, he expanded upon his call for a “civil public square.”

I greatly appreciated Os Guinness’ comments, his response to [my analysis](#), and the opportunity for the conversation. Nevertheless, I retain my main concerns about the Manifesto and its public effect. I do admire and respect many friends involved in the project. At the same time, I remain unconvinced that *all* involved in the project would interpret these issues in the same way. Public statements and published works would seem to indicate otherwise. I wish that all of those involved in the project would share in Os Guinness’s firm statement of the exclusivity of the Gospel. I know several who most certainly would, but others who I am confident could not. Thus, my concern about the Manifesto remains.

Evangelicalism is an on-going project and a movement marked by a seemingly permanent identity crisis. We should be thankful for any opportunity to clarify the issues at stake — especially when we agree that Evangelicals should be defined theologically, above all.

See my analysis of “[An Evangelical Manifesto](#)” [here](#).

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