

## **Lecture 15: The Upper & Lower Story (II)**

**Introduction and Review:** After a brief review of Strauss' and Young's religious existentialism, Professor Barrs examines five general consequences of the "Upper and Lower Story" dichotomy for Christianity in modern society.

### **The Upper & Lower Story (II)**

*I. The Problem of Reducing Faith to an Abstraction: Three Examples*

II. The Consequences of the "Upper and Lower Story"

- A. "Faith in faith" - an abuse of the word
  - 1. Biblical faith
  - 2. Modern "faith"
    - a. Neo-Orthodoxy
  - 3. The need for this distinction when speaking about faith in general
- B. Biblical language - "semantic mysticism"
  - 1. The misuse of religious words in this culture
    - a. Separated from their meaning
    - b. Manipulated into a specific agenda
      - 1) Civil rights movement
      - 2) Political right
      - 3) Christmas marketing
      - 4) Metropolitan Community Church
- C. Loss of contact with history and science
- D. Faith set against reason
  - 1. Irrational faith - an unbiblical idea glorified
- E. Dialectical thinking
  - 1. Truth and falsehood not opposed
  - 2. Affirmation of relativism
    - a. Rejection of "one objective truth"
    - b. Universalism (Vatican II)

Question: How should Christians handle the use of biblical language as a banner for certain causes?

- \* Clear definitions for our own use of the words
- \* Careful not to make the same mistake - never allow a label to substitute for clear communication of beliefs

Question: Is another Great Awakening possible in this society?

- \* The culture is "ripe"
- \* The need for clear, meaningful communication