

Lecture 24: Criticisms of Schaeffer

Introduction and Review: In this final portion of the class, Professor Barrs addresses various criticisms leveled against Francis Schaeffer during his ministry and since his death. Working from the primary accusation that Schaeffer's early character contrasts his later character, Professor Barrs lists the criticisms and then responds.

Criticisms of Schaeffer**I. The "Early Schaeffer"**

- A. Evangelist and challenger
- B. Not interested in systemic evil
- C. Not interested in meaningful social change
- D. Cared little about the arms race and war
- E. Cared little about capitalism and racism

II. The "Later Schaeffer"

- A. Fixated with political action and social protest
- B. Purveyor of simplistic analyses of moral problems in America
- C. A man of single-issue causes
- D. Enchained by the New American Right
- E. Believed in cultural civil religion
- F. Naively believed in Reformation base for freedom and justice
- G. Guilty of Anglo-Saxon anti-Catholicism
- H. Guilty of intellectual dishonesty
- I. Media popularity and name-dropping
- J. Guilty of messianic consciousness regarding his own importance
- K. Guilty of latent fundamentalism
- L. Believed in past "golden ages" of Christianity
- M. Espoused theonomy, reconstructionism, and triumphalism
- N. Advocated "doomed" dispensationalism
- O. Believed in conspiracyism

III. In Defense of Schaeffer - His "Early Character"

- A. An evangelist and challenger
- B. Opposed not political involvement but political labels
- C. Critique of relativism includes "systemic evil"
- D. Concerned very much about social reform
 - 1. *Death in the City*
 - 2. *Sin Is Normal* (1953), *Christianity and the Jew* (1940s)
- E. Third world concern
 - 1. African socialism lectures
 - 2. Support of the Rookmakers
- F. Concern about war -Vietnam lectures
- G. Concern about racism and capitalism
 - 1. Pro-interracial marriage
 - 2. Capitalism lectures
- H. "Serve God in your place"