

A FEELING OF BELONGING

When I became a Christian, God gave me such a love for his book, the Bible, that it seemed to come alive in my hands, and I searched eagerly to find what it would tell me about living my new life. Then my RI teacher told us that some of the Bible wasn't true (well, most of it actually, as far as I could tell), and I discovered I wasn't simply a Christian, but an Evangelical, since I did believe the Bible.

It wasn't till some time later that I found that some Evangelicals didn't think the whole Bible was true either —just the important bits. So since I seemed to believe the lot, I wasn't an Evangelical as I'd thought, but a Fundamentalist.

Then I read in this Bible that God was the champion of the poor and oppressed, and that Christ's people were to be the same. My friends shook their heads and said I was wandering into the Social Gospel, and would become a Liberal soon.

Later, I read in the Bible that Christians were supposed to be filled with the Holy Spirit, and that interesting things like miracles, speaking in tongues and joy unspeakable often happened if they were. But it appeared that neither Liberals nor Fundamentalists believed those parts of the Bible, so they told me I was a Charismatic — except that, reading in the Bible that it was wrong to kill or even be angry with my fellow man, I opposed Nuclear Arms. Charismatics, it seemed, were supposed to be right-wing and pro-nuclear, so I was actually a Radical.

A little time went by, and I read in the Bible that Christians should be one, just as the Godhead is one, so

that the world could see we belonged to Jesus. I also noticed that the Bible taught that unity is even more important than doctrine, and that it never mentioned denominations at all. But my friends told me that Christians are spiritually united, and that the world will see this when we get to Heaven (and they get to Hell), and that I was an Ecumenical, which was like a Liberal only worse.

One feels very isolated being a non-Evangelical-Fundamentalist-Liberal-Charismatic-Radical-Ecumen-ical.

The only way I can think of to be one of the boys is to stop reading that Bible***

JCG