



# GOSPEL *for* LIFE

## **Reprise: Why We're Not Emergent Season 5, Episode 8 Transcript**

### **[00:00:00.280] - Announcer**

Welcome to the Gospel for Life Podcast. We help churches make disciples. Now here's your host, Darryl Dash.

### **[00:00:08.800] - Darryl Dash**

Welcome to the Gospel for Life podcast. And today, I want to do something a little bit unusual. I'm going to take you back to 2008, when the Emerging Church was still a thing. And back then came across a book called *Why We're Not Emergent*, and was written by Kevin DeYoung and Ted Kluck. And I had the privilege of interviewing them way back then. And it is nowhere. I don't think it's anywhere on the internet right now.

And so what I've done is dug it back up on my computer and edited it a little bit. And I just want to rerelease it so that first it exists on the internet. And second, I think that even though the Emerging Church is no longer a thing, there's still much to learn from this interview. So here it is from 2008, an interview I did with Kevin DeYoung, 30 years old, and Ted Kluck on their new book back then: *Why We're Not Emergent*.

Hey, welcome to DashHouse, and this is my first podcast. I'm Darryl Dash.

Today, we're going to talk to the authors of *Why We're Not Emergent: By Two Guys Who Should Be*, Kevin DeJung and Ted Cluck.

**[00:01:34.940] - Darryl Dash**

I had them on the phone, and their book is coming out on April the first, 2008. Here, let's give them a call.

**[00:01:46.430] - Kevin DeYoung**

Hello.

**[00:01:46.960] - Darryl Dash**

Hi, Kevin. Darryl. Yeah, hello. Hi, Ted.

**[00:01:50.440] - Kevin DeYoung**

Yeah.

**[00:01:51.010] - Darryl Dash**

Darryl Dash here. How are you?

**[00:01:52.730] - Ted Kluck**

Hey, Darryl. I'm good. How are you doing?

**[00:01:53.740] - Darryl Dash**

Not bad at all. I've got Kevin on the line as well.

**[00:01:57.540] - Kevin DeYoung**

Great. Hey, Ted.

**[00:01:57.960] - Ted Kluck**

Hey, Kevin. What's up, man?

**[00:01:59.660] - Kevin DeYoung**

You feeling better?

**[00:02:00.590] - Ted Kluck**

I actually feel pretty cruddy. Darryl, if I have to excuse myself to blow my nose here, I hope you understand I've got the winter crud that's going around up here. Okay.

**[00:02:10.800] - Darryl Dash**

Well, I appreciate you doing this.

**[00:02:12.240] - Ted Kluck**

No problem, man. I appreciate your interest.

**[00:02:14.210] - Darryl Dash**

I wondered if you could tell me a little bit about who you guys are and what led you to write this book.

**[00:02:21.170] - Ted Kluck**

I'm actually a member of Kevin's Church. Kevin's the pastor University Reformed Church, and I've been going there for probably seven or eight years. I'm 31 years old. Sports writer, I guess you could say, by trade. I write for ESPN.com, Sports Spectrum magazine. Got three sports books published and on the shelves now. The first one was a collection of interviews with 15 guys that fought Mike Tyson, the boxer. It's called *Facing Tyson: 15 fighters, 15 Stories*. Then this fall, I had two football books published. That's my background.

I'd never, I guess, envisioned myself writing a Christian book. That was the furthest thing from my mind. But I think when this emergent thing started to gather steam, I guess some red flags went up. And not being a theologian, not being someone who was really well-versed or trained in theology, But still, there were things that just didn't sound right to me, things that didn't jive with what I've been taught about the gospel my whole

life and with what I was learning from Kevin. Kevin's a great Bible expositor. I feel like my theological learning really ramped up when he came to our church.

**[00:03:34.620] - Ted Kluck**

It was about that time that I started to be challenged with some of these emerging ideas. I don't remember who approached who, to be honest with you, but we approached each other. We're good friends, and at that time, our friendship was growing. We just approached each other and said, Hey, do you think it would be fun to do a book like this? I think the unique angle to us at that time was, it felt like there really hadn't been a whole lot written about the Emergent Church the perspective of guys who really fit the demographic, young-ish, 30-something type guys who really should have been all over the movement. Can you add to that, Kevin?

**[00:04:12.100] - Kevin DeYoung**

Yeah. It's a little bit about myself. I'm 30, so I'm definitely the young guy of the two of us.

**[00:04:17.470] - Ted Kluck**

Yeah, wow. Kevin has more gray hair than I have, though.

**[00:04:19.920] - Kevin DeYoung**

Yeah, I do. That's true. That's why I keep it short. That's the cool one. I came to this church in 2004. In the summer, I had been an associate pastor out of the church in Iowa for a couple of years. Coming here, there had been a time of transition. They had a really godly long-term pastor who had been here, and then two years without a pastor. I think during that was just a lot of new ideas, some of which were probably good and some of which were maybe not as helpful. So I came into a situation where, at least in some circles of the church, there different emergent books being passed around and different things being dog-eared. I wasn't really familiar with it, so I tried to get caught up to speed and just found things that concerned me.

It seemed like once I heard of Emergent. Everywhere I was looking, I was seeing it. There's more and more church plants in our denomination were looking like that.

Different churches that I had friends or family going to would start some new fusion service or something. At first, it just seemed to be just more of a stylistic thing, the three Cs, couches, candles, and coffee, which, hey, that's not what I would do, but okay, that's not a really big deal to me in the big scheme of things.

**[00:05:45.930] - Kevin DeYoung**

But then as I started reading more and started reading Brian McLaren, and then with Rob Bell, who's just an hour down the road from us at Mars Hill, I had gone to that church, not as a member or attender, but I visited a number of times. And so I really curious at the books he was writing and the things he was saying. Putting that all together, I just started really getting a burden that, I got to write something. I got to put something down because this is just not right. We got a lot of college students who were into *Blue Like Jazz*, which I know is not exactly Brian McLaren, but it's got some of the same themes and just got concerned by some of the things that were being said out there and people were buying into. Ted and I sat down.

My original intent was to write a real boring journal article that would probably die a very obscure death. Ted said, Why don't we write something? So I wrote Ted's coattails into the publishing world, and fortunate to have this book coming out.

**[00:06:45.880] - Darryl Dash**

When I first blogged about the book, the initial reaction I got was not another anti-emergent church book. I guess people think of Carson's book, and I think John MacArthur has written one recently. I think you've already mentioned one difference between your book and the others. But if somebody said to you, Why another book about the Emerging Church? How would you answer that?

**[00:07:08.580] - Kevin DeYoung**

Yeah, Ted can chime in, too. I think we felt like, one, there wasn't anything written by young guys like us, and Ted mentioned that. Then two, I read Carson's book, and I liked it. I felt it was helpful. As I talked to some other people that read it, they would get bogged down in the chapter on deconstructionism and Foucault and Derrida and Lyotard and all these people. It's good for a certain audience, but I don't know if

everyone could track with that. And plus, I wanted to do something that was going to cover the waterfront a little bit more.

I think the one knock on Carson's book, which I do like, was that it just really dealt with Brian McLaren and then Steve Chalk to a certain extent. So we wanted something that was a little broader and try to distinguish some of the different players because Mark Driskill is not anything like Brian McLaren. I mean, they're on totally different pages and don't agree on much of anything, it seems to me. So we wanted to try to be true to those distinctions and also write something that was going to be hopefully playful and provocative enough, because that's what I think the emergent crowd is really strong.

**[00:08:23.380] - Kevin DeYoung**

Brian McLaren is fun to read, and he tweaks people all the time. That's part of what makes his his writing enjoyable. And so we want to do some of that. And that's why I'm glad Ted was able to give the personal vignettes to things. Yeah, yeah, exactly.

**[00:08:38.660] - Ted Kluck**

And I would just add to that. I think you can count me among one of those people that was a little bit bogged down by Carson's book. We met Dr. Carson and really appreciated what he did. But I wanted to write something that my parents could read or my friends back home could read or my buddies from college could pick up and breathe through. And there didn't seem to be anything like that out there. And again, obviously, coming from a sports background and a little bit more popular level background, I guess, I thought we could bring that to the table.

**[00:09:11.720] - Kevin DeYoung**

I hope that the title has its strengths and weaknesses: *Why We're Not Emergent*. It's pretty clear what the book is about, but I think probably some people will have your reaction. Oh, boy, two guys who are just going to do a hatchet job on the emergent church. We really didn't want to do that because we do know people in these churches or churches like these ones, and obviously we have some strong disagreements. But we wanted to be the book that you wouldn't feel embarrassed to say, Hey, why don't you

read this? And I think there's some good critiques in here and not feel like they had to apologize every other page for just.

**[00:09:45.110] - Ted Kluck**

Yeah, we really wanted to come off like another hatchet job. Actually, I read your review today, Darryl, and I really appreciate that. I feel like I sent it to Kevin afterwards and I said, it feels like this guy really got it. I think you captured the spirit in this thing to quote Slapshot. But I thought you seemed to pick up on that.

**[00:10:07.470] - Darryl Dash**

Yeah, I think the playful and provocative part, I think you really got. I appreciate it as well. You were respectful of the differences between McLaren and a Scott McKnight as well. So that was good.

You mentioned in the book, I think that, I guess you weren't expecting necessarily to change a lot of minds among the people in the Emerging Church. You realized that people are maybe dug in. Given that, Who are you writing the book for and what do you expect to come out of the book?

**[00:10:34.310] - Ted Kluck**

For me, I think I had several college students in mind when I wrote it. We've been lucky that being a university church, we're lucky to be able to be in relationships with college students all the time. I had some friends in mind when I wrote the book, some people who had just gotten their heads turned by the whole idea that, Hey, we can have a religion based on doubt and questioning and not really put our hats anywhere at the the day when it comes to theology and being able to articulate what it is that we believe. For me, I don't know what Kevin's answer would be for this, but for me, I really had those kids in mind when I wrote the book. I wanted it to be something that was as winsome and engaging as a *Blue Like Jazz* and something, hopefully, as theologically meaningful as what D. A. Carson would write. So hopefully between the two of us, we managed to meet some of those objectives.

**[00:11:27.700] - Kevin DeYoung**

We don't expect that Brian McLaren is going to read through this and come out with a book, *Why Everything Must Change Back*, or something like that. But I think we wrote it for the people that are going to agree. We know there's going to be people that agree. Hopefully, they do it in the similar spirit, not just want to say, Finally, here's somebody to trash these guys. Those people will hopefully read it.

I also wrote it a lot with people who just don't know. People like, Yeah, my parents or their friends or people that are living in rural Iowa and have heard of the Emergent Church and don't know anything about it, and their kids love Rob Bell's, and they're not quite sure what to think about it. I've run into a lot of people who ask questions. What do you think of Rob Bell or Brian McLaren or these guys? And hopefully this is a book for people who have questions. Obviously, it's one side of it, but we'll help answer some of those questions. And then I think there's a lot of people, some pastors and certainly people in churches that are, you could say, going emergent, that are really good-hearted evangelicals who want to see people come to know the Lord, or maybe been hurt in churches.

**[00:12:43.990] - Kevin DeYoung**

Maybe they're frustrated by a real rigid fundamentalism. And so they're reacting to some things that you need to react to, and they're wanting some good things, but maybe just haven't read carefully what some of these guys are saying. They maybe haven't connected the dots to say, Oh, wait a minute. If the gospel is what we do in the world, then that's not a lot of good news for me because I don't do a lot of good things. And then don't see some of those connections, what they're losing by going to something that feels cutting edge and fresh and just a new spin. But it goes much deeper than that.

**[00:13:21.410] - Darryl Dash**

I think there's a lot of people flirting with the emerging church that have a sound theology, and I think they go into it and assume maybe from a background of solid Bible teaching a lot of things that aren't said. I'm pretty sure this came out when talking about Mars Hill. Maybe a lot of people that go there might have a solid biblical background, and yet a lot of stuff is assumed and not overtly said. Do you think that's accurate? And

if so, looking forward to people that might not have that background going into the same churches. What do you see coming out of that?

**[00:13:55.030] - Kevin DeYoung**

Yeah, no, I think that's dead on, Darryl. I think we mentioned in the book. Rob Bell grew up in the town that we're in now, and I grew up in the town that Rob Bell is in now. So I know really well what that town is like. When Ted and I visited a few months ago, I saw people from my parents' home church and professors and all sorts of people that I knew there. I know they're probably not even reading *Velvet Elvis*. They're not getting what he's saying or not saying. Sometimes I don't even know if Rob Bell is getting what he's saying or not saying. I think there is a lot of assumed theology, especially in a place like West Michigan, which has a ton of churches, is for the most part very conservative. I think you can come to a church like that and you get 10,000 Dutch people. I'm a Dutch person, nothing against them, but you get 10,000 Dutch people who have basically been in church for a long time and have a lot of good background. And then they hear something that, Hey, this Well, this is cool. This is fresh.

**[00:15:01.600] - Kevin DeYoung**

This is new. But it's what happens in the second generation. What are their kids getting or what are they not getting? And I find that the same stuff that works in Grand Rapids and seems fresh, seems stale here in a university town, Oh, uncertainty? I get that in all my classes. The text doesn't have a meaning? Well, that's old news. I want something a little more solid. So I wonder if there's going to be a backlash or if Some of these places where they're living off the fumes from an earlier generation are going to sputter out eventually.

**[00:15:37.900] - Darryl Dash**

What response have you got, even as people have heard that you're writing this book or that it's coming out soon?

**[00:15:43.770] - Ted Kluck**

I think it's been mostly positive. Moody, I don't know how much we want to get into this, Kevin, but Moody was very intentional about wanting to send all the pages, basically where we mentioned anyone in the book to those people. Moody gave folks a chance to respond well before the book came out. And we haven't heard much of anything back from the emerging folks. But I think from other people, the response has been mostly positive.

I was, quite frankly, terrified of doing this book. I hate conflict. I don't like stepping on toes. I'm the last person who would probably respond to a blog post or post anything on a message board or get into some of those theological wars that happen out there on the internet. I've been really wringing my hands over what the response would be, but I think for the most part, it's been positive. People have appreciated our heart in the whole thing, which hopefully was clear. To write something that would affirm and build up the church and do it in a fun and win some way.

**[00:16:50.760] - Kevin DeYoung**

I think what I've heard more than anything else is people are really curious. They've heard something about the Emergent Church, or they know somebody who goes to one these churches, and they don't quite know what to think. So they're really eager to hear the other side because you got Carson, you got MacArthur. But if it's not one of those two... And MacArthur is really an extended book on Jude with some shots thrown in here and there with some other things. So to have something like this that can hopefully give a broad perspective and a critique, I think people are looking forward to. But I'm sure there's going to be criticism, and we've heard some of that. Why are you picking on people? Why do you have to start a fight? Can't you do something more positive? But hopefully, people will take it for what it's worth, and it'll be helpful part of the conversation to use the emergent cliché.

**[00:17:39.700] - Darryl Dash**

I think you guys indicated in the book, you could see it one day sitting down in a pub or somewhere with some of these guys if your paths ever do cross. That actually could happen, I guess.

**[00:17:53.270] - Ted Kluck**

Yeah, it totally could happen. I hope it's not terribly awkward when it does. But like I said, I genuinely in my travels for the book and crossing paths with a couple of these guys. They seem genuinely likeable and like guys that I would enjoy spending time with. So hopefully, writing this book doesn't preclude that in the future.

**[00:18:14.190] - Kevin DeYoung**

Yeah. We've been contacted by a couple of the emerging guys we talk about in the book, and I certainly don't want to pretend like they were giving any blanket endorsement to the book. They were nice and said, Hey, I'm glad this is coming out, and you probably have some good points that other people in the movement need to hear, and we're trying to say these are some of the more moderate voices, and I'm sure they'll disagree with some things. But hopefully, we're not going to pretend that we all just really do agree on all of these matters. But hopefully you can get past some of the smoke and see where there actually is a fire and what things people really do disagree on.

**[00:18:54.540] - Darryl Dash**

Let me ask you a couple of questions about the Emerging Church, Trevin Wax, and I think another I have recently argued that the emerging church is receding. Do you see that it's basically a bit of a fad that might already have peaked and is now beginning to decline? Or do you see that it's still going pretty strong?

**[00:19:13.640] - Kevin DeYoung**

That's a really good question. I think it probably has peaked in its more faddish elements, the three Cs. The shelf life for these new worship trends is so short. The seeker sensitive stuff That lasted 20 years, and the emergency stuff is going to last half that long, probably, and some of it might be good. So not entirely critical of either one. But I think as just the external stuff that goes into a church service, I think that's probably going to prove to be somewhat sad-ish. But some of the deeper movements, I think the real key is whether or not it gets hooked up with the main line. I think, at least

in the United States. I see that in our denomination, at our annual Synod meetings for three consecutive years, we had, and this is a reformed denomination, we had Leonard Sweet, Tony Campolo, and Brian McLaren as our keynote speaker countries. I don't think any of those guys are particularly reformed, but somebody who makes those decisions felt like they were key people or a mainline denomination. I think if the emergence hooks up with some of the main lines that are struggling, because I think they're realizing at least the more liberal emergence have a lot in common with some of the more liberal mainline types, they really need to have as much as their anti-institution, the emergent church is going to last.

**[00:20:42.700] - Kevin DeYoung**

I don't really hope it does, but if it does, They're going to need to find a way to have institutions of their own and schools and seminaries and organizations. I think that will be the key, whether or not it lasts. But I certainly think some of the social justice elements, some of the reconfiguring what the atonement means, I think some of those are going to prove to be more than just passing fads.

**[00:21:09.640] - Ted Kluck**

I guess all I would add to that is that, again, what we've seen, some of the more successful emerging guys like Rob Bell, they're affluent young white guys who know how to market. We've all grown up with marketing just 24/7. It's almost be counterintuitive not to know how to market for some of these guys. I even put myself in that category. Just growing up with MTV and ESPN and seeing how things are packaged and sold. I think Rob Bell will probably have a successful church in 10 years. Whereas some of his emergent contemporaries might fall by the wayside a little bit.

It does look to me like a fad. I don't think we'll be talking about it much in 10 years. I hope not. I think, like Kevin said, the comparisons with the more liberal mainline denomination, certainly, there There's a lot of similarity there.

**[00:22:02.320] - Kevin DeYoung**

I think what part of the controversy will be more lasting are the theological disputes. Just in evangelicalism, which has been very atheological over the past generation, is now

trying to find out does it really have a theology. One of the Emergent guys who called me up and I talked to him, he said, You know what your book is really about is not the Emergent church so much as creeping liberalism in the evangelical church. I don't totally disagree with him. That is some of what, at least in my chapter, is I was getting at. Once you put a label on it, it's probably going to end up being a fad, especially when emergence stands for everything that is anti-institution and everything that's supposed to be not faddish and not organizational.

I think as a term, it's probably like postmodernism. It's a blip word now. That may not be too far down the road for the term emergent. But I think some of the theological issues that they're pushing are going to be things that the evangelical church has to sort out.

**[00:23:09.770] - Darryl Dash**

Tim Keller made the point that the John Stott evangelicalism that was not on the right politically, solidly Orthodox, but also concerned about social justice, that that's been on the decline. It's caused a lot of emerging people to look at evangelicalism to say, something's missing here. What do you is legitimate about their concern, and what can traditional churches learn from the emerging church?

**[00:23:35.520] - Kevin DeYoung**

You want to feel that, Ted, or you want me to

**Darryl Dash**

I think I got about three questions here.

**[00:23:38.380] - Ted Kluck**

No, that's fine. I'll go first, I guess. I think a couple of things have popped into my mind, and I think I even wrote about this in the book, but probably five or six years ago before Kevin came to URC, my wife and I, we had our church as a relevant phase. I think we would have been ripe for the picking, I guess, for the emerging church. Some of our critiques were that evangelicals didn't seem to care about the poor. They didn't seem to care about social justice. I think that's probably what made the Emergent Church

attractive at the time was, Hey, it looked like here are some folks like us who seem to care about this stuff, who seem to be concerned about it.

However, when I think we really jumped in to our church and started looking at other churches, we realized, Hey, these emergent guys, they didn't invent care for the poor. There are a lot of people on our own walls who are really about this and who are working hard in this area. So that's one thing. I think the other thing was the emergent church seems to place a pretty high regard on authenticity diversity, whatever that means.

**[00:24:46.510] - Ted Kluck**

I guess for some people, it might be swearing and admitting you listen to secular music, but I think it obviously runs deeper than that. But I think that was attractive, too. Not feeling like you had to put on an evangelical show at church or to be a part of church culture. I think those are two really good critiques.

Kevin mentioned the culture in Grand Rapids, this conservative church culture that he grew up in, and I'm certainly aware of. I'm not surprised that a more emergent ideal bubbled out of that. I think some of the critiques and some of the things that they brought up are good.

**[00:25:26.360] - Kevin DeYoung**

Yeah. I would just echo that and say the social justice is a good example. That's one of those buzzwords that I don't always know what people mean by it. Hopefully everyone's for justice, whether it's social or informal or whatever. But the emerging church is probably right to see, at least in certain parts of evangelicalism, it being very over politicized, at least in the United States.

I think that's actually one of the dangers of the emerging church, as much as they would say, We're not the left, we're just trying to look at what Jesus would do. You read through their concerns and abortion, gay marriage, that gets really pooh-poohed, that the real issues are global warming and third-world debt and AIDS. If we could have a little more balanced approach on both sides and just not be overawed with politics,

considering Jesus did very little that we see that was about politics, other than the massive thing of saying he was the Lord and no one else was. I think that's a fair critique that many evangelicals just automatically got lumped in with the religious right, which did some good things and probably bound for a correction.

**[00:26:41.450] - Kevin DeYoung**

And then critiquing the reductionistic method of salvation here. Just sign this card, raise your hand, and you're in heaven, and that's about it, and let's go save some more souls. Now, that's a caricature, but that's what they're reacting against. To get churches to think, Okay, we need people to go to heaven, but what are they going to do for the next 50 years that they're here on Earth?

That's fair. I just wish that they would talk more about how do you help a 45-year-old mom who's dying of breast cancer besides telling her to go paint the world red for Jesus. What do you tell her in her final breath?

There are helpful critiques. That's what I tried to get at in the very last chapter, which talks about the seven churches of Revelation. You look at each of churches could be a different church in our community, or it could be a different group in our own church. You got the emphasis church that's got good doctrine. Jesus, he doesn't criticize him for it. He just says, You're not loving. I feel like the emerging church wants to throw out the baby with the bathwater and say, doctrine's your problem.

**[00:27:47.870] - Kevin DeYoung**

No, doctrine isn't the problem. They weren't tolerant of sin. Jesus commended them for that, but they didn't love. They turned on each other, and that's a problem. Where there are churches like that, the emerging churches there's right to point out those problems. I just want them to see that they have their own weaknesses, too.

**[00:28:05.670] - Darryl Dash**

Well, what can emerging churches learn from uncool churches and pastors?

**[00:28:10.730] - Kevin DeYoung**

The first thing that... I'm an uncool pastor. The first thing that I wish they would do, and it's something that I'm learning, too, is just to be a little slower to make sweeping generalizations. I mean, it's so easy to say, none of our churches care about the poor. But you look at a church, you say, Well, almost every church I've been a part of, and they're not doing Bono stuff around the world, but you look at any church I've been a part of, not because of me, but you're going to have deacons that are, without people knowing it, are giving checks to people in the church who are out of work. There's people who are doing the proverbial serving in soup kitchens, going on mission trips. There's people doing evangelism.

We need to improve in a lot of areas in our church, but I think they can be so dismissive of the traditional church, like there's just nothing but lame carpet and lame coffee going on there. When really you get to it, it's people living their lives who have normal jobs, fixing shoes, and then tie their income, and lead a Bible study in their home, and pray for their kids, and raise them well.

**[00:29:24.630] - Kevin DeYoung**

I mean, those people are my heroes, and they're not ever going to be on the cover of Newsweek, and they're not going to be talking about saving the whole sub-Saharan continent of Africa, but they're making a difference. If the emerging church... I feel like they don't see those people. They would probably say they do, but I feel like those people get overlooked.

Like Ted said, we want this book to be really affirming of all sorts of ordinary churches that are never going to be famous or well known and have 100 people or 300 or 500. The word is preach, and they're serving, and they're loving, and there's more they need to do, but they're doing a lot of things that I think Jesus would be pleased with.

**[00:30:07.620] - Ted Kluck**

Yeah, I think what I would add to that is just that I think there's a lot more diversity in uncool churches than people think. A lot of the emergent experiences that we had as research with this book, it seemed like a lot of 25 to 35-year-old college-educated

hipster white in a room with lattes discussing films. That's a pretty narrow demographic at the end of the day. But again, visiting these uncool churches, thinking about the churches we grew up in, there are PhDs worshiping next to hourly workers and everything in between. You just see this really cool diversity and people learning from each other, people living their lives together in community, which is another cliché or buzzword. But I really experience that in the church I'm in now. It's one of the things I appreciate most about our church. It's an underrated diversity, I guess you could say.

**[00:31:08.370] - Kevin DeYoung**

I think the Emergent Church, a number of them probably felt like they didn't fit in in the traditional evangelical subculture. They were maybe into art or films or didn't want to wear khakis and polos and wanted to go to dance clubs. It just felt like they were part of a very different culture. And so the helpful thing is that they can show the church, You know what? You have a culture here and you don't realize it. And it's maybe not very easy for people like us to feel welcomed here because you're putting your khakis before the gospel without realizing it. That's a needed critique. But I think the emergent church doesn't see that they have their own culture that is even more narrowly defined often. Just going right down what music they're going to listen to, the political things that are issues for them. I think you have a lot of the same demographic. If there's not some Catholicity to it, that this could work for the church universal, then it's going to end up just being a little niche movement, which I think they want something more than that.

**[00:32:15.940] - Darryl Dash**

Good stuff. Churches are in decline, and at least it's perceived that the evangelical church is in trouble. People are looking for answers, and I think a lot of people thought, Okay, maybe the emerging church is the answer. If it isn't, what is?

**[00:32:32.030] - Kevin DeYoung**

I would say, and I know what you're asking, Darryl, and I think you're asking it in an intentionally provocative way, but I would say that's the wrong question to ask, or at least you can ask it in the wrong way. If it's not the Emergent Church, what's it going to be? What's the new thing? I don't think it is a new thing.

I went to Gordon Conwell and had David Wells. I don't know if you had Dr. Wells for any classes, Darryl.

**Darryl Dash**

No, I never did.

**Kevin DeYoung**

Okay. Yeah, I really liked really enjoyed his books and really enjoyed his classes. The knock on him at the seminary is he just a pessimist and writes all these Jeremiah ads and what's wrong with evangelicalism.

Somebody asked him in class one time, What do we do? How do we fix this? And he paused his slow British talk and said, I don't have a twelve-point plan for you to fix the church. And then he thought a moment and he said, The only thing I can tell you is expositional preaching. So, Whoa, where did this come from? Now I say that as a preacher and someone who believes in expositional preaching and knows that you need to have more than just strong preaching in church.

**[00:33:42.070] - Kevin DeYoung**

But I think the word of God doesn't to turn void. That's what Isaiah says. And Jesus has all sorts of parables about what the smallest seed can do and how overnight it grows into the biggest plant in the garden. And I think if we would stop chasing after relevance, we would be so incredibly relevant to our culture if we would be willing to be who we're called to be and be different, not in the way that we all have to dress differently and listen to different music, but we'd have a different ethic and ethos and culture. I think that's the relevance that really matters.

I love this one part in Dan Kimball's book. There's some things in that book I didn't agree with. I thought he was advocating for a bunch of changes that wasn't necessary. But he has this one remarkable paragraph that I quote in the book where he says something like, he's talking about his experience and what drew him to the church or back to the church. It was some 80-year-old pastor who was totally uncool, but invited him over and talked to him and asked him questions and loved him.

**[00:34:45.780] - Kevin DeYoung**

He says, At the bottom, people are still the same and have the same needs. I agree 100% with that, I think. I see that with college students here in our community. Sometimes people get intimidated. They're not going to know the podcast or the cool stuff on TV. But people want to know that you care, that you love them, and you really believe the Bible, and you teach it. It's the hardest and easiest thing in the world to do. It's simple, and it takes a whole lifetime of dying to ourself to do it.

**[00:35:19.880] - Ted Kluck**

Yeah, I would totally agree with that. I think Kevin said it better than I could, certainly. But again, I know from a parishioner's perspective, from the perspective of the in the pew, the Bible teaching that we've gotten has just been so meaningful and much more meaningful than any other trendy demographic thing that you might look for in a church, and that we've grown so much out of that. I just think pastors who are willing to do that and stake their ministries on that can't go wrong. But it might not be the 5,000-sea churches either, though. Those would be the smaller, less cool, more faithful type churches.

**[00:36:03.800] - Darryl Dash**

I love the part of the book where you said, I'm convinced there are many of us in our postmodern world who are tired of endless uncertainties and doctoral repaintings. We long for Jesus. That goes on and says, The Jesus of two millennia of Christian Witness with all of its unchanging and edgy doctrinal propositions. I thought that was a brilliant quote there.

**[00:36:23.710] - Kevin DeYoung**

I don't look at too many blogs, although I'll have to start looking at the Dash blog now. But I saw on Justin Taylor's blog, he posted this. Maybe it's even Trevin who sent it to him, that clip from the ER. Did you see that?

**[00:36:38.800] - Darryl Dash**

Yeah, I did see that.

**[00:36:40.200] - Kevin DeYoung**

I mean, that was really powerful. You should see it, Ted. It's this guy who's dying of cancer, and he has this quasi liberal chaplain there, and she just keeps doing reflective listening to him. I hear you're frustrated, and he finally just yells, I want a real chaplain who believes in a real God in a real hell. I need to know how Yeah, I need to know how I get forgiven. I didn't watch the episode, so maybe he turns out to be the goat in the whole story. I don't know. But I think that's true. People want to know. Would you tell me? What's humility? Not an arrogant certainty. Nobody wants to be arrogant. But would you tell me what's true? I need to know, is there anything that I can base my life on? What's going to happen when I die and I look back and see I didn't help enough starving kids in Africa and I didn't move into the inner city, and is my life worth anything? Is God going to accept me? I mean, those are still the fundamental realities that people need to deal with.

**[00:37:39.620] - Darryl Dash**

Just two more questions. I really loved that your voices were unique in the book, and both of you came from different perspectives. You talked about authenticity. There was an authenticity of your voice. Did you guys have any surprises as you came at the same subject from different angles and wrote the book?

**[00:37:57.840] - Ted Kluck**

I don't think so. Kevin, you can speak to this, too, but I think we're pretty close. I know from my perspective, listening to Kevin's sermons every Sunday morning, I felt pretty solidly like I knew what his chapters would say to a certain extent before I even read them. However, reading them, I was pleasantly surprised still. There were things that came out of his writing that were, I guess, different or maybe even more interesting than things that he would be willing to say from the pulpit. But yeah, I don't think there were any surprises, except that I probably enjoyed his writing even more than I thought I would. And that probably sounds like the typical co-author's response in these interview situations.

**[00:38:43.110] - Kevin DeYoung**

Yeah, we got that one. We collaborated on that response.

**[00:38:46.970] - Ted Kluck**

Exactly. We ran that through a couple of times before you called.

**[00:38:49.860] - Kevin DeYoung**

Yeah, we checked with our agents and everything. The handlers and the focus group. I mean, I would- Yeah, that focus is really a good answer. I don't think I had any surprises in terms of what Ted said. When I first came to the church and got to know Ted and Kristen a little bit, we always joke. I mean, they look cool. I don't look cool. My wife's cool, but I didn't have him pegged as somebody that I would become really close friends with. I thought, Well, he's probably into movies, which he was. I heard he took a college student to Metallica. I thought that was Philistine of him.

**[00:39:28.410] - Ted Kluck**

But that was just- It was a That's a great show, man.

**[00:39:31.090] - Kevin DeYoung**

Yeah, I'm sure it was. It was unbelievable.

**[00:39:33.560] - Ted Kluck**

But yeah, that was- That's for another interview maybe.

**[00:39:36.560] - Kevin DeYoung**

Yeah. Those are my own issues and sin. It was fun and pleasantly surprise as Ted and I got to know each other more through this project and talking to him that we could be very different people and read different kinds of things and be in different kinds of worlds. And yet that good biblical teaching matters as much to Ted as it does to me. And he's got the same theological radar. So that was really important for me. Not that everyone's going to agree with our book. Lots of people won't. But okay, this isn't just

me and the other pastors that are going to go together for the gospel or whatever, who are in the same circle of things. But regular guys in the pew, this stuff really matters.

**[00:40:23.530] - Darryl Dash**

One last question for you, Ted. Where can we get copies of that DVD behind the Praise Band? Oh, man. I want to see that on YouTube.

**[00:40:34.500] - Ted Kluck**

Probably in my basement. But let me see what I can do about getting that baby up on YouTube. I've got some tech-savvy friends who could probably throw that baby up there for your enjoyment, Darryl.

**[00:40:47.960] - Darryl Dash**

I think there might be some demand for that when people read this book.

**[00:40:51.010] - Ted Kluck**

Yeah, absolutely. That was the whole... That was the side motivation for the book was to get rid of those DVDs.

**[00:40:57.700] - Darryl Dash**

Your wife will be happy.

**[00:40:58.930] - Ted Kluck**

Yeah, absolutely. You're certainly doing your part there.

**[00:41:01.720] - Kevin DeYoung**

It's some of the best acting this side of Saved by the Bell.

**[00:41:05.740] - Ted Kluck**

It's unbelievable.

**[00:41:07.000] - Darryl Dash**

I can't wait to see it. I hope I do. Well, guys, I really appreciate your book, and I hope it does well. Actually, I hope I can meet up with you one day. You guys aren't that far away. You never know.

**[00:41:18.550] - Ted Kluck**

It'd be great.

**[00:41:19.460] - Kevin DeYoung**

Yeah, that'd be great. I really appreciate you taking the time to read it and ask us thoughtful questions.

**[00:41:24.940] - Ted Kluck**

Definitely.

**[00:41:26.160] - Kevin DeYoung**

Cool.

**[00:41:26.730] - Darryl Dash**

All the best to you guys.

**[00:41:28.200] - Kevin DeYoung**

Hey, thank you. Thank you so much, Darryl.

**[00:41:29.460] - Darryl Dash**

Thank you so much.

**[00:41:30.590] - Kevin DeYoung**

All right. Take care. Hope to meet you sometime. Likewise. Okay.

**[00:41:34.750] - Darryl Dash**

Bye. Hope you enjoyed this podcast. If you want more information on the book, you can go to their website, [notemergent.com](http://notemergent.com). You can also check out my review at [DashHouse.com](http://DashHouse.com). Take care. Until next time.