Evangelical Theology and Its Future
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1. Introduction
   1.1. The terms “evangelical” and “evangelicalism”: see definition in Grenz’s *Pocket Dictionary of Theological Terms*
   1.2. Historical background:
       - Reformation (16th century)
       - Revivals (18th and 19th centuries)
       - Fundamentalism (vs. Modernism/Liberalism) (early 20th century)
       - Neo-evangelicalism or New Evangelicalism (1940’s on)
       - The present situation of evangelical diversity (see below, esp. point 3)

2. The Five Characteristics of Evangelical Theology (from John Stackhouse, chapter 2 of the book *Evangelical Futures*)
   2.1. Christ and Salvation: the uniqueness of Jesus as Savior
       - Christocentric Theology
   2.2. The Bible: the primary authority in theological method
       - Believe that one cannot wilfully contradict Scripture in Theology
       - Should lead evangelicals to resist speculation, traditionalism, and mysticism
   2.3. Conversion: the importance of spiritual transformation in the Christian life
       - Believe that if a person believes in Christ then they should be changed and transformed as a person
       - Should cause evangelicals to resist a reduction of theology to the purely academic or the reduction of Christianity to social concern
       - Evangelical theology and practice is rightly holistic (including personal, intellectual and social elements)
   2.4. Mission: regards evangelism (proclaiming the good news of eternal salvation) as the primary call of the church above all other calls or tasks
       - Evangelicals should neither assimilate to culture (the tendency of liberalism) nor separate themselves from culture (the tendency of Fundamentalism)
       - Ongoing question of how to respond to the plurality of world religions (unit 11)
   2.5. Transdenominationalism
       - Evangelicals have an identity that crosses denominational lines.
       - This reflects the diversity of the movement

3. The Open Future of Evangelical Theology
   3.1. Some New Theological Tendencies
       - Emphasis on other theological sources besides Scripture (like tradition, reason and experience)
       - Emphasis on community and resistance to individualism
   3.2. Unanswered Questions:
       (1) Who is saved? Exclusivists vs. (conservative) inclusivists
       (2) Is Scripture inerrant? What is the nature of biblical authority?
       (3) Who/what is the church? Can the Catholics and Orthodox be evangelical?
       (4) How should the church respond to social issues like poverty, sexism & racism? What does the “good news” mean for the oppressed?
       (5) How should evangelicalism relate to postmodernism?