Twitter Thread by Brad Edwards



Brad Edwards
@cbradedwards

A vitally important thread. Much isnt new, but is so in the air we breathe we forget how RECENT it is & therefore how unaccustomed we r to coping w/it. At the risk of hijacking her great observatns, theyre pivotal to points others have made re: Institutional Evangelicalism...1/12

> Popping back on briefly to share some insights on media consumption, spread of conspiracy theories, & epistemelogical divides.
>
> — hannah anderson (@sometimesalight) January 12, 2021

1. The increased burden of sifting fact from fiction is one that only the economically privileged have the bandwidth to keep up with day-to-day, especially w/the SPEED of news generation we've seen in the last 6-10 years. This contributes to polarization & significantly... 2/12

... disadvantages blue collar America (on the left and the right) in an info economy, and is a massive catalyst for populist sentiments that make it exponentially harder for already-weak institutions to lead or swim against the tide (see Yuval Levin's "A Time to Build"). 3/12

2. I cannot agree more effusively with @sometimesalight's point re: social media & narrative. Social media platforms function as counterfeit institutions (social spaces that form identity via narrative, connection via shared purpose, & virtue via participation). 4/12

Prior to SocMed's ubiquity(approx. 2010), sifting/weighing primarily happened in traditional institutions (esp. churches) where perspectives tempered by wisdom, virtue, & relationship both evaluated & prioritized info. They served as both refuge & filter, solvent & catalyst. 5/12

Counterfeit Institutions like SocMed falsely promise the BENEFIT of connection w/o the BURDEN of formation. Being content/virtue agnostic is itself a purpose w/deep moral implications, shaping us toward expressive individualism & (over time) epistemological nihilism. 6/12

3. @DavidAFrench said in our interview that he believes the primary diff b/w public figures whove stayed consistent vs gone off the deep end during the Trump era (eg @ericmetaxas) is whether theyre anchored in healthy institutions. This is VITAL. 7/12 https://t.co/ayDslWjUc6

When Evangelical institutions are more shaped by their counterfeit, they function as mere platforms w/o a formative purpose (e.g. Great Commission). Expectations of leaders follow suit, making everything @sometimesalight describes THAT much harder for those who need it most. 8/12

4. We're living thru epistemological crisis, but not b/c secular post-modernism won out. Just as "no creed but Jesus" is a creed, "no formation, just expression" IS formative. Institutions w/o formative purpose (i.e. platforms) cant HELP but form expressive individualism. 9/12

Levitical laws were liturgical narratives shaping Israel's orthodoxy THRU orthopraxy (& why @drmoore's article is so on-point). Evangelicals outsourced our orthopraxy to the culture wars, our epistemology to SocMed, & our orthodoxy to nationalism. 10/12 https://t.co/jFq1gAnOEU

> This is not about politics. This is about our country, about the rule of law, and about the sanctity of human life. https://t.co/rYidlxRvfE
>
> — Russell Moore (@drmoore) January 11, 2021

5. Lastly, far more than democracy @ stake: the Church's witness. Last wk's insurrection is culmination & escalation of everything post-evangelicals feel so genuinely frustrated w/, but I wont belabor what I've already written re: @ length below... 11/12 https://t.co/t2r6wQtzNa

> "Secularism is not the prodigal son who fled a good and loving home, it\u2019s the estranged spouse of evangelicalism\u2019s extramarital affair with individualism."
>
> This is a thesis that has been incubating since before the pandemic hit, but... (1/5)https://t.co/gD0IP58HVw
>
> — Brad Edwards (@cbradedwards) September 8, 2020

Culture war fallout will likely "winnow" Evangelicalism, w/refugees falling into @msgwrites's boxes. B/c witness is to both Xp & His Bride, I suspect which will largely depend on whether the baby(Institutions) is thrown out w/bathwater(Counterfeits). 12/12 https://t.co/KKiSA6ZE2r

> EXPANDED THREAD on the fracturing of evangelicalism:
>
> I keep thinking about what I\u2019m observing as I talk to other pastors & ministry leaders around the country and I think that evangelicalism is fracturing into at least 6 distinct groups:
>
> 1/14 pic.twitter.com/lR5xkApYn2
>
> — Michael S. Graham (@msgwrites) December 21, 2020