

Theology of Wholistic Ministry

Because God is both Creator and Judge of all men, He desires both justice and reconciliation throughout human society and the liberation of men and women from every kind of oppression, spiritual, emotional and physical. Every person, regardless of race, religion, color, culture, class, sex or age, has an intrinsic dignity because he or she is made in God's image.

Evangelism and social concern are not mutually exclusive; evangelism and socio-political involvement are both part of our Christian duty. Both are necessary expressions of our doctrines of God and man, our love for our neighbor and our obedience to Jesus Christ. The message of salvation implies also a message of judgment upon every form of alienation, oppression and discrimination. We should not be afraid to denounce evil and injustice wherever they exist. When people receive Christ they are born again into His kingdom and must seek not only to exhibit but also to spread His righteousness in the midst of an unrighteous world. The salvation we claim should be transforming us in the totality of our personal and social responsibilities. Faith without works is dead.

Wholistic ministry is the proclamation and demonstration of the gospel. Our proclamation has social consequences as we call people to love and repentance in all areas of life. And our social involvement has evangelistic consequences as we bear witness to the transforming grace of Jesus Christ. As in the life of Jesus, being, doing and saying are at the heart of wholistic ministry. In his life and through his death Jesus modeled identification with the poor and inclusion of the other. On the cross God shows us how seriously He takes justice, reconciling both rich and poor to Himself as He meets the demands of His justice. As recipients of His undeserved love we are to show grace, generosity and inclusiveness to others.

Wholistic ministry impacts our relationship with all of God's creation. Responsible and sustainable use of the God's resources includes recovering a biblical sense of stewardship. God's redemptive plan encompasses the transformation of the moral, intellectual, economic, cultural and political dimensions of our lives. The Bible reveals Christianity not as a religion, but as a comprehensive worldview and Jesus as the redeemer of all things distorted through the Fall.

Micah 6:8 "He has showed you, O man, what is good. And what does the Lord require of you? To act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God."

Biblical references on the wholistic mission of the church: Eph. 1:9-10; 22-23; 3:9-10; Col. 1:18-20; Rev. 21:5; Luke 4:17-21; Mark 1:15; Isa. 61:1-4.

For further study:

Discipling Nations , by Darrow Miller

If Jesus Were Mayor , by Bob Moffitt

Involvement: Being a Responsible Christian in a Non-Christian Society , by John R. Stott

Justice, Mercy and Humility: Integral Mission and the Poor , by C. Rene Padilla, Tom Sine and Elaine Storkey

Micah Network statement on Integral Mission,

http://micahchallenge.org/global/christians_poverty_and_justice/96.html

Mission as Transformation: A Theology of the Whole Gospel, editors Vinay Samuel and Christopher Sugden

The Lausanne Covenant, especially paragraph #5, <http://www.lausanne.org/Brix?pageID=12891>

The Micah Mandate , by George Grant