

Response to "The Whole Gospel To The Whole Man".

The key opening statement "The willingness to proclaim Christ and his Gospel is the ground on which the believer's commitment to Christ is tested." immediately removes the possibility that man can have a adequate relationship to the gospel if that relationship is theoretical. The paper then sets forth various N. T. Words which refer to various types of proclamation.

We can sincerely appreciate the strong emphasis, (not at all too strong, I believe) on the Christian responsibility to look after both evangelism and social action. We also heartily concur in the assertion that the gospel is "eminently personal" and yet that this Gospel is not preached in a vacuum. I found the paper stimulating and thought provoking. There are, however, just a few questions that I would like to raise for further clarification:

1. Is Social Action part of evangelism or is it not?
 - a) On page 12, the writer quotes, with approval I believe, that social action is not part of evangelism, but rather something that stands independent of it.
 - b) And yet when words like "whole-orbed Gospel" and "full Gospel" are used, and when the fulness refers to the inclusion of S.A. and when the understanding of evangelism is understood as being the proclamation of the Gospel, then we come back to the understanding that social action is part of evangelism.
2. On page 3 of the paper, Christian social action is defined as "alleviating human suffering and misery (helping victims) "and" attempting to change and reform the conditions in society which give rise to human suffering".

The question is not with the alleviating - but with the "attempting to change and reform."

What kind of action does this call for or permit?

- a) p.4 cites that both in Old and New Testament "the believing community challenged the culture of its day" (Carl Henry). Was the challenging action in Old and N. T. times not radically different?
 - b) p.9. (Tounier) "... the church must formulate what the gospel means for economic, political and intellectual life." Does this mean "formulate" so people know what's right, or "realize" so that actually right is done. E.g. Jesus emphasis was that man should treat fellow man righteously, but when man came to ask Jesus to help him get part of his brothers inheritance (which presumably it would be righteous for him to have.) then Jesus refuses to be involved in such action.
3. Does inseparability (p.10) mean equality of significance of the two evangelism and social action. If this is so are evangelicals and liberals (evangelism and social action) in equal states of obedience or disobedience when they do only the one? Can we maintain priority for evangelism without implying separability?

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