

City Church Network - Tuesday Fellowship

5-12-2020 and 5-15-2020

Streams of the Christian Faith: Social Justice

facilitated by Sarah Cearley on 5-12-2020 and Wim Codington on 5-15-2020 (cell: 423.505.6411; email: wimcodington@gmail.com)

Bible passages examined:

- Matthew 7:21,24
- John 15:9-17
- James 1:22-25
- Acts 2:45
- Acts 4:32-35
- Acts 6 (ordination of deacons)

Thoughts and ideas:

- Themes:
 - Importance of combining word and deed and not overemphasizing one or the other
 - The truth about God is communicated through relationships built on love and trust.
 - My favorite Christian artist group in high school was dc Talk. One of their very best songs was “Luv is a Verb”
 - Justice is a passion of God that is written on every human heart. When we advocate for justice and grieve injustice (deed), we build relationships with people that enable us to share truth (word).
 - When we are changed radically by an experience of God’s love, a byproduct of the change is that we are eager to share with others.
 - John Piper’s definition of “love”: “the overflow of joy in God that gladly meets the needs of others”
- Spiritual gifts: compassion, generosity, hospitality, etc.
- Dangers:
 - Underemphasizing teaching, prophecy, and evangelism
 - Bypassing the mind in the search for truth



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- The precarious balance between thought and action, word and deed can be seen in the history of Christianity:
 - Protestant Reformation (collateral damage of underemphasizing good works unintentionally)
 - 20th century fundamentalist movement (collateral damage of underemphasizing good works)
 - Highly reactionary traditions often underemphasize good works
 - (Personal note: This is one of the reasons I try to prioritize compassion and action in my ministry; it is not because I am a naturally compassionate person or believe it is my primary gift. Rather, it is because I know the danger of overemphasizing words. Words quickly lose their meaning if they are not backed by deeds, now more than ever).
- Notable people:
 - William Wilberforce - worked for decades in England in the late 18th century and early 19th century to end the slave trade and slavery itself within the British empire. Notably, William memorized Psalm 119 and would recite it on his walk to and from Parliament. (Let it not be said that the social justice stream does not value the word of God; Psalm 119 is all about the word of God)
 - William Booth - founded the Salvation Army in England in the late 19th century. Booth said, "I have no intention to depart in the smallest degree from the main principles on which I have acted in the past. My only hope for the permanent deliverance of mankind from misery, either in this world or the next, is the regeneration or remaking of the individual by the power of the Holy Ghost through Jesus Christ. But in providing for the relief of temporal misery I reckon that I am only making it easy where it is now difficult, and possible where it is now all but impossible, for men and women to find their way to the Cross of our Lord Jesus Christ."
 - Martin Luther King, Jr. - American civil rights movement leader and pastor
 - Mother Teresa - Roman Catholic nun and missionary to India in the 20th century
- **Questions or observations from your own life, thinking, and observations?**
- Practicing this stream:
https://www.plcfantioch.org/dir/wp-content/uploads/2019/01/how_to_practice_each_of_the_streams_of_faith.pdf (page 5)

