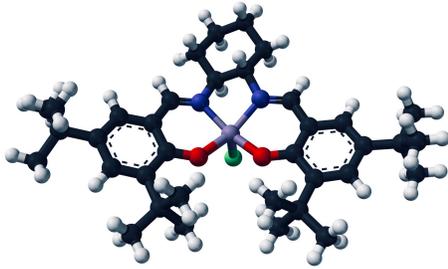


Catalyst Sermon Series 2019



Catalyst is a plan designed to spark conversations, prayer, and build community around the Vision and Mission of Christ Covenant Church for a the re-planting of a church around a movement of the gospel at 3100 Covenant Road in 2019.

You can listen to the Catalyst Sermon Series, *Gospel Centrality* from Galatians 2:11-21, *Stewarding a Gospel Movement* from 1 Peter 2:4-12, *God Seeks Worshipers* from John 4, *God Builds Community* from Acts 2:37-48, and *Generous Lives* Luke 10:25-37 at www.ccotc.org/sermons. On Sunday February 17th we will be considering, *Humble Cultural Engagement*. The following article is written to get us thinking about humble cultural engagement.

Humble Cultural Engagement

To many, phrases like, “Cultural Renewal”, “Cultural Influence”, or “Culture Change”, sound suspect. When these phrases are used by the church, the suspicions rise even higher. We may think these expressions sound like a political takeover by those who are religious. In a western context we say, ‘Keep the church and the state separate.’ But it is naive and intellectually dishonest to deny that anyone who wants to see culture move in a certain direction holds to a particular worldview or view of “the good life” that they would like to see have a greater influence on society in general.

In our Western context people would say that a persons religious views are private. Those views are not to be expressed in the realm of their work or callings. To let their views influence their cooking, writing, music, banking, or farming, is to impose those views on others. This view of things keeps “the facts” or the public sphere separated from morality or faith, the private sphere. However, in other cultural contexts outside the west all of life is integrated. A persons views of God, human nature, and moral truth, which are “private”, are not to be kept out of a persons “public life.” But humble cultural engagement is fit for a western cultural context, or any other context, as we learn to be followers of Jesus in all of life.

The church is always responding to the culture. There are four ways the church has in general responded to or engaged culture. These can be defined as: countercultural, culture-controlling, culture-assimilating, and cultural tipping point. Counterculturalists believe “the church is not called to transform culture but rather to form countercultures that bear witness through modeling alternative values”. Culture controlling churches believe that governments and the laws of the land should be explicitly based on biblical principles. Those who are culture-assimilating believe that God is revealing himself and his will through political and cultural movements of social liberation. Therefore, the church is to be liberated to mirror these movements. The culture-tipping point view believes that if enough people are evangelized and changed by the gospel then culture will change. There are negatives and positives in these four views, but not any one of them is the way of humble cultural engagement.

Humble cultural engagement emphasizes a countercultural, gospel-centered Christianity that does not make its countercultural position the exclusive witness to culture.

Humble cultural engagement emphasizes evangelism, church revitalization, church planting, and discipleship which helps Christians learn to work in their callings in a distinctively Christian manner.

Humble cultural engagement recognizes God’s common grace which calls Christians and churches to work with others in a community for the common good of all.

Humble cultural engagement emphasizes cultural leadership that demonstrates a truly just society is one that recognizes “the value-laden and commitment-driven nature of all knowledge and all institutions.”

What is the biblical worldview that constructs a humble cultural engagement as outlined above? It is rooted in the doctrines of Creation-Incarnation and Kingdom-Resurrection. It is the doctrine of God’s good creation and his willingness to re-enter it in the incarnation of Jesus Christ that leads us to see the importance and value of all things created. God is the artist of and investor in his material world. He delights to create, sustain, and cultivate his creation. Therefore, we cannot say that the preacher “does the Lord’s work”, while the banker “does worldly work”. It is God the Holy Spirit who daily gives life to the dead through the gospel of Jesus Christ (Acts 16:4), and who renews the material world (Psalm 104). Therefore, God invests his renewed image bearers who live by a humble faith in Jesus in all areas of his good creation to labor alongside others to engage in a participation of God’s good work. Yet we all know that God’s good creation is infected by sin.

God is king of all that he has made, and man is in rebellion to God and his kingdom. This rebellion is revealed in man’s sin stemming from his nature of sin. Sin has caused an unraveling of all relationships in God’s creation. Wherever God is not acknowledged by his creatures as King, there is a poverty of relationship to him, oneself, others, and the world. When those in God’s creation do not honor them as their King, they acknowledge another god or idol. Every human engagement in this world puts forth something other than God—financial profit, individual rights, human reason, group power—as the ultimate value and goal. This always leads to human poverty individually and corporately.

It is the doctrine of God’s kingdom that promises a renewed creation through the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. Every part of the world is broken by sin, and it is the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ that promises it’s renewal - hearts, relationships, communities, and practices are renewed by his reconciling work (Col.1:16-20). He is doing more than saving souls by his death and resurrection. The Lordship of Jesus Christ is affecting all of human life. The church is to be a renewed creation in which the world can see what family life, business practices, race relations, and all aspects of life can be under the kingship of Jesus Christ. According to the doctrine of the kingdom, we can understand the world only when we realize that it was originally created good in itself, that it is fallen and marred by sin, and that it can be redeemed under Christ the healing King. This leads the church practically into humble cultural engagement. Our lives are to be lived as a public faith in Jesus Christ in the city and the community where he has invested us for his glory and others good.

Catalyst Conversations...Sign Up for One in the Narthex at Barnwell St.

Please take the opportunity to participate in a Catalyst Conversation by signing up after Worship or Life Groups. Catalyst Conversations are an opportunity for you to participate with other church members, regular attenders, and guests in a discussion around CCC’s Vision and Mission. We desire that you have an opportunity to engage yourselves and affirm together what we believe is God’s biblical vision for his church. The Catalyst Conversation is a small group gathering of 8-10 people facilitated by a couple (husband & wife) who will be prepared to lead the discussion. You will be discussing questions like:

- ❖ Why is it important for a particular church to have a vision and mission?
- ❖ Why could the CCC Vision and Mission be timeless, used now and in the future?
- ❖ What do you like about the Vision and Mission of Christ Covenant Church?
- ❖ What questions or concerns do you have?

The Conversations will begin mid February and conclude by March 31. Our facilitators have provided the following dates for Catalyst Conversations. Please sign up for one in the lobby of the Barnwell Street campus.

- ❖ Peter & Samantha Wilkerson - Thursday February 21, 6:00 PM & Tuesday March 5, 6:00 PM
- ❖ Ryan & Morgan Evans - Thursday February 21, 7:00 PM & Thursday March 7, 7:00 PM
- ❖ Brad & Loretta Carnahan - Saturday March 2, 10:30 AM & Saturday March 16, 10:30 AM
- ❖ David & Amanda Campbell - Monday February 25, 7:00 PM & Monday March 18, 7:00 PM
- ❖ Jordan & Makala Smith - Friday February 15, 7:00 PM & Wednesday March 6, 7:00 PM
- ❖ Scott & Sandy Dinkins - Tuesday February 26, 7:00 PM & Tuesday March 19, 7:00 PM

We desire that the Catalyst Sermon Series and the Catalyst Conversations will lead us as a church toward a planning process for the re-planting of Christ Covenant Church at 3100 Covenant Road. Therefore, your participation in these conversations is vital to a movement of the gospel at Christ Covenant Church where we do worship, life and ministry together for his glory and the good of the city. Thank you for signing up to participate.