

Money Follows Mission Seminar

March 18-19, 2011

Notes from Rev. Gwyneth Arrison

Mike Slaughter spoke about three Scriptural aspects of effectiveness in church ministry. These would make a good sermon series, and is a possibility for our 3-week mid-year stewardship series entitled “Money Follows Mission”! As Mike said, money follows mission not church budgets.

- Great Requirement: *What does the Lord require of you?* To do justice (Methodists are really good at voting justice and studying justice), to love mercy (nothing about tolerating), and walk humbly with God.
- Great commandment – *Love others as I have loved you* – when we get out and do this people will recognize the spirit. “Quit worrying about how to get people into the church, but how to get the church into the world.”
- Great commission – *Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything that I have commanded you.* We’re not in the business of drawing a crowd but making disciples ready to carry their cross.

But more than a sermon series, some important takeaways have to do with the big picture view of the church. Most western churches, whatever denomination, employ a soft-secular world view rather than the Gospel worldview. Although I don’t have any particular plan at this point other than increasing awareness, the table below is a helpful comparison of the two worldviews as spoken of by Mike Slaughter.

Soft-Secular	Gospel
Work ethic: I’ve worked hard to have what I have and if you worked hard you could too	Work ethic: I’m forgiven so I’m free to work hard
Concern is how to get people into the church	Concern is how to get the church into the world (Matthew 25 – we didn’t see you because we were IN church)
Administrative meetings give sense of importance	Mission gives sense of meaning. Simple administrative structure made up of visionaries to “dream God’s dreams”
Work of church done by “volunteers” – that is the language of a club. Volunteers are “in charge” of what they do / don’t do.	Work of church done by “servants” who serve at the discretion of the Spirit and the needs of others.
Believing in Jesus but not really looking much difference from our secular friends	Showing our faith in Jesus by taking up the cross and following Jesus as a lifestyle
Change as evolutionary	Change as revolutionary

Soft-Secular	Gospel
Attracts spectators with hired professionals to “do ministry”	Attracts missionaries who all do ministry together
Staff driven	Team-based, mission and discipleship opportunities rise up from within the church body
Lots of programs, fundraiser and fun activities to keep busy	Focus on groups where meaningful discipleship, accountability and mission occur
Consumer mindset	Producer / distributor mindset
Spiritual hospice	Mission Outpost
In church to “be served” and “be fed” and as on a cruise ship to be pampered and massaged. Church is about self interest.	In church to serve and feed others, it’s about service and engagement. Church is connected to the needs of others.
Cruise ship programming model – self contained fortress with activities for every age and interest	Mission outpost model – networking to meet needs in the community, partnering with other organizations (including secular and government) to make a difference
Low standards for membership	High standards for membership
Church helps people live a little better soft-secular lifestyles	Church is about the task of changing the world
Getting into heaven	Getting heaven into people
Focus on numbers, getting more people	Focus on fruit with the people you have
Focus on church attendance	Focus on life transforming experience, significance and meaning
Good news for the middle class and those who look like us	Good news for the poor and those who don’t look like us
Comfortable and try to appease the crowds so no one will leave mad	Sacrificial and understand the reality that the Gospel will drive some folks away
Relevance	Revolution
Appear to have life, like the dry bones in Ezekiel	The dry bones come to life as they are filled with the Spirit
Focus on asking people for money for the budget so we can keep the doors open	Focus on mission moments and witness that motivate people to want to give because their money will make a difference in the world

Soft-Secular	Gospel
Looking for the magic bullet that will grow the church	Continuously seeking God's unique will for the church in our particular time, situation and culture
Scarcity – focused on what we don't have	Abundance – working from the amazing gifts God has given the church