

Engaging with Culture

...From one man he made every nation of men, that they should inhabit the whole earth; and he determined the ties set for them and the exact places where they should live. God did this so that men would seek him and perhaps reach out for him and find him, though he is not far from each one of us. ...

Acts 17:16-34

I. BACKGROUND

god-fearers = Greek: daimon

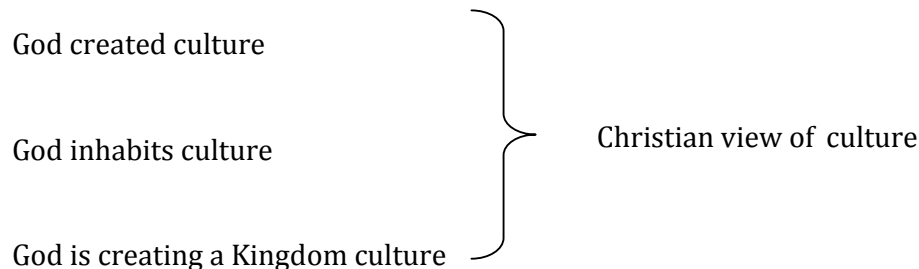
II. ENGAGING WITH CULTURE

Observe: *As I walked around and looked carefully*

Engage: *he was greatly **distressed** to see that the city was full of idols*
NAS = provoked (Greek = paroxysm)

Each idol revealed that these men and women of Athens had a great capacity for God. They knew there was something beyond man, and they were seeking for it. But each idol also revealed a twisting, a distorting, of that capacity, a sabotaging of it.

--- Ray Stedman



Cultures are never static; there is a continuous process of change.

---Willowbank Report 1978

It is only by active loving engagement with the local people, thinking in their thought patterns, understanding their world-view, listening to their questions, and feeling their burdens, that the whole believing community (of which the missionary is a part) will be able to respond to their need.

---Willowbank Report 1978

III. GOD'S INTENTIONALITY

God's Dream: Revelation 7:9-10

The events of human history have all been to this end --- that they might find God, that man might be motivated to search for Him.

---Ray Stedman

Example of Abram

Acts 2:6

Genesis 11:8

Revelation 5:9-10

God is transforming cultures, redeeming them from the enemy.

Example of engagement: Incarnation

1. Renunciation
 - a. of status
 - b. of independence
 - c. of immunity
2. Identification

IV. KINGDOM CULTURE

All believers in Jesus Christ, of every ethnic group, are united to each other not only in a common humanity in the image of God, but even more, as brothers and sisters in Christ and members of the same body.

---John Piper

Sermon on the Mount