

5-3-1 Assignment Chapter 9

Questions

1. Why is it important for Christians to answer the question for how Christ affects culture?
2. What is the primary understanding of Niebuhr's "Christ against Culture" category?
3. What is the primary understanding of Niebuhr's "Christ of Culture" category?
4. How does Niebuhr's "Christ the Transformer of Culture" view the nature of sin?
5. In light of Scripture, how are Christians to engage the world?

Answers

1. Depending on one's view of Christ and/or culture, their understanding influences whether or not they think society can resemble the Kingdom of God. Also, it will affect the witness Christians have within society.
2. Ultimately, there is a strong distinction between the people of God and fallen society; thus, believers should withdraw or reject culture.
3. In this view, Christian faith works in tandem with human culture. It is fully possible to embrace both faith and societal norms (with minimal limitations).
4. The view acknowledges that sin is not only in human hearts but also in every dimension of life. Thus, Christ transforms culture because He has already dealt with the sin issue.
5. Jesus tells believers to live within the world, but as His salt and light. The world is fallen, but believers are being sanctified and have a voice in addressing culture. "In but not of the world."

Terms

1. heuristic device – a constructed typology or model used to make sense of what it models
2. monasticism – a movement to renounce the world and/or to seek the vision of God
3. contextualized – to make things or ideas make sense in a particular context

Summary

In this chapter, Hollinger introduces and expounds on Niebuhr's "Christ and Culture" typology. Depending on how Christians view Christ's involvement with culture will influence how they engage with the world. On the opposite sides of Niebuhr's five-fold framework are "Christ against Culture" (Christians should withdraw from society) and "Christ of Culture" (Christians can fully embrace faith and most of what society has to offer). Yet, regardless of where Christians land on this typology, Christians must be effective witnesses of the gospel in the various societies they are present.