

TH604: Christian Ethics: OA

Spring 2023

Choosing the Good, Chapter 9

March 29, 2023

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Questions

1. Why is the author asking Christ-Culture questions?
2. What is Richard Niebuhr's approach to the question?
3. What was Tertullian's view on amusement of his day?
4. What did the Mennonite Church (Anabaptists) believe?
5. What is the gist of Christ the Transformer of Culture paradigm?

Answers

1. Believers have to decide how to deal with ethical issues, stance towards society, involvement with issues, and how they draw from the culture for example.
2. Niebuhr's paradigm includes five views: Christ against Culture, Christ of Culture. Christ above Culture, Christ in Culture in Paradox, and Christ the Transformer of Culture.
3. He viewed Roman amphitheater shows for example as idolatrous and opposed Christian involvement in those events.
4. That Christ was against culture - participation in the military, politics, and creation of their own systems and structures.
5. That the Gospel can transform societal systems and structures.

Terms

- **Via negativa**- Elimination of temporal distractions.
- **Type** - Broad categorization that supports understanding complexity in any field of study.
- **Anabaptist movement** - They desired a church defined by radical discipleship.

Summary

While I agree that the Kingdom of God will not be fully present until His return, I do believe that we are called/commanded to bring the Kingdom of God to bear on this world, in its fallenness. I think Christ in Culture goes without saying. I like the "not of" culture, except Jesus lived among the people while remaining differentiated from the people, but being able to use culture to bridge gaps, gain access through that knowledge, and ultimately speak truth to cultural, religious, political systems, and ideologies.