Cross Cultural Dynamics

Jared Black

Omega Graduate School

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Professor

Dr. Jared Sober

***Assignment #1 – Core Essential Elements***

* 1. Select One (1) Core Essential Element from the Syllabus Outline: Create a 350-word original discussion paper (with cited sources) during the first week of the term. Post this document in DIAL.
  2. Professor will check for quality of content and word-count requirements. Grade assigned will be Credit or No Credit (CR/NC).

In assessing the core essential elements for interdisciplinary cross-cultural communication, I am compelled to attempt to articulate an interdisciplinary, adult centered, critical reflection program that I have been designing and facilitating for the past 5 years. Its mission is a foray into cross-cultural dynamics within the various Christian traditions and practices. I recognize the necessity and development of each of the core essential elements coming into focus with each successive group that I host. I call it Thought Architecting (TA), a group of 8 to 12 adults reading interdisciplinary selections for the purpose of in-depth discussion. The group’s make up consists of Protestants from various strains (Baptists, Church of Christ, Methodists), Catholics, Eastern Orthodox, Pentecostals, and Sabbath-keeping messianic types.

What began out of a self-serving desire to surround myself with like-hearted folks endeavoring to read, think, and discuss the things which influence and move our lives, has become more than just a discussion of “ideas”. The deeper desire has been to discover “truth” in an iron-sharpening-iron arrangement, allowing the full function of the “body of Jesus” to intimately animate Himself in and through our lives, our families, and our shared community, capitalizing on our unique approaches, distinctions, as well as our unifying desire for critically reflecting on our culture and participation in it.

The idea for TA came out of a book I read about a decade prior to our coming together. It was an obscure book, from an unknown author, from a small, independent publishing house that I can no longer locate nor have on my bookshelf. I cannot even recall the title of the book. The gist of the book, however, undoubtably melded itself into my being. The premise was this: people reading together and discussing what has been read as an invaluable tool to assist developing authentic Christian community…especially amongst adults. By reading and discussing the same words, the same ideas, the same themes, the likelihood of learning to listen to one another – to hear each other’s thoughts – grows into learning to love and care for one another’s hearts. This approach is clearly reliant on the quality and caliber of communication techniques in a group dynamic which facilitates both openness, disagreement, and a communicative capacity to search for common ground, resulting in a “unity in diversity” expression of Christian community.

As compiler and editor of our selected interdisciplinary readings, I am aware of a personal agenda – a hope, really – that the structure and flow of the readings would create a thought architecture amongst the group resulting in a spiritual unity binding us in one Spirit.

I have endeavored that we read widely, peering into authors of philosophy, theology, sociology – academics both new and old, societal technicians, each intent to grapple with the ideas and movements of our culture replete with the issues that confront. It is purposefully interdisciplinary in scope. And yet, with some subtlety perhaps, I have desired to steer each TA Season towards an encounter of the Church collective; Her calling, Her purpose, Her distinct position to instruct the principalities of our age. Her calling is ours.

The Church (Big “C”) is the penultimate called out community. She is the picture of cross-cultural dynamics made up of Jew and Greek (all ethnicities and races), rich and poor (a full range of social “class”), male and female (a full gender expression), slave and free (all socio-economic profiles). And yet, this unique community, with its myriad of distinctions amongst the individuals within its makeup, is called to declare: In Christ, our unifier, we are to be One; One in Him. One in community. One in purpose, calling, and love. The call of the Church is the ultimate expression of cross-cultural dynamics.

WORKS CITED