Cross-Cultural Dynamics

David D. Reedy

Omega Graduate School

April 5, 2025

Professor

Dr. Jored Sorber, Ph.D.

Assignment #1 – Core Essential Elements

1. Select One (1) Core Essential Element from the Syllabus Outline:

a. Create a 350-word original discussion paper (with cited sources) during the first

week of the term. Post this document in DIAL.

b. Professor will check for quality of content and word-count requirements. Grade

assigned will be Credit or No Credit (CR/NC).

An orthodox Christian does not begin engagement with culture, whether his own or another’s, to simply understand current events or social trends in his or another’s culture. Such engagement begins with a comprehension of our Christian calling and clear recognition of the nature of such engagement as informed by Scripture (Bock, 2020, p. 11). The Christian begins with recognizing the world we live in and all the cultural manifestations within it will reflect a level of corruption that is naturally opposed to the things of God (p. 12). However, we also recognize that our own interpretations will be driven by motivations and preference that themselves may not be pure. Bock encourages us to begin such engagement recognizing it must be rooted in spiritual discernment rather than in our instincts toward conflict (p. 12).

As Ephesians 6:10–18 teaches, “our struggle is not against flesh and blood but against spiritual forces of evil.” Too often, however, Christians have misdirected this struggle, viewing people themselves as the enemy. In doing so, we lose sight of the mission: people are not our opponents. People are the goal (p. 13). Each person, regardless of their beliefs or lifestyle, is someone Christ died to save.

Christian engagement requires seeking to understand what is going on in the lives of those who live according to differing values. Cultural intelligence involves empathy and careful listening. Bock argues when our words or actions lack compassion, or when we mirror the tactics of a hostile world, we risk alienating the very people we are called to reach. In some cases, the church’s posture has been so combative that it has repelled rather than attracted, exchanging the mission of discipleship for a spirit of division (p. 15). This does not support a blanket endorsement of unchristian behavior or values as God’s truth remains truth. But the goal is to try to help others come to faith informed by Scripture.

The Gospel, the truth of God’s Word, and the armor described in Ephesians are our resources—not anger, sarcasm, or social media outrage. Bock reminds us our mission is a rescue operation, to pull people from destructive spiritual forces they may not even perceive (p. 13). When we engage society with clarity, courage, and compassion, holding firm to truth while remaining anchored in grace, we reflect Christ’s heart. In doing so, we move beyond culture wars and instead offer the world the hope it desperately needs.

WORKS CITED

Bock, D. L. (2020). *Cultural intelligence*. B&H Academic.