

Saturday, October 29, 2005

More on the Critique of Rick Warren's books

The critique of Rick Warren's books, posted two days ago, focused on two issues: Dualism and Dispensationalism. Perhaps more explanation is in order. 1. Dualism- Dividing reality into two spheres: Spiritual and Physical, Eternal and Temporal, Sacred and Secular, Heaven and Earth, Church and World, etc. The opposites are compartmentalized and kept separate. They are seen as equally real and valid "worlds", just different with different "rules" or they are seen as enemies. Such "Dualism" is the common perspective of Christians. Neocalvinists are Holists and seek the redemption of all Reality, including arts and culture, work and leisure, marriage and family- all in Christ, the Sovereign of all, for the Glory of God. 2. Dispensationalism- in Naugle's article, he was not discussing Eschatology (End Times). He was discussing the common view of the Church, as taught by Dispensationalism. That view says the Church did not exist in the Old Testament. It is a New Testament, Age of Grace, Body. In Naugle's perspective, Evangelicals like Warren divide the Bible in two and thus also have a very deficient or incomplete understanding of the Church. In Naugle's Reformed view, the Bible must be considered as a whole and the Church is the Covenant People of God, having replaced Israel. This is tied in with the Neocalvinist Reformed World View taught by Naugle. That WV begins with Creation and the Purpose of all Humanity, as the Image of God, to be responsible for the cultivation and care of all Creation. The Fall impeded that Plan. Israel was formed for this Purpose, creating civilization according to the Norms (Law) established by God for His glory. They refused this mission. Christ came and redeemed the Elect, the Church. The Church assumes Israel's role to carry out the Cultural (Stewardship) Mandate. This is its "Purpose". What motivates it? Love of God and Humanity (the "Great Commandments") It intentionally seeks to enlist others in this Purpose (the "Great Commission"). Commonly, Evangelicals do not "buy" this Purpose, because they are Dispensational Dualists (as defined here). The "purposes" of Worship, Fellowship, Discipleship, Ministry and Evangelism, as defined and taught by Rick Warren and most Evangelicals, while of value, are not at all the same. In practice, this 5-fold purpose ends up supplanting the original Purpose, given at Creation and elaborated on through out the entire Bible. I agree with Dr Naugle.

Posted by Cal in Christian Living at 12:00