

TRANSFORMING AUSTRALIA THROUGH SOCIAL ACTION, SOCIAL JUSTICE & PRAYER

For some time now the Christian faith has been under attack from secular humanism and other world religions. A lot of that attack has focused on a challenge to traditional Christian values.

The homosexual lobby has sought to weaken traditional marriage, secular humanism through its focus on individual rights and denial of a God has successfully fought for liberalised abortion laws, and, less successfully euthanasia. The attention of much of the Christian Church has been on defending what is seen as traditional values that have made us strong as a nation. Most of this attention has been focused around matters of sexuality and personal morality.

Other streams of the Church have felt more concerned about issues of social justice and felt that there was an overemphasis on matters of personal morality when the issues of the poor and oppressed seemed not to warrant much attention.

Of course both sides of the debate are important. The Gospel is concerned with both personal morality as well as social justice. God is now beginning to restore a balance and in the process has been forming unusual alliances in a most unexpected way. Concern for the poor and marginalised, the widows and the orphans has been stunningly brought back on the world agenda by such natural disasters as the Asian Tsunami, the New Orleans floods and the Pakistan earthquake as well as the recent French riots.

Recently in Australia a small gathering of Christian leaders were invited to meet together under the banner of World Vision, Micah Challenge (Make Poverty History) and the Australian Prayer Network. This alliance of organisations represent the social action, social justice and prayer components of the Christian faith. Many Christians had thought that there had developed such a divide between the evangelical/charismatic and social justice streams of the Church that they would have little in common, if indeed you could bring them to the same table.

The Lord however has been at work at both ends of the theological spectrum. He has impressed upon those concerned for the poor and marginalised that prayer was a powerful tool that could break spiritual bondages over the lives of such people thus freeing them to respond to the Gospel. To the prayers he began to bring a conviction that prayer for our brothers and sisters that did not include a corresponding faith action to demonstrate the outworking of the Gospel lacked integrity. When the Lord therefore brought leaders from those three streams together they found they had much common ground and understanding upon which to build.

This new move which seeks to use prayer more effectively as an agent of social transformation in our nation is still in its infancy. More time has to be spent in discerning the Lord in this whole matter as outcomes could have significant impact upon our nation. This process is continuing. As with all pioneering work it will have its challenges but if prayer, works and justice ever line up together in our nation it could be impacting beyond our imagination.

We notice that many of the youth movements springing up around the world bring these three aspects of the Gospel together in a powerful way. We believe they are a prophetic example of what God is challenging His whole Church to become.

We invite you to pray, work and believe for such an outcome to the Glory of God and the release of our nation from much injustice and inequality felt by many of our own poor and marginalised people.

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