

Relationship - Movement and Church

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I. Introduction - Biblical and Christian history, three ways to work harmoniously, and discussion.

II. A Review of Biblical history.

A. God's primary channel was through two groups of men and women: priests and prophets.

1. The priest's job was to teach, and pray for the people as well as to offer up sacrifices. Their primary job was to meet the internal needs of the family of God. (Leviticus 4)

2. The prophet was chosen to meet the external needs of the wider community. To prophesy is to foretell and forth tell. The prophet was to meet needs on the congregational level and the national level. Sometimes he was raised up for special jobs.

a. There were many prophets who were not typical.

b. Moses, David, Solomon, etc.

3. God was the head of the priest and the prophet - neither was head over the other.

B. God's primary channel in the church age was through the hierarchical institution and orders.

1. In the New Testament the office of bishop was created and eventually a chief bishop arose above the others - this was the hierarchical church.

2. Orders arose later that were somewhat distinct from the hierarchical church and that met the broader needs of the community.

C. In the Reformation God raised up pastors and leaders to minister to the community, but it was not until William Carey that He began raising up movements that are vital to the body.

1. These movements are not rebellious in regards to the local church.

2. Just as God raised up the prophets and many of the orders, he has raised up movements today.

III. Suggestions for working together.

A. There is only one head of the body - that is, Jesus Christ. (1 Corinthians 12:6, Romans 12:4-5)

1. We all share that one head.

2. The cornerstone is the most important stone.

B. We all have distinctions.

1. The Navigators tend to be more interested in follow-up than other movements.

2. The local church has distinctions: it is defined geographically, it is the pillar of the truth, the ordinances are administered through it, and it is cradle-to-the-grave.

C. We all have overlaps.

1. Evangelicals overlap in their concern for the Word of God and all are concerned with some type of growth or maturity.

2. Tension seems to come in this area - often people define geographical areas so that there is no competition in missions.

3. In the areas of overlap we should esteem others' work more than our own. (Philippians 2:4)

D. God has always recognized both a congregational working and a broader working through the prophet, order or movement.

1. The movement does not have to do the same things that the local church does.

2. It is important to find the proper emphasis in one's sphere of influence.

3. We work together by recognizing that we have one head, areas of overlap, and areas of distinctiveness.

IV. Discussion.

A. God gave to the church Apostles, teachers, and evangelists, but this does not limit the extent of their ministry to the local church.

B. Priests and prophets were dependent upon each other under one head.

C. Defining the church. The local church is primarily in view here. It has a geographical location, it is the pillar of truth, it is where the Word is preached, it administers to the sacraments and it is cradle to the grave.

D. Christianity is the greater movement and there are sub-movements that arise from it.

E. Is differentiation by method more than function? It is probably idealistic to say that every church can do everything that it is called to - therefore, movements supplement.

F. Christian ministry movements either become a church, joins a church, or goes off in heresy. The movement needs the church to keep it pure in doctrine

G. Realizing that we are doing what we are called to do will relieve areas of tension.

H. Movements have their strengths and the local churches have their strengths. For instance, the local church can better meet people where they are at in regards to training - something difficult for movements to do on a broad scale.

Application questions.

1. How does history demonstrate the validity of movements today?

2. What principles are helpful for maintaining unity between different movements? How does this apply to the relationship between the movement and the local church?

3. What distinctions do you see between other ministries and your sphere of influence? What are the overlaps? How do you intend to maintain a spirit of unity between your ministry and that of others?
