

Thoughts on Ministry of Healing

(2) Days of Ministry (pages 29-50)

Summary:

The Kingdom that Jesus brought is truly “not of this world.” The focus of Jesus ministry, therefore, was on simplicity, spirituality, self-sacrifice, dependence on God, and development of character, rather than on the values of the wider world: wealth, power, fame, self-importance and outward display.

Thoughts:

Jesus was not satisfied to be a wonder-worker or a healer of physical disease, He sought to turn people’s minds from the earthly to the spiritual. (31) How do you do that in the context of Loma Linda (both clinical and educational) or a commercial business?

Jesus’ methods of ministry were in direct contrast to the religious leaders of His day. (31-32) He did not seek to become famous or start a mega-church. He did not wear his “religiosity” like a badge. His method was to go about quietly and gently like the dawn.

Jesus’ agenda was not overtly political. He did not commit Himself to overturn kingdoms. Nevertheless, His life of mercy and self-sacrifice was a direct challenge to all the ways humans seek to gain advantage over each other, including political, military and economic. The power of Jesus’ kingdom was most clearly seen in the transformation of character. The things that are seen and temporal are of value to the degree that they express the unseen and the eternal. (35-37) God works in ways that are often not discernable and not assessable.

Jesus’ greatness was seen, not so much in his miracles and spectacular accomplishments as in His attention to the little things, such as the care of children and outcasts. (39-44) Is the focus of Adventist health care on buildings and equipment and fancy billboards consistent with this mission? Do we care more about buildings and equipment than scholarship and character development? Character is as important as knowledge and skills. Should we care so much about how our institutions (schools and hospitals) rank in relation to others?

A quote from Alfred North Whitehead may be instructive here: “Seek simplicity and then distrust it.” (Quoted by Richard Rice)

Ellen White offers an interesting ecological suggestion on pages 47-48. She saw the diet offered at the feeding of the 5000 as a lesson in simplicity. If people lived more simply, in harmony with the laws of creation, there would be enough resources to supply the whole human family. It is selfishness and indulgence of appetite that have led to the extreme inequalities in the world.

Quotable Quotes:

“The Pharisees. . . proved their zeal for religion by making it the theme of discussion.” (32)

“Wealth or high position, costly equipment, architecture or furnishings, are not essential to the advancement of the work of God.” (36)

“The choicest productions of art possess no beauty that can compare with the beauty of character, which is the fruit of the Holy Spirit’s working in the soul.” (37)

“Christ came to the earth and stood before the children of men with the hoarded love of eternity.” (37)

“In choosing men and women for His service, God does not ask whether they possess worldly wealth, learning, or eloquence. He asks, "Do they walk in such humility that I can teach them My way?" (37)

“Let not your un-Christlike character misrepresent Jesus. Do not keep the little ones away from Him by your coldness and harshness. Never give them cause to feel that heaven would not be a pleasant place to them if you were there.” (43-44)

“If men today were simple in their habits, living in harmony with nature’s laws, as did Adam and Eve in the beginning, there would be an abundant supply for the needs of the human family.” (47)