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The Antithesis Its Practical Implications

As Christians we are separated but not isolated from the world. Separation may never lead to withdrawal! The needs of our time force us to shoulder our responsibility. We may not surrender our biblical heritage to the spirit of the age.

As debtors to Christ, we must continue to work on a distinctively Christian lifestyle. As sons of God, we live by faith, under the sign of the cross, with the Bible as our guide, in confrontation with the world.

What is a Christian lifestyle? It embraces not just our private life, but our whole life. It gives total meaning to an otherwise fragmented existence. God cannot be tucked away in a corner.

Ethics

When Christianity declares that the Truth, the Scripture itself, is God's revelation; and that God's revelation has become incarnate in Christ, it gives an absolute norm for all of life. Whatever doesn't conform to the Truth is false (John 14:6). A Christian, therefore, selects a theory of ethics to the exclusion of all others. His code of behavior and ethical thinking should be rooted in a world and life view fashioned and inspired by the Bible.

A professor said to his students, "Young men, play the game of life." A student spoke up and said, "Sir, but there are no goal posts." There are goal posts-fixed norms-found in God's Word.

Missions

In modern missions, universalism is taking its toll. Many missiologists call for a dialogue with Muslims, Hindus, Buddhists and even communists, in search for the establishment of mutual human understanding, fellowship and service in behalf of each other. On this basis, people of different religions work together in social service projects that contribute to the welfare of mankind. Solidarity is the watchword! But social action cannot unite mankind. We are not all children of God. In our mission work, our point of departure is the antithesis between the kingdom of God and the kingdom of Satan. A biblical Christian must be a missionary. The Gospel of reconciliation must be proclaimed to a world alienated from God (II Cor 5:19). But missions are more than saving perishing souls from the fire of hell. To participate in missions is quite impossible unless we battle against every form of opposition to God's intentions wherever it be found. Missionaries are more than "soulwinners." They are ambassadors of Christ the King (II Cor 5:20).

Labor

How do Christians view their work? Should Christians join a "neutral" union and witness there to the saving grace of Christ, or should they become members of a Christian union? Many workers have organized themselves for Christ in a labor union with a biblically based social platform. But don't they become isolated when they join a Christian labor union? Are they not disobedient to the Great Commission (Matt. 28:19ff)? Reformed labor leaders have always testified that a Christian organization, whether labor or any other, may never serve as a well-protected fortress in a secular world, forgetting to witness prophetically to the saving power of the Gospel. And a Christian on the job should try to win others for Christ, through word and deed.

Education

Education is not without a norm structure. In our confused age, it seems as if educators talk in a Babel of voices when they give direction on rearing children. John S. Brubacher lists twelve schools of education philosophy, ranging from pragmatic naturalism, rational humanism, communism to democracy, but a Christian philosophy of education is not on the list. (Modern Philosophies of Education. Fourth Edition Foundations of Education.)

Which direction should the Christian parent choose? Not every philosophy of education and norm structure can be right. Christian education builds its view on God's norms for the world and the child. Christ is at the beginning, in the center and at the end of this Christian education endeavor. Christian parents have joined in founding schools with the Bible; schools operated by parent controlled societies, free from either church or state.

Do Christian schools guarantee eternal salvation for each of their students? Of course not. Their task is to manifest the knowledge of Christ in every place. "The final issue of life--the destinies of men--we leave in the hands of the Savior, while with fear and trembling but with great joy in believing," writes Cornelius Van Til, "we place before our students the choice of rejecting Christ as their Lord with the issue being everlasting death, or accepting Christ as their Lord with the issue being everlasting joy."

The antithesis has practical implications. If Christianity is true, we have a responsibility to God and to the world to show that other world and life views are blind alleys, leading nowhere.

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