

LOCAL THEOLOGY
Church & Community in Dialogue
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SPCK 1994

Clergy forget that laity have lives outside the ambit of institutional questions.
They find others outside who have values which they share.
How to support and resource that?

Spiral is too coherent and conclusive.
Theology as a poppy head bursting in all directions – random & unrestricted.
But how then to create meaning and order out of it?

Post-modernity – breakdown of one narrative, acquisition of many.
Operate at conscious, unconscious, critical, trans-rational.
So take an example, work with the people, and then analyse afterwards to see what come of it.

Example One: Rural Housing Questions.

Local church group engages a housing issue with locals.
Decides to think about power using philosophers like Foucault.
Thinks about Community – church is not at its centre any more.
[His ideas are taken from different ideologies, none of them specifically christian in origin – but assuming that God is in them all? Not stated.]

Example Two: Play scheme – can we work together?

Story of how local church works with Play group.
Nearest he comes to it is:
“In Christian terms we might talk about the restoration of dignity and self-worth and an approach that responds to God’s love for us by trying to meet the needs of others.”
p71
Assumes Christian visions of social justice exist and we all know what they are. On p80 he mentions the Christian Tradition that are brought to life.

Church is well-placed to discuss at moral and spiritual level.

But human beings do not work at intellectual level but in practical transactions. We have little critical consciousness.

We might be tempted to use our spiritual language. (p87)

We might be tempted to intervene with stock answers. (88)

Third Example: Environmental Project

A piece of land that might one day be the Church's car-park.

“to repeat the words of Genesis or St Francis as if hundred s of years of change in scientific and cultural thought had never happened cannot constitute a reasoned and truthful response to crucial moral and political questions.” So we have a lot of listening to do. 116

[Seems he has only read Giddens so does not see that traditions can help.]

“The church might do well to swallow some of its pride and go back to the same starting point without assuming that it has anything to offer. Local theology is an attempt to do just that.” p140 Other new movements are doing it all. Theology is just there to control. 143.