LESSLIE NEWBIGIN

FOOLISHNESS TO THE GREEKS

TAUGHT BY ROBERT CUNNINGHAM
TODAY'S AGENDA:

Missionary Encounter
Missionary Analysis
Our Cultural Moment
MISSIONARY ENCOUNTER
“After having spent most of my life as a missionary in India, I was called to teach missiology and then to become a missionary in a typical inner-city area in England. This succession of roles has forced me to ask the question I have posed as the theme of this book: What would be involved in a missionary encounter between the Gospel and this whole way of perceiving, thinking, and living that we call ‘Modern Western culture?’”

Lesslie Newbigin, Foolishness to the Greeks
THE GOSPEL AND CULTURE

Indigenizing Principle

Pilgrim Principle

Andrew Walls
“There can never be a culture-free gospel. Yet the gospel, which is from the beginning to the end embodied in culturally conditioned forms, calls into question all cultures, including the one in which it was originally embodied.”

Lesslie Newbigin, *Foolishness to the Greeks*
“A missionary going to serve in another country is advised to make a thorough study of its culture…”

Lesslie Newbigin, Foolishness to the Greeks
**PROBLEM:**

What if the evangelizing culture is the same culture as the recipient culture?
“A missionary going to serve in another country is advised to make a thorough study of its culture... But with what tools could I study my own culture? On the basis of what perceptions can I evaluate my own perceptions of ‘how things really are’—perceptions that are part of my mental make-up from childhood?”

Lesslie Newbigin, Foolishness to the Greeks
OUR CULTURAL MOMENT

“Modern Western Culture”
# The Comprehensive Gospel

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<td>Futility</td>
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the Ten Commandments

I AM the LORD thy God.
Thou shalt have no other gods before me.
Thou shalt not make to thyself any graven images.
Thou shalt not worship them or serve them.

The Capitol building of the state of Texas is visible in the background.
THE NATURE OF BELIEF

- Secularism
- Religious Pluralism
- The Nova Effect
- The Heretical Imperative
- Fragilization
WORLD
THE NATURE OF THE WORLD

- Disenchantment
- The Immanent Frame
- Affirmation of Ordinary Life
- “Baconian Project”
- From Creation to “Nature”
  - Instrumentalized
  - Exalted
My life.
My death.
My choice.

I support Brittany Maynard and all Americans’ right to choose #DeathwithDignity

thebrittanyfund.org
THE NATURE OF SELF

• Individualism
  • Utilitarian (Autonomy)
  • Expressive (Authenticity)

• Therapeutic Ethos
  • Wellness
  • Self-Actualization and Self-Optimization

• Dignity
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THE NATURE OF SOCIETY

• **Community**
  • The Big Sort
  • From “Associational Pluralism” to Tribalism

• **Politics**
  • Liberalism
  • From a Politics of the Common Good to a Politics of Instrumental Power

• **Economics**
  • Global Capitalism
  • From a Market Economy to a Market Society
WHAT ASPECTS OF CULTURE WOULD YOU ADD TO THIS ACCOUNT?

WHERE DOES THE GOSPEL NEED TO BE TRANSLATED SO THAT IT CAN BE INTELLIGIBLE TO MODERN, WESTERN CULTURE?

WHERE IS THE GOSPEL AT RISK OF ASSIMILATION TO THESE ASPECTS OF MODERN, WESTERN CULTURE?

HOW MIGHT THE GOSPEL CHALLENGE MODERN, WESTERN CULTURE?