

The Second Nation Building Principle

Nationbuilding Principles

“No other persons decisions about your life are more important than your own decisions about your life”

Nationbuilding Principle #2

- The question is: Are the decisions of the individual more important than the environment in which he finds himself?
- If they are not and if the circumstance of life are more important, then we must labor to change the environment
- If in fact our own decisions are more important than our circumstances, then we must change ourselves.

Nationbuilding Principle #2

In 1989, the National Research Council predicted the following future for African Americans if the trends present at that time continued:

- A substantial majority of black Americans will remain contributors to the nation, but improvements in their status relative to whites are likely to slow even more as the rate of increase of the black middle class is likely to decline.
- Approximately one-third of the black population will continue to be poor and the relative employment and earnings status of black men is likely to deteriorate further.
- Drugs and crime, teenage parenthood, poor educational opportunities, and joblessness will maintain their grip on large numbers of poor and near-poor blacks.

Nationbuilding Principle #2

In 1989, the National Research Council predicted the following future for African Americans if the trends present at that time continued:

- High rates of residential segregation between blacks and whites will continue.
- The United States is faced with the prospect of continued great inequality between whites and blacks and a continuing division of social status within the black population.
- A growing population of poor and undereducated citizens, disproportionately black and minority will pose challenges to the nation's abilities to solve the emerging economic and social problems of the twenty-first century.

The Sin Paradigm

“At the turn of the century, the black pastorate was not nearly as educated as it was to become in later years. Although doctrinal error and ignorance were present, as with all races and nationalities, the typical pastor operated on what I will call the “Sin Paradigm”. **The Sin Paradigm is founded on the precept that the basic problem of man is that of a broken relationship with GOD.** This sin problem makes him less likely to succeed at any other aspect of life. The result of the sin problem is not only an eternity in hell after death, but also failure in life, if only as measured against ones potential as a Christian.”

The Sin Paradigm

- Essentials of the Sin Paradigm
 - Mans primary problem in life is his broken relationship with God and the sinful nature that results from this fact
 - His sinful predisposition causes him to poison his own environment, spiritually, psychologically, socially and physically Jeremiah 17.9
 - This problem is overcome through the Cross of Jesus Christ. Through salvation the sinner becomes better: a better person, a better husband, a better father, a better employee and a better citizen John 10:10b.

The Rights Paradigm

“Another paradigm developed momentum in the early part of the twentieth century that was to displace the Sin Paradigm for many pastors. This paradigm I will call the “Rights Paradigm”. The Rights Paradigm represented a significant change in priority of the clergy that adopted it. **The Rights Paradigm holds that the primary problem of the black individual is his relationship with his fellow man** and not his relationship to GOD. Specifically, the black persons’ lack of the rights accorded to whites in America was the priority that most immediately required addressing.”

Walker, pg 13

The Rights Paradigm

- Essentials of the Rights Paradigm
 - Mans essential problem in life is his lack of various categories of rights: human rights, economic, social or political rights.
 - As a result of this lack of rights, men suffer disenfranchisement, a lack of self-determination and the psychological deficits that these cause
 - Therefore, a correction of the unequal power relationships in society will result not only in improved environment, but also in the improved emotional and mental health of the oppressed
 - Logically then, the actions of men must be directed towards impacting those external (to the oppressed) systems and individuals who have the ability to change unequal power relationships

The Rights Paradigm

- "To put it simply, Black theology knows no authority more binding than the experience of oppression itself. This alone must be the ultimate authority in religious matters."
- "Concretely, this means that Black Theology is not prepared to accept any doctrine of God, man, Christ or Scripture which contradicts the black demand for freedom now. It believes that any religious idea which exalts black dignity and creates a restless drive for freedom must be affirmed. All ideas which are opposed to the struggle for black self-determination or are irrelevant to it must be rejected as the work of the Antichrist." (bold mine-rw)

James H. Cone, "Black Theology and Black Power", , Harper San Francisco 1969 pg 120

The Rights Paradigm

- “Black religion is self-consciously committed to the destruction of caste in America and is moving quite visibly in some instances, less perceptibly in others, toward the principle that Christian commitment is inconsistent with powerlessness and lack of freedom.” (emphasis mine-rw)

C. Eric Lincoln, “The Black Church Since Frazier”, Schocken Books, New York, 1974 pg 135

The Two Paradigms

ISSUE	SIN PARADIGM	RIGHTS PARADIGM
RELATIONSHIP	GOD	MAN
PRIORITY	GLORIFY GOD	ACHIEVE RIGHTS
ENEMY	SATAN	RACISM, INJUSTICE
POWER SOURCE	HOLY SPIRIT	HUMAN ABILITY
ACTIVITY	MAKE DISCIPLES	IMPACT THE SYSTEM
MESSAGE	THE GOSPEL	DOCTRINE OF OPPRESSION
CONSEQUENCES	RETARDS CULTURAL DECAY	ACCELERATES BREAKDOWN OF SOCIETY

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