

# Engaging with Culture

Dovedale House  
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# Clearing the ground

- Be self-aware: make the invisible – visible
- Be courageous: run towards the fire
- Be respectful: debate with the strongest case of your opponent.
- Be relational: form unlikely alliances.
- Be open: develop a ‘proper confidence’.

# Relationship to culture

- Baptism of culture
- Hostility to culture
- Christ above culture
- Church in tension with culture
- Transformation of culture

# The balance of relevance and authority

- Want to maintain the authority of Christianity in a compromised world
- BUT want to be relevant to contemporary culture.
- Can you both keep the purity of the faith and be relevant to culture?
- Could be authoritative but isolated or relevant and lose sense of mission.

# The Biblical Narrative

- Creation: God's original intentions
- Compromise: Distortion and distrust
- Covenant: God's salvation history
- Completion: God's new world.

# Creation

- God's original intentions: A good world
- Humanity reflecting the image of God
- A cooperative environment
- Work as creative and fruitful
- Relationship: Equal and mutual respect.
- Freedom based on trust.

# Compromise

- Emergence of distrust, insecurity and arrogance between humanity and God.
- Introduction of power in relationships
- Collapse of environmental cooperation
- Rise of corporate evil
- Social reversal of values
- Cosmic conflict and spiritual warfare.

# Covenant

- The relationship between revelation and requirement.
- History as salvation history.
- The chapters in the narrative of the story: Creation, Compromise, Israel, Incarnation, Crucifixion, Resurrection, Glorification, Judgement, New World.
- The church as 'buskers' aided by the Holy Spirit



# Completion

- Our identity is determined by our destiny.
- We live now in the light of the kingdom
- We know that there is continuity and discontinuity between this world and the New World.
- The presence of the Lamb as the eventual recipient of power is a warning against false ambition.

# The Five Voices of the Church

- The voice of responsibility for the world
- The voice of blessing on the world
- The voice of suffering with the world
- The voice of prophecy to the world
- The voice of hope in the world.

# Engaging with Culture

- Don't reduce God's work to the individual. God grapples with human history.
- Don't see apparent failure as irredeemable.
- Don't mistake knowledge for wisdom.
- Don't use power when integrity will do
- Question the institutional status quo.
- See your work in the context of your life