

Teaching Leaflet



FOUNDATIONS FOR HOLISTIC MINISTRY LESSON ONE: INTRODUCTION

Use Theological Foundations Survey

Where do you experience these theological tensions within your own belief system? How is your experience of Christian living influenced by traditions you have been taught or passages of scripture that have been emphasized in your prior experience?

Take some time with the following survey to think about the theological foundations you bring as you think about these issues. Think about what ideas you have grown up with as you take this survey. How do they influence your beliefs today?

(Have participants take Theological Foundations Survey. Give time for discussion.)

Discussion questions:

- Did you find it hard to choose one idea or did it seem pretty simple? Was that true for each set of questions?
- Was one set easier to answer than another set?
- Where do most of your answers lie, on the left side of the page or the right? Or did you find yourself circling a lot of 3s in the middle?

The statements on either side of the survey have validity and can be supported by various passages of scripture and Christian traditions, and to be true to the whole of scripture, we should have balance in our views on these theological foundations. For most of us, however, we have probably been more influenced by the theological ideas on the left side of the page if we were to be totally honest. Whether your answers fall completely to one side or to the other, or even more in the middle, this study will help you to explore Bible passages and how they relate to how we care for people in need.

Theological Foundations Survey

The purpose of the survey is to explore the beliefs of this study group related to holistic ministries.

Directions: For each set of statements listed below, please circle the number you think best describes your beliefs. "1" means you would agree most with the statement on the left, "5" means you would agree most with the statement on the right, "3" means you would agree equally with both. If you disagree with both statements, put an "X" over the number next to the statements.

Some of these may seem like extremes, but if you lean to one or the other most of the time, go with that idea.

If you agree most with this statement,
circle 1 or 2

If you agree equally with both,
circle 3

If you agree most with this statement,
circle 4 or 5

A. People, Sin, Salvation

1	People are foremost individual beings.	1	2	3	4	5	People are a balance of personal and communal beings.
2	People have a strong body/soul separation.	1	2	3	4	5	People are integrated beings with more wholeness within than separation.
3	Sin is personal, associated with an individual's thoughts, choices and actions.	1	2	3	4	5	Sin is systemic, associated with social, economic and political structures.
4	God's plan of deliverance is for souls saved by faith, who will ultimately be resurrected.	1	2	3	4	5	God's plan of deliverance is for all of creation, which will ultimately be renewed.
5	Conversion is a one-time event.	1	2	3	4	5	Conversion is a gradual, long-term process.
6	The gospel means the good news that Christ offers individuals forgiveness of sins and eternal life.	1	2	3	4	5	The gospel means the good news that God is bringing about greater peace, justice and wholeness in society.
7	The way to share God's love with people is by telling them about Jesus.	1	2	3	4	5	The way to share God's love with people is by demonstrating it with caring actions.

B. The Christian Life

1	The message of faith is one of challenge to complacent Christians.	1	2	3	4	5	The message of faith is one of comfort for struggling Christians.
2	Christian living means having a moral lifestyle.	1	2	3	4	5	Christian living means having a lifestyle of compassion and justice.
3	Christian faith focuses on growing in one's personal relationship to God.	1	2	3	4	5	Christian faith focuses on promoting wholeness and peace in the world
4	Outreach ministry is the responsibility of specially gifted individuals.	1	2	3	4	5	Outreach ministry is the responsibility of every Christian.
5	Outreach ministry should focus on people's spiritual needs — the quality of their relationship with God.	1	2	3	4	5	Outreach ministry should focus on people's social and emotional needs — the quality of their health, finances, family life, etc.

6	The only objects of evangelism are individual persons.	1	2	3	4	5	The only objects of evangelism are social structures.
7	The Bible is the source of theological truth.	1	2	3	4	5	The Bible, tradition, reason, human experience can be sources of theological truth

C. The Church

1	The focus of God's transforming work is the church.	1	2	3	4	5	The focus of God's transforming work is the world outside the church.
2	The church should focus on preparing people for eternal life after death.	1	2	3	4	5	The church should focus on helping people here and now.
3	The task of the church is to work to change the lives of individuals.	1	2	3	4	5	The task of the church is to work to change society.
4	Government is solely responsible for meeting the needs of the poor.	1	2	3	4	5	The church is responsible for meeting the needs of the poor.
5	The church awaits Christ's return to restore of the world, as human efforts cannot be expected to bring about social change.	1	2	3	4	5	The church is the agent of God's work of restoration in the world, responsible for bringing about social change.

B. Society and Social Change

1	Change in a person's circumstances comes when they change spiritually.	1	2	3	4	5	Change in a person's circumstances comes when they get the social aid they need.
2	Poverty is largely due to a person's foolish choices or immoral lifestyle, such as laziness or drugs.	1	2	3	4	5	Poverty is largely due to social, economic, and political factors, such as racism, shortage of affordable housing, and a lack of good jobs.
3	Christians have the most impact on society through their personal influence, by being good citizens and neighbors.	1	2	3	4	5	Christians have the most impact on society through their collective influence, by organized advocacy or action groups.
4	Change in a community comes as individuals and families are transformed.	1	2	3	4	5	Change in a community comes as social structures, laws, local economy and culture are transformed.
5	Christians should look for wisdom about how to help persons and communities from the Bible and Christian teachings.	1	2	3	4	5	Christians should look for wisdom about how to help persons and communities from any useful sources, including secular ones.

Adapted from: Heidi Unruh and Phil Olson, *Becoming a Church That Makes a Difference: Ventures in Holistic Ministry (Word and Deed Network, 2006)*, esa-online.org. Used by permission.