

March 25, 2018
The Challenge of Faithfulness
Taken From James Hunter, How to Change the World

For Christian believers, the call to faithfulness is a call to live in fellowship and integrity with the person and witness of Jesus Christ.

American civilization — a bundle of contradictions: energy and exhaustion; Capitalism and consumer mentality; democracy empowers with tools for self-governance and it flattens out ethical distinctions; technological advances improve quality of life and bring new forms of violence and oppression.

American political culture — fragmented and polarized. Americans are committed and hopeful yet distrustful of the major institutions and their leaders and uncertain about the future of the nation.

Conservative—main challenge is secularization, solution—bring God back

Progressive—main challenge is inequality, solution—redistribute wealth and power

Neo-Anabaptists —main challenge is violence and coercion in democracy and consumerism of global capitalism, solution —peace loving koinonia of the church-based community

All at least partially correct about solutions.

Mistaken in seeing that the challenge they see is the defining one.

“There is not one single challenge. The multiplicity of challenges and the dizzying complexity of their causes are largely what makes the modern world so confounding”

Difference and Dissolution

Difference: In a pluralistic society, the existence of many different beliefs pose a challenge to Christian beliefs. There is no longer a dominant culture.

Dissolution:

The deconstruction of the most basic assumptions of reality.

A doubt that words and concepts can have any ultimate meaning.

Pluralism and especially the media environment of modern American life creates an environment that trivializes information and makes depth and reflection more difficult and helps to dissolve meaning.

Electronic media have transformed the nature of consciousness and culture.

1. Compresses time and space
 2. Compartmentalize the world in incoherent ways
 3. Driven by commercial interests so entertainment become the primary format
- Create an illusion of intimacy with actors and politicians, and strangers