

MISSIOLOGIST: DO NOT REPLACE MISSION WITH DIALOGUE

Millennium Development Goals Not Well-Grounded In the Bible

By Wolfgang Polzer
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BLANKENBURG (ANS) -- Professor Peter Beyerhaus, one of the best-known German missiologists, has urged Christians not to replace the proclamation of the Gospel with religious dialog. Evangelicals should seek dialogue without neglecting mission, said Beyerhaus at a meeting of evangelical theologians in Blankenburg, Thuringia, in September.

It would be detrimental for the church to neglect or disregard the Great Commission, emphasized Beyerhaus. Christians should not bow to the pressure of popular expectations but rather preach an unabridged biblical message.

He criticized liberal theologians who reject the message of Christ's atoning sacrifice as an affront to modern thinking. It is inevitable - said Beyerhaus - that Christians meet with opposition. Jesus does not promise evangelistic success, but he takes responsibility for the fruit of evangelism.

According to Beyerhaus the most important task of a missionary is to translate the Gospel message in such a way that it is clearly understood without harming the biblical content. Missionaries should take care not to embrace unbiblical cultural or ideological concepts.

Beyerhaus also sees the danger that the justified involvement in the alleviation of social need leads to a reduction of the Gospel message. As one example Beyerhaus mentioned the Millennium Development Goal of halving extreme poverty by 2015. Some evangelical organizations had turned this into a missionary objective. But this is – according to Beyerhaus – not well grounded in the Bible.