

Biblical Basis for Wholistic Ministry



In scripture we see God's mission is wholistic in nature, and is concerned not just with eternal salvation but with bringing the whole world under the Lordship of Jesus Christ¹. In the incarnation of Christ we see how Christ's own ministry was wholistic², and how he commanded his disciples to do the same³. In the creation of man, we see that we are made in God's image, with spiritual, physical, emotional and social dimensions which are integrated to make us whole people⁴. In the fall, we see that sin not only broke our relationship with God, but also with self, others and creation⁵. And in God's ministry of reconciliation, we see that reconciliation goes beyond just eternal salvation to encompass the redemption and restoration of all of God's creation⁶.

In light of this, we as Emmanuel International affirm that Wholistic Ministry is the best approach to addressing poverty in all of its dimensions. The following definition and principles express how we as a global body understand the definition and principles of Wholistic Ministry.

Definition

Wholistic Ministry is an approach to personal and community transformation, based on God's mission and Biblical principles, which seeks to address all the needs of a person, including physical, spiritual, emotional, and social.



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1 Ephesians 1:7-10, Matthew 6:9-10
2 Luke 4:18-21, Isaiah 58:6-7
3 Matthew 22:36-40; Matthew 25:31-46;
Matthew 28:18-20
4 Genesis 1:26-27
5 Genesis 1-3; Romans 8:18-25;
Revelations 21
6 2 Corinthians 5:17-20



Principles of Wholistic Ministry

1. It is rooted in Biblical principles and Jesus' call and commission to participate in God's mission to redeem and restore all of creation.
2. It seeks to follow the model of Christ's incarnation, who demonstrated compassion and a servant attitude by reaching fallen humankind on their own level and responding to all of their needs, both in this life and in the hope of eternal life.
3. It recognizes that poverty is a reflection of our broken relationship with God, with self, with others and with creation, and that restoring shalom requires a restoration of all of these relationships.
4. It recognizes that the Holy Spirit is the agent of transformation and restoration.
5. It recognizes that local churches, being visible expressions of the universal Church, are God's primary instrument for bringing about His Kingdom for His glory.
6. It recognizes that we are people created in God's image, with physical, spiritual, emotional and social dimensions which are integrated to make us whole people.
7. It recognizes that these needs must also be addressed in the context of community and creation.
8. It recognizes that addressing poverty in all its dimensions requires submission to the Lordship of Christ and the liberating Gospel of the Kingdom of God.
9. It recognizes that bringing God's Kingdom requires both the proclamation and the demonstration of the Gospel, in all spheres of life, through words, deeds and character.
10. It strives towards personal and community transformation.
11. It is impartial, committed to serving people according to their needs, regardless of race, religion, or gender.

Other relevant verses include: Micah 6:8; Mark 12:28-31; Romans 12:19-21; Galatians 6:2; Ephesians 2:10; Colossians 1:12; and James 2:15-17.

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