

The Evangelical Manifesto

Recently, a document was released by a group of Evangelical leaders in an attempt to define what it is to be an evangelical Christian, and how to work together with other “faith communities” for the common good of the nation. Entitled *An Evangelical Manifesto*, the document spells out specific areas in need of reform in the church, specifically to be a believer in all things and areas of life and not be limited to “single-issue” definitions, such as abortion or the question of gay marriage.

I have read this document, and found no objection to its overall points, save for two that are addressed below. I have, in fact, made similar statements on this web site and in talking with other believers. However, I believe that my first calling is to the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ and the fulfillment of His instructions to us, the Great Commission. Many of the things I have written on dealing with the church have been an effort to make believers see that trying to bring the Kingdom of God to Earth through human effort simply doesn't work, and that we must be sold out completely to God and let Him transform the culture and the life and destiny of the United States.

So, rather than break it down section by section (as it is a fairly long document), I am merely going to list the site where the document can be read, www.anevangelicalmanifesto.com, and list my comments on it below. I recommend that you prayerfully read the document for yourself and ask God's guidance regarding it.

1. *Contrary to widespread understanding today, we Evangelicals should be defined theologically, and not politically, socially, or culturally.* All true, of course, but what that statement fails to take into account is that it is our theology – our faith – that makes us what we are; not just theologically, but *also* politically, socially and culturally. It is from the core of a person's being, shaped by what that person believes, that our political, social and cultural views and preferences come from. Or, as the late Rich Mullins put it in his song, *Creed*, “I believe what I believe is what makes me what I am. I did not make it – no, it is making me; it is the very truth of God and not the invention of any man.” Further, we must remember that since the 1960s – and possibly earlier – the culture of this nation has been under assault and transformation from those who wish to see no influence of the Lord in the public square.
2. *With God's help, we stand ready with you to face the challenges of our time and to work together for a greater human flourishing.* If you believe the Bible, that flourishing is only going to come as the Kingdom of God is established by Him on Earth, and witnessing to that Kingdom and making disciples of all men is the charge we are given by Jesus in the Great Commission. This is one of several statements by the Manifesto that gives an impression of ambiguity of purpose. As Christians, working out the Great Commission means we should stand

ready to work in areas where our help should be given without reservation or condition, such as in natural disasters or in the eradication of starvation and other forms of human suffering. At the same time, however, work in these areas should be an opportunity to let our light shine so that people can see the source of our strength and security and hope. At the core of everything should be the Lord Jesus and His "marching orders," if you will.

For the Glory of God and the Lord Jesus Christ
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