

Churches



Evangelism
(spiritual
redemption)



Social Justice
(physical
redemption)

Moses ...

Then the LORD said, “I have surely seen the affliction of my people who are in Egypt and have heard their cry because of their taskmasters. I know their sufferings, and I have come down to deliver them out of the hand of the Egyptians and to bring them up out of that land to a good and broad land, a land flowing with milk and honey ... Exodus 3:7–8

God's Plan Was to Liberate Israel ...

- Politically
 - A large nation, politically oppressed, without a voice
- Economically
 - Enslaved, no land of their own, economically exploited by the Egyptians
- Socially
 - Escalating state violence against the Israelites, death of male babies eats away at social cohesion, violation of fundamental human rights
- Spiritually
 - Egyptian slavery restricts the worship of God ("Let my son [Israel] go that he may serve me"), God is working to reclaim his worshippers, God is working to lead the Israelites to knowledge/service/worship of Him

Luke 4:18~19

“The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to proclaim good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim liberty to the captives and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty those who are oppressed, to proclaim the year of the Lord’s favour.”

Why Does Redemption Need to be Holistic?

- Sin alienated us from God
- Sin alienated us from ourselves
- Sin alienated us from each other
- Sin alienated us from the natural world

Social Action Without Evangelism

- Leading people out of slavery without restoration of their relationship with God will result in people repeating the history of Israel
- Unless people's worship is changed they will inevitably return to slavery
- According to Hebrews, the nation that experienced the wonders of God's deliverance from slavery, failed to enter into the fullness of God's salvation because of disobedience and unbelief

Evangelism without Social action

- Ends up being a pietistic religion
- Religion will become a nice, cosy club
- The Israelites had a strong appetite for worship but their lives were a denial of the moral standards of the God they claimed to worship
- James is scathing towards a faith that lacks social action

MARK

- THE STORY OF JESUS -

PART 23 - JESUS: A HOLISTIC REDEMPTION

Mark 8:1~9

In those days, when again a great crowd had gathered, and they had nothing to eat, he called his disciples to him and said to them, "I have compassion on the crowd, because they have been with me now three days and have nothing to eat. And if I send them away hungry to their homes, they will faint on the way. And some of them have come from far away." And his disciples answered him, "How can one feed these people with bread here in this desolate place?"

Mark 8:1~9

And he asked them, “How many loaves do you have?” They said, “Seven.” And he directed the crowd to sit down on the ground. And he took the seven loaves, and having given thanks, he broke them and gave them to his disciples to set before the people; and they set them before the crowd. And they had a few small fish. And having blessed them, he said that these also should be set before them. And they ate and were satisfied. And they took up the broken pieces left over, seven baskets full. And there were about four thousand people. And he sent them away.

God's character Revealed in Christ

The LORD your God is God of gods and Lord of lords, the great, the mighty, and the awesome God, who is not partial and takes no bribe. He executes justice for the fatherless and the widow, and loves the sojourner, giving him food and clothing. Deuteronomy 10:17–18

Thomas Chalmers (Scotland)

The Reformed (Protestant) Church in Scotland was established by John Knox in the sixteenth century. The country was divided into parishes. Each church consisted of two classes of officers: elders and deacons. The deacons were given the responsibility to care for the poor in each parish out of the funds of the congregation. The responsibility of the parish minister included both the temporal and spiritual welfare of all parish inhabitants. He supervised the deacons in the collection and distribution of the parish poor-relief fund. However, both the parochial system and the office of deacon began to vanish by the eighteenth century.

Thomas Chalmers (Scotland)

Under Rev. Thomas Chalmers, however, this system was restored in the church of St. John's, Glasgow, during the early 1800s. His parish included 11,513 residents, of which 2,633 were members of his church. Four thousand of the residents were completely unchurched. The entire area was divided into "quarters," each with a deacon over it. Each deacon's job was to keep the Session (the elders) informed about the economic conditions in his quarter. He was to help the unemployed get work and help uneducated children get schooling. When a family was found in need, he was to seek out resources within the neighbourhood. If there were no other options, the family was admitted to the poor roll. The statistics from one year show 97 families on the relief rolls of the church, from an approximate total of 3500 families in the parish.

Thomas Chalmers (Scotland)

The deacons did not work alone. Each "quarter" was cared for by a ministry team consisting of an elder, a deacon, a Sunday school teacher, and often a lay "evangelist." The gospel was shared and children enrolled in church school as diaconal aid was offered. Chalmers called this program his "moral machinery. At one point, his ministry was criticized as being in competition with the government welfare system. Chalmers readily agreed! He went on to say that the church could do what the government could not. He saw that it could deal with the moral and spiritual roots of poverty.