

Member dilemma

Theology and OD

Sean Callaghan, one of our members writes:

"I am working on three projects that are all banging their heads against this issue - the status quo in churches is often enabled by a theological framework. To achieve change often requires change to the underlying theological framework. And that is no small task".

What experiences or ideas do you have that will help Sean in his three scenarios:

1. An evangelical church that is seeking to become both more 'missional' and more 'participative'. It appears that the theology of the church in practice (even if not in theory) supports an exclusive community with a primary leader who drives an attractional Sunday-centric process. How do I help them move to a team lead, inclusive, participative, outward-looking community? Does this require a theological shift both in the pastor and in the congregation?

2. I am doing a lot of work with African pastors who one the one hand are engaged in integral mission but on the other do not have a theological framework in which to articulate what they are doing. They appear open to "every wind of doctrine" and are thus incredibly vulnerable. How can I help?

3. We are working to mobilise an evangelical network of churches to address the issue of Gender-based violence. But do we not need to also address gender inequality in the structure of the church in order to address gender-based violence? If so, how do we go about such a major task?
 - ***What would you say to Sean?***
 - ***Have you faced similar situations? What did you do? What did you learn?***

Some questions to reflect on:

- Is it about changing church theology or church culture?
- Do we need good theological understanding and skill to do OD with churches?
- How can we use theology to encourage, rather than block, change?

Send any ideas to cop@missioncouncil.se to that we can circulate it to Sean and then written up next month for wider group.