

Holistically whole by Durk Meijer, March 31, 2016

If we accept that our God is the creator of all things, then we need to accept that nothing was created outside of him and as such there is only one reality. 'Reality' refers in this context to everything that exists.

Most people perceive that there is more than a physical existence. Many will recognize the concept of a spiritual existence, while others perceive even more dimensions of existence. So, as human beings, we are able to perceive that one single person lives in various dimensions of existence. Scripture confirms that there are various dimensions of existence, but we can grasp only very little of any single dimension. These dimensions are closely integrated and they are part of God's creation. If we focus on God, then all these dimensions are functional in our lives. But if, instead, we focus on any single dimension, then we are in danger of viewing our life through the bias of our limited understanding of that dimension. This will also influence our understanding of God.

Likewise, when we serve people, we need to remember that ultimately we cannot serve them in one dimension of their lives. If we try, for example, only to help people with their spiritual needs, but don't consider their physical needs, we are not demonstrating the character of God through our lives and in our work. If a person is sick or hungry, we should meet these needs first. Most people look at us as a whole and as Christians, whatever we do or how we act reflects on God.

Even though we may focus in our work more on specific issues, like for example, either physical, spiritual or other needs, we need to recognize that those issues are integrated. We as people only can live in this world when all these needs are addressed. If we try to relate only to one of these needs in isolation, forgetting that they are part of a whole, we are fooling ourselves in thinking that our ministry can be effective. This also means that we cannot just do whatever we want to do and presume that there will be others that will complement what we have done or build on it. It is easy to become prideful, by elevating the value of our ministry focus above others, instead of keeping our focus on God and his holistic work.