

## Our Greatest Need

### **BEYOND CULTURE WARS** BY MICHAEL S. HORTON

On the premise that the church has embraced secularism and that a consequence has a shift away from theology and more toward meeting the “felt needs” of the un-churched, Horton introduces “Our Greatest Need”.

As in the days when Christ was on earth, the people long for miracles; not the miracles that may be grouped under common or routine occurrences, such as the sun rising, but the miracles that dazzle and delight the crowd. Remember that Jesus said in John, chapter 4:

**Unless you people see miraculous signs and wonders, you will never believe...**

I have read that the outcome of miraculous works, in terms of numbers or accounts, was surprisingly not as effective; villages or regions that witnessed or experienced more miracles did not prove more faithful or committed to *The Way*.

A simple comment (or observation) made by Horton is that “The Problem” ...today is not that Christians are not where they should be, it is that they are not what they should be right where they are.

In the vein of this want for miracles is an element of greed or selfish desire. For Americans, this greed runs part and parcel with the priorities and promotions of our society...that bleeds over into our churches. Michael points out that the notion of America’s “manifest destiny” is an example. Some semblance of this notion has been the basis for “evangelicals perceived as radicals who want power” in the political forum.” He continues:

Surely there is a place for political actions groups and lobbies, but when evangelicals participate in these in such a way as to be presuming to represent God and His church, we give the secularists some cause for cynicism concerning our allegedly “spiritual” causes.

He continues:

Instead of fighting ideology with ideology, the evangelicals must return to theology. Ideological radicals will die. Give them time.

With some reference to the Tower of Babel, Michael comments (on ideological stance): “We are not building any towers to heaven by our activity (public service); we are simply working for our daily solutions to daily problems.”

### **Can we mandate morality?**

Make no mistake that Michael is not suggesting that Christians not dismiss the role and participation in public life or service (paid, volunteered, etc.); but what he points out is that this **participation cannot mandate morality in our society**.

H. Kirk Rainer