



Pathway Builders - Part Two

Author/s

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Last month I wrote about Seed's purpose to be pathway builders for more faithful and effective engagement by Christians in society.

Where should those pathways lead? Our hope is that the pathways ultimately make it possible for Christians to be agents for redemptive change in society.

Redemptive change is our term for a particular approach to social change that grows out of our engagement with the Christian story. It is an approach to change that results in our growth and formation as followers of Jesus, while also making a positive impact on society and bearing witness to Jesus.

Our belief at Seed is that God is fundamentally FOR God's creation. The unfolding of history is the outworking of Jesus, the Spirit and the Father redeeming that which is broken by sin in the creation that was good in the beginning. Ultimately the movement of the story that we see in the Bible is toward God renewing the creation, with the renewal of our relationship as humans to God at the heart of the narrative.

Surely it also therefore makes sense, as followers of Jesus and members of God's family, that our desires and our actions should be fundamentally FOR creation and seek the kind of redemptive change that God desires for God's creation.

In simple terms....we want good for the world.

By contrast, our engagement with the world is too often consumed by negativity. This week a clip was released promoting an upcoming TV series called Christians Like Us. It should make for fascinating viewing. It's just one example of how Christians are portrayed in society at the moment.

<https://tvtonight.com.au/2019/03/airdate-christians-like-us.html>

Some of that portrayal is perception or media bias. Much of it we bring on ourselves.

There has to be a better way. And we're committed to working with others to chart that way.

Of course, our conception of what is 'good' for society will not be completely aligned with what others believe is 'good'. In these instances our role is not to make people like us; God made them free to choose. Our role is not to defend God; I don't worship a God who needs us to do that. The fact that others see the world differently to us does not mean we see them as our enemy.

Our role is simply to be faithful - to embody the way of life that Jesus showed us and called us to. We are to seek the good of others by demonstrating the life of Jesus and inviting them to know the source of



that life.

This member's edition is full of examples of people who are choosing a better way. They are stories of people who are wrestling with the tension of being faithful to Jesus, while loving people who think differently to them. They are stories of people positively contributing to a world that doesn't always see their contributions as positive.

I hope and pray that you will be inspired by them to find ways to witness to Jesus by seeking positive change in your own context.

GROW:

Set aside 15 minutes away from distractions.

Use these questions to help you reflect on how you can transition to a more positive engagement in your context.

1. Consider your own context (a community, workplace or industry).
2. Read the well-known letter from Jeremiah to the exiles recorded in Jeremiah 29: 4-11
3. Consider the various stakeholders in your context. Are there some who you regard as enemies? Where have you become engaged in a battle to 'win'? Is this a right perspective?

4. How might your behaviour and actions change if you changed your perspective on these people? What might it look like for you to 'seek their prosperity'?

5. If possible, arrange a conversation with one of these stakeholders and ask them what their desires for the future are. How might you be able to contribute to these desires while also remaining faithful to the way of Jesus?