

THE
GOSPEL &
CULTURE
PROJECT

HOW OTHERS describe us:

“As a pastor in a world-class city, I have long felt we have needed an initiative such as *The Gospel & Culture Project*. At a time of widespread confusion about the role of faith in political and social life, this center will help bring credibility to the Christian religion and its message of liberty and reconciliation in every area of life.”

Timothy Keller, author and Senior Pastor, Redeemer Presbyterian Church, New York City

“*The Gospel & Culture Project* shows us how to practice Christianity-with-its-sleeves-rolled-up in our communities, as well as the biblical and philosophical foundation for doing so. I strongly encourage you and your church to get involved!”

Joni Eareckson Tada, JAF International Disability Center

“The strategic vision of this project is as magnificent as it is timely. With Bill Edgar’s wisdom and experience leading it, I am both excited and deeply supportive.”

Os Guinness, author and social critic

IF YOU SHARE OUR DESIRE TO SEE THE GOSPEL MORE FULLY REFLECTED IN OUR WORLD,

we would appreciate your involvement. We deeply value your prayers, your participation and your financial support.

FOR MORE INFORMATION PLEASE CONTACT:

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As apartheid began to unravel in the late 1980s, South Africa anticipated a period of bloody vengeance and social turmoil. Instead, a group of Christians led the transition to a peaceful coalition government and the now-historic Truth and Reconciliation Commission. They did this by applying their Christ-centered beliefs regarding peacemaking and justice and through their conviction that, just as God had redeemed his people through the cross of Christ, he could also transfigure racially-ravaged South Africa.

In the early 1800s, William Wilberforce spearheaded the abolition of slavery in England. His tireless efforts were rooted in his conviction that all men were created equal through applying Acts 17:26, “God hath made of one blood all nations of men.”

In our time, examples of Gospel-rooted cultural transformation include the work of *Dwelling House Savings and Loan (DHS&L)* of Pittsburgh and the music magazine *Paste*. *DHS&L* has been a catalyst in the renewal of Pittsburgh’s blighted urban areas through making loans geared toward creating home ownership and rehabilitation opportunities. It has done this out of obedience to the biblical command to help the poor.

Paste magazine was founded by a group of Christians who sought to bring examples of truth and beauty in contemporary culture to light as a result of being humbled by the work of God’s grace in their lives. *Paste* has been recognized as one of the nation’s best music magazines by *National Public Radio*, *The Wall Street Journal*, *The New York Daily News* and *The Chicago Tribune*.

While these examples highlight the power of the Gospel to shape culture, they also suggest the degree to which the church in the West has been uninvolved in this type of work. The contemporary church tends to reflect the Western, private/

public division in which our inner convictions are seldom expressed through social involvement. The Christian faith has come to be separate from the world, while also being focused primarily on individual experience. Although we proclaim Christ Lord of all, we accomplish little in applying the Gospel to our world in a way that brings about significant social, structural change.

The Bible’s view of cultural engagement is quite different. We are called to “fill the earth and subdue it.” (Gen. 1:28) This task is central to Christ’s Great Commission “to make disciples of all nations.” (Matt. 28:18) The Lord requires us to “do justice and to love mercy” (Mic. 6:8) and to “seek the welfare” of the city that is our contemporary local and global society. (Jer. 29:7)

The *Gospel & Culture Project (GCP)* responds to this breakdown by training and shaping leaders and equipping the body of Christ to bring the Gospel to bear on the key issues and circumstances of our age. The *GCP* brings some of the best minds devoted to applying the Gospel to our world together with individual Christians who have a passion for applying spiritual truth to the arts, politics, economics, the environment, media, finance and science, among others.

The *GCP* is uniquely equipped to do this because of its cultural-redemptive approach. This outlook interprets the Bible as presenting an unfolding historical process that culminates in the coming of Christ’s kingdom. History, as God ordains it, is moving toward a new creation—a new heaven and earth. At the center of this is God speaking to us through his word and his world. He guides us through this process. As a result, to view the world through a cultural-redemptive framework is to understand that God can and will work with us and through us so that the world might more truly reflect his character.

HOW our vision BECOMES REALITY.

FORAY

The word *foray* means a venture or initial attempt in an unfamiliar area. Our monthly *Forays* do exactly that. They are gatherings in which experts examine their areas of specialty through the lens of the Gospel. Rather than lecturing, material is presented in dialogue with those attending so that all involved contribute to the learning process.

WORD MEETS WORLD

Word Meets World seminars take place in churches as facilitators trained in the craft of Gospel application equip the laity with tools for bringing their faith to bear on contemporary issues and questions. *Word Meets World* seminars feature training in hermeneutics and theological application, while also focusing on a specific area as a means of demonstrating how this approach works in real-world situations.

GOSPELANDCULTURE.ORG AND BEYOND

Gospelandculture.org serves as an online community, while also explaining the mission of the *GCP* and publicizing its events and initiatives. Its content features commentary, interviews, reviews and reportage. Eventually it will also serve as a web-broadcasting portal and as a testing ground for the development of a second site.

Our second site, which will replace *gospelandculture.org*, will feature cutting-edge functionality that will enable many different types of engagement, broadcasting, and research. The launch date of the second site will depend on the availability of funding and staffing.

THE SCHOOL FOR CULTURAL ENGAGEMENT

THE GOALS OF THE SCHOOL INCLUDE:

- Facilitating more meaningful Christian participation in the wider culture
- Developing leaders:
 - who can help the church and the larger society to apply Christian theology to culture

who, through deep academic work and collaborative endeavors, become capable of speaking to critical issues of the day

who can sustain dialogue and relationships across disciplines, borders, and denominations

Depending on funding and staffing availability, we plan to launch *The School for Cultural Engagement* with the fall, 2010 semester. The school will feature coursework geared toward the needs of laypeople who plan to go back into or start careers and those heading into full time, professional ministry.

THE PLANNED EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS INCLUDE:

- Certificate in Cultural Apologetics
- Executive MA with Cultural Apologetics emphasis
- MAR with a Cultural Theology emphasis
- MDiv with a Cultural Theology emphasis
- PhD in Cultural Theology

THE GOSPEL & CULTURE CENTER

The Gospel & Culture Center will be the physical location for many of our programs. It will include offices, a resource library, an audio/video recording and editing studio, as well as an art gallery and gathering place for discussion and hospitality.

Besides our main center, the *GCP* hopes to have a presence in key cultural centers around the globe. Each of these locations will serve three interrelated purposes: first, to plan and host public events; second, to provide space and accessibility for *The School for Cultural Engagement*; and third, to maintain an ongoing, interactive presence in key locations, such as New York, London, Nairobi and Beijing.



gospelandculture.org