

Church People – Theological Triage
Jonathan Cleveland
August 18, 2024

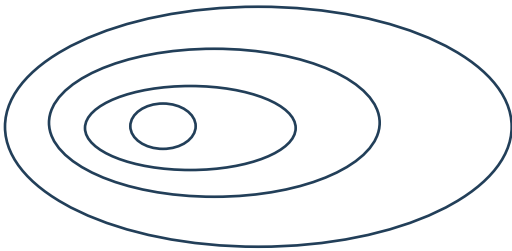
Reflection & Discussion Questions

One issue facing Church People today is not *bad* theology but *poorly ordered* theology

Theological triage helps us stay focused on the things that matter most.

*What might happen if we have no prioritization to our theology and what we believe?

*What consideration have you given to where you place your beliefs and why?



Our center is not an idea, or a collection of ideas, it is a person

Everything we do and how we relate to others orbits around that core belief.

Read and discuss Colossians 1:13-23 (NIV)

¹³ For he has rescued us from the dominion of darkness and brought us into the kingdom of the Son he loves, ¹⁴ in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins.

¹⁵ The Son is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation. ¹⁶ For in him all things were created: things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or powers or rulers or authorities; all things have been created through him and for him. ¹⁷ He is before all things, and in him all things hold together. ¹⁸ And he is the head of the body, the church; he is the beginning and the firstborn from among the dead, so that in everything he might have the supremacy. ¹⁹ For God was pleased to have all his fullness dwell in him, ²⁰ and through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether things on earth or things in heaven, by making peace through his blood, shed on the cross.

²¹ Once you were alienated from God and were enemies in your minds because of your evil behavior. ²² But now he has reconciled you by Christ's physical body through death to present you holy in his sight, without blemish and free from accusation— ²³ if you continue in your faith, established and firm, and do not move from the hope held out in the gospel. This is the gospel that you heard and that has been proclaimed to every creature under heaven, and of which I, Paul, have become a servant.

*What do these verses say about the center of our faith?

*What other beliefs have you seen added to the center as seemingly important as the person of Jesus?

*As church people, how does our core belief affect the way we approach people?

Primary beliefs are of first importance – they are what makes the faith the faith

Read and discuss I Corinthians 15:3-8

³ For what I received I passed on to you as of first importance: that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, ⁴ that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures, ⁵ and that he

appeared to Cephas, and then to the Twelve. ⁶ After that, he appeared to more than five hundred of the brothers and sisters at the same time, most of whom are still living, though some have fallen asleep. ⁷ Then he appeared to James, then to all the apostles, ⁸ and last of all he appeared to me also, as to one abnormally born.

And Galatians 1:6-7 (NIV)

⁶ I am astonished that you are so quickly deserting the one who called you to live in the grace of Christ and are turning to a different gospel— ⁷ which is really no gospel at all. Evidently some people are throwing you into confusion and are trying to pervert the gospel of Christ.

Secondary beliefs are how we understand and follow God

Read and discuss Acts 15:28-29 (NIV)

²⁸ It seemed good to the Holy Spirit and to us not to burden you with anything beyond the following requirements: ²⁹ You are to abstain from food sacrificed to idols, from blood, from the meat of strangled animals and from sexual immorality. You will do well to avoid these things.

Tertiary beliefs are disputable matters

Read and discuss Romans 14:1-5 (NIV)

¹ Accept the one whose faith is weak, without quarreling over disputable matters. ² One person's faith allows them to eat anything, but another, whose faith is weak, eats only vegetables. ³ The one who eats everything must not treat with contempt the one who does not, and the one who does not eat everything must not judge the one who does, for God has accepted them. ⁴ Who are you to judge someone else's servant? To their own master, servants stand or fall. And they will stand, for the Lord is able to make them stand.

⁵ One person considers one day more sacred than another; another considers every day alike. Each of them should be fully convinced in their own mind.

*What do all of these passages show us about triage of our beliefs?

*Where have you seen church people's belief priorities get out of whack?

*When have you gotten distracted or focused on things that aren't urgent?

The world needs to see church people focused on what matters most, living out the highest priorities of our faith

Having good priorities helps us not to inadvertently put up barriers to the Gospel.

*Spend some time placing some of your beliefs in each circle and consider where they fall. Does your presence with others reflect the most important beliefs? How do you relate to people you disagree with in each circle? What beliefs are hard to categorize?

*What is He saying to you about your triage and how you've ordered things?

*How is are you being called to live out the highest priority?