

Dialog Notes: Lois Olena & Ray Gannon

Sources:

<http://www.caspari.com/mishkan/> “Jewish-Christian Dialogue: A Theological Assessment” (3 1985)

Marvin Wilson, Our Father Abraham chapter 15 (p. 319)

https://www.amazon.com/Our-Father-Abraham-Jewish-Christian/dp/0802804233/ref=sr_1_1?s=books&ie=UTF8&qid=1480178957&sr=1-1&keywords=marvin+wilson+our+father+abraham

DIALOGUE

Requires:

- A humble spirit
- realization that it is a long-term venture (surprises, risks); fully prepare for and commit to it.

Purpose:

- not to overcome the “opposition”
- not to convert
- not to seek reconciliation through theological compromise
- not mere “toleration”
- it IS an invitation to LEARN
- it IS a means for enhancing personal growth and understanding through a mutual search for truth
- achieve a new rapprochement as we explore ancient sources and forge new links together
- an occasion to broaden and enrich one’s spiritual capacity
- allows Christians the opportunity to reveal a new image
- opportunity to demonstrate true humility and servanthood attitude conducive to further growth through mutual trust

Guidelines:

- James 1:19, “Quick to listen, slow to speak”
- 1 Pet. 3:15 “Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect.” (not arrogantly or thoughtlessly, but with sensitivity and respect for the inquirer)
- “the greatest of these is love”

- don’t ignore differences, but look honestly at disagreements rather than avoiding them
 - understand both groups often use the same words but with different meanings (Bible, Gentile, Pharisee, Crusade)
 - recognize inaccurate assumptions about the other (Christians worship three gods, the NT is anti-Semitic, faith vs. deeds)
 - who Jesus is (Messiah? Prophet? Man? God?) recognize why there is an impasse (has to do also w/the way we see our sources – canon, word of God, etc.)

EDUCATION AND PERSONAL GROWTH

- not just cognitive
- should be personal (ex. visiting Israel, visiting a camp, etc.)
- should have output as well as input (teach it in Sunday School, share w/others)
- should be active (can design a program in consultation w/the Jewish community; ex. Bonhoeffer week; visit a synagogue; visit world of Jewish culture – museums, etc.)

SOCIAL ACTION (tikkun olam, do justice, show mercy...)

- Helping the poor, fighting anti-Semitism, Darfur, etc.

Suggestions for Future Dialogue [Gannon, 1983]

Two important questions...

(1) Can American Jews accept the crucially important Evangelical help without requiring that they in effect deny the universality of the Great Commission?

(2) Can Evangelicals bless Israel with continued goodwill (and treat Jews with respectful equality) in the face of deliberate rejection of the gospel?

For dialogue between Jews and Christians, study and regard with respect the tenets of each other's faith (history, biblical studies, philosophy, ways normative to Judaism). What makes one another tick? There should be no mistake regarding our convictions, but also no misconception regarding our unconditional demonstrative love. Abandonment of each other's practice shouldn't be the price for the mutual acceptance and cooperation.

Suggestions for future dialogue: social concerns of life, not theology; issues of mutual concern.

Evangelicals must not compromise their beliefs. The gospel is also for Israel! Neither should their commitment to Israel's well-being be contingent on Israel's acceptance of Jesus. Pluralistic America – a good place where Jews and Christians have been able to work together.

The Holocaust has hastened the imperative, though. An appreciation for religious pluralism must be fostered (each denomination contributes to an aspect of religious liberty, the right which each group claims for the practice of its faith without interference from others).

Gannon hopes both camps will answer both questions, "Yes."

Israel needs to accept Evangelicals as they are, even though to them our ideas are obnoxious.