

Armitage Response
September 19, 2008

Response to 'Setting the Vision: The Calling of the Christian teacher in the Twenty First century World. (Dr. Trevor Cooling)

by The Rev Dr Bill Salier, Moore Theological College, Sydney

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How to respond? Well let me begin by affirming what I saw as the central thrust or passion of the paper, that is to encourage Christian people to become teachers and to become thoughtful,

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My second question is with respect to the criteria offered for establishing one's vocation or secondary calling in life: fit and fulfillment. First of all there is clearly much sense in the concept of 'fit', there is no point putting square pegs in round holes and so on. The question is sensibly posed is 'has the way that God made me equipped me to flourish and serve in teaching? The follow up question is of course how will I know? How does one determine the proper 'fit' for teaching? There is a fascinating quiz that has been developed on the Transforming Lives website to this end. I also found this other slightly more tongue in cheek version:

You Might Be a Schoolteacher if...

- . you have no time for a life from February to December.
- . you want to slap the next person who says, "Must be nice to work from 8 to 3 and have your summers free!"
- . when out in public you feel the urge to talk

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perspective of the writer of Ecclesiastes. Praise God that Jesus exercises perfect dominion by toiling to death, completing the work that his Father gave us to do.

Having observed this, I do resonate with many of the concerns/implications that Dr Cooling derives from his analysis. Though again I want to broaden the discussion and question the 'professions' emphasis in the discussion. He is right to question the comparative amount of time invested into identifying and developing candidates for ordained ministry (but there may be

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recognizing the work of teachers if we are to really affirm their role in kingdom building. But why the particular accent on kingdom building?

To reiterate my earlier point: from the perspective of creation there is good work to be done on the basis of work being part and parcel of our humanity under God to exercise dominion, to do good to others and so on. I realize that a paper cannot say everything and that there may be a far more nuanced position but I wonder if the attempt to shore up the significance of Christian work by pointing to its longevity runs the risk of pandering to a more worldly pursuit of creating something that lasts (of/by oneself) rather than again a God-centred and other person-centred perspective of vocation. This may be over-stating I realize but I want to emphasise that there is a fundamental goodness or rightness about the activity of teaching regardless of the eschatological perspective. Teachers and the knowl

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an argument for the ongoing support and encouragement of teachers in thinking Christianly and the AEC is to be commended amongst others for offering this support.