

I want to share with you these comments written by Dr. Sittler who is a Lutheran Theologian at the University of Chicago.

"I sometimes think that the church would be more true to her purposes if she had had a better-developed sense of humor. For a sense of humor is the outer mark of things understood organically and appropriately.

This observation is occasioned by the sobersided intensity with which the church is indulging in what is commonly called "goal-setting" and "long-range planning." There is certainly nothing wrong in the church looking ahead; but it is terribly important that the church's looking ahead should be done in connection with the look inside into her own nature and mission, and a look behind at her own history. If a church really does this, she would be more careful about taking her marbles for "goal-setting" and "long-range planning" from the business community, the corporation, or the market place.

The church has a mission; her program must be flexible to her mission. She learns by walking where she has to go. The church does not "call the shots"; she responds to the facts and needs. To lay down a long-range program and to be too serious about it is to forget that "the wind bloweth where it listeth." It's perfectly all right for the church to do her financial statistical operations according to models taken from IBM. It is perfectly wrong for the church to do her thinking according to such models. The corporation extrapolates a future from the market-place data of the past; the church moves into the future with the Spirit in her heart, her finger to the wind, and her ear to the ground. The business model uses the phrase "if present trends continue..."; the church's model is the open dynamism of the parable. And the parable is a condensation of the madness and the unexpectedness of the holy.

In the church's past as in her future, deserts do bloom -- dry bones do live. The un-promising is given a strange life.

So let us look ahead, but slightly smiling betimes. For the church remembers, as market analysis need not, what the people say they want may not be identical with what they need what the people wanted was Barabbas."

I could
not agree
more - I am
going to
publish this
4/24
Sittler is w/ us
3 days in Nov

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next pp
Apr 12-16
Yalang

PAH: SITTLE'S
STATEMENT - NOT BAD!
J NAY