

One King Event in Jerusalem Promises to Change Lives

Over the last century we have seen dramatic shifts in the evangelical world in how Western Christians relate to Israel and understand the Middle East. For decades, many in the west were “pro-Israel” and firmly supported the modern state of Israel.

However, in the last few years there has been a shift across the evangelical world and many are now questioning whether Western Christians should support Israel and asking how western Christians should relate to Palestinian and Arab Christians in the region.

As the controversy of Israel escalates, there are a number of difficult challenges that this generation is facing. One of those challenges is defining biblical expression of social justice. There is more interest in social justice in this generation than any other generation in history and yet there is also more confusion.

Christians in previous generations have been leaders in social reform, and Christians in this generation should be voices for social justice in the Middle East and the nations, but it will require us to form a robust expression of social justice that is grounded in the Bible.

Another challenge is the recent shift in thinking about Israel. Some evangelicals are asking whether or not Western Christians should continue to support Israel and whether God still has a unique purpose for the Jewish people. Because only Jesus can bring the Jewish people into the fullness of their calling, many evangelicals are feeling a need to define what it means biblically to stand with Israel in a holistic way and how the Western church should partner with the believers in

the land to see the gospel proclaimed and spread throughout the land of Israel.

Christians in the West are also asking how the Western church can best partner with and support Arab believers in Israel and the Middle East. In the gospel we find God's way to bring to pass His unique purposes for the Jewish people and also be fully committed to His purposes for every other people group, but how does that work itself out in the complexity of the Middle East?

In other words, is it possible to be committed to God's purposes for the Jewish people and also be fully committed to His purposes for the Arab people? The glory of the gospel is that all people can come into their full inheritance through Jesus, and we need a fresh commitment to proclaim the gospel to all the people in the Middle East—both Jew and Gentile.

The rise of radical Islam is another challenge facing the Western church in this generation. While the vast majority of Muslims are not radical, radical Islam has become the largest challenge to the existence of the Christian community in the Middle East and it is also a key factor in a rise in global anti-Semitism. Western evangelicals must begin to engage with our brothers in the region to learn how to stand with those who are suffering under Islam, how to speak out against anti-Semitism, and how to share the gospel with the Islamic world.

One of the great challenges in this conversation is that many of the issues that surround Israel are frequently expressed in political terms without directly addressing the underlying spiritual dynamics in the region. However, the Bible tells us that a spiritual conflict is at the core of what happens in the nations. In Ephesians 6:12, Paul tells us that it is powers and principalities that occupy the hearts and minds of men and enslave them. Biblically, our understanding of the Middle East must go beyond the political dimension to understand the spiritual reality so that we can respond

missionally to see the gospel proclaimed in the region.

Another key challenge is that most believers in the West have not actually been to the region, spoken with local believers and engaged in the complexity of the situation first hand. As great as the challenges in the region are, there is also an untold story unfolding in the land. God is already at work in Israel and the region and the gospel is making a real difference.

Jewish and Arab believers are already working together in the region to see people come to Jesus and yet few Christians in the west have ever heard the full story of what is happening and even fewer have been able to experience what God is doing.

It is becoming clearer that there is a need to have a context for real conversation where, as Western Christians, we can discuss the difficult questions and immerse ourselves in the reality of what is going on in Israel and the Middle East to find ways to partner with what God is doing. Young adults in particular need to enter into the conversation to become a voice for what God is doing in this generation.

One of the steps in this direction is an event named One King that is happening this June in Jerusalem. One King is a young adult gathering that gives attendees the chance to have a robust conversation about what the Bible says about the challenges of the region while also experiencing the modern reality and challenges of the land of the Bible.

One King is an immersive experience that will include interaction with speakers, conversation about what the Bible really says, extended times of worship and time with believers in the region to witness first hand what God is doing and learn about the challenges they face.

During One King, a number of speakers and leaders—including Allen Hood, Wayne Hillsden, Carl Ellis, and Rania Sayegh—will lead sessions on God's purpose for Israel and the Middle East.

Dan Juster and Gary Burge will engage in a conversation on different theological perspectives. Worship leaders Laura Hackett Park, Jaye Thomas, Jonas Park and Lindy Conant will lead extended times of worship and prayer. Local believers will host attendees on site and tell the untold story of what God is doing in their cities among the people of the region.

Events like One King are leading the way forward by providing a context for young adults to discuss the difficult issues with leaders, worship together, visit with local believers and get connected to what God is doing now in Israel and the Middle East. You can find out more information about One King online at .