



*running on empty*  
**Exploring the connection:  
From our heads to our hearts**



*How can we bridge more intellectual theological reflection and mission activism in our own lives? How does this impact our approach to those we teach and those we work with?*

This is a brief record of our discussions at the seminar, based around the handout that was given at the start.

Most of the time was spent discussing a number of statements.

*Statement 1: "There are two types of people in the world: those who think without doing and those who do without thinking."*

Response: In reality everybody thinks and everybody does. You can't be human and alive without both of them. It is true, however, that many people try to avoid abstract thinking, but nevertheless, they still must be thinking. What we really need to do is to develop our ability to reflect on what we do.

At this point we discussed some ways to reflect on practice, such as the Kolb cycle (see David Kolb, *Experiential Learning: Experience as the source of learning and development*, New Jersey: Prentice Hall, 1984; a quick overview is provided by Clara Davies, "Kolb Learning Cycle Tutorial - Static Version", no date, [www.ldu.leeds.ac.uk/ldu/sddu\\_multimedia/kolb/static\\_version.php](http://www.ldu.leeds.ac.uk/ldu/sddu_multimedia/kolb/static_version.php)).

We looked very briefly at some other related ideas, that were given as statements on the handout. The idea, "Too many people become academic missiologists to avoid missions", was largely rejected, on the grounds that academic thought is a part of the mission of the church. There was a strong desire to see more thinking on missiology, although this was tempered by the call for this to be on practical aspects of the global mission of the church.

*Statement 2: "Most people are passionate about missions until they are about thirty. After that they are just carried along by their previous decisions and present skills."*

Response: Many people in the discussion felt that this was not at all true, based on their own experience of getting involved in missions after the age of thirty. All agreed, however, that it was important to keep "heads" and "hands" and "hearts" (thinking, activity and passion) sustained and engaged in all our involvement with mission.

*Statement 3: "The Trinity is a model for how we should relate heads, hands and hearts."*

Response: This was initially thrown out as heretical. Later a few voices suggested some support for the idea that just as the Father does nothing without the Son and the Spirit (etc.), so too we should keep our heads, hands and hearts integrated and functioning together, if we wanted to be fully human in our involvement in God's mission.

*Statement 4: "Separating heads from hands from heart is a false trichotomy based on a Western, not a biblical, worldview."*

Response: This statement got full endorsement from the group.

*Statement 5: "It's the incarnation, not the Trinity, that should be directing our thinking about missions."*

Response: A good number in the group weren't too sure what to make of this statement. It was felt that there is a tendency to focus on one doctrine at a time in our thinking that could lead to errors. However, the group was comfortable with the idea that the incarnation and Trinity cannot be fully understood with out each other, and in this sense the statement was on a false foundation.

#### *Biblical passages for further reflection*

During the course of the discussion some biblical passages were referred to. Here are the main ones:

- Mark 3:13-15. Jesus called his disciples for certain reasons.
- Mark 10:17-31 (cf. Matthew 19:16-30; Luke 18:18-30). Jesus forced his disciples into reflecting on the event they had just witnessed.
- Mark 12:24 (cf. Matthew 22:29). The Sadducees erred in two ways.
- Mark 12:30 (cf. Matthew 22:37). The greatest commandment calls for total and integral love.
- 1 Corinthians 12:21. The body metaphor applies firstly to relative importance within the church, but also to the importance of ministries we might engage in.

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It had been hoped that Bob Hunt (formerly of All Nations Christian College) would co-facilitate the seminar with Ian, but this turned out not to be possible, because of some family difficulties.