

Bibliographic citation

Martin Šály, *Between spirit and tangibility: Dynamics in the life of the New Testament church and limits of its application in history (Mezi duchem a hmatatelností: Dynamika života církve v Novém zákoně a meze jejího uplatnění v historii)*. Dissertation, Charles University in Prague, Evangelical Theological Faculty, Prague, 2016.

Summary

The subject of the paper is the New Testament church. The author first draws attention to hermeneutic difficulties of the subject. These include e. g. a distinction between (1) the theological language of the church, which can be found in the NT in the form of many various images of the church, and (2) the NT passages intended to talk about the church as a religious organization, to target church ethics and so on. In the NT, however, the perfect distinction between the two areas is not always possible.

Methodically, the work conceives the New Testament church to live in a dynamic space formed with various axes between different poles. Therefore, the NT church is not described here using certain typical attributes, but it is viewed in the dynamic space of "tensions between poles". The following pairs of poles are described for the New Testament church life: spirit - tangibility; The tradition of Jesus of Nazareth - The church tradition; ideal - reality; cooperation with society - exclusion from society; power - powerlessness; uniformity - diversity; continuity - discontinuity. Each pair of poles and the corresponding "axis" tension is briefly explained. Then there are described New Testament resources to demonstrate the relevance of the tension for one or more NT text groups.

One of the goals of the work is to offer some aid (a set of criteria) for considerations, how a specific today's church can be "compliant" with the New Testament. This aspect of the work is supported by commenting each "tension axis" by the selected historical illustrations taken from the later history of the church. Historical examples are given as apparently too excessive shift towards a particular pole of the axis.

Keywords

Ecclesiology, New Testament, Church history.