THE PERILS OF PARACHURCH MINISTRY

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Category: Church: UK

I'm very challenged byÂ this quote fromÂ Church in Hard Places.

> *One of the big claims of those supporting parachurch ministries - particularly those that operate within the context of the poor - is that they can effectively do what the church cannot. On one level that is true. Hundreds of thousands of people in Scotland are doubtless grateful for the food parcels they've received as the worldwide credit crunch bites. yet observing twenty-first-century Scottish schemes with their history of parachurch involvement, one has to wonder where is the long-term spiritual fruit after decades of parachurch labour? Where are the indigenous converts? Where are the healthy local churches? In my observation, they are nowhere. In fact there are fewer churches in these areas, not more.*
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> *That may seem harsh, but we have to face the hard facts. As Carl Trueman once said, "The parachurch exists purely and solely to serve the church in a subordinate and comparatively insignificant way." Maybe this great parachurch experiment has not helped the local church after all. Whisper it softly, but maybe in some areas parachurches have weakened and not advanced the kingdom of God or built up Christ's bride. So, for example, I have church members who are forced to miss three out of four Sunday services "working" for their parachurch organisation. Where are they worshipping in community? Nowhere. They have been taught that loyalty to their organisation is the height of worship.*

As someone who has spent thirty years working for a "parachurch" organisation (we call it a mission agency, but the meaning is the same), I recognise some of the issues that Mez raises here.Â The temptation to downplay the role of the church is huge, but we must avoid it at all costs.

You may have noticed a few little changes and problems with Kouyanet in the past week or so. We have moved over to a new webhost and the process has not been smooth. When I get a little time, I'll try and iron out any remaining glitches.Â