

Avoiding Controversial Issues

(Karl D. Lehman MD, January 20, 2022)

The persistent, clear sense of guidance I have felt from the Lord is that I should avoid taking public positions on controversial issues (as much as possible). Currently, individuals, groups, organizations, and congregations on both sides of various controversial issues are welcoming me to teach them about the Immanuel Approach, and this seems important and strategic.

When people on the conservative/traditional side of any given issue push me to take a public position, I reply with some version of: "Right now, churches, groups, and individuals on the other side of this issue are welcoming me to teach them about the Immanuel Approach. Do you think it is a good thing for these people who disagree with you on this issue to spend more time with the living presence of Jesus?" And they usually say, "Yes, of course." I then say, "I'm pretty sure that many of these people would no longer be interested in my teaching about the Immanuel Approach if I took a public stand in support of the conservative/traditional position - do you think that would be a good thing?" And they usually say, "No, probably not."

In contrast, when people on the liberal/progressive side of any given issue push me to take a public position, I give the exact same response, but in reverse: "Right now, churches, groups, and individuals on the other side of this issue are welcoming me to teach them about the Immanuel Approach. Do you think it is a good thing for these people who disagree with you on this issue to spend more time with the living presence of Jesus?" And they usually say, "Yes, of course" I then say, "I'm pretty sure that many of these people would no longer be interested in my teaching about the Immanuel Approach if I took a public stand in support of the liberal/progressive position - do you think that would be a good thing?" And they usually say, "No, probably not."

In almost all of these scenarios, people on both sides of the issue are moderately unhappy with me, but so far almost all of them have continued to welcome me to provide Immanuel Approach training. And my perception is that this is the strategic priority the Lord is asking me to care for in avoiding public positions on controversial issues (as much as possible).