

Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary

School of Religious Education

**Critique of**

***Christian Social Ministry***

**by**

**Derrel R. Watkins**

**Nashville, TN: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1994.**

**177 pages. Paperback, \$15.99.**

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by

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## **Critique of *Christian Social Ministry***

### **Bibliographical Data**

Watkins, Derrel R. *Christian Social Ministry: An Introduction*.  
Nashville, TN: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1994.

### **Synopsis of Each Chapter**

Chapter one traces historical foundations for Christian social ministry, beginning with Egyptian, Greek, Roman, Jewish, and Christian systems. The ancient and medieval church is then explored as to the passive change agent, enculturated, and institutional ministry models. Watkins then reviews the reformation and its church-state cooperation, social action, church parsonage, diaconate, and daughters of charity models. Lastly, the modern church is scrutinized regarding its charity organization society and the settlement house movement.

Chapter two surveys organizational models for Christian social ministry, consisting of the Puritans, Quakers, Salvation Army, Volunteers of America, miscellaneous voluntary societies, American Evangelicals, social gospel, salvationists and rescue missions, and denominational models. Watkins concludes this

chapter by addressing seminary education for social ministries.

Chapter three explores biblical foundations for Christian social ministry, explaining Old Testament bases of righteousness, justice, mercy, and love, then New Testament concepts such as the cornerstone of love, language of love, love commandment, Paul and the love commandment, and ministry and judgment.

Chapter four reviews the theological foundations for Christian social ministry, including the doctrine of God, primary attributes of God, Trinity, doctrine of humanity, humanity's relationship with God, human relationships, doctrine of sin and redemption, and international principles for helping.

Chapter five touches upon the philosophical foundations for Christian social ministry, defining social and ministry, social ministry and church functions, and describing principles of social ministry as well as qualities and pitfalls of the social minister. The chapter closes with discussions on the topics of dysfunctional persons, ministry programs, and evangelism and social ministry.

Chapter six discusses methods for social ministry, including intervention with individuals, couples, families, groups, organizations, and communities, and skills for social ministry encompassing information gathering, problem assessment, intervention strategy planning, implementation of intervention strategies, and termination and evaluation of intervention.

Watkins then concludes the chapter by describing intervention tools.

Chapter seven explores Christian social minister roles as case manager, counselor/therapist, educator/trainer, advocate, social planner, consultant, evangelist, generalist, pastor/director, missionary, and administrator.

Chapter eight closes out the text by addressing programming for social ministry, including the focus in social ministry programming, enrichment, prevention, and treatment programs, steps in developing ministry programs, and administrative guidelines for programming.

### **Evaluation and Applicability: Strengths and Weaknesses**

The strengths of this book are its logical chapter progressions, its chapter breakdowns into concise segments which facilitate outlining and readability, its historical surveys, step by step explaining, and its use of footnotes rather than end-notes. This text is more applicable than those of Perkins because the focus is not as narrow (black inner city neighborhoods) and it lists steps of procedure in developing ministry programming, which are easy to follow. Not having to re-invent the wheel is most helpful, and should keep others from having to enter social ministries blind-folded.

The weakness of the book by Watkins has to do with the split

infinitives (pp. 11, 139, 151, 170), but even they are only slightly distracting.