



Question: "What is the seven mountain mandate, and is it biblical?"

Answer:

The seven mountain (7-M) mandate or the seven mountain prophecy is a strategy for evangelizing the modern world and enlarging Christ's kingdom. It has especially gained a following in Charismatic and Pentecostal churches. Those who follow the seven mountain mandate believe that the best way for the church to be effective is to bring change in the seven major spheres of influence in society.

Here are the seven "mountains" to be transformed, according to the seven mountain mandate:

- 1) Education
- 2) Religion
- 3) Family
- 4) Business
- 5) Government/Military
- 6) Arts/Entertainment
- 7) Media

These seven sectors of society are thought to mold the way everyone thinks and behaves. So, to tackle societal change, these seven "mountains" must be transformed. The mountains are also referred to as "pillars," "shapers," "molders," and "spheres." Those who follow the seven mountain mandate speak of "occupying" the mountains, "invading" the culture, and "transforming" or "taking back" society.

Some teachers of the seven mountain mandate use Isaiah 2:2, which mentions mountains, to support their view: "In the last days the mountain of the LORD's temple will be established as the highest of the mountains; it will be exalted above the hills, and all nations will stream to it." Others try to find a correspondence between the seven mountains and the seven kingdoms Israel was to drive out of Canaan (Deuteronomy 7:1).

Lance Wallnau coined the term *seven mountain mandate* and is one of its prominent teachers. Wallnau adapts the missionary mandate of Jesus to His disciples to "go and make disciples" of all the nations into a mandate to effect social transformation. He reasons that, since churches already have a presence in every nation in the world, we need to now concentrate on influencing the systems (the "mountains") within these nations. The problem, according to Wallnau, is that Christians are not currently influencing society outside the church. Christians have left the mountains susceptible to the "gates of hell," which are spiritual portals over the "kings" (influence-shapers) of those mountains.

Wallnau's teaching is loosely based on the Abrahamic Covenant, which promised Abraham a seed and a lasting inheritance. Also, Israel was promised in Deuteronomy 28:12–14 to be the "head and not the tail" among the nations. Proponents of the seven mountain mandate infer that the church, not Israel, is the entity to claim that promise. It is now up to believers to move in proximity to the "gates of hell" and position themselves to exert the greatest amount of influence. Each individual Christian is to find the particular "mountain" to which he is called and be a leader in that realm.

Christians are called to be light and salt in the world (Matthew 5:13–14). It's true that the church should seek to share the gospel of Jesus Christ with all people in every area of society and in that way influence culture. When lives are transformed by the gospel, society will be impacted. When Paul and Silas brought the gospel to Thessalonica, there was an uproar. Evil men, resistant to God's message, claimed the missionaries had "turned the world upside down" (Acts 17:6, ESV). The overturning of wicked systems and the advancement of God's truth should be something every believer prays for and works toward.

Christians *should* be involved in the arts, business, government, media, etc. We need more believers in those areas, not fewer. The message of the gospel must permeate everywhere, and the seven mountain mandate is a strategy that makes sense on one level. The people wielding the most influence today—the people at the top of mountains—are, for the most part, ungodly people who do not follow God's Word. Influence the influencers, and you can change the world. Become an influencer yourself, and you can bring change that much more quickly.

One caveat to the seven mountain mandate is that the Lord may do His work any way that He sees fit. We have no direct command in Scripture to seek positions of influence in society, only that we make disciples and be Jesus' witnesses in all the world (Matthew 28:19; Acts 1:8). God may use anyone, regardless of how high on the "mountain" he or she is. In fact, God has specifically chosen the lowly: "Not many of you were wise by human standards; *not many were influential*; not many were of noble birth. But God chose the foolish things of the world to shame the wise; God chose the weak things of the world to shame the strong. God chose the lowly things of this world and the despised things—and the things that are not—to nullify the things that are, so that no one may boast before him" (1 Corinthians 1:26–29, emphasis added).

Another caution is that the seven mountain mandate traces its origins to "visions" certain men had, and the strategy is heavily promoted by "apostles" in the New Apostolic Reformation, including Bill Johnson, C. Peter Wagner, and Che' Ahn. Further, the seven mountain mandate sometimes drifts into the realm of dominion theology, the belief that God desires Christians to rise to power and govern the nation according to biblical precepts.

The world desperately needs Jesus, and we are to take the message of Jesus into all the world. We need Christian professors, lawyers, CEOs, drill sergeants, newscasters, coaches, painters, chefs, gardeners, actors, handymen—the list goes on. The church should not shy away from engagement with the world, and all professions need a gospel witness. Wherever we are and whatever we do, we should "work at it with all [our] heart, as working for the Lord" (Colossians 3:23). And we trust that Jesus will continue to build His church (Matthew 16:18).

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