THE FALSE GOSPEL OF GLOBALIZATION

Cynthia Moe-Lobeda’s article, “Refuting the False Gospel of Globalization” (The Other Side, November-December 2002, 16–21), presents and unmasksthe myths that undergird economic globalization, which is so powerful in our lives today.

The pathos of the situation stuns. Christians are called, before all else except love for God, to love neighbor as self. This is our gift and vocation, our primary lifework here on earth, and many of us long to fulfill it. Yet we find ourselves locked into a global political economy that structures exploitation into the very fabric of our lives. We do not wish to buy shirts made in sweatshops, coffee grown on land that should feed its hungry children, or metal products from mines that have displaced thousands of people. We are not pleased to be pumping toxins into our planetary home, destroying the life systems upon which life depends. Yet, we do.

Our lives are intimately bound up in a moral-spiritual crisis of profound and unprecedented dimensions. The reigning model of economic globalization threatens earth’s life systems, undermines cultural integrity and diversity, and endangers the lives of many who are poor in order that some might consume exorbitantly and a few accumulate vast wealth.

A haunting dimension of that crisis is our acquiescence to the prevailing form of globalization. As a society, we do not seriously consider its long-term social and ecological implications. We fail to resist it and forge alternatives. Many of us, insulated by privilege, remain blind to the suffering and ecological devastation wrought by current global trade and investment regimes. Others, while aware, feel muted, dwarfed by the situation, and powerless to shape economic lifestyles and structures that enhance human and planetary flourishing.

What specific myths or ideological presuppositions drive this system of domination?

The first “market myth” undergirding economic globalization is that growth benefits all.

A second myth at the heart of global free-market ideology is that human freedom and market freedom are inseparably linked.

A third key myth in the prevailing paradigm of economic globalization holds that the human being is, above all, an economic being—homo economicus.

Finally, free-market ideology includes the myth that corporate-and-finance-driven globalization is inevitable.

Never before has any economic system produced such polarization between the few rich and the many poor. Genuine human freedom is not based on private property unconcerned for the common good and unfettered by “public accountability, scrutiny, regulation, and responsibility.” Human beings are not simply autonomous, competitive, consumeristic, self-centered subjects but rather beings-in-community. Corporate-led economic globalization is not inevitable; it can be resisted and changed.

1. What evidence of the truth of these myths do we find in the media and among friends?

2. What evidence of the falsehood of these myths can we offer?