DAVE BURKE ON POSTMODERNISM

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Category: Mission

My mate Dave Burke of Bethany City Church in Sunderland has just posted on his website some talks that he gave at Keswick this year. One of them is an excellent piece on post-modernism that I strongly recommend to you. One of my gripes about much Christian critique of post-modernism is that the often do little more than point us back to modernism. This sort of approach fails to recognise that both modernism and post-modernism are human cultural expressions which need to be challenged by the Gospel.

> *Wherever you and your church happens to be on this spectrum, it is important to stress that we must meet Post-modernism with the Gospel, not with Modernism. Our goal is not to convert people back to an older dead system! What happens when the gospel meets the post-modern?*

Dave also points out that post-modernism has some positive aspects for Christianity that we would do well to think about.

> *One of the interesting things about Post-modernism is that it is possible to believe in the biblical picture of Jesus without having a lot of confidence in the bible. In modernism, we had to prove the Bible before people could believe in Jesus and as a result we often only presented the Bible. In post-modernism, the person can overcome the metanarrative and so we can ease back on presenting/defending Scripture and concentrate on presenting Jesus. Do you see the difference, and the interesting opportunities this gives us? (read more)*

Sue and I feel that we can take a tiny little bit of credit for this talk as we sat with Dave in his kitchen and chatted through some of the ideas over an excellent cup of coffee a couple of months back. Essentially, the issues that Dave is dealing with in this paper are the same ones that cross-cultural missionaries have to deal with when travelling around the world. I touched on these concepts here.