TRIBAL MINISTRY FOR THE URBAN JUNGLE

Posted on August 30, 2008 by Eddie

Category: Church: UK

John Drane is one of the most engaging thinkers I've ever come across on the subject of the church and culture. Third Way has an excellent, though rather long, piece by Drane on the tribal nature of modern urban life in the West and how the church should respond to it.

> *In the 1989 movie Field of Dreams, Iowa farmer Ray Kinsella built a baseball pitch in his corn field, on which the ghosts of players of a long-dead generation appeared and put on a magnificent game. They were lucky: the shape of the field, and the rules of the game, had remained fundamentally the same since they were all banned from the 1919 World Series. In contrast, if my grandparents were to return to my home they would need to be re-educated before they could perform the simplest of everyday tasks - even things like cooking or washing-up that they did every day in life. Give them a mobile phone or a computer, and they would be completely lost. If that is true of ordinary things like eating and washing, how much more true is it in relation to how we now view the world and understand our own place within it?....*
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> *Christians, meanwhile, have convinced themselves that the source of all our ills comes down to 'postmodernism' - as if having the right label for a culture will somehow ensure that we know how to live effectively within it. Among the baffling array of alternatives currently in vogue are post-Christian, post-secular, late modernity and liquid modernity. Those who use these terms do not always define them carefully, and in some cases I suspect they have little idea of what they mean.*
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> *The more likely reality is that we have no idea what is going on. On the contrary, what we thought we knew and understood of our culture has descended into some sort of unpredictable chaos - and we kid ourselves that if we can name it, we can somehow control it. Churches scramble to buy the latest trendy programmes that are claimed to address this new circumstance, only to discover that few of them seem to make much difference. It seems that Christians struggle more than most to live within a culture that is now so unpredictable, random, and discontinuous with what has gone before, that literally anything might happen next. We have convinced ourselves that everything needs to mean something, and that if only we look hard enough we are bound to find some sort of order beneath the confusion. (read more)*

Thanks to Catherine for pointing this out on her Facebook page.