# AUTHENTIC CHRISTIANITY

*Posted on February 7, 2010 by Eddie*

**Categories:** Africa, Christian Life, Church: UK





This weekend, Sue and I visited the wonderful Fountains Abbey in North Yorkshire. The weather was cool and foggy, which gave an amazing atmosphere to the ruins. Which I hope comes across in these photographs.

It must have been a hard life being a monk here through the hard winter months, and even the summers are hardly hot and balmy is this part of the world.

It was an interesting thinking back a couple of weeks to the worship service I attended in Ouagadougou. The setting was very different: hot sun in place of Yorkshire fog and bright colours in place of grey stone. But it's not just the externals that were different. I wonder what the monks of Fountains Abbey, their lives ordered by the daily rule of Benedict, would make of an African Assemblies of God service and *vice-versa.*

The style of music, the way of praying, the manner or reading and learning from Scripture are all hugely different in the two contexts. I suspect that just about the only thing that would be recognisable between the two contexts is the cross which appears prominently in the church in Burkina and which no doubt appeared at Fountains Abbey during its heyday. The quiet contemplation and ordered life of the monks seems to have very little in common in with the hectic life and worship of people in a modern day capital city in West Africa. And yet both claim to be Christian. So which is the authentic face of the Christian message?

Both of them, of course. Authentic Christianity is worked out in the lives of communities as they take on board the message of the Gospel and live it out within the context they find themselves. Life in England in the middle ages was drastically different to life in modern day Burkina Faso and because of this we would expect the expression ofÂ  Christianity to look very different. I will return (again) to the question of how Christianity relates to culture in the near future. But perhaps the most important question that we can ask is what does authentic Christianity look like in our culture today? Britain has undergone huge changes over the last thirty years and I would expect that our living out of the Gospel would reflect that.




TOUT EST POSSIBLE