BLOG OF THE YEAR 2010

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Categories: Bible & Mission, Computing/Internet, Mission, Observations

A year ago, in my blog of the year post, I wrote:

> *Is it just me, or has blogdom become rather boring of late? There are lots of blogs out there, but very rarely do I come across anything that makes me leap out of my seat in sheer joy and wonderment.*

A year later, I feel the same sentiment even more strongly. The quantity of online comment and blogging has increased over the last year, but, in my experience, the quality has declined significantly. Partly this is because some bloggers who could be guaranteed to produce the occasional stunning post have significantly reduced their output. Lingamish has changed his name to Kanyimbe and concentrates on pointing to other people's work. Hamo has seriously scaled down his blog and Andrew (TSK) Jones is also blogging much less (though his family travel blog is well worth following). Another sad departure from the Christian blogsphere is Milton Stanley whose blog gave was an excellent daily dose of wisdom and insight. Brian, the author of my 2009 blog of the year is another author who seems to be posting more rarely than in previous years.

I suspect that Facebook is another reason for the decline in the quality of blogging. Compared to writing a thoughtful blog post, updating your Facebook profile is extremely simple. For people who lead busy lives, Facebook is a much more attractive proposition than running a personal blog. Some former bloggers have also resurfaced on Twitter. To my mind, Twitter has two great uses. It is a wonderful place to share short, sharp funny sayings: @robinsons is the master of this art form and once again is my twit of the year. The other use of twitter is to follow up to follow news events as they unfold. Over the last few weeks, it has been the best source of information on the developing situation in Ivory Coast. Sadly, much of what passes for Twitter comment is of the "look at me, aren't I wonderful?" variety, and (even more sadly) Christian tweeters are far from immune from this temptation. Even with big twitter projects the signal to noise ratio can be far too low.

So, what is my blog of the year? As in previous years the criteria are simple:

1. They must post regularly
2. They must be consistently interesting
3. I must like them more than other blogs for whatever subjective reasons I choose.

There are plenty of blogs which fulfil the first criterion, but far fewer that fulfill the second, but I've managed to come up with a few that might interest you.

I came across Antony Billington's blog relatively recently. Antony rarely posts any entirely original content, but if you want intelligent book reviews and pointers to good theology and missiology websites, this is a great place to look. Over the last year I've found some excellent reading matter and I've spent a fair bit of money on books thanks to Antony.

Over the last year, the Reverend Drayton Parslow (retired) started blogging and then rather suddenly vanished. Thankfully, the good pastor can be found blogging with the Beaker Folk of Husbourne Crawley. This is a profoundly thoughtful, very silly and occasionally absolutely brilliant blog. The humour is gentle, but all the more cutting and profound for that. I suspect that it may be completely unintelligible to those who are not British.

These two blogs concentrate on the situation in the UK, but this year I have come across a couple of good blogs which cover international issues. Missionary Confidential describes itself as *everything a missionary isn't supposed to say*. That subtitle would only be true if missionaries were not supposed to be thoughtful and honest. Another breathtakingly honestÂ missionary blog is written by the Jamie Very Worst Missionary (her description, not mine). Jamie has a wonderful (sometimes colourful) turn of phrase and she says lots of thing that I wish I had said. Her husband El Chupacabra also writes a very interesting blog.

These are all worthy blogs, but for me there is one blog that stands out above all of the others. Through the year,Â missionary Theologian William Black, author of Onesimus Online, has published a regular series of controversial, though-provoking and soundly based reflections. The church desperately needs people like William who have the capacity and background to think theologically about the realities of the world Church. This isn't a celebrity blog and it doesn't deal with high-profile church politics, but Onesimus Online is dealing with the issues that will define the Church for the next century. Don't miss it.