MISSION IN TODAY'S WORLD

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Category: Observations

This quote comes from a lecture by the ever excellent David Smith.

> *However, it is important to notice that while the position just described may appear anachronistic, it is attractive to many Christians who find themselves confused and bewildered by the tensions and contradictions that exist in a time of transition. It is not easy to live between paradigms at a point when the old model no longer works and the new one has not yet emerged. A strategy of mission that assures anxious Christians that nothing has really changed, that Christian conquest of the world remains assured, and that with one final push we can actually precipitate the end of all things and the return of the Lord, obviously has power to reassure the troubled. Thus, when a highly respected missionary strategist writes that the 'tide of the gospel has risen and flowed over two thirds of the earth, and is lapping at the one third where the final bastions and citadels of Satan's kingdom have yet to be broken down', it is tempting to accept such an analysis since it confirms that nothing has really changed in the world and the inherited paradigm of mission can be retained. Sadly, analyses of this kind rest upon nineteenth-century assumptions that involve the presupposition that the contemporary West is an area immersed in the gospel tide, while peoples in the so-called 10/40 window are under satanic domination to a degree found nowhere else on the planet. The cities of Accra, Delhi and Beijing are thus classified as 'citadels of Satan'; London, Berlin, even Las Vegas, are not viewed as legitimate missionary territory since they are located in areas that have been 'evangelised'. Whatever else may be said about such an approach, it is difficult to see how it connects with the real world we know from daily experience at the beginning of the twenty-first century.*

Read the lecture and then buy the book.