THE EXTENT OF MISSION: TAXONOMY OF MISSION 2

Posted on August 29, 2014 by Eddie

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Category: Observations

As far as I am aware, all evangelical christians consider proclaiming the Gospel to be a key part of mission. The proclamation, itself, can be in all sorts of forms; preaching, sharing tracts or good books, teaching in church or covertly sharing the story of Jesus in situations where it is illegal to be a Christian.

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Evangelical writers on mission are divided between those who take a '**narrow view**' of mission, restricting it to various forms of overt proclamation and those who take a '**broad view**' of mission, who would include a range of social action within the rubric of mission.

Evaluation

For some people on both sides of the question, this issue isn't worth discussing. It was sorted out long ago and doesn't need reopening. But the truth is, that there is still considerable disagreement over on this question, however strongly certain individuals feel about it. Of course, it's always the guys on the other side who are wrong!Â However, despite the ability of the church to become polarised over the place of social action in mission, this is not so much a binary division as a continuum.There are those who see social action as being a valid part of mission, but who would also give it a secondary position to proclamation.

For my own part, I tend to fall pretty much into the 'broad view' of mission camp. That being said, I do recognise some dangers with this position. My major concern is that many of those who adopt a broad positionÂ can drift away from giving proclamation any practical place in their mission. As I said at the outset, all evangelicals see proclamation as being a key part of mission. However, this conviction is not always worked out in practice; especially in an age where we are uneasy about sharing our opinions with others.

If you would like to read more about these positions, a good place to start for the narrow view would beÂ What Is the Mission of the ChurchÂ by DeYoung and Gilbert andÂ Recovering the Full Mission of GodÂ by Dean Flemming is a good place to start for the broad view. *This is the second in a series of posts in which I am attempting to delineate some of the broad themes in evangelical mission.Â*