GEOGRAPHY: A TAXONOMY OF MISSION 5

Posted on September 8, 2014 by Eddie

Category: Observations

When I was a lad, the world was much more simple than it is now. There was the Christian world (Europe and places where the European diaspora lived) and the rest. Mission was about taking the Gospel outside of the Christian world. At home, we did evangelism. Mission was about telling people the Gospel for the first time and evangelism was reminding people who were culturally Christian, but had lost sight of the fact, about what they were supposed to believe.

OK, I'm simplifying horribly, but the picture is more or less accurate.

The problem is, that over the last fifty years the number of Christians in the 'non-Christian world' has increased exponentially, while the trend has been in the opposite direction in Europe and North America. Whatever truth there onceÂ was in the idea of Christian and Non-Christian worlds, there is certainly nothing in the idea now.

As a result, mission has been redefined over the last few decades to include activities in the home countries as well as doing stuff in the far flung corners of the earth. In theory, everyone accepts that Jesus called us to be his witnesses in our home city, home country and to the ends of the earth. But on a pragmatic level, people put the stress in very different areas.

Home Orientation

There are those for whom a legitimate concern about the needs of their home town or country means that they lose sight of their responsibility to the wider world.

World Orientation

And exactly the opposite occurs!

Evaluation

This should never be an either/or situation; it should be both/and. Unhappily, we do seem to have an ability to swing from one side of the pendulum to the other without ever achieving a balance in the middle.