THE BIBLE, THE CHURCH AND CULTURE

Posted on February 11, 2015 by Eddie

The church's challenge today remains the same: to articulate with integrity the substance and detail of the faith in terms accessible and persuasive to our neighbors around the world.
Category: Bible & Mission

> *The NT clearly expects the Christian Faith to transform and transcend its Jewish origins; to fulfill and go beyond them, but without repudiating them. Charged with a global mission, the Christian faith had to be able to translate itself, without loss or corruption, into the expressive means of new cultures in order to infect them with the life-giving new self-replicating DNA of divine grace and the world-view transforming energy of Christian ideas. Virus like, the gospel could both merge with and utterly transform its host culture. The early church did not compromise the faith, but knew what the contemporary church, in its nervously self-conscious attempts at contextualization too easily forgets. A missional hermeneutic must translate the gospel to make it accessible, not transform the gospel merely to make it acceptable. The church fruitfully appropriates Greek or Roman, or any other culture's expressive forms knowing that the Gospel is potentially indigenous to any culture because it ultimately transcends all cultures.*
>
> *The church's challenge today remains the same: to articulate with integrity the substance and detail of the faith in terms accessible and persuasive to our neighbors around the world. The church needs to use the tools and ideas that the surrounding culture provides to clarify and communicate the gospel forcibly and even to discern better the truth of its Gospel. The early church's study of the Bible enabled it to do precisely that. The very motion of cultural self-transcendence enacted in the OT storyline of Israel's ongoing historical engagement with Yahweh, culminating in the incarnation, passion and ascension of Jesus, and embedded in the structure of the christian biblical canon, predisposed the Christian movement to adapt to any culture while maintaining its unchanging identity in Christ.*

This excellent quote come from a paper entitledÂ *Inhabiting the Garden: Bible Theology and MissionÂ* by LawsonÂ G. Stone. You can find it in the Asbury which can be downloaded here.