A RE-EVALUATION

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Category: Avril Poisson

The book of 1 Chronicles tells us that the men of Isachaar â€œunderstoodÂ theÂ timesÂ and knewÂ what Israel should doâ€ . At this precise point in history, it is important for us to know what is going on and to react appropriately.

In the spirit of this principle, I have been re-thinking some of my approaches to mission in the light of todayâ€™s challenges. I will highlight a couple of them.

Go Easy On the Ends of the Earth

Ever since William Carey, the British church has made a major contribution to the spread of Christianity around the world. We have a long and noble history of mission pioneers; from Carey, to Hudson Taylor, CT Studd and many more. Not only that, but these mission pioneers have been remarkably successful; the Christian church is now firmly established across the world. However, this period of missionary advance has also been a time when the church in the United Kingdom has been in drastic decline. As Iâ€™ve mentioned on numerous occasions on this blog, the centre of gravity of the Christian world has shifted from the North to the South.

What this means for the church in the UK is that we can no longer afford the resources; people, time or money to help the rest of the world. Weâ€™ve done our bit and it is time for us to concentrate on ourselves and on our own needs. We should no longer send missionaries abroad, but we should concentrate on our primary mission that is to make sure that the church is well accepted in the UK.

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English is a World Language

At the same time as the church has spread around the world, the English language has also achieved global prominence. Hollywood, hippy-hop music and the Internet have all served to make English the *de-facto lingua-franca*. As the Church is an international, cross-cultural body, it needs to have an international, cross-cultural language and there is only one candidate.

Just as we can no longer afford to send missionaries overseas and support evangelistic work around the world, it is no longer appropriate to spend vast amounts of time and effort translating the Bible into other languages. These people will all learn to speak English eventually, so why invest the effort Bible translation? When people canâ€™t quite understand some of the subtleties of English (especially, the humour, perhaps) they can use Google translate or other online tools to make things straightforward for them.

Today is a new day and we would be foolish not to respond to the challenges that we face in an

appropriate way.

Edit: Just in case anyone reads this in the future and doesn't spot the date it was written; this is an April fool's joke. That being said, I have heard people make both of these points in all seriousness at various times. The word foolish does seem appropriate.Â