FIRST PRINCIPLES

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As followers of the one who prayed "Father forgive them" as a bunch of soldiers nailed him to a cross, we must have compassion on those who are lost - even if they are violent and wish to do us harm.

Category: Observations

Let's face it, the world is complicated and confusing place. There are numerous wars going on in the Middle East and it is more or less impossible for anyone who is not an expert to remember who is fighting whom and which nations are backing which factions in which situations. ThenÂ there is the massive problem of refugees from Syria coming into Europe in ever increasing numbers. This is before we mention the violence perpetrated by some Islamists, mainly in the Middle East, but also in Europe and elsewhere. All of these issues are to some extent related and we can't address any one of them without touching on the others.

So what should we do?

To be honest, I don't know. I'm really glad that I'm not a politician faced with having to work out what Britain's response should be in the face of these issues and the other stuff they have to address. However, if I don't know what the answer is, I am pretty sure about what the starting point to finding a solution is; at least for Christians.

Quite simply, our starting point has to be the example and teaching of Jesus. I know that sounds obvious, but it's a point that bears repeating in the current climate.

Firstly, we must be concerned for the fact that there are billions of people who don't know Jesus and who are facing a lost eternity. As followers of the one who prayed "Father forgive them" as a bunch of soldiers nailed him to a cross, we must have compassion on those who are lost - even if they are violent and wish to do us harm.

Secondly, we have to care for the poor and suffering in the name of Jesus. We are called to love our neighbour as ourselves - and the parable of the Good Samaritan shows that our neighbours could well be people we are not all together comfortable with.

Two points; that'll do for starters.

I've no idea how you work these points into an overall strategy that deals with things like the refugee crisis, national security and the economy. I'm just a mission blogger, not a political scientist. However, for Christians, this is where we must start. We mustÂ reject any political settlement that is based purely on self-interest or fear

> *â€œYou have heard the law that says, â€˜Love your neighbourâ€™Â and hate your enemy.*
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> *But I say, love your enemies!Â Pray for those who persecute you! [Â] In that way, you will be acting as true children of your Father in heaven. For he gives his sunlight to both the evil and the good, and he sends rain on the just and the unjust alike.*
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> *â€œâ€˜You must love the Lord your God with all your heart, all your soul, and all your mind.â€™Â This is the first and greatest commandment. [39Â] A second is equally important:*
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> *â€˜Love your neighbour as yourself.â€™Â The entire law and all the demands of the prophets*

> *are based on these two commandments.*