WHAT DOES CHRISTIANITY LOOK LIKE?

Posted on April 12, 2016 by Eddie

The Christian church is an amazingly diverse body; both in time and in space. The way people worship, the way they dress and the questions they bring when they read Scripture all vary.
Category: Church: World

In one of the most thought provoking Christian essays of the last few decades, Andrew Walls imagines a long-lived, space travelling anthropologist who was studying the phenomenon of Christianity on our planet.

The anthropologist makes his first visit during the time of the book of Acts and finds a small group of people, who closely identify with the Jewish religion. Three hundred years later, the traveller turns up at the Council of Nicea and finds that Christians are debating, in great detail, things that the first Christians didn't talk about much. They also seem to be rather hostile to the Jewish people, though they still use the Jewish Scriptures. A few hundred years later, our visitor encounters some Celtic monks who look nothing like either previous group. A thousand years later, he encounters a group of wealthy English people in London making plans to take the Christian message to Africa. Finally, he encounters an African church, where the people where white robes and dance and sing with absolute abandon - nothing like the London businessmen who were planning a mission!

All of these groups are expressions of Christianity at a particular place in space and time andÂ they don't look much like your average British church today. Nor, more to the point, does the British church today look the same as it will in 100 years time.

The Christian church is an amazingly diverse body; both in time and in space. The way people worship, the way they dress and the questions they bring when they read Scripture all vary. This is part of the richness of our faith and it goes back to the day of Pentecost.

The problem is, that all too often we fail to appreciate the richness of Christianity and we try to make everyone look like us or do things our way. That really isn't wise.