

The Great Divide



Mark Greene
on the biggest
challenge
facing the
church
today...

and what
we can do
about it.

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GLOBALLY, 98%
of Christians are
neither **envisioned** nor
equipped for mission
in **95%** of their waking
lives. **BUT**, just imagine
if they **WERE...**

1. The Heart of the Issue

You can win a lot of skirmishes without winning a battle.

You can treat a lot of symptoms without defeating a disease.

And you can do an awful lot of good things without tackling the one thing that might really make the difference.

In the last 20 years, the UK church has taken many, many good and fruitful initiatives in evangelism, in social action, in youth work, in resource development, in a host of areas. However, research reveals two sobering truths:

- ❖ Church attendance has declined markedly – we're down to 6.3 percent monthly, from 7.6 percent in 2000, and 9.6 percent in 1990. The missional opportunity is huge and urgent.
- ❖ The vast majority of Christians have not been equipped for mission in their daily contexts, nor are they being helped to live out the abundant life in Christ where they spend most of their time. (See 'Apprentice 09' survey, LICC.)



I'm convinced that we are missing something, that the message of the gospel is being partially eclipsed and that this has led to a narrower, less radical, less adventurous understanding of what it means to follow Jesus than the Bible's compelling picture.

I am also convinced – given LICC's international connections – that this is not just a critical concern in the West, where the church is in decline, but a vital issue for the church globally, even where the number of people becoming Christians continues to grow. Indeed, as many non-Western commentators have pointed out, there is a crying need for a deepening of discipleship. There is also an urgent need to avoid the mistakes of the Western church.

The challenge is the sacred-secular divide. And it is the malignant foe of fruitful mission and joyful Christian living. There is a better way.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Mark Greene". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Mark Greene, Executive Director,
The London Institute for Contemporary Christianity,
October 2010

In this compelling essay, Mark Greene,
LICC's Executive Director, explores the
stifling, pervasive, life-denying impact
of the sacred-secular divide on Christian
mission and living, and reveals
how overcoming it can:

*expand our vision,
inspire our mission,
release our churches,
broaden our minds,
enlarge our hearts,
nourish our souls,
thrill our spirits,
free our imaginations*

for faithful following and
fruitful living in all of life.



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