
Video Review

Good Neighbours

A video with study booklet on how to witness to other faiths in Britain. BCMS, video, 35 minutes, £19.95 to buy, £5.00 to hire. booklet, 12pp, 50 pence.

BCMS is an evangelical Anglican missionary society and this video is based on two case studies in Preston and Wolverhampton. It features David Bronnert of St John's Southall Southall and Raj Patel of Evangelical Christians for Racial Justice.

The success of one evangelistic outreach centering on the work of a Christian Asian couple is vividly portrayed, stressing the importance of friendship and cultural sensitivity. Our danger of adopting racist attitudes and doing everything in an English way is clearly demonstrated through the two concrete situations. So too is the importance of our being willing to accept Asian Christians as leaders in our churches.

The booklet contains useful basic information on the four major Asian faiths and the Bible Studies consist of about five questions on each of three Scriptures, Deuteronomy 13:1-11, John 14:1-11 and Acts 10:34-48.

The limitations of the video, however, are all too obvious. Although claiming to give help on witnessing to other 'faiths' only

Asians are referred to. What about Jews or Mormons? Even the topics it does handle are not penetrated. Nothing is said about the content of our message nor the crucial points of contact with the Asian mind and concepts which might be misunderstood. Scripture is not used to support the thesis of cultural adaptation and the logical outcome of the film would be for churches in predominantly Asian areas to become English/Asian in their worship cultures.

Overall the cultural issue is overplayed and the failure of many Asians to heed the Gospel is blamed too much on the matter of race. Perhaps the denominational stance of the producers is reflected in their conception of Anglicanism as supremely an expression of English cultural values. They do seem unaware of the fruitful witness of some non-Anglican churches in multi-cultural situations.

Although it is encouraging to see God using Asian evangelists in Britain the film makes no attempt, other than urging friendship, to explain how God can use English people to reach Asians. More is called for if we are to be fired with zeal to take up this difficult challenge.

David Bond works with 'Christian Witness to Israel' in North London.

"Through Their Eyes" is a study pack designed to help Christians think through their relationships with people of other faiths living in Britain. It concentrates on Hindus, Moslems and Sikhs. Three programmes introduce their beliefs and experiences while a fourth explores the problem of racism faced by Asians in Britain. They consist of fast moving sequences of stills with full soundtrack. The material considers Christian responses through discussion outlines, worksheets and activities. Leader's notes are included with master sheets for producing summaries and worksheets for the group. The pack costs £19.95 (+ £1 p&p) and is available from BMMF INTERSERVE, 186 Kennington Park Road, London SE11 4BT.