

**JOURNAL OF THE  
ACADEMY FOR  
EVANGELISM IN  
THEOLOGICAL  
EDUCATION**

**Volume Twelve  
1996-1997**

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In This Issue

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In This Issue

The articles in this twelfth issue of the *Journal* cover a variety of topics and reflect the diverse writing styles of the authors. A discernible though unintentional general theme, however, is the theology and practice of evangelism. Thomas Torrance's lead article calls for the transformation and renewal of our minds through assimilation to the mind of Christ, a life-long process. "We cannot be evangelists," declares Professor Torrance, "without being theologians whose minds are constantly schooled in obedience to Christ."

Moving from the personal to the congregational level, John Stewart asks, "Whither Evangelism?" The question was prompted by his experience at the Conference on World Mission and Evangelism in Salvador, Brazil, sponsored by the World Council of Churches. Dr. Stewart shares his thoughts on how American congregations should get on with the task of evangelization in the face of the challenges of our present age.

Michael Knowles offers "A Theological Taxonomy of Evangelism," with the intention of presenting "an ordered classification of evangelism's various practical and conceptual components." It is his way of transcending the gap that still exists between those who view evangelism primarily in terms of verbal proclamation and individual conversion, and those who believe evangelism includes every aspect of the church's life and ministry.

In his article, "A Theology for Youth Evangelism," Ralph Quere appeals for a new language to communicate the gospel to Generation X, and he offers some substitute terms for some of the traditional words that he feels have no meaning for today's unchurched youth.

Thomas Wright follows with a call for contextualizing the gospel in order to address effectively the changing attitudes of people in today's world. It means "presenting the uncompromised gospel of Jesus Christ in the sociocultural, ethnic, and linguistic context of the hearer so he or she may respond and be disciplined into a church."

Evangelism among university graduate students is the focus of Gary Deddo's article, "The University at the Crossroads: Crisis and Opportunity in Higher Education." After describing the mission field of academe, Dr. Deddo draws upon his own experience as a campus minister in presenting some programmatic and practical ways of reaching graduate students.

On the premise that changing times demand new methods and strategies, David Gustafson in his article, "Creating and Critiquing Evangelistic Methods," appeals for innovative ideas that do not compromise the gospel,

and he offers and expands upon several criteria for evaluating the ways and means of congregational evangelism.

The final article in this issue is the third in the series, "As I See It," featuring the reflective comments of some of our senior colleagues in the field of evangelism. Jack Stanton's autobiographical article is a delightful change of pace, as the veteran evangelist reviews some of the events in his long and distinguished career, concluding with a strong defense of mass evangelism.

Also included in this issue are eleven book reviews and the minutes of the annual meeting of the Academy in October, 1996, at Asbury Theological Seminary.

As I have decided to step down as editor of the *Journal of the Academy for Evangelism in Theological Education*, I want to take this opportunity to thank my colleagues Ron Johnson and his predecessors David Young and Marigene Chamberlain for their indispensable partnership in what for me has been a most enjoyable six-year enterprise. I also want to thank those who have submitted articles and book reviews over the years without compensation.

The Academy of Evangelism is especially indebted to David Watson, who was the founding editor of the Journal and who established a standard of excellence that the editorial committee and I have endeavored to maintain.

My successor will be nominated by the executive committee and elected, it is to be hoped, at the forthcoming annual meeting of the Academy. Whoever it is, I look forward to an ever-expanding readership and a continued high level of professional and scholarly journalism for what is a truly unique publication. As our colleagues and others write from their current perspectives on issues of relevance and importance to us all, the Journal remains on the cutting edge of the burgeoning field of evangelism. If anyone wants to know what's new in evangelism, he or she should always be able to read about it first in the Academy's own Journal, which remains the best forum for those engaged in our academic discipline.

Happy reading to all!

Richard Stoll Armstrong

### Editorial: A Vital Partnership

At a conference recently I was asked to speak on the topic, "The Seminary in Partnership with the Church." I thought at the time it would be an appropriate subject for my final editorial in the *Journal of the AETE*. Since the Seminary is or should be part of the Church (with a capital C), the title obviously refers to the seminary's partnership with the local church. The topic is one that we have often discussed in the Academy, and it continues to be a source of debate among our colleagues, who must keep their feet planted firmly in both institutions.

The importance of that partnership needs no justification. The seminary exists for the primary purpose of preparing ministerial leaders for the churches, but it cannot do that without the support of the churches. Nor can the churches fulfill their mission without the ministerial leadership provided by the seminaries.

But what kind of leaders? In my opinion too many seminaries have been preparing maintenance-minded ministers for maintenance-minded congregations. The core curriculum at these seminaries prepares students to do what congregations expect pastors to do--preaching, teaching, pastoral counseling, moderating board meetings, etc., etc. They have not been preparing their students to make disciples who will carry out Christ's mission in the world.

There are exceptions to that indictment, but they only prove the rule. The whole call process in my own denomination fosters the maintenance mentality. The church information form and the candidate's personal information form are designed to match candidates' maintenance skills with congregations' maintenance expectations.

I do not mean to imply that maintenance skills are unimportant. Pastors do indeed have to minister to their own flocks and church members must care for one another, as well as for the world about them. But the congregational pendulum has swung too far in that direction. Holistic ministry demands that there be a proper balance between maintenance and mission, and that balance must be reflected in the seminary's curriculum. In too many seminaries, however, it isn't.

Those who are teaching future ministers of the church need to have a realistic understanding of the church whose future leaders they are preparing for ministry and of the world which the church is called to serve and to evangelize. That calls for listening on the part of both partners, who have much to learn from each other. The seminary must help the local church to be theologically faithful, and the church must help the seminary to be

existentially relevant. The seminary must equip future ministers of the church to teach and preach a holistic gospel, while the church challenges the seminary to show how it applies to the real world in which they live.

This underscores the seminary's continuing need to help students integrate the so-called classical and practical disciplines in their theological education. That's why there is a department of practical theology, which some might call an oxymoron. To be sure, it's a function to be shared by all the departments. The age-old debate between those who view the seminary as a graduate school of religion and those who see it as a professional school perpetuates an unfortunate dichotomy. A seminary cannot afford to be one or the other, but must strive continually to be both.

The seminary's role is to help students to become grass roots theologians, to use Sam Calian's term, who can in turn teach their church members to think theologically and to apply theological principles to real-life situations. But the local church is a vital partner in that process, since it is the context for field education and the place where most mentoring takes place. In his book *Turnaround Strategies for the Small Church*, which was based on a survey of a hundred churches representing ten different denominations, our colleague Ron Crandall reported that in response to the question "What mentor or teacher has contributed most to your effective pastoral ministry?", 44% of the pastors said a pastor, compared to 35% who said a professor. When asked why or how they were most influenced, almost all responded that it was because of a deep mentoring relationship, through personal, pastoral guidance, rather than mere instruction.

Together the seminary and the local church share the responsibility for enabling future ministers to obtain a holistic theological education, one that maintains a proper balance between the personal and the social gospel, between piety and learning, between the traditional and the contemporary in worship, between ethnic identity and spiritual unity, between a pastoral and a prophetic ministry, between outreach and nurture, between proclamation and communication, between evangelism and church renewal, between maintenance and mission. Together the seminary and the local church seek to produce not scholars of religion, but religious scholars, men and women of faith as well as knowledge.

In any partnership each partner has his or her unique contribution to make in the pursuit of their common goal. So too with the partnership between the seminary and the church. Seminaries need to help pastors to reflect theologically on their ministries, as they interact with their peers under the guidance of seminary professors in the D. Min. programs, for example.

Seminary professors need to do more mentoring than most of them now do. Seminaries need to consider adjusting professors' teaching loads and other

responsibilities in order to permit them to do that. They should be "people persons" who model for their students a servant leadership style. Seminaries need to give more thought to the importance of this criterion in selecting faculty members.

Seminary professors can bring effective pastors and practitioners into the classroom as guest speakers, and they can plan projects in which students visit local churches to observe, evaluate, and learn from pastors and lay persons. That is partnership at its best!

Seminaries should recognize and accept their role in the spiritual formation of ministers. Jim Waits in a *JAETE* article (Vol. 3, pp. 41-45) asked in what sense is theological education religious education; that is, education for faith and piety as well as for academic competence? I maintain that it must be both, though I admit that there may always have to be a dynamic tension between academic research and religious formation, between scholarly pursuits and spiritual experience.

If the seminary is the intellectual center for the life of the church, its purpose is nevertheless distinctly religious, as H. Richard Niebuhr contended. To understand the seminary this way is to recognize both its academic calling and its inseparable identification with the mission of the church. "Nowhere else in the church," wrote Waits, "is the intellectual cogency of the gospel brought to bear with the same intensity and intentionality as in the seminary..." (p. 44). That is the unique vocation of a seminary faculty.

The seminary is a partner of the church in the teaching and training of the laity, offering its faculty and resources and providing opportunities through courses, conferences, seminars, and institutes. Many seminaries are adjusting their class schedules to accommodate the needs of part-time and working students. Most courses at New Brunswick Theological Seminary, for example, are being taught in the evening. There are very few students in classrooms during the day.

There are many other ways that seminaries can contribute to the partnership. Let me mention just one more: I think the seminary should provide a model for the church of what Christian community is all about. With so many congregations still racially, socio-economically, politically, or theologically non-inclusive, the seminary can exhibit what a fully integrated, accepting Christian community should be like, as a common and prevailing faith in Jesus Christ transcends all the other barriers that still divide people. I'll admit that in the highly competitive, political climate of academe, genuine Christian community is a difficult challenge. But if the seminary can't meet it, who can? If the seminary won't, who will?

As for the local church's role in the partnership, here are a few things that immediately come to mind. First, the local church must take more seriously than it sometimes does its responsibility to discover, encourage, and develop the very best candidates for the ministry of the word and sacrament. The quality of seminary graduates depends on the quality of those who enroll. The church must inspire the very best young people and second career people to consider what is still the highest calling of all.

Second, the local church can continue to provide on-the-job training for seminary students and interns. Pastors must take seriously their role as mentors to those they agree to supervise, and congregations must recognize and accept their responsibility to cooperate in that effort. At Princeton Seminary teaching pastors are brought to the campus for two days a month for ongoing training and dialogue with peers and faculty. I must say the learning that takes place is a two-way street, as the professors and administrators listen to and learn from those in the parish, who are on the front lines of the church--where the action is.

Similarly, pastors and lay persons alike can accept their opportunities to sensitize seminary professors and students regarding the real-life issues they are facing daily in the world. The seminary community has much to learn from those in the local church. As a seminary professor, Ron Crandall thinks of himself as a co-laborer with his students rather than as an instructor (see his article, "A New Look at Theological Education for Effective Evangelism," *JAETE* Vol. 11, pp. 19-27).

One more obvious way the local church can contribute is financially. For too long the cost of educating ministers was much too dependent upon the legacies of the dead and not nearly dependent enough upon the support of the living. Congregations should assume their responsibility for helping to pay for the education of their future ministers. It costs far more to educate a student than is covered by his or her tuition. The difference has to be raised each year and it is a need that congregations must help to meet in their designated giving, since only a tiny percentage of most mainline seminaries' operating costs are paid for out of their denominational budget.

In his *JAETE* article entitled "The Theological Seminary: Will It Continue to Exist" (Vol. 6, pp. 6-16), Robert Anderson concluded that the seminary which blends scholastic excellence with practical wisdom will survive. One could answer the question another way: The seminary that keeps in close partnership with the church will survive.

One definition of a partner is "either member of a couple who dance together." That's a nice metaphor for the partnership between the seminary and the church. Now there is dancing, and there is dancing! Some

contemporary dancing involves little or no contact between the partners, as each one does his or her own thing.

That is not the picture I have in mind. Rather I'm thinking of the graceful synchronization of two partners who are together following the Lord of the Dance, the Lord who forms, sustains, judges, and redeems that partnership.

Shall we dance?

Richard Stoll Armstrong

## The Reconciliation of Mind

Thomas F. Torrance

"For in him all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell, and through him God was pleased to reconcile to himself all things, whether on earth or in heaven, by making peace through the blood of his cross. And you who were once estranged and hostile in mind, doing evil deeds, he has now reconciled in his fleshly body through death, so as to present you holy and blameless and irreproachable before him" (Colossians 1:19-22, NRSV).

"I appeal to you therefore, brothers and sisters, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship. Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your minds, so that you may discern what is the will of God--what is good and acceptable and perfect" (Romans 12:1-2, NRSV).

In this article I want to focus attention on the statement of the apostle Paul that we are alienated or estranged in our minds, and in fact are hostile in mind to God. This is a basic New Testament conception, which was deeply resented by the rational culture of the ancient classical world of Greece and Rome, and which the rational culture of the medieval world and the rational, philosophical, and scientific culture of our modern world have found very difficult to accept. This applies not least to "evangelical Christianity" today, which on the whole still seems to work with what I call an "unbaptised reason," for it has not thought through sufficiently the transformation of the human reason in the light of the Word made flesh in Jesus Christ. Hence the *mind* of the Church and the *mind* of society are not inwardly formed by the Gospel; they remain basically unevangelized. The reason for this is that we have not taken seriously this New Testament emphasis upon the fact that the human mind is alienated at its very root. It is in the mind that sin is entrenched, and so it is right there, the gospel tells us, that we require to be cleansed by the blood of Christ and to be healed and reconciled to God.

According to the teaching of the Bible humankind were created in mind as well as body out of nothing. We must not forget that a creaturely human mind has "being." This is a fact which, interestingly, neurologists, brain-scientists, and psychiatrists have been coming to recognize. Some of them speak of the mind as constituting a "fifth dimension," and others refer to the "ontology of mind." The mind is ontologically real. It has being. What they do not often recognize, however, is that it is deep in this mental being

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that our humanity is twisted and distorted, and indeed, to use Old Testament language echoed here by the apostle Paul, is "desperately wicked." We do not find in Paul, any more than in the Old Testament, any body/soul or body/mind dualism, for, as James Denney used to express it, you are the body of your soul and the soul of your body, or the body of your mind and the mind of your body--a unitary whole. It is as such that humankind have fallen and become alienated from God, and as such that we need to be redeemed.

Now the mind of a human being constitutes what the Greeks called the *hegemonikon* or the governing principle, for it is the mind that governs or directs our behavior as human beings. Thus where modern people tend to refer to the will as the determining factor in human behavior, the Greek Fathers traced everything back to the mind. It is a mistake to think that they were not interested in the will and did not therefore stress the freedom of the will as modern people do, because they laid this emphasis upon the mind as the governing element in human nature. The Greek Fathers realized, however, as perhaps few people do today, that although we may have free will, we are not at all free to escape from our self-will. That is why they put their finger upon the twisted state of affairs in the depths of the human mind. It is in the heart of our mental reality which governs and controls all our thinking and culture that we have become estranged from the truth and hostile to God. And it is right there, in the ontological depths of the human mind that we desperately need to be saved and redeemed.

As I have indicated, the rational culture of the ancient classical world found this very difficult to accept, so that inevitably difficult problems arose whenever the gospel began to take root and find expression in Greek life and thought. Thus we find cropping up fairly early within the Church an insidious heresy that came to be known as "Apollinarianism." It took its name from Apollinarius, a very clever theologian, who refused to believe that in his incarnation the Son of God took upon himself our alienated, twisted mind, because it was in that mind that sin had become rooted and entrenched. If Jesus had taken our alienated mind upon himself, so argued Apollinarius, he must have been a sinner, in fact an original sinner. And so he held that the Son of God became incarnate in our human existence in such a way that in Jesus the human mind was displaced by the divine mind. It was therefore some sort of neutral humanity that the Son of God assumed, and not the actual humanity in which we sinners all share.

However, the Fathers of the Church found this idea of the incarnation to be evangelically and soteriologically deficient. If at that point, in the heart of our mental being, we are not redeemed and cleansed by the blood of Christ, then we are not really saved at all. If in the fundamental controlling principle of our human mind we are untouched by the incarnation and the atonement,

then we are no better off than the pagan Greeks. And so the Christian Church insisted that we must take dead seriously the fact that in his incarnation the Holy Son of God assumed our fallen, enslaved human nature, our twisted, distorted, bent mind, but that in assuming it right from the very beginning our Lord converted it, healed it, and sanctified it in himself. In taking from us our fallen human nature upon himself, instead of sinning in it as we all do, Jesus condemned sin in our carnal mind, and was himself wholly without sin. And so by living out a life of perfect holiness and purity in his mind, he sanctified and healed our human mind in the whole course of his incarnate and redemptive life from his birth to his crucifixion. He carried our mind into the very depths of his agonizing and atoning struggle on the cross. He descended into the hell of the utmost wickedness and dereliction of the human mind under the judgment of God, in order to lay hold upon the very root of our sin and to redeem us from its stranglehold upon us. Yes, it was not only our actual sins, but it was original sin and original guilt that the Son of God took upon himself in incarnation and atonement in order to heal, convert, and sanctify the human mind in himself and reconcile it to God.

There is extant a fragment of a second century theologian, Irenaeus, which I like to think of in this connection. In it there seems to be a suggestion that the incarnation may be understood in the light of the incident recorded in the gospel when Jesus touched a leper, and when, instead of becoming leprous himself, he healed the leper. I don't know whether any of you may have seen a leper. I used to pass a leper colony when I went to school every day as a boy in China. That was long ago, but I have never forgotten the horrible emaciation of face and hand and limb in leprous flesh.

If I sense what Irenaeus had in mind in that tantalizing fragment, it was that Jesus had taken our leprous humanity upon himself, but that instead of becoming a leper himself he healed and transformed our leprous human nature and restored it to be like the flesh of a newborn child. But let us not forget that it was our diseased *mind* that our Lord assumed for our sakes. But in assuming it, far from sinning himself or being estranged and alienated from the Father, even when he penetrated into the fearful depths of our alienation--"My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?" (Mark 14:34, NRSV)--he turned it all back again, converted it from the very bottom of our disobedient human being, from the roots of our estranged mental existence, into perfect oneness with the mind of God--"Father, into your hands I commend my spirit" (Luke 23:46). In the Epistle to the Colossians, as in the Epistle to the Ephesians, Paul thought of that atoning reconciliation as embracing heaven as well as earth; for if all things invisible as well as visible need to be cleansed by the blood of Christ and reconciled to God, how much more the invisible mental life of human beings!

It was in order to conserve this biblical teaching that great Patristic theologians in the early Church enunciated as a fundamental principle, "*The unassumed is the unhealed*" (Gregory of Nazianzus), or "*What Christ has not assumed has not been saved*" (Cyril of Alexandria). They reckoned that the Church would be soteriologically and evangelically deficient if it refused to take seriously that Christ took our fallen mind upon himself in order to redeem and save it. That is a truth which I first learned from my beloved Edinburgh teacher, H. R. Mackintosh, who had himself been profoundly influenced by the Christology of these Greek Fathers.

But it was only when I studied Karl Barth's account of this doctrine that its truth broke in upon my mind in a quite unforgettable way. I refer to that section in the *Church Dogmatics* I.2, where Barth expounded the mystery of the Virgin Birth. Overwhelmed by the immense significance of what our Lord had done all for our sakes and in our place, I fell to the ground on my knees trembling in awe and wonder at the sheer miracle of God's grace in the birth, life, and passion of Jesus--the miracle that foul, wicked, depraved humanity, twisted in upon itself, had been appropriated from us by the Son of God, and been cleansed, changed, redeemed, and sanctified in him.

There we have to do with the inner heart of evangelical theology: the transforming of the human mind in such a way that it is no longer conformed to the patterns of this world but brought through renewal into conformity to Christ, through the communion of our mind with the mind of God in him, and its assimilation to the holiness and truth of God incarnate in Jesus. That is far from being easy, but it is something which fidelity to the gospel will not allow us to avoid. It was because Karl Barth, for example, took this so seriously that he spent so much of his life thinking out in the light of God's self-revelation in Christ what the renewal of the human mind means, and what knowledge of the truth as it is in Jesus implies for the transformation of reason, intelligibility, and objectivity in Christian theology. Karl Barth was above all an evangelical theologian who spent his life in evangelizing the human reason, whereas the great majority of Protestant and Roman Catholic theologians still operate, I am afraid, with an unregenerate and unbaptized reason, and thus avoid the agonizing experience of working out conformity to Christ in the ontological depths of their minds.

Sometimes the inner conflict in which people find themselves can be very sharp, as I learned when I began teaching Christian theology, so that I regularly made a point of alerting students about what was involved. I used to tell them about a friend of mine who went up to Basel to study music when I went there to study theology with Karl Barth. In those years before the war there were two of the world's greatest musicians in Basel, Adolf Busch and Rudolf Serkin. It was with the latter that my friend Edgar wanted to take piano

lessons. Serkin looked at his hands and asked how old he was. When he said that he was twenty-seven, Serkin shook his head and told him that he was too old for him to take on, and declined to enroll him. But Edgar hung about and when Serkin found that he had an unusually keen "understanding for music," he sent him to a friend in Salzburg who gave him exercises for six months on end, until the very shape of his hands was transformed. I recall his talking to me afterwards about the drawn-out pain and agony of that experience. But it had been worth it, for when the muscles in his hands had been sufficiently restructured, Serkin at last took him on. In due course Edgar became a distinguished musician, and indeed a composer, himself.

In recounting that story to my young students I used to say to them, "Something similar may well happen to you in these classes, for as you let the truth of the gospel have its way with you, you will find the very shape and structure of your mind beginning to change." That is indeed what the gospel is about, a *metanoia*, a radical repentant rethinking of everything before the face of Jesus Christ. No better account of theological method has been given than that which Jesus gave to his disciples when he said: "If any want to become my followers, let them deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me" (Matthew 16:24, NRSV). That is what repentant rethinking means: you cannot separate evangelical theology from that profound experience of the radical changing and transforming of your mind that comes through dying and rising with Christ.

There often came a point in my classes when I felt that the students wanted to throw their books at me, as the inner struggle between the gospel and the frame of mind they brought to it became intense. Let us make no mistake about it: divine revelation conflicts sharply with the structure of our natural reason, with the secular patterns of thought that have already become established in our minds through the twist of our ingrained mental alienation from God. We cannot become true theologians without the agonizing experience of profound change in the mental structure of our innermost being.

"Let this mind be in you (*touto phroneite*)," Paul wrote to the Philippians, "which was also in Christ Jesus." The early Greek Fathers gave a great deal of thought to that injunction. They cultivated what they called "the apostolic mind" (*phronema apostolikon*), for it was only through the mind of the apostles embodied in the Holy Scriptures that the Church could be imbued with the mind of Christ (*phronema Christou*) himself. That is precisely what a faithful theology was about, the assimilation of the mind of the Church to the self-revelation of the Father through the Son and in the Spirit.

Thus a regular question raised by Christian theologians, concealed behind all the great debates in the early centuries, was whether they were really thinking *worthily* of God in accordance with the mind of Christ Jesus,

as it has been imprinted by the Holy Spirit in the apostolic foundation of the Church and expressed in the apostolic Scriptures. All through these early centuries as the gospel was carried from end to end of the Mediterranean world Christian theology played a major role in the evangelizing of nation after nation, for it was only as the mind and culture of people were brought into conformity to the mind of Christ that the Church could put down permanent roots in the soil of humanity. As in the New Testament teaching and preaching were always interwoven with each other, so in the remarkable growth and expansion of the Church after New Testament times theological and evangelizing activity always functioned inseparably together. By its intrinsic nature an evangelical theology is an evangelizing theology, for it is concerned with the winning and transforming of the human mind through conformity to the mind of Christ Jesus—not simply the minds of individual human beings but the mind of human society and culture in which individual human being exist.

What does this have to say to us today about what we call "evangelical Christianity"? We have been concerned with evangelizing men, women, and children as individual human beings, calling for repentance and personal decision for Christ as Lord and Savior, and rightly so. But have we been concerned with the evangelizing of the mind of the society in which these people live? If not, how can a Christian church put down roots in an unevangelized society and remain genuinely Christian? I believe this is where evangelical Christianity today has failed terribly. By and large, as far as I can see, even the mind of the Church, let alone the mind of society, is still secular in that it shares the mind of the secular society within which it exists. We have Christian people, but do we really have a *Christian Church*? We have people who profess to believe in Christ as Lord and Savior, but do we have a Church that so imbued with the mind of Christ that its members individually and as a community think *instinctively* in a Christian way?

I have been wonderfully blessed with a mother and a wife who have a profoundly Christian, and indeed a remarkably theological, *instinct*. My mother never had any academic training in theology, but her life and her understanding were so tuned into the mind of Christ that she knew at once where the truth lay and was quick to discern any deviation from it. This was also very true of my dear wife who is imbued with an unerring *theological instinct*, evident again and again in her reaction to ideas put forward by preachers or teachers. At the end of the day that was the test I used to put to my students, as I read their essays and examinations or listened to them in the chapel. "Has this person a genuinely theological instinct or not? Is his or her thinking spontaneously and naturally governed by the mind of Christ?" That is much more important than being theologically learned, much more important

than being able to offer a formal academic account of some doctrine or historic debate in the Church. What really counts in the end is whether one's mind is radically transformed by Christ and so spiritually attuned to the mind of Christ that one thinks instinctively from the depths of one's mental being in a way worthy of God.

As Athanasius used to insist, we must learn to think strictly "in accordance with the nature" (*kata physin*) of God the Father as he is made known to us through the Son and in the Holy Spirit, that is, in an essentially godly way (*eusebos*). To think like that from a center in God himself, in accordance with his essential nature revealed in the incarnate Son, is, he claimed, what *theologia* strictly is. If any one does not think in that way, but thinks from a center in oneself, governed by the devisings of one's own reason, then one is bound to think of God in an unworthy or irreligious way (*asebos*), which Athanasius designated *mythologia*. Either you think from out of a mind centered in God through union with the mind of the Lord Jesus, or you think from out of a mind centered in yourself, alienated from God and inwardly hostile to the truth incarnate in the Lord Jesus; that is, in a way that is finally governed by the unregenerate and unbaptized reason.

The transformation of the human mind and its renewal through assimilation to the mind of Christ is something that has to go on throughout the whole of our life; it is a never-ending discipleship in repentant rethinking, as we take up the cross and follow Christ. That is why we cannot be theologians without incessant prayer in offering ourselves daily to God through the reconciling and atoning mediation of Christ; and that is also why we cannot be evangelists without being theologians whose minds are constantly schooled in obedience to Christ. It is after all with our minds that we worship God and it is only with our minds that we can preach the gospel and evangelize the world. Is that not, in part at least, what Paul was concerned with in the two verses I cited from the twelfth chapter of his Epistle to the Romans? "I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service (*logike latreia*--not just spiritual but *rational* worship). And be not conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God."

Notice the distinctive way in which the apostle interrelates the renewing of the mind with the offering of the body as a living sacrifice and with rational worship. It is not with disembodied minds that we have to do here, but with the created unity of mind and body in which the human self is constituted. While stress may be laid upon the transformation of the mind and its assimilation to Christ, it is the whole human self that is involved. The

transformation of the apostle called for is so deep as to evoke out of the rational self an instinctive judgment about what is good, acceptable, and perfect before God. That is to say, in the way I have been expressing it, we are called to be transformed in such a profound way that there develops within the depths of our rational being a *theological instinct* in virtue of which we are able to make true theological judgments. Without such a theological instinct we are little more than people with secular minds loosely clothed with a Christian profession. A genuine *theological instinct* of the kind Paul had in view cannot be gained apart from a constant self-offering in rational worship to God, for it is through that inner relation between prayer and the transforming renewal of our minds, that we may be so tuned into God that we fulfill our service in the rational way acceptable to him.

In his scientific autobiography, Werner Heisenberg tells us that again and again when the mathematics of quantum theory proved to be as difficult as they were intricate, he would go away for three or four weeks at a time to play the piano or the violin in order, as he put it, to tune in to the "Central Order," the name he used in that context for God. When his whole being was tuned into that Central Order he would come back to find his mathematical equations working out more easily. It is something similar that happens in theological activity. Through study of the Holy Scriptures, meditation, and prayer we tune in to the mind of God incarnate in Jesus Christ, the source of all rationality, until our own minds, healed, renewed, and sanctified in him, are imbued with his truth. Then it is that we may preach and teach the gospel, and find it transforming the lives and minds of people and the society to which they belong.

### Whither Evangelism?

Late Night Thoughts After a WCC Conference<sup>1</sup>

John W. Stewart

Good fortune, like providence, is embedded in mystery. On the last day of last November, a Brazilian airline official in Sao Paulo hand-picked a few of us to ride "first class" back to New York City. I did not inquire further about the criteria for my selection and promptly tested out the wide leather seat, tilted way back, stretched out, kicked off my shoes and sipped the champagne. I had just represented Princeton Seminary for six long days at the Conference on World Mission and Evangelism in Salvador, Brazil, sponsored by the World Council of Churches (WCC). Some 600 delegates from 120 member churches from around the world had gathered in Salvador, a sea coast city in the state of Bahia. Salvador is a sprawling urban complex, vibrant with a cacophony of voices and diverse human colors. It would be hard to imagine a more perfect environment for the Conference's theme: "Called to One Hope: Gospel in Diverse Cultures."<sup>2</sup> On the plane, however, my brain suffered from some malady resembling indigestion. Early breakfast meetings and late evening plenary sessions generate a plethora of position papers, endless redrafting, a multiplicity of garbled (and often contradictory) perspectives, and, finally, sober pronouncements. Many of us left Salvador frustrated that core theological issues were rarely addressed correctly. After six days of unrelieved "conferencing," my mind could ingest no more. I was *very* ready to go back home and try to sort things out.

I had gone to the Conference with high hopes of learning *how* the transforming gospel of Jesus Christ might better be communicated, especially in a diverse, pluralistic, secularized American society. None can doubt that we American mainstream Protestants urgently need to engage in a wider ecumenical dialogue if for no other reason than to clarify what in our witness belongs to Christ and what in the American churches is alloyed with lesser gods in modern lifestyles and culture.<sup>3</sup> To that end, the WCC Conference proved provocative. With its characteristic prophetic voice, it called for churches to attend to culture analyses and issues of contextualization while in the practices of their ministries. Especially enticing was a section in the conference entitled "Local Congregations in Pluralist Societies." Other

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sections promised similar agendas: "Discerning the Spirit at Work in All Cultures"; and "Culture Sensitive Evangelism." All delegates were sobered by the vivid rehearsals of how the Christian churches had participated in "crushing the identities of excluded peoples," especially the enslavement of African peoples. (Salvador was one of the earliest ports of call for the infamous slave trade.) The WCC Conference poignantly reminded all in attendance that our own native cultural norms are very much with and within us. Yet, amid the surfeit of words and position papers, too much remained unsaid or understated or simply avoided. Especially disappointing for me, the Conference left dangling theological commitments that both undergird and energize evangelization. Surely, Christian witness in the public arena is linked to the "clarion call" of Christian conviction.

My own research and teaching responsibilities center around congregations and their witness. I left the Conference, however, wondering how "mainstream" American congregations are to become wiser and more effective in their witness to the gospel. Is there nothing in the gospel that is transcultural, or counter-cultural? What is the ultimate outcome when we omit the definite article in front of the word gospel, as the Conference organizers intentionally did? Are there multiple gospels? How do we understand, in our own day, the Biblical witness that "there is no other name whereby we must be saved?"<sup>4</sup> Is the gospel a unique gift of God to all persons everywhere? If not, what sense does evangelization make? Slouching "first class" toward home I felt I had been thoroughly schooled in the manners of banqueting but the meal, the Bread, itself, was missing.

So how, exactly, are "mainstream" American congregations to get on with evangelization in our day and culture? What can be the meaning and intent and style of evangelism as this century winds down? This brief article seeks to provide a response to the challenging and puzzling issues facing evangelists (witnesses) in American congregations.

Most acknowledge that the word "evangelism" continues to carry enough burdensome baggage to intimidate or irritate many contemporary Christians. Memories and myths about aggressive, "in your face" confrontations, whining and perspiring characters on TV, and robot-like recitations devoid of personality conjure enough obnoxious specters to alienate most of us. One might note, however, that there are many terms in the Christian tradition which are uncongenial in contemporary society and polite conversation: try "sin" or "repentance" or "second coming." Nevertheless, until a better phrase comes along, the word "evangelism" is worth regaining because of its root concept of "evangel" or gospel.

Beyond troublesome terms, however, responsible expressions and programs of evangelism pose deeper dilemmas within the "boundaries of our habitations" in North American Protestantism today. I nominate three formidable challenges.

The *first* dilemma addresses the location of the experience of religion in contemporary American culture. For historic and political reasons, religious conviction and expression in secular arenas are problematic for many. Since religious fervor, so this popular debate goes, divides more than unifies a multicultural society like America, the politically correct and pragmatic resolution to this civil threat is to isolate all religious experiences. For many, such privatization now qualifies as the American manner and standard. This cultural norm is not unlike our society's mores surrounding the confidentiality and privatization of personal incomes. American religious experience, like salary packages and savings accounts, might be best summarized as "Don't ask, don't tell."

A *second* and, perhaps, even deeper cultural convention poses a hindrance to the best and most sensitive of the Church's evangelistic efforts. The term "post-modernism" is a darling term in the academies of Western societies. When translated to every-day life and thought, post-modernism reinforces a virulent relativism and nullifies most reasons and motives to evangelize. For increasing numbers of *post*-Enlightenment people, there are no agreed-on assumptions of rationality that can create a neutral vantage point from which reasonable persons can evaluate or decide ultimate questions about life's meaning. As Leonard Cohen sings, "Things are going to slide in all directions, / Won't be nothing you can measure anymore." Thus the phrase, "different strokes for different folks," captures this growing ethos and discloses the assumption that there are no absolutes. Such relativization blends nicely with the reductionism mentioned in Flannery O'Connor's *The Habit of Being*:

One of the effects of modern liberal Protestantism has been gradually to turn religion into poetry and therapy, to make truth vaguer and more and more relative, to banish intellectual distinctions, to depend upon feeling instead of thought, and gradually to come to believe that God has no power, that he cannot communicate with us, cannot reveal himself to us, indeed has not done so and that religion is our own sweet invention.<sup>5</sup>

On a recent "Prairie Home Companion" show, Garrison Keillor said it more pointedly: "For liberals there are no right answers, just points for sensitivity." When standards disappear, we are left with little beyond ourselves and our memories and those are thin threads to sustain evangelistic venture.

In such a suspicious milieu, evangelism is more than merely intrusive or arrogant. Many deem it dangerous. Many marginalized persons, with long and

historic memories, fear linking God with political and social agendas and contend that evangelization is little more than a ploy to justify racial, gender, political, and economic privilege. In light of such post-modern assumptions and political concerns, many opt for the solution suggested above--relegate religion to the very private sector of human experience.

A *third* reason for the dis-ease associated with evangelization is rooted in America's "culture of professionalization."<sup>6</sup> Many scholars point to the conventions in Western society whereby complex questions are referred to experts for answers. Legal questions require lawyers, medical problems require specialized physicians, and computer glitches require technicians. Similarly, questions about Christianity and religious faith are best referred to professionals; that is, the clergy. The late great Roman Catholic scholar, Yves Congar, has shown that by the 17th century the word "laity" had become equated with "ignorant."<sup>7</sup> But there is more here. Lurking beneath this "culture of professionalism" lies an archaic ecclesiology, namely, the idea that the church is equated with its clergy. Despite a heritage of the "priesthood of all believers" in Protestant circles and despite the emphasis on the Church as the "People of God" in the decrees of Vatican II, the ancient dictum of St. Cyprian--"The Church is in the Bishop [or priest]"--still reigns. John Calvin, as I recall, divided the church into two classes, those who teach (*ecclesia docens*) and those who listen (*ecclesia audiens*). Further, when mainline Protestants confine the marks (*notae*) of the Church to the preached Word and faithfully administered sacraments, the role and status of clergy are inevitably enhanced. Little wonder that a "culture of professionalism" reinforces this ancient, prevalent and stubborn clericalism. When professional clergy and specialized theologians are designated as the sole interpreters and arbitrators in matters of faith, evangelization is usually relegated to professional priests and presbyters.

This much seems clear: mainline congregations will have to confront these three basic challenges if they are to respond faithfully to their divine mandate to "go into all the world and make disciples." What follows, then, are some late night thoughts and responses to these culture-imposed dilemmas. As will be obvious, they are more suggestive than definitive.

I contend that mainline Protestant denominations need to clarify their own *basic and indispensable convictions*. Study after study points to an erosion of theological confidence in the Protestant Churches. Huston Smith, the well-known teacher of world religions in American academia and on national television, once expressed deep concern about the church of America:

I live five minutes from Berkeley's Graduate Theological Union and teach at the University of California. . . . It's been a long time since I have heard the words "supernatural," "miracle," or even "revelation" in a mainline church or theological colloquium.... The human spirit--the *imago dei* within us will not long abide this

degree of stifling accommodation to worldly styles of thought. If people do not hear from mainline churches the news of a world that is vastly more real than the one science reports and we normally experience, they will go where they do hear that news. Currently, that means going to three places: 1) to conservative churches (worldwide, Pentecostals are increasing at the rate of 20 million per year); to Asian religions (last year Buddhists overtook Episcopalians in California); and 3) to New Age enthusiasms.... If churches do not present people with a momentous alternative reality to the one that bombards them every day, why should people complicate their already harried and fragmented lives with another institution? Mainline churches are good at good works and social action, and pretty good on community formation, but parishioners can fill these needs in other ways. And many do."<sup>8</sup>

At a recent conference on the future of American congregations, I heard Nancy Ammerman, who is emerging as the foremost authority on American congregations, state that, "The mainline churches, pre-occupied with one-issue agendas, have lost their confidence in the Church's 'charter story.'"<sup>9</sup> A mainline American denomination was surprised to learn through a questionnaire that more than half of its members encountered their "faith forming" experiences outside the congregation. In their widely quoted work on the religious commitments of the "Boomer" generation, sociologists D. R. Hoge, B. Johnson, and D. A. Luidens in *Vanishing Boundaries*, assert that the Presbyterians have failed to convey to their youth and the world "What is so special about Christianity?"<sup>10</sup> My own conversations with leaders in American mainline congregations suggest that the gospel is one of our best kept secrets. John Cobb makes my point more strongly in his recent *Reclaiming The Church*. Cobb contends that

unless the Christian faith can provide the basis for assimilating the truth of the new challenges of the twentieth century into a whole that is communicable to many, and unless Christians can point convincingly to what this vision requires, oldline Protestantism will relapse more and more into lukewarmness--and death.<sup>11</sup>

At the WCC Conference in Brazil the distinguished missionary and apologete, Lesslie Newbigin, challenged delegates to declare openly that "The gospel is certainly the most important fact in the world, and one which we cannot keep to ourselves." He repeated what he had said in his 1984 Warfield Lectures at Princeton Seminary: "While the gospel is never culture-free in its expression, the gospel will always, at first, appear as "foolishness" to any culture, including our own."<sup>12</sup>

At the end of the day, however, I doubt that the *main* barrier to evangelism is solely or purely an intellectual one. Of course, Christian convictions raise pressing and severe questions in a culture full of competitive

rationalities and multiple religious perspectives. Yet cultural diversity is no new experience for Christian churches, especially in this nation. Jon Butler's celebrated book, *Awash in a Sea of Faith*, demonstrates how religiously diverse and multifaceted colonial America was, and by implication, continues to be.<sup>13</sup> Rather, responsible evangelization requires a gracious human voice and a compassionate life-style before a persuasive apologetic gains a hearing. In this perspective an engaging Christianity is both simpler and more demanding than rational discourse precisely because the gospel requires a radical incarnation of the reality of Christ. Is it not the witness of most Christians that God, in unpredictable mystery, usually comes to people *through* other people? Most persons come into the Christian faith when the transforming reality and lifestyle of Jesus Christ are demonstrated authentically by some other person or persons. Eastern Orthodoxy sometimes speaks of the Christian community as "living icons." Few of us come to Christian faith solely through reading books or sustained arguing or in isolated reflection. Rather, we come to faith because someone else demonstrated --incarnated--for us the reality of the grace of God and the Holy spirit nudged, prodded or swept us into the conviction that Jesus and his resurrection power can be real for us also. Even that old stalwart Princetonian, Charles Hodge, finally had to conclude that ". . . the exhibition of genuine Christian experience carries with it a convicting power so much higher than that which belongs to external testimony or logical argument."<sup>14</sup>

I suggest that one effective counterpoint to a culture committed to privatization is to *link conviction with advocacy*. As Presbyterian James Ayers once wrote, "When we talk with people about God's purpose for them, we must speak, not as their opponents, but as their advocates."<sup>15</sup> A well-known parachurch youth organization reminds its leaders that "one has to earn the right to be heard." The WCC and other international organizations, such as the evangelical Lausanne Conference, have been especially astute in articulating this coupling of evangelism and issues of justice and human welfare. Earlier, in 1975 in Nairobi, the WCC put the linkage this way:

The gospel always includes: the announcement of God's kingdom and love through Jesus Christ, the offer of grace and forgiveness of sins, the invitation to repentance and faith in him; the summons to fellowship in God's Church, the command to witness to God's saving words and deeds, the responsibility to participate in the struggle for justice and human dignity, the obligation to denounce all that hinders human wholeness, and a commitment to risk life itself.<sup>16</sup>

They deemed this the "whole gospel," and I agree. The current prize winning movie, "Dead Man Walking" is a brilliant attestation to this wedding of

witness to the redemptive power of the gospel and the advocacy for human well-being and dignity. Others do look as they listen.

Admittedly, the linkage between evangelism and advocacy is problematic for many local congregations. Most scholars who are writing in the field of American congregational studies, acknowledge that many American congregations are part of a broad socio-cultural trend toward "cocooning," a term made prominent by Faith Popcorn.<sup>17</sup> The ministries of these congregations are often intramural, therapeutic, centripetal, and self-preserving. Beyond their own members, few outside persons benefit from their "in house" witness and mission. Translated into the lives and witness of many congregations of mainstream Protestantism, this cocooning phenomenon is little more than a "corporate" expression of America's move to privatization of religion. And few will deny that this trend in American congregations is at deep odds with the description of the ideal local congregation envisioned by the leadership at the WCC Conference in Salvador.<sup>18</sup>

Rather than lamenting and whining, mainstream Protestants need to identify those congregations who can model the effective linkage between evangelism and advocacy.<sup>19</sup> One might begin with *Acting on Your Faith: Congregations Making a Difference*.<sup>20</sup> What is needed is a concerted effort to discover and communicate those ministries in local congregations that creatively and effectively link evangelism with advocacy. One example will have to suffice: one of the most evangelical Presbyterian congregations I know in the Midwest commissions (ordains?) small cadres of their members to live and witness in the same inner-city housing units that the congregation purchased and rehabed. Not surprisingly, a satellite congregation emerged whose members launched a fair housing lobby and mobilized tough-minded parental scrutiny of the local elementary school—all natural outgrowth of their witness to Jesus and the "power of the resurrection." It is a sterling example of linking Christian witness linked with advocacy of human well being. One of the more disappointing features of the WCC Conference in Salvador was the neglect, especially in the section on "Local Congregations and Pluralistic Society," to consider examples of local congregations who are, in fact, living toward a broader vision of witness, advocacy, and hospitality. Surely, among the many denominations that make up the WCC, there are countless congregations from diverse nations that can model the vision articulated in the WCC's San Antonio Document (1989):

Our churches should resist at all times the temptation to succumb to the spirit of the age and withdraw into a ghetto existence. One way of articulating this resistance is to reclaim . . . a simple life in which sharing and solidarity have priority over possession and individualism, the boldness to refuse to conform to the pattern of this

world (cf. Romans 12:2), and the resilience to persist on the road of faith and service. The fountain head of our practice of resistance . . . ought to be the local worshipping community. . . ."21

Finally, in light of this culture's drive toward professionalization, a responsible evangelism for the 21st century begs for a more workable strategy to equip laity for Christian witness. We need to find ways to cut through the very deep, culture-based, ecclesially blessed demarcation between clergy and laity. Newbigin repeated at the WCC conference what he had written earlier:

The missionary encounter with our culture requires the energetic fostering of a declericalized, lay theology. . . . It is much more important that its [the Church's] lay members be prepared and equipped to think out the relationship of their faith to their secular work. . . . Only thus shall we bring together what the culture has divided--the public and the private.<sup>22</sup>

Newbigin's challenge made, apparently, little imprint on the WCC Conference in Salvador. Lay voices at the Salvador WCC Conference, however unintentional, were strangely muffled if not silent. Of the 30 persons who wrote preparatory documents for the WCC Conference, only two persons (by my count) were lay persons.<sup>23</sup> Wanting to learn *how* congregations evangelize, I attended the sessions on "Local Congregations in Pluralistic Societies" and, to the best of my information, there were only three lay persons in the entire section. On one occasion a German delegate asked her section to draft a statement that affirmed lay persons engagement of mission and evangelization in their day-to-day vocations and work places. For reasons not altogether clear to me, this request was not included during the plenary session's re-write of the section's document.

This strange silencing of laity betrays, I believe, a profound confusion. Anne Rowthorn has succinctly articulated this confusion:

As long as the laity believe they go to church whereas the clergy are the Church, and as long as Church structures and practices allow the clergy to dominate Christ's ministry (in which all Christians ought to participate) the laity will fail to be what the Church might become. . . . The call to ministry is often equated with the call to ordained ministry. . . . Without its laity, the Church has no place in the world. But whether or not Christ is represented in human activity is dependent on whether or not the laity genuinely represents Him."<sup>24</sup>

This confusion also undercuts, I maintain, mainstream Protestant strategies to evangelize through local congregations and circumvents "equipping the saints for the work of ministry" (Ephesians 4). Michael Donahue and Peter L. Benson have gleaned much from the literature on congregational growth and decline. They have argued that there exists a definite correlation to what lay

congregants believe, the quality of the programming for those laity, and the congregation's membership of growth.<sup>25</sup>

Once again, evangelism strategies for mainline American denominations need to consult those congregations where lay-equipped, lay led evangelistic efforts are operative and effective. Why not enable congregations to teach other congregations? There are many such congregations across America, congregations of all sizes and located in diverse social and economic contexts and there are solid accounts of mainline congregations who have circumnavigated the "pastor paradigm" and steered those congregations toward a "shared ministry."<sup>26</sup> One example will have to suffice: a group of committed lay women and men in a Presbyterian congregation in Pittsburgh began a support/witness ministry for any unemployed person let go during downsizing of local corporations. Over the last decade, this lay-led ministry of "outplacement" has benefited (I am told) over 3000 persons. It is no accident that the same congregation has experienced a steady growth in membership.

**Whither evangelism?** In the wake this culture's trends toward privatization, relativization, and professionalization, I propose that mainstream Protestants turn to and learn from congregations who are doing evangelism effectively. There are many mainstream congregations who are training their members to articulate their Christian faith and are sustaining members who translate their witness into the public arenas. American mainstream denominations and the World Council of Churches already possess invaluable resources for future responsibilities in evangelization, namely, the congregations in their midst.

#### NOTES

1. An abbreviated form of this article has appeared in *Inspire* Vol. 2 (Spring, 1997): 10-11. This journal is a publication of Princeton Theological Seminary, Princeton, NJ.
2. The preparatory documents for this Conference can be found in three issues of *International Review of Mission* Vol. LXXXIV, No. 335 (October, 1995); LXXXV, No. 336 (January, 1996); and (Vol. LXXXV, No. 337 (April, 1996).
3. By "mainstream American congregations" I mean those Protestant communities that are (1) intentional about a creedal tradition; (2) cooperative ecumenically, that is not separatist; (3) usually liturgical; (4) committed to the infrastructures of denominational judicatories; and (5) confident with America's cultural values and mores. In place for over a century, these commitments began to lose members and influence beginning in the 1960's. Usually included are the American Baptist Convention, Episcopal Church, Evangelical Lutheran Church of America, Presbyterian Church (USA),

Reformed Church of America, United Church of Christ, and United Methodist Church.

4. For opposing points of view on this controversial issue, see John Hick and Paul F. Knitter, eds., *The Myth of Christian Uniqueness: Toward a Pluralistic Theology of Religions* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1988) and Carl E. Braaten, *No Other Gospel: Christianity Among the World's Religions* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 1992).

5. Flannery O'Connor, *The Habits of Being*, ed. by Sally Fitzgerald (New York: Farrar, Straus, Giroux, 1979), 430.

6. See especially Burton J. Bledstein, *The Culture of Professionalism* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1978); M. S. Larson, *The Rise of Professionalism: A Sociological Survey* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1988); and Eliot Freidson, *Professionalism Reborn* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1994)

7. Yves Congar, *Lay People in the Church: A Study for a Theology of the Laity*, rev. ed. Trans. by D. Attwater (London: Geoffrey Chapman, 1985). See especially Chapter III.

8. Quoted in Martin Marty, ed., *Context 27* (October, 1995): 2.

9. See also "Congregations in the Midst of Change: An Interview with Nancy Ammerman," *Christian Century* (January 15, 1997): 48-51.

10. Hoge, Dean R., Benton Johnson, and Donald A. Luidens. *Vanishing Boundaries: The Religion of Mainline Protestant Baby Boomers* (Louisville, KY: Westminster/John Knox, 1994).

11. John B. Cobb, J. *Reclaiming the Church*, ed. by Durwood Foster (Louisville, KY: Westminster/John Knox, 1997), 67.

12. Lesslie Newbigin, *Foolishness to the Greeks: The Gospel in Western Culture* (Grand Rapids, MI: W. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1986), 4.

13. Jon Butler, *Awash in a Sea of Faith* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1990).

14. Charles Hodge, "Introduction" in *The Faithful Mother's Reward: A Narrative of the Conversion and Happy Death of J.B.* (Philadelphia: Presbyterian Board of Publication, 1853), vii-xvi.

15. James Ayers, "Advocacy Evangelism," *Presbyterian Survey* (January/February, 1993): 12.

16. This quote, derived from the official documents of the Fifth Assembly of the World Council of Church which met in Nairobi, Kenya in November 23 December 10, 1975, may be found James A. Sherer and Stephen B. Bevans, eds., *New Directions in Mission and Evangelization: Basic Statements, 1974-1991* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Press, 1992), 10.

17. Faith Popcorn, *The Popcorn Report* (New York: Doubleday, 1991), 26-34.

18. The American churchman, Daniel Romero, wrote in a position paper for the Conference, "The local congregation, in order to fulfill its missionary mandate in today's world, will seek to be inclusive of age, gender, race, ethnicity, and sexual orientation without apology." See Daniel F. Romero, "The Church's Struggle with Diversity," *International Review of Mission*, Vol. LXXXV, No. 337 (April, 1996): 189.

19. In the words of Martin Marty, "It is time to study congregations that work. One more explanation of What Went Wrong will induce only a thousand more yawns.... We need to locate such places and listen to their people." See *The Christian Century*, January 1-8, 1992:4.

20. Victor N. Claman, David E. Butler and Jessica A. Boyatt, eds., *Acting on Your Faith : Congregations Making a Difference* (Boston: Insights, Inc., 1994).

21. The full text of this document may be found in James A. Sherer and Stephen B. Bevans, eds. *New Directions in Mission and Evangelization 1: Basic Statements, 1974-1991* (Marynoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1992), 73-81.

22. Newbigin, *Foolishness to the Greeks*, 142-3.

23. See end note No. 2 above.

24. Anne Rowthorn, *The Liberation of the Laity* (Wilton~ CT: Morehouse-Barlow, 1986): 1-2.

25. See Michael Donahue and Peter L. Benson, "Belief Style, Congregational Growth and Program Quality" in *Church and Denominational Growth*, ed. by David Roozen and C. Kirk Hadaway (Nashville, TN: Abington Press, 1993), 225-240.

26. See, for example, Greg Ogden, *The New Reformation* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing Co., 1990); E. Stanley Ott, *The Vibrant Church* (Ventura, CA: Regal Books, 1989); and James E. Tozer, *A Shared Adventure: The Dynamics of a Discipling Church* (Lima, OH: CSS Publishing Co, 1984). For examples from Great Britain see Michael Green, *Evangelism Through the Local Church* (Nashville, TN: Oliver-Nelson Press, 1992). For new models of pastoral leadership that seeks to encourage witness and ministry, see Jürgen Moltmann, *Church in the Power of the Holy Spirit*, trans. by Margret Kohl (New York: Harper and Row, 1997); Jackson Carroll, *As One with Authority* (Louisville, KY: Westminster/John Knox Press, 1991); and Donald E. Smith, *Empowering Ministry* (Louisville, KY: Westminster/John Knox Press, 1996).



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## A THEOLOGICAL TAXONOMY OF EVANGELISM

Michael P. Knowles

Not uncommonly, discussions of evangelism within mainline Western churches fall into one, or both, of two extremes. More conservative proponents of evangelism tend to construe the activity primarily in terms of verbal proclamation, and envisage an appropriate response predominantly as one of personal, individual conversion. At the opposite end of the spectrum can be found those who, demurring at such an individualized and affective emphasis, want to include every aspect of the church's life and ministry under the category of "good news." Evangelism, on such a definition, is not just one activity, but all activities that the church undertakes. Yet there are at least two difficulties with the latter response. First, it ceases to be a definition at all: if everything is "evangelism," then the word ceases to have a distinctive meaning. Second, in its reaction to the more conservative definition, it loses an appropriate emphasis on the call to respond definitively to the gospel of Jesus Christ (however "gospel" and "response" are each variously construed). In fact, such an avoidance unconsciously acknowledges the force, if only as a stereotype, of the first definition.

The critical task, at least for the North American church, has been to recover a broader definition for evangelism while not thereby emptying the term of any distinctive meaning. Two examples will suffice to demonstrate that this has, in fact, been the direction of our thinking for some time now. The 1966 Wheaton Declaration, intended as a formulation of world-wide mission strategy, voiced concern on the part of evangelicals for "the needs of the whole person," and included a commitment "to demonstrate anew God's concern for social justice and human welfare."<sup>1</sup> Focusing more specifically on evangelism, the 1974 Lausanne Covenant expressed penitence for evangelicals' "having sometimes regarded evangelism and social concern as mutually exclusive," and affirmed that "evangelism and socio-political involvement are both part of our Christian duty."<sup>2</sup> Notwithstanding its insistence that "reconciliation with man is not reconciliation with God, nor is social action evangelism, nor is political liberation salvation," social justice ministries in such an influential document on evangelism counters any easy dichotomy between verbal and praxis oriented aspects of the church's mission.

In the wake of statements such as these, the dispute between proponents of personal evangelism and social justice ministries, respectively, has now

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been largely resolved. It is widely acknowledged in principle (if not in actual practice) by both sides that the two spheres of activity are more complementary than contradictory. As a second example, this growing convergence of understanding has been accompanied, if not encouraged, by a renewed appreciation of the "kingdom" or "reign" of God as theologically foundational for evangelism. This concept provides a common point of departure for a wide variety of theological perspectives on evangelism, from that of radical social justice, at one end of the spectrum, to radical charismatic emphasis, at the other.<sup>3</sup> Notwithstanding other differences in outlook and emphasis, all are agreed that Jesus proclaimed and inaugurated the reign of God's kingdom both in his teaching and through acts of mercy and healing. Although a direct identification is more problematic than is sometimes assumed, the content and manner of Jesus' ministry is understood to mandate similar emphases on the part of the church.

At least two considerations suggest that this theological initiative needs to be expanded, thereby facilitating a fuller understanding of the church's task of evangelism, broadly understood. Positively, the breadth and flexibility of the reign of God as a theological construct suggests that more can fit within its conceptual embrace than such generalized categories as proclamation and social activism alone. On the other hand, emphasis on the kingdom of God should not be allowed to efface or override the distinctive contribution and characteristics of ministries that do not understand themselves, initially or directly, as manifestations of the divine reign.

The purpose of this article, therefore, is to propose yet another rearrangement of the relationships between various aspects of the church's ministry in such a way as, on the one hand, to construe them as authentically evangelistic in their own way, while, on the other, not thereby emptying the word "evangelism" of meaning. It is in this sense that I want to propose a "taxonomy" of evangelism, an ordered classification of evangelism's various practical and conceptual components. It is, unavoidably, a "theological" taxonomy, insofar as evangelism (like all other aspects of the church's identity and ministry) is rooted more in the character, purposes, and activity of God than in human character, purposes, or activities. Conversely, it is equally unavoidable that "evangelism" should imply a measure of distinctively human activity and anticipate, ideally, some measure of human response. Thus the term "evangelism" is understood here primarily in its technical sense of the proclamation of a triumphant event of cosmic, salvific significance within human history and experience.<sup>4</sup> As appropriated by the Christian church, this event is of course the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus, proclaimed by the Spirit of God (John 16:14) and by human witnesses alike (Acts 1:8), evoking a response--positive or negative--on the part of the hearer. Finally, while the

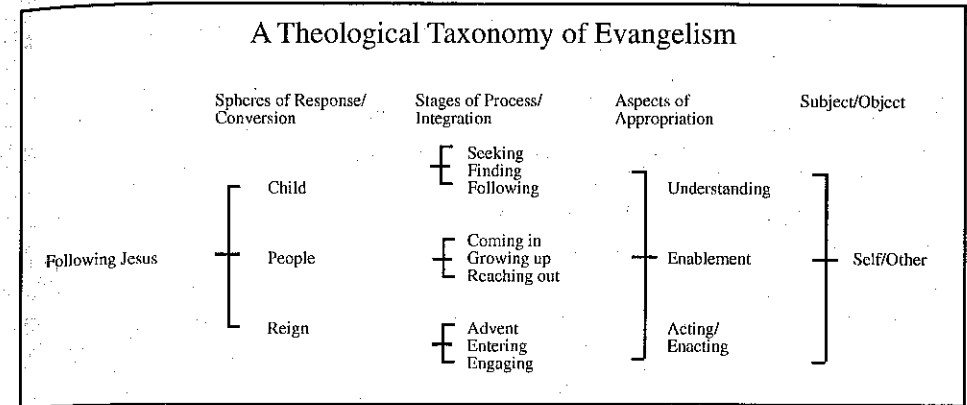
taxonomy proposed here is primarily a theoretical or conceptual construct, its intent is to provide a framework within which to classify and appreciate the interrelation of practical ministries that otherwise operate independently of one another.

### Following Jesus

The goals of evangelism are variously construed, as its various proponents seek to define the most basic elements of the life of faith, and thereby to determine how people can be introduced to such a life, or faith. In a Christian context, the defining metaphor for the life of faith is that of "following Jesus."<sup>5</sup> It is important to note that the New Testament lacks any word that we could directly translate by the abstract term "discipleship." "Following Jesus" describes not a concept, but a concrete activity, in keeping with which "the earliest self designation of Christians seems to have been "those of the Way" (Acts 9:2; 19:9, 23; 22:4; 24:14, 22).<sup>6</sup> It is these concrete metaphors that give practical substance and content to the concurrent designation of Jesus' followers as "disciples," those who learn from and follow the "Way" of Jesus. Evangelism, then, conceived of in the broadest possible terms, consists of an invitation to a way of life that is characterized by its following of the one who is himself "the Way" (so John 14:5-6, noting the relevance of Thomas' question). How this "following" is to be construed is the next focus of our attention. The accompanying graphic provides a schematic overview of the taxonomy proposed in the sections that follow.

#### Spheres of Response or Conversion

It is a self-evident truth of church life that we are not one, but divided. No less self-evident is the fact that denominations define themselves not only along theological lines, but also in terms of how they express their respective theologies in practical terms. Denominations are often united (or divided!) by their understanding of how one should respond to God and, moreover, function as though this characteristic manner of response were the only valid one. Generally speaking, these responses fall into three categories or spheres of activity: the personal, the corporate or community-based, and the public or political. These three kinds of response can be conveniently summarized in terms of the call to conversion (1) as a Child of God, (2) as People of God, and (3) under the Reign of God.<sup>7</sup> In keeping with such distinctions, Christian individuals, congregations, and denominations tend to define evangelism in similar terms. Only after we have clarified the nature of the envisaged response ("conversion") can we go on to speak of the various ways in which that response may be elicited or sought ("evangelism").



#### 1. A Child of God

The pietist tradition envisages the characteristic response to God primarily in personal terms, the consequence (to borrow Wesley's famous phrase) of the individual heart or mind being "strangely warmed":

To this dimension belong questions of identity and character, of personal ethics and behavior. It is here that I accept God's forgiveness for the waywardness and sinfulness of my own life and take on my new identity as a child of God.<sup>8</sup>

For most evangelicals, this is familiar territory: it is the call to "give one's heart to Jesus." Such a call should, of course, be understood to include one's mind, "body," and all other aspects of personal identity. But the emphasis, in any event, is on an individual and personal appropriation of the promises of God in response to an individual and personally directed call of God. At least within conservative Protestantism, the characteristic metaphor for such a response is that of being "born again," which (despite its customary definition in terms of personal "decision"), is altogether appropriate to the notion of personal spiritual filiation. It is, after all, by being born that children enter the world!

#### 2. The People of God

Alternatively, churches with (for example) a strong liturgical heritage often understand their responsibility toward God in terms that are more corporate and community-oriented than personal and individual. That is to say, one responds to Christ by becoming a member of the faith community. One's individual Christian identity is thereby understood to be mediated by the community to which one belongs: God does not call "me" so much as God calls "us." Individual faith and faithfulness are but constituent elements of the community's faithful response to God. What conservative Protestantism has tended to view as a lack of personal faith is, upon closer examination, a different understanding of the exercise of faith.

The necessary complementarity of the two approaches is aptly illustrated by Jesus' summary of the demands of Torah, citing Deuteronomy 6:4 and Leviticus 19:18:

The first [commandment] is . . . "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind, and with all your strength." The second is this, "You shall love your neighbour as yourself" (Mark 12:29-31).

Such an emphasis on the corporate dimension of faith provides a necessary counterbalance to the overly-individualistic tendencies of Western culture. How ironic that, particularly in the field of evangelism, the most theologically conservative wing of the church should have been captured so fully by the biases of secular culture! To quote again from the work of Harold Percy,

It is essential to a proper understanding of the gospel to realize that God's purposes in this world go far beyond rescuing isolated individuals from their plight and initiating private and personal relationships with each of them independently of one another. Far beyond reconciling isolated individuals, God wants to reconcile people to one another as well. . . the Christian faith is a corporate faith, and the biblical story is the story of a people.<sup>9</sup>

### 3. The Reign of God

Finally, churches with a strong tradition of social justice often understand their response and responsibility toward God as being expressed primarily in the arena of public and political activity. Faithfulness to God, in other words, requires us to "act justly and love mercy" (Micah 6:8) outside the boundaries of the Christian community as well as within in. Such an approach seeks to engage the radical implications of the familiar petition, "Thy kingdom come, *thy will be done on earth*, as it is in heaven," affirming that no aspect of human endeavour is beyond the scope of God's redemptive activity and concern.

Evangelism construed under the category of God's reign invites people to live in accordance with the principles of justice and righteousness (since the biblical terms, whether Hebrew or Greek, conveniently include both) that are central to God's own character. It seeks to convert those who labour for public justice by inviting them to recognize in the cross and resurrection of Christ God's own demand for justice and righteousness. It affirms, moreover, that the cross and resurrection represent God's definitive gift and enablement of a creation ordered by justice and characterized by covenantal faithfulness.

As stated at the outset, this last category is the most comprehensive of the three. For evangelism as the proclamation of God's reign is able to incorporate elements that are subjective and objective (my story; the story of Jesus), individual and corporate (my testimony as a believer; our testimony as a

congregation or denomination), transcendent and social (relationship to God, relationship to neighbor), and oriented to past, present, and future (the kingdom of Christ, the kingdom and the Church, the kingdom of Christ's return).

If nothing else, this demonstrates that these three spheres of response are anything but mutually exclusive, even if their respective proponents tend to perceive them as such. The truth of the matter is that they are interconnected and complementary; together, they represent the possibility of a holistic response to God's redemptive declaration and demonstration that "Jesus is Lord." What makes them appropriate as categories of evangelism is that they are responses to God, rather than (as their respective detractors would have it), merely human preoccupations with self, "church," or "politics."

### Stages of the Process of Integration

However complementary these spheres of response may be, they each involve distinctive stages in the process of conversion. Again, this is most easily recognizable in the case of conversion as a "child of God." The Willow Creek model, for example, with its emphasis on different styles of worship for people at different stages of their spiritual journey, acknowledges that the needs of "seekers" are distinct from those of committed disciples, or at least that the content of the Christian message must be presented in different ways to the different audiences. The process of personal conversion, whereby the implications of salvation are appropriated and integrated into one's individual experience, typically involves a stage of seeking (whether for meaning, forgiveness, acceptance, healing, etc.), followed by one or several points of acceptance or "finding," subsequent to which one understands oneself as a "follower" of Jesus. Again, these observations are intended only as generalizations. The point to be observed, in any case, is that personal conversion cannot be limited simply to a single moment of decision. Conversion consists, rather, of a whole series of moments and decisions throughout the stages of exploration, initial or decisive commitment, and continued adherence.<sup>10</sup> Western evangelicalism's preoccupation with "The Hour of Decision" is fueled more by a cultural fascination with personal self-determinism and the exercise of the will than it is by the content or nature of the Christian gospel.

The same observations regarding process pertain equally to the remaining two models of conversion. Conversion within the life of the community involves the same three stages of exploration, definitive appropriation or acceptance, and mature engagement. Harold Percy designates these as the stages of (1) Coming In, (2) Growing Up, and (3) Reaching Out. To be converted to the life of a community first involves a

process of entry, whereby members and prospective members, respectively, examine the implications of community membership for the newcomers. Engagement and commitment may be marked by ceremonies of acceptance or initiation. But because the primary focus here is *community*, it is possible to view appropriation in terms of an ongoing process of maturation ("growing up") rather than limiting it simply to the moment of initiation. Finally, ongoing adherence to the life of the community is expressed not only by continued membership within it, but also by offering the fruits of that life to those outside the community. Conversion takes place as the community (not just the individuals within it) welcomes new members, integrates and orders the lives of its members into a larger whole, and seeks to perpetuate its own life by reaching outside itself. This process is a conversion not only of individuals to the community, but also represents the conversion of the community itself. And self-evidently, it is a cyclical, rather than a linear process, whereby "reaching out" leads to more people "coming in," "growing up," and "reaching out" in turn.

The process of conversion to or within the reign of God is described by Scripture more clearly than either of the other models.<sup>11</sup> Jesus' parables repeatedly set out the characteristics of the kingdom, and the New Testament speaks frequently of the "coming" or "drawing near" of God's reign.<sup>12</sup> On this model, it is clear that God takes the initiative, only subsequent to which are we said to "enter," "inherit," or "receive" the kingdom.<sup>13</sup> "Entry" is constituted by one's acknowledgment that "Jesus is Lord," again, not primarily as a gesture of personal allegiance, but rather as a confession of the cosmic scope and significance of Christ's saving claim. The final stage of the process is two fold: that of our own ongoing engagement by the imperatives of God's reign and our own engagement in turn of a creation that does not yet recognize the divine sovereignty.

Conversion thus involves a series of individual, corporate, and public responses to the gospel. In one sense, these are simply different spheres of personal response, different arenas in which every individual engages and is engaged by the good news of Jesus Christ. But it has also become clear that "community" and "kingdom" also exercise an independent agency in the conversion of any individual who enters them, or, rather, is received by them. Furthermore, it has emerged that we are speaking here not only of the conversion of individuals, but also of the conversion of communities and political domains. Communities are continually converted to become more truly the "people of God" (Calvin's "*ecclesia semper reformanda est*") and political structures are called to acknowledge the sovereignty and providence of God, until at last "the kingdom of the world has become the kingdom of our Lord and of his Messiah" (Revelation 11:15).

### Aspects of Appropriation

It remains only to point out that in each sphere of response, at the stages of exploration or inauguration, definitive engagement, and continued adherence or maturation, a series of factors are at play in the process of appropriation. Borrowing from the medieval contemplative tradition and adapting its intentionally Trinitarian formula of memory, reason, and will, the proposal of this taxonomy is a triad of (1) understanding, (2) enablement, and (3) action or enactment. I intend "understanding" here in the strongly etymological, medieval sense of "standing under," being ruled by, as well as in its modern and primarily intellectual sense. For conversion to be truly Christian, moreover, it must be marked by grace, by the irruption of "divine assistance" whereby God enables, through the work of the Holy Spirit, that which God requires. And finally, appropriation must involve not only reception, not only enablement, but also some sort of concrete response (as in John the Baptist's exhortation to "bear fruits that befit repentance" [Luke 3:8]). At each stage of each process in each sphere of response, therefore, one comes to new understanding, one becomes the subject of enabling grace, and one takes action as appropriate to the particular stage of one's movement toward (or even away from) Christ. The purpose of dwelling here on what may, in one sense, seem obvious, is to insist that both human and divine will must be accounted for in conversion and evangelism, and that the human response must be holistic, incorporating all aspects of personality and involving elements that are both passive (reception) and active (reaction).

### Subject/Object

To this point our proposed taxonomy of evangelism has focused, not on evangelism *per se*, but on processes of conversion, on the understanding that "conversion" is evangelism's intended goal. An understanding of conversion as the process of becoming a child and people of God under the reign of God allows us to understand evangelism as directed to (or as an expression of) these same goals. Conversion, in other words, views these processes in subjective terms, as centripetal, whereas evangelism views them as centrifugal, directed toward those who are not yet fully children and people of God, or intentionally under the reign of God.

To pick up on a previous taxonomy, the classification proposed here incorporates the classic distinctions between pre evangelism, primary evangelism, and secondary evangelism. It acknowledges, in other words, that the stages of exploration, definitive commitment, and continued adherence are in fact different moments or aspects of a single theological process. The

process of becoming a child of God, or the people of God, or of acknowledging the reign of God, each has a single, unchanging focus and goal. Only the particular evangelistic strategies for accomplishing these goals need change, depending on the spiritual situation of the "convert." Indeed, to be fully comprehensive, we should say that these are not ultimately three separate processes, with separate strategies appropriate to each, but that they are different manifestations of the same process, with each being distinguished by its personal, communal, or corporate/political focus.

#### Evangelism: A Taxonomy

It is not the purpose of this study to propose any new methods or concepts of evangelism. Its purpose is rather to correlate various aspects of the church's present ministry in such a way as to highlight the genuinely evangelistic character of each. Evangelism, we said at the outset, is the proclamation in word and deed of God's victory in Christ. Insofar as the primary initiative for evangelism comes from God (in the sending of Jesus and of the Holy Spirit), and insofar as God's saving work is operative alike upon individuals, communities, and the entire created order, it becomes possible to understand "evangelism" as our cooperation with God's saving initiative in each of these spheres. Evangelism seeks to convert individuals into cognizant children of God, to convert human communities generally and children of God in particular into the people of God, and to convert the people of God into being more truly communities of Christian faith and faithfulness, all by declaring the relevance and transformative power of Jesus' death and resurrection. By the same token, Christian ministries of social justice seek to convert the political structures of our world by bringing them under the victory and reign of Christ. By virtue of their intentional proclamation of God's salvation in Christ, each is distinctively evangelistic, while yet retaining their distinctive character and sphere of operation, each demanding a distinctive and appropriate response.

I quoted at the outset William Abraham's excellent working definition of evangelism as "that set of intentional activities which is governed by the goal of initiating people into the kingdom of God for the first time."<sup>14</sup> In partial contrast, the broader definition proposed here places somewhat greater emphasis on the ongoing, saving initiative of God—definitively past, actively present, and climactically future—by which God conforms us and our activities to his own character and work. Precisely because God's reign is the overarching theological concept that gives shape to human existence, we are ourselves first the objects of God's work and thereafter the subjects through whom that work, via our own evangelistic endeavours, extends to others.

#### NOTES

1. Quoted in Norman E. Thomas, ed., *Classic Texts in Mission and World Christianity. A Reader's Companion to David Bosch's Transforming Mission*, (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis: 1995), 138.
2. Lausanne Covenant, Section 5, "Christian Social Responsibility."
3. See, as examples of each, J. Stromberg, *Mission and Evangelism: An Ecumenical Affirmation. A Study Guide* (Geneva: World Council of Churches, 1983), and John Wimber with Kevin Springer, *Power Evangelism* (San Francisco: Harper and Row, 1986). For a more balanced and comprehensive approach, see William J. Abraham, *The Logic of Evangelism* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1989), esp. p.95: "We can best improve our thinking on evangelism by conceiving it as that set of intentional activities which is governed by the goal of initiating people into the kingdom of God for the first time."
4. See further G. Friedrich, *euaggelizomai*, etc. TDNT II.710-712; 717-737.
5. Richard N. Longenecker, ed., *Patterns of Discipleship in the New Testament* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1996), 3-4.
6. Ibid. 1.
7. For a more comprehensive treatment of this schema of responses, see Harold Percy, *Good News People: An Introduction to Evangelism for Tongue-Tied Christians* (Toronto: Anglican Book Centre, 1996), 43-54.
8. Ibid. 45 (emphasis added)
9. Ibid. 47 (emphasis added)
10. This observation is based on the work of my colleague John Bowen of InterVarsity Christian Fellowship.
11. At this stage of the present taxonomy, the concept of the "reign of God" is being applied (more narrowly than the Scriptural evidence warrants) as a reference to the social and political implications of Christ's work. Ultimately, as acknowledged at the outset, personal, communal/corporate, and social/political responses to the gospel are all acknowledgements of God's reign as manifest in Christ.
12. Ibid.
13. Some fifteen passages speak of entering the kingdom of God/Heaven, eight of inheriting it, four of receiving. According to the Book of Revelation, the saints are twice said even to "be" a kingdom of Christ's making (Rev. 1:6, 5:10; cf. 11:15).
14. Cf. note 2, above.

## A THEOLOGY FOR YOUTH EVANGELISM

Ralph W. Quere

Waiting for Nick<sup>1</sup> at the Food Court of a nearby mall, I was preparing to talk with him about my ideas about youth evangelism. Nick is a high school junior, an all-round athlete, currently just out for football. He has two jobs. He's quiet, likable, bright, and insightful. We talked a lot about words: the kind of words that he and his friends used and understood. Also, the kind of words that might best communicate the Word of life.

Since this article focuses on the *why* and the *what* rather than the *how*, it's about words. Words about the Word. Words to communicate the Word. Words to be heard. A primary task in a theology for youth evangelism is to find the right words in the "language of the mall"--elsewhere called the "language of the *marketplace*"! Words for youth! What follows is a beginning at building a cultural bridge for gospel communication between the young and the young at heart.

The ancient quest for the fountain of youth to stave off aging and dying is very different from the modern idolizing of youth, which practice has its roots in peculiarly Western Romantic notions. Even the mid-life crisis of baby-boomers now reaching 50 is being called a "mid-youth crisis." This has placed tremendous pressure on adolescents who want to differentiate themselves from their elders who keep trying to be or at least act younger.

One way of underlining the very real cultural differences that exist between today's youth and their forebears is the generational labels recently popularized. While most of us resist such stereotyping, some youth are particularly sensitive, especially when the characterizations become caricatures. They feel they are being put in a box, judged, and "dissed" because of the attitudes or actions of their peers. But all the youth I've talked to recently say they feel manipulated by those around them, including their peers. However, youth also recognize that they are finally responsible for buying into their culture's lifestyle. Aaron, a high school freshman with many talents and much promise for the future, said to me: "Sure, we emulate our peers. It's obsolete not to!"

Recent studies of generations give us two complementary and connected insights: (1) human nature and human stages of development are fundamentally the same throughout history; (2) the sameness is expressed in forms and shapes that look significantly different from generation to

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generation and place to place. The connection between the two insights is this: one generation influences the next positively and negatively, so that some characteristics are passed on and received consciously and willingly, while others are resisted or rejected yet still received, albeit against the wishes of the recipient generation. So continuity and change from one generation to another is not always what it seems or what was intended. Cultures carry over, often unconsciously, some attitudes and patterns from their predecessors, while consciously and vigorously attempting to overthrow others, often unsuccessfully!

Historians ask: "How did we get to this thirteenth generation (after the founding fathers)?" Chronologically and biologically the answer is simple. Culturally and philosophically, however, it is more complex. What follows is a survey of the world views embodied in American culture.

The 18th century Age of Reason reinforced earlier Puritan and pietistic tendencies to elevate human experience; rationalism made experience the *final* authority. The dimension of experience that reigned supreme was rational, as typified in physics and chemistry and the "laws" of nature. The 19th century Romantic era glorified human emotions and feelings. Romanticist interest in history, geology, and biology expressed the shift to the earthly, the diverse, and the local and away from the purely rational, the uniform, and the universal. I was involved in a discussion recently of whether it was appropriate to present to families the statistics of the negative effects of broken homes on children. Several pastors strenuously objected because it might make single parents feel even more burdened. This overriding concern for the sensibilities of individuals took precedence over the Church's proclamation of God's will for families: a classic example of the modern trend of giving human experience precedence over God's revelation. The 20th century, beginning with high confidence in liberal evolutionary progress toward human perfectibility, crashed with the Titanic, the First World War, the roaring twenties, and the stock market in 1929. This generation of my parents was a generation of survivors.<sup>2</sup>

The silent generation, born between 1930 and 1945, has been called builders, boosters, and pre-boomers. (The last term makes about as much sense as "pre-boarding" an airplane!) The belief that achievements are attained through education and hard work suggests to me that the label "strivers" is most appropriate. We who belong to the silent generation remember the tales of the Great War and the Great Depression, lived through and watched WW II on newsreels at Saturday matinees, along with cartoons and Superman serials. Some of us had to fight the Korean War. We respected authority, family, and tradition; and we were suspicious of radicals, especially

Communists. This generation moved slowly toward the establishment of equal rights for minorities and women.

The next generation of noisy "baby boomers," born between 1946-1964, were defined by their protests for civil rights and against the Vietnam War, and by their revolutionary behavior in the areas of sex, drugs, and music. They pointed to their parents' addictions to alcohol, nicotine, and caffeine and themselves turned to harder, illegal drugs, as they listened to rock music and made love, not war! But as they matured and married, many Hippies and Yippies became Yuppies. Like my children, born just before and after 1964, and especially the "millennials" born since the early 80s, Generation X-ers grapple with the world their parents have willed them. The boomers passed on with mother's milk, bottles, and pacifiers the lullaby sung or played by their parents whenever they heard cries on their monitors. The prophetic cry of Peter, Paul, and Mary has already reached "unto the third generation" and may soon proceed to the fourth:

Tell me why you are crying, my son!  
 You will inherit what mankind has done.  
 In a world filled with sorrow and woe.  
 You ask me why this is so.  
 I really don't know.<sup>3</sup>

The 13th Generation X of "baby-busters" is not happy with the ecologically and socially damaged world or lives they inherited, nor are they satisfied by their parents' agnosticism. They seek spirituality, often *any* spirituality. Damaged by addictive dependencies and co-dependencies, broken homes or absent parents, they are not sure who or whose they are, where or whether they belong, and what their task in life is---if anything. "Whatever!" is their attitude. AIDS has made suspect their parents' slogan: "If it feels good, do it!" But they tend to "Just do it!" rather than "Just say No!" For even though they recognize the dangers, the "No Fear" slogan often overrides their better judgment. Cable TV, videos, and the Internet have bombarded this latest generation with an overload of stimuli and information. They are constantly threatened by cynicism, depression, and apathy.

Perhaps the image of the cloud can characterize the 20th century: the clouds of mustard gas in WW I; the clouds from fire bombing and atomic bombs in WW II; the threatened cloud of a nuclear holocaust during the Cold War; the clouds of tobacco and marijuana smoke that continue to clog arteries and fog minds; and the invisible clouds of chemical weapons gases suspected in the Gulf War syndrome. The symbol of the 90s might well be the smoke from the nitrate/fuel oil bomb over Oklahoma City, forming a cloud of uncertainty. These cloudy days have brought us from the ages of *nausea* in

the aftermath of WW I to *anxiety* during and after WW II to a new age of *depression* today.

#### A Christian Interpretation of the Generations

The Christian answer to the haunting question in the song by Peter, Paul and Mary is "Sin" with a capital "S." Our children do indeed "inherit what mankind has done" and this inheritance involves the "hereditary corruption" called "original sin." There are biological aspects, such as babies being born with AIDS, or fetal alcohol syndrome, or even birth defects to which no moral categories attach themselves.

And then there are the universal, psychological, and spiritual dimensions, such as bondage of the will, inordinate self-love, destructive self-deprecation, pride, despair, and unbelief. All these are symptoms of the congenital disease called Sin that distorts our personalities, cripples our lives and bodies, and damages our human nature.

The personal embodiment of original sin in the individual is called "the flesh." Scripture calls the total person "flesh," not just our bodies. Flesh is our sinful humanity apart from God's grace. Recent theology has described our human condition as "broken." In talking with youth I suggested the term *excluded* to describe a range of experiences from being pushed out the home or peer group, pushed off a team, or pushing oneself out in a quest, like Eve and Adam, for the knowledge of good and evil.<sup>4</sup> However, half the youth I talked to did not feel that the term "excluded" described themselves or their peers. But they all said feeling left out was a common experience for youth. The difference between "excluded" and "left out" seems semantic. Hannah, a sensitive and articulate high school junior, added: "Feeling left behind is even more accurate. Government, schools, and parents do things for us, like curfews. And we have no say." Obviously there is a feeling of alienation here.

Maybe that's what leads some baby busters to ignore authority. The results of such exclusion and alienation are loneliness (all my dialogue partners affirmed this); shame (one volunteered this; co-dependence literature sees it as universal); depression (most saw this; one thought "down" or "stressed out" was more appropriate; another seemed to equate "depressed" with "suicidal"); suicidal (all the older teens knew someone who had attempted suicide; the younger teens did not); and boredom (all my young friends heard "Boring!" all around them). Mark, a talented, serious, and wise high school junior, said: "My friends aren't bored, but some are frustrated. They don't have any purpose or direction [in life]."

In our formal prayers, we Lutherans confess our original sin, as well as our actual sins. The somewhat ambiguous liturgical language reads: ". . . We

are by nature sinful and unclean. . . ." Some thought such "nature" language went beyond original sin and denied the goodness of the human nature God created. Others called the language of "poor, miserable sinner" a "worm theology."

So without denying human sinfulness, Lutheran worship material shifted in the 1970s to the language of human bondage. Classically, from Augustine, through Luther, Calvin, and Jonathan Edwards, this focused on the "bondage of the *will*." Melancthon suggested the "heart" was the appropriate biblical term. Life since the 60s and the baby boomer generation have underlined the relevance of this description. A classic example of such bondage is the connection between various addictions to alcohol, drugs, work, sex, etc., as well as the co-dependent and dysfunctional relationships of addicts, their enablers, and their families.

So the 1978 Lutheran liturgy reads: "We confess that we are in bondage to sin and cannot free ourselves." For such bondage to sin, death, and the devil, I suggested to my teen friends the term *enslaved*. Except for the two older boys, most of my conversation partners felt "enslaved" was too strong a term. Nonetheless, what followed seemed to justify the continued use of the term. "Enslaved" seems to fit because all of the teens knew other youth who were addicted to cigarettes, alcohol, or other drugs. Most of the youth felt "controlled" by parents or teachers. All of them experienced attempts by friends to manipulate them. Mark confided: "One of my former friends tried to make my personality like his. It gave me stomach problems. I've seen people put down and destroyed by their friends. It makes you experience feelings like sorrow." Nick said he felt pressured by peers to engage in sex or use drugs or alcohol.

The older youth all knew someone who had experienced physical or sexual abuse. The younger ones did not, except for emotional or verbal abuse. Violence was a fear of some of my young friends. Some had witnessed racial discrimination. Others felt discrimination because they were "band geeks"--or simply teen-agers. Those experiences of oppression, abuse, addiction, control, and manipulation make the enslaved want to escape, yet they feel helpless--like "dead men walking."

The danger for the enslaved is the cop-out: "The devil made me do it!" The danger for the excluded is the ploy of playing the victim for all it's worth. Culturally speaking, busters have come by both excuses honestly: they "inherited" them from the booster and boomer generations. And now the Gen-X busters say to all their boring forebears: "Whatever!" The X-ers reject the burden of guilt, just like the boomers, protesting: "Don't try to lay a guilt-trip on me!" The X-ers reject the burden of shame with the pop-psychology that seeks self-esteem and blames shame-based identity for

all our problems. "I'm a victim of . . ." is given as an excuse for everything from bad manners to brutal murder.

But the dimension of responsibility for loveless, sinful actions needs to be acknowledged. My freshman friend Aaron said: "We stay away from things that make us think about life. We're experimenting with life. Thinking about the results of our actions gives us headaches." It's hard for any of us to say: I have sinned--by my fault, by my own fault, by my own most grievous fault." Our burden of guilt and shame is real, not simply neurotic. Its weight is great. Who can get the monkey off our backs? The pop psychology of self-help books won't do it. The question points us beyond ourselves!

The experiences of being enslaved or excluded become ways to hide and give excuses for actions or inactions. With guilt and shame dismissed by previous generations, the burden of youth today is being responsible in their own culture. The devil has been alternately demythologized and worshipped in our era; the "flesh" has been divinized in free sex, spiritualized in New Age, or mutilated in the latest street-craze. The "world" is all that's left and, in the youth culture, the world reigns. All their attempts to reject the adult culture and to emulate their peers and their MTV models make them as much clones of their cultures as were their parents and grandparents. Perhaps as they face downsizing, busters are more like their grandparents who survived the depression and fought World War II than their parents who were wounded, one way or another, by the Vietnam era. It has been said that we often fight our parents' philosophy or theology with that of our grandparents.

So whether it's Elvis or Beavis, the Beatles or Tupac Shakur, when heroes become gods and models become mentors, youth become *encultured*. All of the youth I talked to thought the term "encultured" described their generation. They feel the cultural pressure in advertising where thin and beautiful, muscular and handsome are being promoted as the ideal. Mark said: "You don't believe the ads but you buy anyway. Something clicks and you just do it!" Hannah saw the dangerous cycle of being seduced and then disappointed by culture's promises, seeing oneself as a failure and becoming cynical, ashamed, disgusted, and finally apathetic. The messages are subtle, if not subliminal.

But Aaron recognized that "We don't *have* to buy in; we *like* to!" He also saw that kids believe the Joe Camel and Budweiser ads. Mark also felt the seduction: "The promises suck you in without your realizing it. You start singing the tunes. You don't know you're being seduced!" Talking about his peers, Aaron said: "They wanna get what they *want*, not what they *need*." A pretty keen insight for a high school freshman! He understands that a car is a "material want." But for youth it promises "freedom!"

Measured by culture's standards, seduced by its promises, and finally disappointed by its rewards, youth are often left nauseated. Most of the youth thought that "nauseated" described what happens to them and their peers: feeling sick with shame or disgust by the prejudice they see and the pressure they feel. Mark experiences nausea when he "steps back and asks 'Why?'" Apathy seems to happen at the bottom of the spiral. "Claire," a talented and studious freshman, saw apathy mirrored in the absence of immediate goals of some of her peers, though "some of them have long-term goals." Nick feels many youth don't try because they don't care! ("I couldn't care less!") Some X-ers would say what looks like "not caring" is really "not aspiring" to the utopian dreams of their parents' generation. Hannah identified a complex pattern of causes and effects, beginning with disappointment and leading to apathy. And "where there's self-esteem, there are no goals." Some X-ers would question whether self-esteem is their root problem. It sounds to them more like a boomer diagnosis. If Robert Schuller and others were correct in saying that the quest for self-esteem was the "new reformation," it was short-lived! Many X-ers would reject the apathy diagnosis too. They would say that what others see as apathy is their "downsizing" of expectations. They reject the games and goals of their forebears.

If "encultured" best describes today's youth, they still have not escaped being enslaved and feeling excluded, like parents and grandparents. All need a promise of hope and a community of love. We are all tempted to look for an out-of-the body experience in New Age spirituality or a reembodiment like the reincarnation doctrine of Hinduism. Some youth seek communities of love in street gangs or athletic teams, as their parents and grandparents sought them in cults, communes, country clubs, and Masonic lodges. Now a sci-fi "Heaven's Gate" has been added to the options. But all are potentially deadly! Lasting hope and true love can occur only when the Lord of the Church is present in that community, working faith, hope, and love. And the Spirit works faith through the Word, which brings us back to words. For a theology about *evangelism* is God talk about *good talk*: good news enfleshed in words about God's Word made-flesh. Here I am proposing some new terms to tell the "old, old story." That good news can be presented in ways that are culture-specific and targeted to the needs or experiences that youth express in their music, actions, or words. This does not compromise or change the changeless gospel; it rather contextualizes and translates the gospel into mall language.

### From a Bad Scene to Good Offices

We can be aided in this translation by a classic statement from the 16th century Protestant reformers who agreed without debate on a significant summary presentation of the offices of Christ. It was widely adopted, without controversy, throughout the Church. Drawing on Old Testament types, Christ was called Prophet, Priest, and King. For my first attempt at a theology of evangelism, I adopted and adapted the classic offices and added these descriptions: Vicar, Victim, and Victor.<sup>5</sup> The Vicar is Christ the Prophet, representing God to us and us before God, the one who lays down his life in vicarious substitution or satisfaction for humanity's transgressions. The Victim is God in self-sacrifice--for the Victim is also our Great High Priest-- dying to reconcile the world. The Victor is the King who conquers sin, death, and the devil to liberate human beings from their bondage.

The "offices" are a bridge category between the person and the work of Christ. As my colleague Winston Persaud says: "Jesus Christ is who he is because of what he does (that is, he saves); Jesus Christ does what he does because of who he is (that is, Lord)." Because he is God in the flesh---truly one of us--- he is able to identify with and rescue us mortals. As Athanasius argued against the Arians, the Creator becomes a creature to redeem us, since only the Creator can save the creation. And, as Bonhoeffer argued against the German liberals, only if Christ is God can he be the one to reconcile and justify human beings; for otherwise he is just one more Jewish martyr. Thus the offices imply and demand a clear doctrine of the incarnation and a clear confession that the Son of Mary is God the Son and therefore called Son of God the Father. He is truly and fully human and divine.

The problem stated already is that human beings, old and young, need rescuing ---from something and for something. This is not just an exercise in dogmatics, but a matter of life or death! This explanation of generations is not an ethical evaluation or comparison of generations. It is rather a description of the human condition in which original sin involves being *excluded*. Bondage of the will means being *enslaved* to sin, death, and the devil; and transgression of the will of God leads to being *encultured* in the ways of the world. The offices point to God's answer to this human dilemma. The encultureds' burden of guilt and shame is taken away by the Prophet who dies as a suffering servant and rises as our advocate to represent us before God's courtroom. The excludeds' brokenness is healed; they are restored and brought back home by the Priest who is not just the physician but who is himself the cure of our disease. "By his stripes we are healed" (Isaiah 53:5). The enslaveds' bondage is ended by emancipation; the King has liberated them from captivity and they are "free at last!" But are there ways the classic

offices of Prophet, Priest, and King can be illustrated with different word-pictures? More than illustrations are really needed. Just as the offices bridge the person and work of Christ, so now different kind of bridges across the centuries and cultures are needed.

Now we need a bridge to connect Generation X with word pictures from a world they do not understand. To get at the biblical meaning of Christ as our Priest and sacrifice, I suggest *friend*. To approach the New Testament's presentation of Jesus as King of the Jews and King of kings, I suggest *hero*. To connect with Christ the Prophet who speaks *to us* and *for us*, I suggest *brother*.

#### A Friend for the Excluded

Christ as Priest and sacrificial Victim addresses human brokenness with the message of reconciliation. In a unique way this temple language presents the issue as God's own problem. It is God's wrath and mercy that stand in tension. The tension is resolved by the sacrificial act of God in Christ reconciling the world. The TEV and CEV translations of the American Bible Society say this well: God in Christ was "making friends" with the world (II Corinthians 5:19). We are made God's friends and God becomes our friend. God's wrath and mercy have kissed and made up, because our great friend, Jesus, has laid down his life for the ones he stoops to call friends.

Most of the youth I talked to understood friends as giving up things for the sake of friends. Some could imagine themselves or their friends risking their lives for others whose life was threatened. "But you don't get much sympathy or self-sacrifice from most friends," Hannah said, then added: "When you're betrayed, Jesus is your best and sometimes your only friend." And as Jesus said: "No one has greater love than this: to lay down one's life for one's friends. You are my friends. . ." (John 15:13f., NRSV). It is for Christ's sake; i.e., because of his death, that we are brought back home to God and received by God. In the parable of the Prodigal, it is Christ, the storyteller, who makes the parable end happily for the lost son. On the cross it is the self-sacrifice of God made mortal that brings peace between humanity and God. God's wrath is turned away from sinful creatures and absorbed by the willing Victim and friendship is reestablished. As the hymn exclaims: "What a Friend we have in Jesus!"

#### A Hero for the Enslaved

Christ the King is Victor over evil in his death and resurrection, and he liberates the concentration camp of death, bringing us new life and hope. The issue here is God's struggle against Satan, complicated by humanity's rebellion against God and subsequent enslavement to sin, death, and the power of the devil. The human dilemma and the divine solution is well described by the author of Hebrews: Christ shared our flesh-and blood nature "that through death he might destroy him who has the power of death, that is the devil, and deliver those who through fear of death were subject to lifelong bondage" (Heb 2:14f., RSV).

Anyone who could and would do that would be a global hero. Christ is that hero. Only he can truly say, "Did it, been there, done that!" Stephanie, a good student with lots of gifts, mentioned as her heroes Washington and Lincoln. Claire mentioned M. L. King, Jr., and several of the U.S. women gymnasts. Aaron mentioned Flynn Taggart from the Doom video games and the "space opera" science fiction books based on the video game. "Fly" is a sensitive, introspective Marine, capable of great violence to survive and protect his equally aggressive "buddy," Arlene. Their relationship is platonic; but together they "blow away," by the dozens, demonic aliens bent on conquering Earth.

Surprisingly, half the youth identified parents or grandparents as their heroes. Nick said "Most of my friends would never admit if they did have family heroes." They'd rather name sports figures. Hannah agreed and said that many of her friends would choose movie stars. These Christian youth did not realize just how counter-cultural they were in their choices of heroes. It also underlines how relational, communal, even familial, are the categories toward which they gravitate.

Christ has answered the age-old cry of humanity to God: "Oh, that you would tear open the heavens, that you would come down!" (Isaiah 64:1). Or its modern counterpart from the hit song, "What if God was one of us!" The Christian can shout: "God is one of us!" It's God in the flesh, our Maker, who became our Redeemer. Nobody else could pull off such a cosmic rescue operation.

#### A Brother for the Encultured

Christ the Prophet has often been misunderstood as merely a teacher. But this prophet not only proclaims the word of the Lord: he is the Word. He reveals God in his person, as well as by his words and deeds. He is the personal representative of God to the world and the personal representative of

the world before God. Like the two-fold role of Priest and Victim, this double agent gets into trouble; the Prophet becomes a suffering servant. For here the issue is God's struggle with disobedient mortals.

Another way of picturing this role is as an older brother, one who sometimes terrifies or cajoles, teases with his stories, or challenges with his example. But when the youngsters are in confusion or danger, he is always there to help. All the youth were positive toward the idea of Christ as older brother for those who had and/or were older brothers. All mentioned situations in which the brother's mere presence was a protection to younger siblings; sometimes it took words or actions. Claire saw her older brother as a trusted confidant and guide. Stephanie found him helping and encouraging her. Nick knew he was someone to talk to when loneliness or fear threatened. Two brothers saw their roles as warning their sibling about "what's ahead" or "what's coming." A big brother goes where we cannot yet go, but comes back to tell us it's cool!

\* \* \*

We began talking about words and moved to new word-pictures as bridges to connect youth with *the* Word. I continued by surveying the generations and giving a Christian interpretation of the continuity and charges in human beings through the centuries and the decades. The many dimensions of sin are met by the manifold grace of our Lord Jesus Christ as Prophet, Priest, and King. But the biblical illiteracy and the historical amnesia of modern and post-modern Americans intensifies the generational and cultural barriers and calls for new experiments in communication of God's self-revelation in Christ, as well as new description of our human situation. Searching the words of youth to communicate the Word to youth, I have suggested the minor biblical themes of Christ as brother and friend and, as a contemporary paraphrase of *Christus Victor*, hero. I see these as ways to communicate the richness of Prophet, Priest, King and the other titles and offices of the Word made flesh. Hopefully these offices/titles will communicate hope to the newest generation in their experiences of being excluded, enslaved, and encultured.

Persaud has picked up Luther's point in his Large Catechism about the meaning of Jesus "becoming my Lord": it means that "he has redeemed me from sin, from the devil, from death, and from all evil."<sup>6</sup> As Christ's incarnation, crucifixion, and resurrection bridged the gap between the Creator and his fallen creation, so also our words and word-pictures must seek to communicate God's friendship to the excluded, in the one called a Friend of tax-collectors and sinners; God's liberation to the enslaved, in the conquering

Hero who defeated all our enemies; God's forgiveness to the encultured, in the Brother who shared our lot and took the punishment we deserved.

#### NOTES

1. The names of the six youth who talked with me about this project have been changed. All are Church members, most from the congregation I belong to. I also discussed the language and content of this article with three seminarians, Kristin Capel, Erik Goehner, and Eric Elkin. All have significant understanding and insight into youth. Paul Hill, Director of Wartburg Seminary's Center for Youth Ministries has given me significant help and encouragement. Eric Elkin's long experience in youth ministries, as well as his editorial skill, helped make this article readable.

2. I have been aided in the following analysis by Doug Murren, *The Baby Boomerang* (Ventura CA: Regal, 1990), George Barna's *Evangelism That Works and Generation Next* (Ventura CA: Regal, 1995), and Gary L. McIntosh, *Make Room for the Boom or Bust* (Grand Rapids: Revell, 1997). Their attempts to use the generational analysis to find evangelistic methods spurred me to look at the generations studies to inform a theology for youth evangelism. This study is in their debt.

3. "Day is Done," Words and music by Peter Yarrow (1969 Pepamae Music Corp.).

4. I have been aided in my understanding of youth as "outsiders" by Edward F. Marquardt, *Witnesses for Christ* (Minneapolis: Augsburg, 1981). The analysis by John S. Savage, *The Apathetic and Bored Church Member* (LEAD Consultants, PO Box 311, Pittsford, NY 14534) has been helpful in portraying the "drop-out routes" of youth from the Church in recent decades.

5. Ralph W. Quere, *Evangelical Witness* (Minneapolis: Augsburg, 1975).

6. T.E. Tappert (ed.), *The Book of Concord* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1959), 414.27. Cf. par. 31.

## A CALL FOR CONTEXTUAL EVANGELISTS

C. Thomas Wright

### Introduction

A young father told me, "I don't go to church anymore, it is boring and makes no difference in my life." As they pushed the stroller along his wife added, "we're just so busy we don't have time to go to another meeting." Later on they talked about their concerns for the homeless, the poor, and raising their daughter with "good values." The husband said "there don't seem to be any answers that are working."

Christians meet these attitudes every day. Consequently, we need to struggle with how to respond biblically and contextually to a population that is uncertain about the relevance of the church. Many people now see the church as an irrelevant meeting that offers no solutions to real problems.

These attitudes developed quickly after the radical social changes following WWII and since the Vietnam conflict. Crime rates and divorce rates have risen dramatically. Church involvement and financial contributions have declined. In one generation, people in the United States have moved from being friendly toward the church, to being suspicious about church, to feeling the church is irrelevant to them. These changes are a primary reason Christians need to create a church-based contextual evangelism strategy to reach people with changing attitudes.

There are other reasons a contextual evangelism strategy is needed. A major reason is the global percentage of lost people. Christians periodically have worked hard to seek and save the lost (Luke 19:10). However, contemporary Christians seem distracted from concern for the thousands who are going to hell. In many World A countries, less than one percent of the population profess to be Christians. *Only China, India, and Indonesia have more lost people than the United States.* Baptism figures are not even keeping up with the population growth. This poor growth is happening in the United States, where churches have tremendous resources in hand.

Effective evangelistic church growth will not happen without a contextual strategy. Personal experience around the globe indicates that a strategy will help direct activity so that there are results. Conversely, without a strategy there is a lot of activity with very limited results. An European friend at Oxford said "You yanks are so busy you invented the rocking chair to keep moving even when you are sitting still."

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It is sad how acceptable it has become to have activity without the results of converting the lost. It is easy to be so busy with what is important that priority issues, like reaching the lost, go unaddressed. The contextual strategy observations in this article will help the reader participate in the conversion growth of people through churches for the kingdom of God.

Living in a secularized culture means that Christians in the United States and other parts of the world have a change in attitudes. This means we need to look at contextual strategies for reaching people with the gospel of Jesus. Understanding secularization is important for the church to understand and penetrate the secular world view that replaced the Judeo-Christian world view.

### Sociocultural Changes

The context for the change in religious attitudes comes from at least five sociocultural changes in the last forty years. These and other changes are included in what is called modernity. The process of change in modernity is called secularization. Secularization often results in the philosophy of secularism. Secularism is characterized by declining church attendance and declining reliance on God, God's Word, or God's Church for instruction on decision making, moral guidance, or social interaction.

The figures are frightening. Since 1900, the percentage of the world's atheistic and non-religious peoples has grown from less than 1 percent to over 21 percent of the population. "Secularists, or people with no religious commitment, now form the second largest block in the world, second only to Christians and catching up fast."<sup>1</sup> Modernity, secularization, and secularism should not be used as synonyms.

Understanding these sociocultural changes, and their related attitudes, can help Christians respond to secularism and reclaim some influence in the community of the church.

1. Changes in Authority. Perhaps these people could be classified as "Homo-I'm-rightus." The primary issue of modernity seems to be the place of authority. The government and religion formerly were given places of high authority by the people. However, government and religion became self-serving and people lost confidence. As people lost confidence they sought new sources of authority. This search ultimately led to each individual's becoming his or her own authority. When that happens, democracy becomes anarchy, and as people who have no king, everyone does what is "right in his own eyes" (Judges 17:6). Even art became subjected to individual preference instead of a transcendent understanding of what is beautiful and skillfully accomplished. Religion became defined as "humankind seeking God" in contrast to Christianity's "God seeking humankind."

2. Changes in Affluence: "Homo-want-morus." The standard of living in the United States is one of the highest in the world. Everyone wants more and better possessions. However, not everyone can get more. The welfare state has nearly gone bankrupt. President Roosevelt's and President Johnson's wars on poverty failed. The gap is widening between the "haves" and the "have-nots."

Attitudes of affluence have crept into the churches. Some beautiful and comfortable churches care for members but no longer reach out to the lost. Dangerous levels of debt are mounting in homes and churches. Growing numbers of people and governments are turning to lotteries to get rich quick in spite of conclusive research that far more people are hurt than helped.

But affluence is not all that people hoped for. Working late hours or multiple jobs alienates family, friends, and faith. Even the popular television soap operas that highlight wealth and power show the widespread loneliness and dissatisfaction of the upper classes. They also show one of the dangers of affluence. People who can have anything they want seem to lose a sense of personal discipline and social responsibility. Hence the well publicized examples of hedonism, greed, and self-centered power. People spend billions on convenience and personal pleasure items such as makeup and dog food but have little concern for improving the plight of the less fortunate. In spite of increasing affluence, the relative per capita giving in many churches is lower now than during the great depression of the 1930s.

3. Changes in Technology. "Homo-electronicus." Technology has been a wonderful benefit to the church. But the danger comes when churches allow the high-tech to replace the high-touch. People are "cocooning" more in their homes. Technology is allowing the development of a nation of isolationists who have little personal interaction with other living humans. Technology also can have a depersonalizing and dehumanizing effect, resulting in people as "numbers" instead of souls.

4. Changes in Sexual Mores: "Homo-in-lustus." Tremendous changes have occurred from the free-love movements of the 1960s. Biblical responsibility and commitment have been replaced by convenience and disparagement. Divorce rates have reached fifty percent. Radical feminism and homosexual rights have exceeded even ancient Roman standards. Advertising seems to believe that nothing sells without sexual innuendo. Even humor has devolved to coarse language and sexual inference.

5. Changes in Ethnicity (Pluralism), "Homo-tolerantus." The young woman was wearing a t-shirt with the words "Orthodox Druid." She traced her religious ancestry to the pagans and Druids of ancient England. As I talked to her she stated the ultimate contemporary insult, "You Christians are so intolerant of other paths to God."

The monocultural United States has changed radically in the last forty years. There are now more than 600 ethnic groups in the United States. Major school systems must work with students from dozens of languages. There are more than 1900 different religious faiths, cults, and sects in the United States.<sup>2</sup> What sociologists called a melting pot of cultures actually became a stew pot. Each ingredient maintained its identity while flavoring the rest.

This pluralism has resulted in widespread syncretism and tolerance. The wide variety of religious choices has overwhelmed some people. They respond with confusion or uniform acceptance of all options. There is a fear that saying yes in commitment to one religion is saying no to all the others. So people want to keep their options open and accept multiple paths to God. This response includes a consumer mind-set that people come "shopping" for the church and programs that give them the most satisfaction. There is little consideration about what they can give to the church and greater emphasis on what the church can give to them. Tolerance of multiple ways has reached the height, or depth, of political correctness. There is widespread misunderstanding about the source and content of God-given truth. Some people are responding to pluralism with racism. Racist activities and confrontations are increasing in the United States and abroad. Pluralism affects all of us and our attitudes.

These sociocultural changes are affecting the people in the communities and in the seats of our churches. Contextual evangelism provides ways to begin and develop a response.

### Contextual Evangelism

Many Christians are searching for a biblical response to the contemporary culture. They are interested in ways to reach lost people with the gospel of Jesus Christ. These Christians should become contextual evangelists. A contextual evangelist is able to reach people with the biblical balance between living in the secular world and not becoming too much like the world. Jesus presented this tension in John 17:16, "My prayer is not that you take them out of the world but that you protect them from the evil one. They are not of the world, even as I am not of it." (NIV, italics added). Or as Paul continued in Romans 12:2, "Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind."

A balanced contextual presentation comes from learning about the context of the society and culture in which the gospel is being presented. It begins with understanding the nature of contextual evangelism. Contextual evangelization can be defined as: *presenting the uncompromised gospel of*

*Jesus Christ in the sociocultural, ethnic, and linguistic context of the hearer so he or she may respond and be disciplined into a church.*

Contextual evangelism gives a starting place in any church or missionary field of service. It can be further understood by looking at the parts of the definition.

#### Understanding the Uncompromised Gospel

In order not to compromise the gospel, we must understand and affirm the core. The early disciples of Christ seem consistently to present seven components as a core of the gospel message: (a) the prophecy of Christ's coming; (b) Jesus' miracles and teachings; (c) his atoning death on the cross; (d) Jesus' physical resurrection; (e) the promise of his second coming for judgment; (f) the sending of the Holy Spirit; and (g) humankind's need for repentance, belief, and baptism.

Peter presents the core of the gospel in Acts 2:14-42 and again in Acts 10:34-43. Paul's use of the core of the gospel is evidenced in Acts 13:16-41. He even weaves the core gospel into his defense before Agrippa in Acts 26:1-29. The gospel core remains uncompromised in each instance. That uncompromised gospel is essential for conversion, growth, doctrinal correctness, and discerning truth from error.<sup>3</sup>

There are two areas that may affect the impact of the gospel: syncretism and folk religion. Proper contextual evangelism prevents syncretism, defined as: *a blending of former religious or cultural practices which results in a diluted gospel.*

Contextual evangelists must be aware of the dangers of local folk religions. These are composed of traditional activities and religious practices that are created by human beings trying to find God. Folk religions often compromise the demands of the gospel and add some often ridiculous requirements for salvation. There are two ways to recognize folk religion. First, look for religious practices that are too exclusive or too inclusive. Second, discover the religious practices that rely on outward activity instead of inward change. The influence of folk religion is very common in American and other cultural contexts.

The core of the gospel must remain uncompromised and undiluted. However, it should be presented with clarity in the context of the hearer.

#### Understanding the Sociocultural Contexts of the People Involved

Suppose a Martian walked into your office and wanted to know about Earthlings. The kind of information you would tell him shows the importance of learning sociocultural contexts. Contextual evangelism communicates by relating to the sociocultural, ethnic, and linguistic background of the hearers. Obtaining this kind of information applies equally in deepest Africa and the suburban American South. Jesus, Peter, and Paul were sensitive to whom they were speaking. They varied their illustrations and presentation styles so the gospel could be understood and accepted. They did not use every component of the gospel core in every presentation. But each component was presented over time. These early contextual evangelists successfully presented the uncompromised gospel in a way that gained response (or reaction) but prevented syncretism.

Using background information in a way that encourages a positive response requires an understanding of the ideas, practices, and attitudes of the hearer and the presenter. This involves understanding peoples' world views. This world view study also helps identify the barriers and bridges that should be addressed if Christianity is to have the opportunity to make an impact on people. Understanding the religion-based or irreligious world view is important in communicating the gospel effectively. World view study helps the contextual evangelist to learn about the culture he or she brings into a cross cultural encounter as well as the context of the target audience.

#### World View/Cultural Understanding Survey

It is difficult to understand cultural context without a tool. A "World View/Cultural Understanding Survey" is provided as a beginning point in culture study. It lists ten cultural elements that are helpful to understand sociocultural contexts. Anything you learn about your culture and the target culture will improve communication. Some of these components will not apply in all cross-cultural situations. The components are divided into two tiers of relative importance.

The first tier helps provide information on beliefs, values and relationships.

1. Religious Practices. What is the religious background of the target population? What are the folk religions and practices added to the formal religion? What do they believe about God, gods, sin, salvation, and hell? Determine the percentage of people who are cultural Christians (or other primary religion) and how many are converts.

2. Core Values. What are the core values? What is considered good or bad, unimportant versus imperative?
3. Personhood, Personality Traits. Who is considered an important person and how does the social structure define importance? How do occupations relate to social rank? (i.e., "blue collar" versus "white collar"). What is the social structure? Determine what is considered polite behavior. Some Americans who see themselves as aggressive leaders are seen by many Asians to be loud and rude. Be careful to avoid stereotypes.
4. Communication Patterns. Determine what is important to communication. Look at the spoken and non-verbal language(s). Find out what language is used in the home and what language is used in commerce. Remember, our religious vocabulary is complex and very specialized. A person who may be functionally fluent in a second language may still not understand theological or other complex concepts. It is always best to communicate important issues in the primary language. I have seen churches put all Hispanics or all Asians in one group regardless of linguistic and cultural differences. This is like putting Scandinavians, North Americans, and South Americans together because they are blue-eyed and blond-haired. Discover any offensive body language traits. It is very impolite in Thai culture to cross the legs so the bottom of the foot points at another person. In the Middle Eastern culture the "OK" sign is offensive.
5. The Role of Family and Friends. What is the accepted and expected behavior for family members, clan members, and friends? How are people greeted? Should a veil, hat, or other special clothing be worn? Personal space for some ethnic groups is often half that of some Anglo-Americans. Consequently, conversations are carried out just inches from each other's face. I never did get used to the Thai custom of males lightly holding the hand or arm of other males as a friendship gesture.

The second tier provides general cultural information that can reduce cross-cultural stress in communication.

6. The attitude toward money and possessions. Determine how wealth is defined and managed. Is barter an accepted form of trade? Who controls the check book? In matriarchal cultures (or families) the woman controls the finances.
7. Average education and its importance. What is the average educational level and literacy rate? Is education considered important? What is the proper communication level for the education level?

8. Use of time. This component has no application in many cross-cultural settings. But I have seen many people add unnecessary stress because of "rubber-band time." Many agrarian or non-industrialized cultures do not have a rigid concept of time as many do in the west. Find out what is considered an important use of time and what is considered wasted time.
9. Number and importance of customs and holidays. Find out when the target population celebrates New Year's Day or a national holiday. Find out the cultural importance and ways of participation.
10. Kinds of food. Learn polite table manners and how to use silverware or hands properly. Many cultures that do not use silverware eat with their right hands only. Find out the fellowship importance tied to certain meals. Fellowship across the table is a universal characteristic and should be utilized.

Understanding the context of the presenter and the hearer assists clear communication of an uncompromised gospel. Strategies must be contextual to the time and place. No plan is universally effective for all of time. People resist change. We get comfortable. We have to challenge people to get outside of the comfort zones for the sake of reaching the lost. "Change only occurs where there is discontent."<sup>4</sup> Acknowledge the discontent and fear with the current global situation. Help the people see the Bible has solutions but we have to change to make sure these solutions make it to the lost.

### Conclusion

Contextual evangelists have to be careful to understand the culture we live in. It helps to recognize that Christians are being assimilated to the philosophy of secularism. The extent and ways that Christians become assimilated in the secular culture will affect their lifestyle witness. The acceptability of an activity or event by the culture is not the same as its acceptability according to the Bible. People must determine if the culture or the Bible is more qualified to determine what is acceptable behavior. It was considered easy when Christians assigned certain cultural activities as inconsistent with Christianity. Some Christians in the Southern United States were told not to dance, play cards, drink alcohol, or smoke. The folk religion then developed that if people act like Christians they are Christians. Internal change brought on by repentance and conversion had been left out of the equation.

At the same time, people knew that the Bible did not explicitly forbid any of those cultural activities. Culture and theology became confused and so did the people. Now the secular culture feels it can dictate acceptable behavior with no regard to Biblical instruction. The uncompromised gospel can help Christians make the distinction.

#### NOTES

1. Guinness, Os. In Philip Sampson, Vinay Samuel, Chris Sugden, eds. *Faith and Modernity* (Oxford: Regnum, 1994), 340-343.
2. *The Encyclopedia of American Religions* provides excellent information on the extent and variety of pluralism in the United States.
3. Discussions on the core of the gospel are not intended to be creedal. C.H. Dodd called it the Kerygma. *The Baptist Faith and Message* also provides further clarification.
4. Dayton, Eduard R., and David A. Fraser. *Planning Strategies for World Evangelization* (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans, rev. 1990), 263.

### THE UNIVERSITY AT THE CROSSROADS: CRISIS AND OPPORTUNITY IN HIGHER EDUCATION

Gary W. Deddo

The University, following the "revolution" of the 1960s, now stands at a kind of crossroads. Wide recognition of this was heralded by Alan Bloom's, *The Closing of the American Mind*. But other less widely known books such as Paige Smith's, *Killing the Spirit*, Derek Bok's *Beyond the Ivory Tower*, and Roger Kimball's *Tenured Radicals* also pointed in much the same direction. For those concerned about the university these books illuminated the nature of the crisis. The authors saw it as a moral and spiritual crisis which affected the entire character of higher education itself. They pointed out that higher education was on the verge of cardiac arrest with very little sense as to where to turn for help. Each possible door of exit had been bolted shut, one at a time.

The process of this closing has been a long one, perhaps beginning as long as two hundred years ago. Many alternative goals for higher education have been closed off. Doors leading to Western culture, to history, to moral philosophy, to self, to science, to technology, to gods, to God, have all been sealed off. These "closings" of the American mind raised the ultimate question as to the point and motive for higher education itself. There is now no consensus.

Despite all the changes, many educators remain concerned about society in general and hope that a university education will contribute, somehow, to its well being. Some have discerned a need to reintegrate "values" back into education. They perceive that without a moral aim higher education cannot contribute to a better society. In fact, it may contribute, instead, to its degeneration. But hard questions remain: how to integrate values? and whose values? For those concerned about the moral quality of our society as a whole these questions must first be answered.

This voice of moral concern is countered in the present university context, however, by another voice--one of moral relativism and skepticism. This live and vocal option arises from a more radical wing and has gathered some significant support: these proclaim that knowledge is for the sake of power to achieve political ends for the group with which any individual might identify. They are skeptical about there being any discernable moral right for all. Promotion of this point of view has had the effect of coloring the debate,

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but it has seemingly failed to gain monolithic support. Perhaps this is because its self-defeating nature was recognized at some level, although seldom explicitly noted. It collapses into an amoral social Darwinism of the strongest group prevailing with no regard for others, especially minorities.

The mind set of the university is split along another line as well, which underlies the divide between the moral optimists and skeptics. There has been for a long time a perceived split between the two worlds of facts and values.<sup>1</sup> The university itself is structured along these lines. The natural or hard sciences are devoted to what are regarded as facts. There, no one is developing his or her own chemistry or physics or engineering. On the other side of the institutional academic chart are the humanities and social sciences. Here individuals and groups are expected to develop their own philosophy of life and set of values.

On the humanities side the issue of values is unavoidable. Interestingly enough, no matter what side of the institutional chart they work on, most everyone in the university world agrees that there is a vast divide between the worlds of fact and value. Science is largely regarded as being value free or neutral by scientists or those in the humanities. Most acknowledge that in the "real" world the two, although separate, cannot be kept entirely isolated. Science and its derivative, technology, affect and are affected by society and the aggregate of its goals and values.

Also, most in the university are skeptics over the issue of values, whether they are in the sciences or the humanities. In the humanities you are expected to have and develop your own values, philosophies, and religions--those that largely justify yourself and your own or your-own group's point of view. These values and commitments, for the most part, of course, are to play no significant role in shaping education itself. Their proper role remains within one's personal and private life entirely, insulated from academic life. Most of those in the sciences seem to agree. While the practice of science may be regarded as public and value free, scientists themselves must have their own values by which to conduct at least their private lives outside the laboratory.

In the natural or hard sciences there is still great confidence that its history and traditional methods are indispensable, ought to be passed on, and that progress will be made. No one is at present inventing their own physics, chemistry or biology. Here there is regard for public universal truth. Science alone is privileged to provide the only basis on which to argue the merits of public programs, policies, and laws. However, there have been clear challenges to the assertion that the practice of science is or can be indeed totally value free.<sup>2</sup> This point is not yet widely acknowledged.

Many educators on both sides of the chart realize that the university should be more than a vocational/technical school. But what more? and on what basis? This is especially a problem since science itself is regarded as having nothing to say to the values issues in higher education and there is no alternative source for establishing shared values.

The overall educational philosophy of the university is really directed by the humanities oriented disciplines. Here skepticism or an unprincipled relativism still has the upper hand. But these orientations for directing higher education are infertile. The modern university is like a reforming smoker. It knows its skepticism and relativism are a danger to its health, but it just can't kick the habit. Such a basis cannot coalesce into a stable philosophical position or deliver a comprehensive program of learning or research. The university in its present state is really a multi-versity with no center. Within this framework there is no way to heal the split of life into isolated parts of neutral facts and biased values. In fact, it perpetuates it.

The university cannot forget recent history which demonstrates the folly of human pretension when it seeks to gain for itself all knowledge and power for the universal goal of liberating all humankind. Utopian and totalitarian dreams have turned into nightmares. Yet its reaction to this false universalism and towards a radical skepticism prevents it from taking up this still cherished goal in any serious manner whatsoever. Such is the present crisis of the university. It wants to serve all humanity but has no basis on which to pursue any such goal. Moral relativism collapses into a moral anarchy of the survival of the fittest.

Many Christians have taken note of this new phase of the crisis in the university and have asked if it signals a further collapse of Western civilization or a new opportunity for Christian witness. It is probably both. How might those of us in campus ministry respond to this situation?

Rather than speak generally, let me speak out of my experience over the past twenty years with InterVarsity Christian Fellowship, USA. There have been some visionaries within IVCF who have had their eyes and ears open to these developments over the years and have wondered what the implications were for campus ministry.

IVCF has always had a concern for the university itself--what it is and how it serves or fails to serve people to the glory of God. Human beings are learners. Learning can be faithfully pursued. We have grasped the obvious: the university is a tremendous culture-shaping institution, for good and/or ill. It is the conduit through which most every professional must pass. Virtually all those who teach in higher education are the products of graduate and undergraduate education, whether at secular universities or Christian colleges. So, we have been concerned not just about the individual fish swimming in

the pond of the university but about the pond itself. We have been asking what are God's own purposes for the university and, as Charles Malik did several decades ago, we have prayerfully asked, "What does Jesus Christ think of the university now?"<sup>3</sup>

We have realized all along, however, that our ministry had little effect upon the university itself. Why? In an informal talk given recently for IVCF grads and faculty at Princeton University, historian Mark Noll pointed out that evangelicals have not affected institutions of higher education very much.<sup>4</sup> He pointed out several reasons for this. Evangelicalism is essentially a renewal movement within Protestantism. As such it has been activist, populist, and largely anti-institutional. These are strengths in regard to its renewal function. And evangelical renewal has been crucial to Protestantism.<sup>5</sup> However, its activism mitigates against intellectual reflection. Its populism mitigates against valuing tradition, history. Its anti-institutional posture mitigates against any long-term commitment to building or shaping institutions.

If Christians, no matter what sociological sector of the Church they occupy, are to influence higher education and the life of the mind, they will have to value intellectual reflection, the tradition and cultural heritage of learning, and invest in institutions of higher education. This will put a strain on individuals and organizations coming out of an evangelical orientation. But bringing evangelical renewal together with a concern for higher education does not represent an incoherent position even if there is a distinction in calling and focus. The Lordship of Christ over all of life pushes us in this very direction.

Recent developments within IVCF have shed some light on developing more effective strategies in campus ministry, bringing together the value of the life of the mind and educational institutions and a concern for evangelical involvement.

IVCF has always had small satellite groups of graduate students formed around the primary undergraduate fellowship. In the late 1980s, however, we saw these graduate groups grow to unprecedented sizes of forty, sixty, and a hundred participants at six or seven graduate schools around the country. And they were saying to us, "You knew what was helpful to do when we were undergraduates. Where are the resources now, when we need them even more?"

Out of this awareness of the crisis of the university and the felt need expressed by graduate students, a specialized ministry to grads was initiated. I joined a small team of six scattered around the country to attempt to design and execute a very much expanded vision of ministry to a neglected aspect of the university, the graduate student. This ministry has now grown to include more than 3,000 graduate students at more than eighty universities.

What became clear is that our strategy to minister to and within the university had a huge hole in it. We had major resources aimed at undergraduates and some at faculty, but none at graduate students. They were certainly a part of the university, and at larger research universities they do a substantial amount of teaching. Part of the reason for this lack was, of course, that we still do not have enough staff to cover undergraduate needs, but some was due to lack of vision. Perhaps also, true to our evangelical activism, we in our undergraduate groups first take note of and nurture those who exhibit more church oriented kinds of leadership, such as small group leadership, organization, evangelism, and up-front gifts, such as emceeing, leading music, or public speaking. Those with academic promise were often left on the sidelines. We are now attempting to correct that myopic vision.

Once we began to consider a specialized graduate ministry we began to see even more how strategic it was. Over the years it was clear that many teaching faculty felt ill-prepared to stand up to the pressures to privatize their faith. In many cases they also were isolated and felt relatively unsupported by the Christian community. It has become obvious that they need better preparation and support, beginning in their graduate student days. What we have come to appreciate is that investment in today's graduate students pays off in tomorrow's faculty. And faculty play a vital part in shaping the institution of the university, especially where there is a vision to do so. Furthermore, university administrators are often drawn from the teaching faculty as well.

We realized that almost all faculty, even those at Christian colleges, were at one time graduate students at secular universities. It was often at this point in their lives that the connections between their faith and vocation began to become compartmentalized, rather than inter-related. Consequently, a ministry to graduate students must address the issue of compartmentalizing faith, learning, and vocation. Secular universities, however, give no encouragement to this task and provide no resources. A campus ministry can provide exactly these two things. Doing so would enable future faculty to get a head start.

In particular, we recognized several challenges to be met. First, we saw a great need for more in-depth biblical and theological training for graduate students, which would be at a level more commensurate with their academic studies.

Second, we recognized that they also need a vision for what a Christian oriented scholarship might look like in a secular university and on what basis they could recommend it and themselves to a secular university. George Marsden has just recently articulated this vision with persuasive clarity in his

book, *The Outrageous Idea of Christian Scholarship*. I regard this a must reading for any Christian who works in the academic arena.

Third, we saw a great need for the development of peer support before entering their professions, support which they could continue to draw upon later on. It became obvious that we needed to provide opportunities for the mentoring of younger Christian scholars by more mature ones. We also realized the need to make graduate students aware of the importance of becoming involved in, or even helping to establish, Christian professional organizations, like the American Scientific Affiliation or the Society of Christian Philosophers. We see our Graduate Student Fellowship as a pre-professional guild, not just another Bible study.

These insights have influenced greatly our strategies for ministry. Our long-term goal is to strengthen Christians for their professional and academic service in the name of Jesus Christ, while at the same time preparing them to affect the professions and institutions in which they serve. We hope that budding faculty members will be able to have a significant role in shaping the future of the university. We hope to assist them in and help prepare them for that calling, as they make their way through that intersection of higher education and vocation called graduate school. It may be forty years before the real fruit of our ministry becomes apparent.

Perhaps I should detail how we work this strategy out in the local campus setting. Again, rather than being general, I shall refer to my experience in campus ministry at Princeton University, where I have been locally based for the past seven years. During our first few years together a vision among IVCF ministry staff and students grew for shaping such campus ministry to graduate students on individual campuses. This is the vision that now informs the InterVarsity Princeton Graduate Student Fellowship. It contains the following four essential components:

1. At the core is the concern to nurture the spiritual growth of the graduate students.
2. Surrounding this concern (we graph it like a donut) is a concern to develop a campus fellowship through which its members can encourage and support one another.
3. In addition, we emphasize evangelism and outreach. Under this concern we try to prepare each graduate student to share and interpret the Christian faith within the university context. This most often happens among friends within a department. But we also sponsor campus-wide events designed to encourage the university community to ask again the big questions about truth and life.
4. Finally, and perhaps most importantly, we want to prepare our graduate students better for the intellectual, moral, and institutional challenges

that lie within their professional and academic fields. We refer to this as the integration of faith with learning and vocation. This involves biblical and theological input and interaction with other Christians who are wrestling with these issues. Access to this dimension comes mostly by way of books, articles, and papers, along with a few local mentors.

To bolster this crucial area we have also organized several summer institutes. These are one- to two-week-long intensive gatherings of fifteen or so selected graduate students from around the country. They have met together with a senior faculty member in their field for the presentation of papers, discussion, and mentoring along with prayer, worship, and devotional reading of Scripture. So far, we have sponsored these in the fields of the Visual Arts, English Literature, Economics, and Political Science.

Our strategy for working out at the local level each element of the vision can again be best illustrated by relating what we have done at the Princeton Graduate Student Fellowship, drawing from the description in the brochure we give to every incoming graduate student.

#### Spiritual Formation

We desire to cultivate a warm and vibrant relationship with the Lord Jesus, practice the spiritual disciplines, and deepen our spiritual lives. We need to know and understand the Scriptures and apply them to our lives. Regular and sustained prayer is essential.

The heart of the Graduate Christian Fellowship at Princeton is our weekly Tuesday meeting of worship, corporate prayer, and group Bible study. We share the burdens and concerns of graduate life, worship Jesus Christ, and pursue in-depth study of the Bible and the Christian classics. At all of our meetings, we spend time in prayer for each other and for those around us. We worship God through the singing of historic Christian hymns, as well as contemporary praise songs.

Over the past year, we have studied the Book of James, the Sermon on the Mount, the Letter to the Hebrews, Richard Foster's *Celebration of Discipline*, and Dietrich Bonhoeffer's *The Cost of Discipleship*. During the coming academic year we plan to embark on a study of Philippians, during our Tuesday night fellowship meetings.

### Christian Community

Christ has called us not only to himself but also to one another as his people. That applies to those in the graduate community as much as to everyone else. Fellowship among graduate students is necessary for personal growth and corporate witness.

We need the support and accountability of like-minded peers and mentors. The erosive effects of individualism and the isolation of departmental life need to be countered in Christian community. The Princeton fellowship brings together graduate students from across the disciplinary boundaries, and from all over the world (China, Russia, Scotland, Germany, Holland, and Canada), bearing witness to the diversity of God's kingdom.

By coming together for meals, by sharing the triumphs and the trials of graduate life, and by reaching out to others in Christian service, we hope to foster a spirit of Christian community and love. We have weekly meals together, have taken field trips, participated in weekend retreats with graduate students from Columbia, SUNY at Stony Brook, Cornell, Syracuse, Johns Hopkins, and the University of Pennsylvania, engaged in service projects, and enjoyed various kinds of social events.

### Evangelism and Service

Not ashamed of the gospel, we corporately and individually bear witness to Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior. Men and women in the graduate community need to see Jesus as a live option, one worthy of their wholehearted devotion. As Christ was sent into the world to bear witness to the good news of the redeeming God and to be a servant, so he has sent us into the world to do likewise.

In our weekly meetings we concentrate on equipping each other for ministry in our everyday lives. We share stories of how God is working in the lives of those around us in our departments, our families, and among our friends. The Princeton Graduate group has had the privilege of nurturing and encouraging several young Christians from all over the world.

On the Princeton campus we have sponsored lectures relating Christian faith to the concerns of the University. Over the past several years we have hosted lectures by physicist and Anglican priest John Polkinghorne on "Christian Faith and Science," professor of psychology Paul Vitz on "The Psychology of Atheism," Philip Johnson on "Is Darwinism Dogma?," as well as a dramatic performance of the Gospel of Luke by Broadway actor Bruce Kuhn.

Finally, as an expression of Christian service, members of our group have volunteered at soup-kitchens in Trenton and New Brunswick and several have helped out with the local Habitat for Humanity project.

### Integration of Faith, Learning, and Vocation

We seek to understand the implications of the Christian faith for our studies. We seek a unity of truth in often fragmented and fragmenting institutions. We want to bring our academic lives under the lordship of Jesus Christ.

One semester our regular Tuesday meetings focused on academic careers as an expression of one's Christian calling and vocation. A smaller group within the Princeton fellowship continues to meet together monthly with undergraduates and faculty to discuss the integration of Christian faith and scholarship. They have read works by Reinhold Niebuhr, Karl Barth, and other Christian thinkers. We have also discussed such works as Mark Noll's *The Scandal of the Evangelical Mind*, Mark Schwehn's *Exiles from Eden*, and Lesslie Newbigin's *Foolishness to the Greeks*.

### Concluding Thoughts

Within IVCF we recognize the present crisis in higher education as a crisis of identity and a loss of direction, but also see within this a tremendous opportunity. The University stands at a crossroads with limited vision and few alternatives in sight. Yet it knows it must take a step. It must move forward.

We hope to prepare today's graduate students to be tomorrow's faculty and professionals who will contribute to the shaping of the University and our society by being articulate and informed participants in the life of the University and its crisis.

We hope that such participation may have a renewing effect upon the University if not our whole society. We hope the University will grasp in a new way its calling to truly be a marketplace of ideas, where each and everyone may give a passionate and intelligent presentation of his or her viewpoints, including any religious basis for them. And we look forward to a time when there can be vigorous, respectful and civil debate, which contributes not only to the search for truth but also to the finding and the dissemination of it, in part if not in whole.<sup>6</sup>

Our prayer is that the university will become a place where one can at least begin, as the Apostle Paul has said, to ". . . search for God and perhaps grope for him and find him. . ." (Acts 17:27).

May God grant us his blessing that we may contribute to and be prepared for that day!

#### NOTES

1. See Lesslie Newbigin, *Foolishness to the Greeks* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1986).
2. See Thomas Kuhn, *The Structure of Scientific Revolution* (University of Chicago, 1962); Michael Polanyi, *Personal Knowledge* (University of Chicago, 1958); Roy Clouser, *The Myth of Religious Neutrality: An Essay on the Hidden Role of Religious Belief in Theories* (University of Notre Dame, 1991); Thomas F. Torrance, *Transformation and Convergence in the Frame of Knowledge: Explorations in the Interrelations of Scientific and Theological Enterprise* (Eerdmans, 1984); Phillip Johnson, *Reason in the Balance, The Case Against Naturalism in Science, Law, and Education* (InterVarsity Press, 1995).
3. Charles Habib Malik, *A Christian Critique of the University* (Downers Grove: IVP, 1982).
4. See Noll's *The Scandal of the Evangelical Mind* (Eerdmans, 1994) for the background for his characterizations.
5. See Thomas Oden's *Requiem* (Abingdon, 1995) for his reflections on the drastic effect the marginalization of evangelicals have had on mainline Protestantism and the hope he sees in evangelical participation.
6. For resources on these topics I would recommend Richard Mouw's *Uncommon Decency, Christian Civility in an Uncivilized World* (IVP, 1992); Mark R. Schwehn's *Exiles from Eden* (Oxford, 1993); Lesslie Newbigin's *The Gospel in Pluralist Society* (Eerdmans, 1989); Harry Blamires' *The Christian Mind: Servant*, 1978; and Richard John Neuhaus' *The Naked Public Square* (Eerdmans, 1984).

### CREATING AND CRITIQUING EVANGELISTIC METHODS

David M. Gustafson

The prophets of ecclesiastical change are beckoning the church to replace outmoded methods of evangelism with methods that are current, relevant and practical.<sup>1</sup> I concur that if our objective is to reach as many people as possible with the gospel, innovation is not an option but a necessity. Our culture is dynamic, ever changing, and in recent years changing more and faster than ever. Karl Barth summarized the challenge when he said, "[The Church] is on a way which is surrounded by a continually changing landscape and in which it is itself continually subject to change--but in which it can never become anything other than itself, in which it is obliged and summoned always to be the same and continually to maintain itself as the same in forms which are always new."<sup>2</sup>

The solution to reach an ever-changing world lies in a metamorphosis of methodologies, shaping contemporary strategies of evangelism without compromising our purpose and message. The gospel must be communicated in dynamic equivalents--forms that translate the good news to new generations.<sup>3</sup> This calls for creativity and originality of evangelistic methods. It calls for theoreticians and practitioners under the direction of the Holy Spirit to generate new ideas of evangelism, brainstorming about ways to reach people in today's postmodern world.

This most often occurs at the level of the local church or Christian ministry where individuals and groups launch new methods of evangelism, freewheeling outside existing paradigms, with cues from contemporary culture and human needs.<sup>4</sup> Innovation follows by piggybacking on the ideas of others, sharpening and refining methods for particular contexts.

Of equal importance, however, is the critique of methods against sound criteria. New methods should be tested and observed. If found wanting, they should be modified, recast, or scrapped. Such analysis is not to discredit a method for lack of a better endeavor but to provide constructive methodological criticism.<sup>5</sup> The seriousness of our mission to make disciples of all nations should motivate us to strive for excellent methods, rather than settle for substandard or even average ones. Without such criteria, there is a tendency toward imprecision and ineffectiveness. On the other hand, informed methods answer critical questions to ensure accuracy and effectiveness in the praxis of evangelism. Our goal is sound methods, not simply any method.

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So what are the criteria by which evangelistic methods are created and critiqued? This article offers four general tests of soundness and asks corresponding critical questions.

### Biblical Test

Evangelistic method is built upon the foundation of the Bible, the final authority for Christian faith and practice. Its teaching is the force that drives us in our mission to make disciples and remains the final critic--the ultimate standard throughout the creative process by which methods are tested.

While the New Testament describes forms of evangelism which may be useful today, we are not limited to first century models. The Bible is clear about our responsibility to proclaim the good news but less clear about specific ways to proclaim it. We know that the early Christians "spoke the word of God boldly" (Acts 4:31), but how were they bold? Forms or patterns are not outlined in detail, leading us to conclude that there is freedom as to how the biblical imperative should be carried out.

The biblical test asks, "*Does a method serve the biblical mandate to make disciples, and is it consistent with biblical teaching?*" All evangelistic activities should contribute to the larger picture of proclaiming the good news and seeing people receive Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior. As well, evangelistic methods should honor various doctrines of the Bible, holding them in creative tension, satisfying each without compromising any.

When I attended a planning meeting at the Fresno Airport several years ago, with a well-known speaker and some prominent pastors and lay people who had gathered to discuss a city-wide outreach, one person commented, "If we spend a million dollars and one soul comes to faith in Christ, it will have been worth it!"

While this statement has high regard for the disciple-making mandate and promotes the doctrine of the worth of a soul, it neglects the doctrine of wise stewardship. The person's statement holds up Jesus' teaching, "Does he not leave the ninety-nine in the open country and go after the lost sheep until he finds it?" (Luke 15:4). However, it fails to consider Jesus' words, "Do not give dogs what is sacred; do not throw your pearls to pigs," (Matthew 7:6). While a soul is of eternal value, we should not be foolish with our resources, including the gospel itself. Otherwise it would be possible to justify all sorts of ineffective methods.

A sound method harmonizes all relevant verses of the Bible in order to reflect what Scripture teaches. A much better plan would be for a person to suggest a creative method in which a thousand dollars is spent and a hundred people come to faith in Christ. The doctrine of the worth of a soul and the doctrine of wise stewardship would then be held in creative tension.

### Theoretical Test

While evangelistic method is built upon the foundation of the Bible, the framework includes realities from supportive fields of study, forming a sound and stable structure. God has revealed truth in the Bible but he also expects us to apply intelligence and to exhibit savvy, being "as shrewd as snakes and as innocent as doves," (Matthew 10:16). All truth is God's truth and we are wise to draw upon related disciplines which integrate knowledge that supports biblical teaching without contradicting it.<sup>6</sup> This includes principles from fields such as communication theory, education theory, cultural anthropology, psychology, and sociology.

The theoretical test is concerned that methods be sound and balanced, observing realities that are true to Scripture and supportive disciplines. Methods that fail to observe these realities are like an airplane whose builders did not observe all the laws of aerodynamics in the plane's design. While the plane may fly, it lacks the efficiency and endurance of a well engineered aircraft.

The theoretical test asks questions which address the theoretical-theological soundness of a method, including the following:

1. *Does the method demonstrate initiative, whereby the witnesses reach out intentionally to those outside of faith in Christ?* Since God has initiated a relationship with human beings, his children are called in like manner to initiate relationships with others based upon his initiative and love for humankind.<sup>7</sup> Charles Colson states, "We need to take the church to the people. . . Jesus didn't set up counseling hours in the Temple; he went into the homes of the most notorious sinners, to the places where the lame, the beggars, the needy could be found."<sup>8</sup>

2. *Does the method include preparation of the witnesses to operate within the spiritual realm of the world, drawing upon spiritual resources in order to overcome spiritual barriers?* Evangelism is a truth and power encounter.<sup>9</sup> A sound method, therefore, prepares believers to operate within the spiritual realm, applying the authority of Scripture, practicing the priority of prayer, and knowing the reality of the Holy Spirit.

3. *Does the method observe the cultural and social context, communicating the gospel in ways that are relevant and meaningful to the target group?* An effective method is culturally consistent, not counter-cultural. It observes the principle that the gospel is communicated most naturally and effectively along established networks of relationships.<sup>10</sup> It promotes the meeting of people on common ground---a cultural and social context without intimidating religious overtones on the one hand, and moral compromise on the other.

4. *Does the method relate personal needs to the gospel, showing its relevance to specific areas of life, respecting the context and circumstances of individuals?* A sound method not only addresses the spiritual and social contexts but also the personal context. Each individual possesses a unique background and environment, and experiences certain needs, aspirations, fears, yearnings, problems, frustrations and hopes, all forming his or her personal realm. A sound method relates felt needs to the foremost need, showing how those needs reveal the greatest need, the need for forgiveness of sin.<sup>11</sup>

5. *Does the method demonstrate credibility, whereby the witnesses model Christ-like character and exhibit a positive presence through their words and actions?* We are perceived as credible witnesses when we are characterized by integrity, authenticity, reliability, charity, and unity, predisposing people to hear the gospel as good news. A method which carries out love and compassion and provides genuine concern and tangible assistance, allows for the gospel's greatest impact.<sup>12</sup>

6. *Does the method build confidence, allowing the witnesses to overcome motivational barriers, being confident in the Lord and assured of their message and mission?* In addition to employing spiritual resources, Christians need to be confident in their faith, trained to share the good news, motivated by teamwork and accountability, inspired through worship, and challenged with a vision to reach out to others with the gospel.<sup>13</sup>

7. *Does the method include the communication of the good news of Jesus Christ accurately, clearly, and concisely, giving the gospel the best hearing possible, in hopes that it may have its greatest impact?* Every method of outreach must proclaim the evangel at some time, or else it is something other than evangelism.<sup>14</sup> A sound method gives the gospel a hearing that is biblical, understandable, and personally applicable.

8. *Does the method seek to win people to faith in Jesus Christ, appealing to them rationally, emotionally, and volitionally, with the goal of persuading them to receive Christ as Lord and Savior?* Although people may hear the gospel accurately and clearly, they will not be converted unless they embrace the good news personally, receiving Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior. A sound method has the goal of persuasion, whereby the truth of the gospel is acknowledged by the mind, affirmed by the emotions, and accepted by the will.<sup>15</sup>

9. *Does the method unite new believers with a local congregation, assimilating them into a fellowship of believers, bonding them to God's family?* A sound method of evangelism incorporates new disciples into a local church where God is worshiped, the Bible is taught, and faith is practiced.

Friendships are the primary glue that bonds new believers to a congregation, the adhesive that makes them stick.<sup>16</sup>

The above questions when applied and answered in the affirmative indicate the degree of theoretical-theological soundness of a method. The more answers a method has in the affirmative the greater degree of balance and potential success.

#### Practical Test

From a biblical foundation and theoretical framework a form of evangelism is applied in contextualized practice. Its viability is determined mainly by its adherence to biblical and theoretical criteria, but the acid test is its workability in the real world.<sup>17</sup> Its application serves as field research, yielding valuable data which helps to reshape and recast methodology. Only by inspecting the results can ineffectual practices be identified and modified or replaced by ones that do work.<sup>18</sup>

We who are entrusted with the gospel are stewards of the truth, and "it is required that those who have been given a trust must prove faithful" (I Corinthians 4:2). To be faithful is to be dedicated and trustworthy, devoted to the message and to its proclamation. To be a steward is to be a trustee, responsible to protect the message and to disseminate it at the master's will. Faithful stewards cannot be indifferent to their charge, for they must be concerned about the effectiveness of the outcome.

Sadly, some evangelistic methods are ineffective at making disciples, and consequently they impede outreach and take limited time, energy, and resources away from potentially productive ones. Such ineffective methods may satisfy a sense of responsibility to the great commission but lead few people to faith in Christ.

A method that has been successful over time, for example, runs the risk of becoming "sacred tradition," degenerating into an end rather than a means to the end. The methodology is then perpetuated for its own sake with little or no regard for the outcome, sacrificing effectiveness on the altar of tradition.

The practical test asks, "*Does the method work, being effective at leading people to faith in Jesus Christ, producing new disciples?*" This test requires that the results of the evangelistic method be inspected and honest conclusions drawn. An assessment such as this may bring new findings, insights, and discoveries as to the actual reasons why a practice is effective or ineffective. In any case, irrelevant and ineffectual methods should be replaced by ones that are fruitful.

### Ethical Test

Evaluation of a method's effectiveness is an important aspect in the creating and critiquing process. Effectiveness is not the final test, however, since it is necessary to return to Scripture, where the method again comes under the scrutiny of the Bible's teaching.

The practical question, "Does it work?" should be accompanied by the ethical question, "Is it right?" A method of evangelism should never step outside the ethical boundaries of Scripture. This concern for ethics is equal to the concern for effectiveness. The goal is to achieve positive results by right practices, those that are consistent with the Bible.

A fierce pragmatism in which the end justifies the means is certainly unsound, irresponsible, and unacceptable. Such an approach quickly allows for methods to cross over the ethical boundaries of Scripture. When good ends are achieved through bad means, or when bad ends are achieved through good or bad means, the method should be rejected.<sup>19</sup>

The ethical test asks, therefore, "Is the method ethically consistent, achieving the right end by right means?" A sound method of evangelism is ethical, being held accountable to the Bible, the ultimate source of authority in ethical matters.

Spray painting the words "Trust Jesus" on highway overpasses is not evangelism but "evandalism," even though it may influence some people to consider Christ. I know one zealous Christian who threatened to beat up his biker friends unless they believed in Jesus. A former headhunter in the Shapra Indian tribe of Peru held his enemies captive while he preached the gospel to them. Such practices and those like them, even subtle ones, are unethical when they employ tactics of manipulation, deception, intimidation, coercion, and falsification.

### Summary

Methods that are unbiblical, unbalanced, ineffective, and unethical are unacceptable. Methods that meet some but not all criteria should be modified or discarded, depending on the degree to which they are unsound. Methods that pass all criteria should be considered sound, and those that excel should be given priority in practice.

The biblical mandate to make disciples of all nations should lead us to think creatively and design innovative methods of evangelism in order to reach an ever-changing world with the gospel. We must think creatively and critically about evangelistic methods, evaluating strategies and testing them against sound criteria. They should be reviewed, refined, or rejected so that

greater levels of effectiveness are achieved. It is a high calling and privilege to represent Jesus Christ, being sent as his ambassadors to every nation of the world. Therefore, let us rise to the task set before us, knowing that we are God's agents and stewards for making new disciples.

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**AS I SEE IT: SOME REFLECTIONS AND PERSONAL  
CONCLUSIONS DRAWN FROM 58 YEARS AS AN  
EVANGELIST AND AS A PROFESSOR OF EVANGELISM**

Jack Stanton

When I was invited to write this article, it was suggested I share my reflections on evangelism from my perspective as a veteran teacher and practitioner of evangelism. I was a little troubled by the word "veteran." To some, that word describes a person of the past, more than the present, indicating one whose expertise relates more to yesterday than to today.

There are tremendous advantages to living a long time, and to traveling in all 50 states and in 80 countries around the world, bearing witness for Jesus Christ. A person with these experiences, if he or she has an open mind and a readiness to learn, must have accumulated some knowledge and wisdom, if only through the process of osmosis. True scholars must be mindful of the past. They need it as a base from which they can move to new and unexplored truths, but they must never be so bound to the past that they cannot grasp new, God-revealed truths that will enable them to meet the changing conditions and challenging opportunities of the present.

The Beginning

I grew up in a family broken by sin and divorce in the tough city of East St. Louis, Illinois. To this day I do not know who my father is, or whether he is even alive. We did not go to church, say grace at the table, or read the Bible and pray, except in a time of crises. We were not atheists, but we lived as if there were no God. My mother was good to me. I always felt loved and appreciated. She worked very hard, sometimes all day and most of the night, to keep me and my brother out of an orphanage. She taught me right from wrong and helped me to feel I was important and that I could do anything I felt I needed to do.

During my high school days I dropped out for two years. During those years I drove a truck, worked in a furnace factory, and ended up doing construction work in St. Louis County. One day after work I decided to go to East St. Louis, Illinois, to visit my grandmother and get a good home cooked meal. As I entered her home she looked at me with surprise and joy, clapped

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her hands together, and said, "I'm so glad you stopped by. Our church is in a revival and I want you to go with me."

I was startled at her request and said, "Every time I come by lately you ask me to go to church, to give my heart to Jesus, and get saved. Can't I get a meal without a sermon?"

She reached out, touched my hand, and said, "I'm going to keep asking you until you go and keep praying for you until you become a Christian."

I went to church with my grandmother, just to please her. I endured the song service and the sermon. Then, the preacher invited those who wanted to become Christians to come forward and the pastor and others would pray and help them. I was unmoved by all of this, but suddenly I felt a touch of a hand on my arm and I turned to find a happy looking man, who asked, "Are you a Christian?"

His question was so unexpected that I blurted out a loud "No!" He seemed confused by my answer and left.

Soon he returned, saying quietly, "Wouldn't you like to be a Christian?" and I replied, "Not tonight, not tonight."

He hesitated a moment and said, "Why not tonight?" I replied, "I don't know why not tonight. Are you a preacher or something?"

He answered, "No, I have only been saved three days and if I'm not doing this right would you forgive me?"

I did not know what he was doing, much less if he was doing it right. Finally, I said I would pray with him if he would keep the preachers away from me. He agreed to this and took me across the front of the church to where he had prayed and received Jesus as his Lord and Savior.

As we knelt, I said, "Why did you come to me? There must be five hundred people here and you came to me twice." He said that three days before he had passed by the church on the way to a small park where he planned to commit suicide. He heard the people joyfully singing and wondered how they could be so happy, living in such a wicked world. He edged into the back of the church and heard the evangelist preach the Good News about Jesus. He said, "I went forward and asked for help, and a man prayed with me and explained how I could repent of my sins, ask Jesus to forgive me, and receive a new, abundant, eternal life. He asked me to pray, confess my sin and receive Jesus Christ as my Lord and Savior. I did what he asked and Jesus gave me a new life.

"These last three days have been the happiest days of my life. During the invitation I asked God if there was a young man in the church who needed Jesus and, if there was, if He would show me the young man and give me courage, I would tell him about Jesus. I opened my eyes and looked directly at you. That is why I spoke to you. If I could just take Jesus out of my heart and put him in yours, you would never give him up."

He asked me to pray and I said, "How do you talk to God?"

He replied, "Just talk to God like you talk to me."

I bowed my head and said, "Dear God. . ." Then I remembered I had to go to work the next morning with some of the toughest, most ungodly men that I knew. But I continued my prayer, asking God to save me and help me witness to my lost friends. When I finished, the man asked if I meant what I said and if I was going to live for God. I said that I meant what I said and that I would buy a Bible and whatever God told me to do I would seek to do. I did not experience any high emotional feeling at that moment, but as I left the church I said to myself, "Jack Stanton has been born again," and it seemed as if a burden had been lifted from my life.

That was many years ago, but I have never been sorry I gave my life to Jesus. He means more to me each day. I thank God for the revival in the church and for Mr. Brown who introduced me to Jesus.

I bought a Bible and began reading it. Nightly, after work, I would find a church having a service and attend. After the service, I would ask the pastor all kinds of questions about God, the Bible, his church, and how to live the Christian life. Some pastors disappointed me with their inability to answer my questions or their unwillingness to share what they knew with me. I finally visited a Baptist church where the pastor willingly spent some time with me. When I told him what I wanted, he said, "I can tell you what I believe, but you need to find the answers for yourself and they are in the Bible."

I said, "I don't know where to look in the Bible and sometimes I don't understand what I read."

The pastor said, "Tell me what you want to know and I will mark in your Bible the Scripture passages that cover the subject. Then you can study the passages and let the Holy Spirit be your teacher. Later we can talk about the passage, if you need more clarification."

It was amazing how much I learned as I followed his suggestions. I learned about baptism and the church, and became a member of that Baptist church. Later, the church sponsored a youth-led revival, but needed one more young man to speak two nights during the week. I was so excited about my new life in Christ that I would seek to share Christ with everyone I met, so someone suggested that I be asked to speak two nights during the revival. I was thrilled at the opportunity to speak to a crowd of people about Jesus.

The first time I preached nothing happened. I was broken hearted. I felt as if I had failed my Lord. After everyone else left the sanctuary, I knelt before the altar and poured out my soul to God, saying I could not preach if people were not being saved. The next time I preached the windows of heaven opened and God's power and blessing came down. So many people came forward, making decisions for Christ, that none of us knew what to do. The

pastor and some older Christians helped us minister to those who came forward.

After the youth revival, people frequently asked me if I was going to become a minister. I felt God was preparing me for his service, but I didn't know what it was. I didn't want to disobey God; I just could not believe that with my biblical ignorance, my limitations, and my background, God would call me to preach. I thought preachers were special people coming from special homes with special abilities. My girl friend, now my wife, and I would go on dates and end up praying, asking God to help us know his will for our lives.

I asked my pastor how one could be certain one was called by God to preach, and he said, "Don't preach if you can keep from it."

I was disappointed when he gave me that advice, but later I was thankful he did. One Sunday night I was so burdened about what I was to do that I said to God, "If during the invitation I feel you want me to preach, I will go forward and publicly announce that I feel led by God to be a minister."

Then I prayed all during the service that I would not feel like that during the invitation. As the invitation began, I felt I would die if I did not share with the church that God was calling me to preach the gospel. I did go forward, and I said to the pastor, "I can't keep from preaching."

The pastor and the church rejoiced in my call into the ministry and did everything possible to encourage and support me. The pastor told me that if I was called to preach, I should preach, and he helped me get preaching opportunities all over St. Louis.

A few months after my salvation experience and call to preach, I enrolled in a college and within three weeks had a place to preach. From that day to this I have had more preaching opportunities than I can fill.

#### Moving Into Vocational Evangelism

After pastoring in Missouri and Illinois during my college and seminary days, I became the first Director of Evangelism for the Kansas Convention of Southern Baptists. W. A. Burkey, Director of Missions, and I borrowed money on our signatures and enlisted some young summer missionaries to go with us to Lincoln, Nebraska, where we conducted the first Southern Baptist revival ever held in Nebraska. God blessed our efforts, and a church came out of the revival and identified with the Kansas Convention.

In 1956 I was called to be the first Director of Evangelism for the Colorado Baptist General Convention, which included Colorado, Wyoming, Montana, North and South Dakota, and Western Nebraska.

In 1960 I joined Dr. C. E. Autrey, Director of the Division of Evangelism of the Home Mission Board of the Southern Baptist Convention, as Associate Director and, later, as Director of Personal Evangelism. When Dr. C. B. Hogue became the Director, I was named as Director of Mass Evangelism and for nine months I served as Director of both Personal and Mass Evangelism.

In January of 1975, at the request of Dr. James Sells, President of Southwest Baptist College (now a university), and the trustees and leadership of the school, I became the Founder and Director of the International Institute of Evangelism. We established the following main objectives:

1. to develop a conference center and continuing program of expanded witness training for the laity
2. to develop classes, seminars, and conferences to train pastors and church vocation personnel in all phases of evangelism, with a special emphasis on personal witnessing
3. to develop training methods and materials for vocational evangelists
4. to develop a comprehensive program of evangelism on a college campus, with the desire to strengthen our own campus and develop a model for other campuses to follow

These main objectives are still the operating goals for the International Institute of Evangelism. While each objective has been achieved to some degree, ever increasing opportunities to meet expanding needs in these areas are a challenge to the Institute.

#### Special Emphasis In Evangelism

From time to time God, in his mercy and grace, has permitted me to be a part of a special emphasis in evangelism that he was using to touch and change the lives of multitudes of people. My life will be forever enriched by these experiences.

While I was Director of Evangelism of the Colorado Baptist General Convention, Dr. Leonard Sanderson, Director of the Division of Evangelism for the Southern Baptist Convention, invited me to join him on a trip through South America, teaching evangelism in the seminaries and conducting evangelistic meetings in the churches. We traveled through Brazil, Argentina, Chile, Peru, and Panama. My life was so challenged by this experience that I promised God I would try and spend some time in overseas evangelism every year.

When I moved to the Division of Evangelism, then located in Dallas, Texas, to work with Dr. Autrey, I was asked to direct the Laymen's West Coast Crusade. Working with Lucien Coleman of the Brotherhood Commission, I enlisted and trained 900 laymen to conduct revivals, Friday to Sunday, and to

equip the laymen in the churches where they were speaking, to be effective witnesses for Jesus Christ. Their efforts resulted in more than a thousand additions to the churches. It may have been the largest simultaneous lay led evangelistic effort in the history of Christianity! This crusade was followed by the Gold Coast Crusade and a crusade in New York City, with remarkable results in both crusades.

In 1965 the Division of Evangelism moved to Atlanta, Georgia, and I became the Director of Personal Evangelism. When Dr. Chafin became Director of the Division of Evangelism, he called together a group of more than 40 outstanding personal witnesses and for three days we prayed and studied how we might equip the pastors and the laity to be more faithful and more effective in witnessing for Jesus Christ. As a result of the findings of this group, I was asked, as Director of Personal Evangelism, to take the lead in putting together a witness training program for our churches. This program was named, "A Lay Evangelism School," and used W. I. N. (Witness Involvement Now) materials. I developed, with help from others, the training techniques used in the Lay Evangelism Schools and Lay Evangelism Leadership Training Schools around the world, and wrote the first Preparation Manual, Teacher's Manual, and Continuing Activities Manual for the Lay Evangelism School. I also authored the witnessing booklet, *How To Have A Full And Meaningful Life*.

To test the efficiency of the schools, we conducted twelve schools simultaneously in Atlanta, Georgia. We repeated this procedure in Chicago, Los Angeles, and Houston. Each morning we would review the two-hour teaching session of the night before, to see how we could improve the Lay Evangelism School.

In 1971 I met individually with all the State Directors of Evangelism in the Southern Baptist Convention, and prayerfully and carefully planned with them how they would launch the Lay Evangelism Schools in their particular state. In 1972 Lay Evangelism Schools were conducted in every state convention and, at the end of the year, we found that Southern Baptist churches had won to Christ and baptized more people into the churches than ever before. 1972 is still the record year in baptisms.

In 1975 I became the Founder and Director of the International Institute of Evangelism, located at Southwest Baptist College, now a university, in Bolivar, Missouri. My office was a small room built in a large hall in the Field House. My secretary had a very small room adjacent to mine.

The International Institute of Evangelism now has a full time staff of five, and 18 work/study students. In 1985, we dedicated the three-story Jim Mellers Evangelism and Conference Center, which houses, among many other important rooms and ministries, the office suites for the Institute, the Hall of

Remembrance, picturing outstanding evangelists who have encouraged our ministry, the E. J. Daniels International Research and Resource Center, the Hyman Appelman Conference Center, video recording studio, the Dwight and Helen Wilmoth Communication Center, the Evangelism Resource Library and Archives, two self-paced learning carrels, and six large classrooms. It also houses evangelism classes for students, and provides training in evangelism through conferences, seminars, and practicums for pastors, laity, youth, and vocational evangelists.

Approximately 61 conferences and meetings, totally more than six thousand attendees, were held in the Jim Mellers Evangelism and Conference Center last year. The number has been increasing yearly.

We also have Plaster Lodge, a three-story building containing 32 rooms, providing an attractive setting for spiritual enrichment and study, as well as physical relaxation and restful sleep for our guests.

I was elected director of Evangelism for the Men's Department of the Baptist World Alliance 1990-1995, and again for 1995-2000. My staff and I, along with many of our students, are working closely with Dr. Nilson Fanini, President of the Baptist World Alliance, to reach out and touch the world for Christ by 2000 A.D.

#### Changes That Have Taken Place

God continues to open doors for evangelism around the world, as many new and effective ways of sharing the gospel are being used. Within my own denomination, the Southern Baptist Convention, I have seen tremendous changes that help evangelists. On a purely materialistic note, vocational evangelists are included in our denominational Annuity Retirement Program. That was not the case in my earlier years.

When Dr. C. E. Matthews became Director of Evangelism of the Southern Baptist Convention, he led in setting up a structure that exists to this day. Each state convention elected a director of evangelism, with the larger states adding associates, each association a director of evangelism and an evangelism committee, and each church was urged to set up an evangelism committee. Larger churches also elected a minister of evangelism.

At the June, 1997, Southern Baptist Convention, the organizational structure of the new North American Mission Board was announced. It is designed to support two primary tasks: evangelism and church starting. The Evangelization Group provides leadership to SBC churches in five primary areas: (a) direct evangelism, (b) interfaith witness, (c) campus evangelism, (d) church evangelism, and (e) ministry evangelism. The new structure will greatly enhance our evangelistic efforts.

For the last few years, vocational evangelists have been greatly used in key places of denominational leadership as elected officials and as members of committees on both the state and national level. In June, 1986, and again in June, 1987, I was elected First Vice President of the Southern Baptist Convention and, since that time, a number of evangelists have been elected to that or similar positions.

It is exciting to see the emphasis now being placed on evangelism in our colleges, universities, and seminaries. All SBC seminaries now offer a doctor's degree in evangelism.

#### Challenges Faced By Evangelism Teachers

- We who teach the great truths of God, must live by these great truths. We can not share what we do not have.
- We must follow Jesus' example and teach with compassion, love, and forgiveness.
- We must begin to teach at the level of the students' understanding and ability to respond.
- We must use the best methods and communication equipment and technology available.
- We must look to the Holy Spirit for guidance and empowerment in our teaching.

#### A Great Concern

In my seminary days my professor of evangelism, a great personal witness for Christ and formerly the pastor of a large, growing church, told us that mass evangelism was no longer as effective as it had been, and that churches would depend less and less upon it for evangelistic results. I had great difficulty with this statement.

Later my wife and I were invited to a Saturday night Youth For Christ meeting. Because I was studying for a very important test, I decided not to go. My wife went along with our friends to the meeting. When she returned, she was very excited about the meeting and shared with me that she believed the young preacher was touched by God, and she was convinced God was going to use him around the world in great evangelistic crusades. I asked her what his name was and she said, "Billy Graham."

At the very moment some professors and pastors were saying mass evangelism was over, God was gathering a great group of Spirit-filled evangelists to loose upon the world, so that ultimately, millions might become Christians.

Hyman Appelman, a Jewish evangelist, was already setting Texas on fire for God and soon would go around the world, shaking great cities for Christ. Charley and Laurie Taylor came from England to stir the revival fires in America. Dr. Walter Kallenbach, blinded in a hunting accident, left his position as a top trumpet player in a great band, went to a seminary where he earned two doctors' degrees, and faithfully preached Christ in great citywide crusades, until he was killed stepping out of a car into the path of another car.

E. J. Daniels, with his "Christ for The World" television programs, his big tent revivals, and his writing and printing of evangelistic books, was used mightily by God across America and around the world, and although Dr. Daniels died of cancer a few years back, his ministry continues under the leadership of his wife, Elizabeth, and Evangelist John Bos.

Time would fail me if I attempted to tell about Robert Schuller, Bob Jones, John R. Rice, and a host of others, who were answering God's call to mass evangelism, while many pastors and some professors were saying that mass evangelism is dead.

Today there are still people saying that mass evangelism is dying, that it is not relevant to the modern age. They are saying this in spite of the fact that Dr. Graham's crusades, through television, are reaching around the world, that Louis Palau is reaching multitudes for Christ in great citywide crusades, and that Dr. Nilson Fanini, President of the Baptist World Alliance, is challenging Baptist churches around the world to double their membership by the year 2000, by winning their friends to Christ through revivals. He also wants to double the number of churches at the same time. Dr. Fanini, along with many evangelists and evangelistic pastors, has set a goal of reaching two hundred key cities of the world by the year 2000 A.D. through ministering to their physical and spiritual needs.

Dr. Thom Rainer, Dean of the Billy Graham School of Missions, Evangelism, and Church Growth at Southern Seminary in Louisville, Kentucky, recently shared the results of a two-year survey and stated that revival evangelism is alive and well, and that a prerequisite for success of revival evangelism is prayer--twelve to eighteen months of concerted, fervent prayer.

In a conference on spiritual awakening in Oxford, England, I heard Dr. J. Edwin Orr say that when God gets ready to give a great spiritual awakening, he calls out and prepares spiritual leaders to be ready for the awakening. It thrills me to see the great number of students in the university where I teach, and the great increase of students in all of our seminaries, who are committed to a disciplined study of spiritual awakenings and mass evangelism, trusting God will use them in the coming revivals.

Effective mass evangelism incorporates every available method of evangelism, with the express purpose of making Jesus Christ known to the greatest number of people possible in the shortest period of time. It is the uniting of the people of God in a concerted, Spirit-directed effort to share Jesus with the lost, that they might receive him as Lord and Savior, be baptized, and join the church to worship God, to grow in spiritual understanding and maturity, and to become more effective in their witness and service. Jesus loves the world, but his love is individualized. The person is the key to the evangelism of Jesus, and mass evangelism must forever remain focused on the individual.

Mass evangelism is a biblical method which is being used very effectively around the world to reach multitudes for Christ. Believers can do more together than they can separately. Togetherness is a Pentecostal prerequisite which promises Pentecostal power. A close study of the last days, as recorded in the Bible, shows that, along with tribulations, there will be so many converts to Christ that no one can count the number.

It has been said that every great advance in every area of life has been preceded by a spiritual awakening. God is truth and he reveals his great truths through his people, as they love, obey, and serve him.

Dr. C. E. Autrey, writing in the Encyclopedia of Southern Baptists, reminds us that, "higher social and civic ideals have been advanced, vice and the liquor traffic have often been curtailed, home life has been purified, and church life has been strengthened. Better relations between denominations have been formed, multitudes of youth have been inspired to enter the ministry or missionary careers, and denominations have advanced in mighty programs of education and missions through the results of organized mass evangelism."

Mass evangelism has always had its critics. Many times it is criticized by those who have never been a part of it or experienced its benefits. Some of the criticism has been justified. We must always guard against cheap sensationalism to attract a crowd, mob psychology to move people, reporting inflated numbers of decisions, undue criticism of the churches, greedy demands for large love offerings, a disregard of reverence toward God in the services, a message that demands less than the New Testament demands, and unworthy motives in conducting the crusade. The devil will deceive us if he can, and a genuine article always stands a good chance of being counterfeited by those not willing to pay the price for the real thing.

There are problems in mass evangelism, but these problems can be solved. It would be well to heed the advice of Jonathan Edwards, who said to men who would not participate in the mass evangelistic activities of his day

until certain problems were solved, that they were, "like the fools who sit by the river until all of the water runs by."

We live in a complex and troubled world, with Satan doing his best to conquer it. Ninety percent of Earth's population lives in five percent of its space. Predictions indicate that within the next century, thirty billion people will live in a universal city that will blanket the globe. The population explosion compounds our problems, but also offers greater opportunities for mass evangelism.

If we take seriously the command of Jesus to win our world, we must, under his leadership and in his power, put forth gigantic efforts to fulfill this gigantic task. We live in a day of great movements and campaigns and we ought to take advantage of the psychological, sociological, and spiritual moods of our time to make Christ known to the world. The group movements of our day offer tremendous support for mass evangelism.

Mass evangelism properly understood and wisely used can, under the leadership of the Holy Spirit, awaken whole communities with the gospel of Christ. Through mass evangelism multitudes can be led to receive Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior; churches can be strengthened by the encouraging and involving of their members in spiritual growth, ministry, and witness, and a base can be provided from which many other Christian activities and ministries can be launched. Mass crusade evangelism helps:

1. to unite and mature the people of God. A deepening of the spiritual life of the church members takes place as they become involved in the crusade.
2. to encourage and strengthen the churches in the areas of attendance, giving, ministry, and the addition of new members.
3. to put the gospel in the headlines by providing bold, dynamic approaches in reaching an area for Christ.
4. to reach the lost for Christ. Many secular, lost persons will attend a religious service if it is held on neutral ground where they can come as they are and feel lost in the crowd.
5. to call out the called. Many of the great leaders of the past and of the present felt the call of God to special service during this type of crusade.

As I look to the future, my prayer is for God to grant that we experience a great spiritual awakening in our day, and that multitudes will receive Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior.

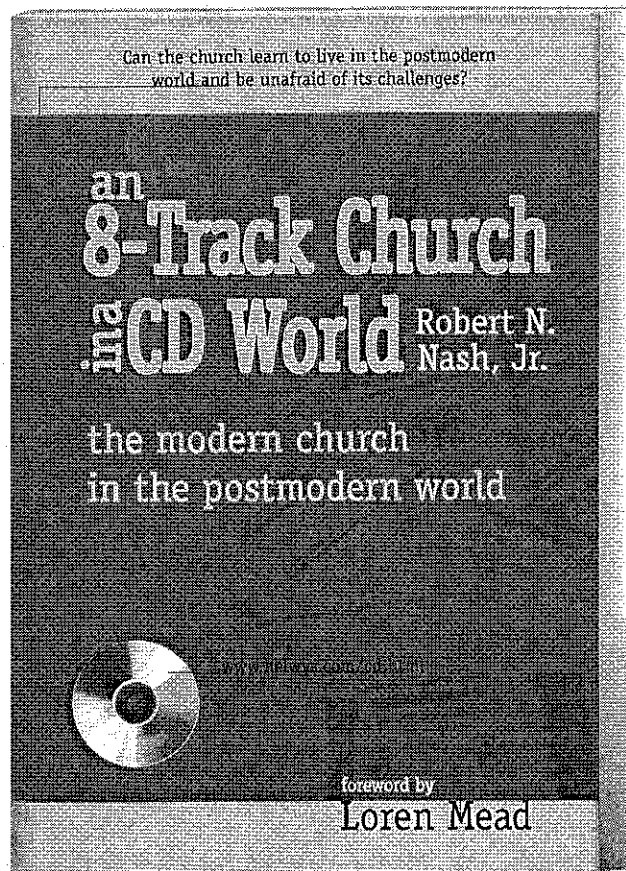
# An 8-Track Church in a CD World

## The Modern Church in a Postmodern World

Robert N. Nash

Foreword by Loren Mead

Though the tasks of the church remain the same, it must face certain realities to minister to the world today. Nash finds that local churches in the 1990s try to address their community's needs with ideas from the 1950s. He also says that if churches, "traditional" or "progressive," don't take a hard look in the mirror and take corrective measures, they will face a fate similar to that of an 8-track tape in today's high-tech, digital world. Therefore, Nash suggests new steps for the "postmodern dance with God."



"... 'must' reading for concerned Christians on all sides of the current 'cultural wars,' not because at every turn he provides the right answers, but because Nash is engaging the right questions."

—Stanley J. Grenz  
Author of *A Primer on Postmodernism*  
and *Theology for the Community of God*

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### BOOK REVIEWS

*Ten Strategies for Preaching in a Multimedia Culture*

By Thomas H. Troeger. Nashville, TN: Abingdon, 1996. Pp. 125.

Thomas Troeger is the Peck Professor of Preaching and Communications at Iliff School of Theology in Denver. In line with some of his earlier works, Troeger's focus in *Ten Strategies* is on preaching that connects with the imagination of the listener, especially listeners who are part of today's "audiovisually oriented" generation.

As the title suggests, ten strategies, each constituting a chapter, are introduced: Play with an Image, Create a Parable, Play a Game, Use a Flashback, Assume There is More to the Story, Reframe a Sacrament, Write the Sermon as a Movie Script, Let a Little Child Lead You, Listen to the Muffled Voices, and Compare Translations. Each approach is briefly described and then illustrated by a "multimedia sermon" ranging from an original play or parable to a congregational game and a movie script called "An Unforgettable Dinner Party" (Luke 14:15-24).

As strange as it might seem to most of us trained in homiletics based on exposition and rhetoric, the strategies work. At least they seemed to for this reviewer, as he "imagined" himself as part of a congregation being engaged by the gospel through each sermonic presentation.

The theological frame of reference is established in a set of "bookends." In the opening chapter Troeger acknowledges prayer and openness to the Holy Spirit as the "deepest origins" of preaching that witness to God. He reminds us that the biblical writers display vivid imaginations, as they create new strategies for presenting the word of God. Historically the church of the Middle Ages made extensive use of art, architecture, and drama; and the Reformation offered the Bible in the vernacular.

Troeger recognizes that there are dangers, possibilities, and limitations. But appealing to Andrew Walls' affirmation of "Christianity's infinite translatability," he calls us to use all that we are and all that we have to witness to all that God is and engage people with the whole gospel.

In a closing chapter he states again that the goal is not simply more imaginative or entertaining preachers, but messengers who cooperate with God to win the human imagination for God through the Holy Spirit, "who fills us with world-transforming visions of the reign of God. If we fail to do this, we leave imagination in the hands of the media" (120).

This could be a dangerous book in the hands of the laity. They might come to expect more imaginative, creative, and soul engaging preaching! But it is a book that would benefit every pastor (and I dare say evangelist and

professor) interested in reaching "boomers," "busters," and whatever we are going to call the next generation. Without question we live in a media and visually oriented culture, and it is more and more a global phenomenon. If we are to engage today's world with the transforming work of the Spirit that makes us new creations in Christ, voices and strategies like those of Thomas Troeger will need to be heeded.

I must confess that at first I was a bit troubled by strategy one. Assume There is More to the Story. Here is where one of the "dangers" seems most obvious. Drawing on the image of Jesus' first miracle, changing water into wine, Troeger tells a story of the husband and wife who were wed that day in Cana and how they kept some of "the rabbi's wine" through the years for special occasions. It is a touching drama engaging the imagination, but it stretched mine beyond the comfort zone as a sermon. Strategy one might best have come later in the book.

The most creative and rewarding strategy for me personally was number eight, Play a Game. Complete instructions are given for playing a nativity game involving the entire congregation and all the space available in the buildings of the church. It is not itself a sermon, but leads to the structuring of the next Sunday's message, and gives the entire congregation a "simulation experience" of searching for the Christ child. Delightful!

Good endnotes help the reader locate additional resources. The text is easy reading and fit for any group seeking to explore new strategies for worship and for announcing the gospel. The historical-theological reflections are appropriate and quite helpful, even if limited. It could certainly stimulate some interesting discussions for a preaching class.

Ronald K. Crandall

Ronald K. Crandall is McCreless Professor of Evangelism in the E. Stanley Jones School of World Mission and Evangelism at Asbury Theological Seminary in Wilmore, Kentucky.

*Miss Bertha: Woman of Revival*

By Lewis Drummond. Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1996. Pp. 292.

In the days when everyone seems to have an opinion on the role of women in ministry, all sides of the disagreement should read, *Miss Bertha: Woman of Revival*. To read this biography is to admit that only God's call and God's power could enable such a ministry.

Born on a farm near Cowpens, South Carolina, in 1888, Bertha Smith became a Christian at an early age, then responded to God's call to missionary

service in China in 1917. Driven by a deep desire for personal holiness and a determined prayer life, Miss Bertha was to play a major role in the revival that swept northern China in the late 1920s and early 1930s.

Concerning this revival and Miss Bertha's involvement in it, Lewis Drummond writes:

The missionaries of Shantung Province prevailed in prayer for revival in China, a country in dire need of a spiritual awakening. To Miss Bertha and her missionary partners in Shantung Province, the need seemed particularly acute. So they devoted themselves to intercession for revival and they were not disappointed. Their prayers were heard. One glorious day God rent the heavens, and what is now called the Shantung Revival burst upon them. What a day it became in the life and ministry of Bertha Smith, all the missionaries, and China itself (pp. 45-46).

Returning after more than 40 years of work among the Chinese, Miss Bertha's ministry broadened. From China, she traveled to the Philippines, Indonesia, Australia, Malaya, Singapore, Vietnam, Thailand, Burma, India, Iran, Egypt, Lebanon, Jordan, Israel, Turkey, Greece, Italy, West Africa, Switzerland, Germany, Denmark, Sweden, Norway, Netherlands, Belgium, and the British Isles before arriving back in the U.S. in 1959. Everywhere she went, the story of revival was shared and lives were changed.

At the age of 81, a new ministry in America opened up for Bertha Smith. Speaking engagements and conferences were numerous. In the midst of these, Miss Bertha's notoriety increased through her book, *Go Home and Tell*. One of the crowning works of her life was the development of the Peniel Prayer Center, in Cowpens, where those "with hungry hearts could come, see the face of the Lord, and get on higher prayer ground."

Five months before her 100th birthday, God called Miss Bertha home to heaven. Faithful to her calling, in the last month of her life, she led a Chinese businessman in Spartanburg, South Carolina, to the Lord.

In gentle style, Lewis Drummond has condensed the complex, yet challenging life of Miss Bertha Smith into one volume of rewarding reading. If you want a blessing, and you're willing to risk personal revival, read *Miss Bertha: Woman of Revival*.

Dan R. Crawford

Dan R. Crawford is Professor of Evangelism and Spiritual Formation at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary.

*Entertainment Evangelism: Taking the Church Public*

By Walter P. Kallestad. Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 1996. Pp. 144.

A centerpiece of the book, as the title suggests, is how to evangelize unchurched, secular people; and the answer set forth is through redesigning traditional worship, moving it out of the "private" mode and into the "public" mode, making it more reflective of a community of joy and in that sense, entertaining.

The questions are: What in today's entertainment attracts and holds people's attention? Why? How can these ingredients be incorporated into our strategies to reach these people for Christ? Of course, red flags go up all over; but Kallestad makes a good case for the necessity of each generation fashioning the "old gospel" to fit its contemporary culture. He cites Martin Luther's translation of the Scripture into German and Charles Wesley's use of "popular" tunes as examples from history.

Kallestad recognizes certain dangers associated with "entertainment," and he realizes this is not the only bridge between today's secular mind set and the gospel. But both history and first-hand experience have taught him that a new movement of power in the church requires a new kind of music, a new kind of preaching, and a new kind of worship. These are the primary ingredients of "entertainment evangelism."

The process he affirms and illustrates throughout the book is "imagineering." The three-fold goal is to: (1) anticipate and welcome change, (2) imagine a new vision that will address that change, and (3) devise and engineer an appropriate strategy to implement the new vision.

Some of the key concepts include: Entertainment wisely used with integrity is powerful and effective. "Old theology + new music = effective evangelism." The greater the vision the greater the struggle. A vision is most effectively shaped with love. Shift leaders from operating out of present reality to operating out of vision. Learn to know how pre-Christian secular people think. The Christian church needs to be even friendlier than Disneyland. Effective churches are invitational, not confrontational. Every great church intentionally makes prayer a priority. Always remember that the real business of the church is people, not policies, procedures, or politics.

Joyful uplifting worship that touches soul is the heart of this evangelistic strategy. Kallestad writes: "We intentionally offer inspiration, hope, and encouragement in a climate of unconditional love and grace." But he also adds that the ultimate goal is to move people as quickly as possible from "consumerism to commitment, from being spectators to being servants" (80-81).

The book is most helpful as an illustration of how mainline, liturgical churches can become more effective in evangelism through alternative worship. Trials, errors, and innovations through the years at Community Church of Joy in structure, staffing, team building, membership commitments, age-level ministries, and lay involvement in mission make this story real not hypothetical. It is easy to read, illustrates in the concrete what many church growth writers have been saying, and raises some of the key questions facing today's pastors and concerned lay people.

If the book suffers from anything in the practical realm, however, it is not that enough focus is given to what the author says is central and critical: music. The importance of music is frequently mentioned, but very few instructions or illustrations actually make their way into the text.

Also, the title makes one anticipate a deeper engagement than is actually found. Only in the broadest of brushstrokes does the author outline the theory and theology beneath "entertainment evangelism." More could be said, and more needs to be said, as we continue to come to grips with this ongoing dialogue of gospel and culture.

Nevertheless, Kallestad has made a good offering, and pushes those of us truly committed to evangelism to ask ourselves, "What changes do I need to consider for the sake of the gospel?"

Ronald K. Crandall

*The Missionary Movement in Christian History: Studies in the Transmission of Faith*

By Andrew Fr. Walls. Edinburgh: T & T Clark and Maryknoll: Orbis, 1996. Pp. 266.

Andrew F. Walls, Professor Emeritus of the Study of Christianity in the Non-Western World at the University of Edinburgh and former missionary to Sierra Leone and Nigeria, brings together lectures and articles written over a period of twenty-five years. Insofar as the book has a single theme, it is to be found in the subtitle: studies in the process by which Christians transmit their faith.

The first part is a series of chapters on the nature of the Christian faith, seen from the perspective of its historical transmission. Essays such as "The Gospel as the Prisoner and Liberator of Culture," "The Translation Principle in Christian History," and "Culture and Conversion in Christian History" explore two forces in Christian history. One is an indigenizing principle, a homing instinct, which creates in diverse communities a sense that Christ belongs there, that the church is "ours." The other is a pilgrim principle that creates within each Christian community the sense both that it is not fully at home in

the world, and that it has a message to bear to the world. The one tends to localize Christianity, the other to universalize it. Both recur because each springs from the gospel itself. Walls observes:

It is a delightful paradox that the more Christ is translated into the various thought forms and life systems which form our various national identities, the richer all of us will be in our common Christian identity. The Word became flesh, and dwelt among us, all we beheld the glory, full of grace and truth (p. 54).

The second part offers case studies on "Africa's place in Christian history." Walls highlights Africa's primal religions as valid carriers for divine revelation. God never disdained Africans; now, as the missionary period of African Christianity fades into history, first-world Christians have much to learn from African Christians. The shift of the center of gravity of Christian faith to Africa, Asia, Latin America, and Oceania enables first-world Christians to appropriate a non-Western religion that has become in actual experience the most universal of all religions.

Readers of this *Journal* may find the third set of essays of particular interest. Walls presents the missionary movement from the West as a model for the transmission of faith more generally. In an arresting phrase, Walls presents missionaries as "the Household Cavalry of the Church Militant" (p. 210). Through their zeal, scholarship, and practical ministries, missionaries contribute not only to the expression of Christianity, but also to the renewal of the sending bodies. In the latter dynamic, missionaries are subversive agents calling us to use all possible means for the conversion of non-Christians. Walls posits the renewal of Christianity as taking place through the renewal of its missionary vocation. As he demonstrates that the cross-cultural transmission of the gospel defines the character of Christian faith itself, Walls offers sure guidance in the mission field called North America.

Because of the format, there is some repetition among the essays. But overall, this extraordinary book is the fruit of a life of Christian discipleship and scholarship. It should receive a wide audience.

Paul R. Dekar

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Paul R. Dekar is a Professor of Evangelism and Missions at Memphis Theological Seminary in Memphis, Tennessee.

*A Relevant Word: Communicating the Gospel to Seekers*

By Robert G. Duffett. Valley Forge, PA: Judson Press, 1995. Pp 166.

As Western society continues to undergo a massive shift from being a church to an essentially unchurched culture, much preaching continues as if this transition were not occurring. Duffett believes that if we are to proclaim the gospel in this new situation in such a way that is actually heard we must make significant changes in the way we prepare and deliver sermons. He proposes in this book a homiletical method which takes into account this new cultural reality.

His call for a new approach is considerably strengthened by his devoting his first three chapters to a brief but clear description of this societal change. There he discusses the move from an industrial to an information based economy, followed by an examination of the effects of urbanization, immigration, and changes in the family. Duffett shows the impact of these changes in the lives of people. Rather than continue to speak "when no one is listening," Duffett calls for a "new method" (p. 31) appropriate to a "seeker culture."

This method he describes in the remaining six chapters. The title of the book is emblematic of his overall approach. His goal is proclamation that is relevant and meaningful, that truly connects with the lives and experiences of people and thereby attracts their attention and interest. He also seeks to remove unnecessary obstacles to hearing the word; hence he prefers the terms "communication" and "message" to "preaching" and "sermon," as these latter have acquired negative connotations in the culture at large.

The three middle chapters focus on the content of the message. Given his concern for relevance, some may be surprised by his insistence that the message be firmly grounded in scripture. His way of genuinely connecting with the seeker while not manipulating the text is called "crisscross interpretation." By this he means the moving back and forth between the Bible and our world to enable scripture to shed light on contemporary concerns. His brief but helpful discussion of such matters as context and literary genre provides assistance in our letting the text speak on its own terms.

Having anchored the message of the text, Duffett next considers how connection is made to the present. He offers a wide range of approaches, all of which use the human dimension of scripture as a link. He also calls for clarity and organization, and offers a variety of effective ways to pattern the sermon.

Following his discussion of how to prepare the message, Duffett provides two chapters on its delivery. He calls for passionate and authentic messages,

in which the speaker experiences the text through activating his or her "emotional memory" (p. 118) and conveys its meaning through the effective use of body, eyes, and voice. In his final chapter he offers an argument and method for planning messages in advance, often grouping them in a thematic series.

This would be a useful text for a seminary class in evangelism or homiletics, as well as a helpful resource for pastors. Because of its focus on preaching to seekers, its role in an evangelism class would be as a complement to a range of other approaches. In a class on homiletics, it would serve as a comprehensive text on preaching, but one in which the methodology has taking into account contemporary cultural transformation.

Henry H. Knight III

Henry H. Knight III is an Associate Professor of Evangelism at Saint Paul School of Theology, in St. Paul, Minnesota.

*Anytime, Anywhere: Sharing Faith Jesus Style*

By William L. Turner. Valley Forge, PA: Judson Press, 1997. Pp. 88. Paper. NP.

This book is an honest effort to face the complexities of evangelizing secular persons amid the conflicting currents the late twentieth century church is navigating. Evangelization is very complex in American religious circles. The manner in which Christians provide an intelligent and honest witness to secular persons has been an issue of debate between those who believe in direct, sometimes confrontational witness, and those who propose lifestyle evangelism. Turner opts for a healthy combination.

Turner has been a Baptist pastor for more than three decades. In the book he draws from his pastoral and preaching experience to present a cogent case for sharing one's faith in the opportunities life presents. His ministry at the South Main Baptist Church in Houston for the last twelve years, in an urban setting amid a secular population, has prompted him to reflect profoundly about the nature of Christian faith amid the pastoral task. His pastor's heart comes across the pages of the book. He dedicated the book to the church family.

The objective of the book is to make readers "more intentional about cultivating relationships with unchurched persons" (p. xx). It contains nine chapters based on Jesus' example in cultivating those relationships with persons he met during his earthly ministry. Each chapter provides, in a sort of sermon style, an explanation of Jesus' style of sharing the faith and makes applications to contemporary church life.

Turner shares with the reader the complexities of church life in American during the 1990s. He draws insights from contemporary authors who have written extensively about evangelizing the unchurched American population: George Hunter III, Loren B. Mead, Tex Sample, Robert Wuthnow, and Kenyon Callahan. He makes appropriate applications, suggests that personal and corporate witnessing should take place in a friendly atmosphere, and includes pertinent pastoral illustrations.

The example of Jesus as a model for witnessing is welcome in an era of "ready-made," somewhat simplistic "how to do books" on evangelism and church growth. The attitude of the Master Teacher and Witness is always inspiring and reminds the reader of the natural way in which sharing one's faith ought to be.

The book is an excellent resource that can be used as a guide for congregational classes on personal witnessing, for lay retreats on evangelism, and for supplementary reading in seminary and college classes of evangelism.

David F. D'Amico

David F. D'Amico is Representative of the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship to the United Nations.

*The Church Between Gospel and Culture: The Emerging Mission in North America*

Edited by George R. Hunsberger and Craig Van Gelder. 1996. Pp. 369.

Among the many work groups, consultations, networks, and continuing colloquia that commenced in the late 1980s and early 1990s, none has had a more important role than the Gospel and Our Culture Network. This group has brought together pastors, scholars, denominational leaders, para-church leaders, and other interested parties from a wide ecclesiastical and theological background to consider the challenges posed by North American culture as the great mission field of the twenty-first century. This book represents the kind of conversation that participants in the Gospel and Our Culture have carried on the past few years. The sixteen contributors to this volume represent a diverse group, although they tend to represent the evangelical perspective that sees the need for conversion.

To a certain extent the Gospel and Our Culture Network and this book represent the effort to take seriously the insights of Lesslie Newbigin, who raised the issue of the missiological challenge in the West, where the church has undergone a cultural domestication which requires a fresh confrontation with the gospel. This confrontation must lead to a missiological mission for the church which will lead it to "represent the reign of God" (p. 15). This

representation will take place in a culture where Christendom once existed, where the church once enjoyed most favored religion status, and where the structures and values of Christianity enjoyed the sanction of culture, even if Christ did not enjoy the obedience of faith. With the collapse of Christendom, the church in North America has the rare opportunity to redefine its identity and mission free of entangling alliance with the power structure of the old culture.

The editors have organized the book into three main sections with an introductory section. The introductory sections include chapters by the two editors designed to define the mission quest at stake for the North American church on its own turf. Having established the need for a domestic missiology that grows from a church with a new identity and shape, the book addresses the three main issues of the Gospel and Our Culture Network: assessing our culture, discerning the gospel, and defining the church. One of the most helpful observations of the book reappears in a variety of ways and undercurrents throughout the book, beginning with Hunsberger's observation that at Lausanne II in Manila, all of the national gatherings considered how to evangelize their own area except for the United States gathering. The United States delegates still operated from a Christendom mindset that saw their task as sending missionaries to some other place. As North American Christians begin to deal with their own mission field, they have the advantage of the experience of Christians all over the world who already know how to operate from the perspective of minority status.

The strength of the collection of essays rests in its analysis of contemporary culture, its insight into how Christians of all theological stripes tend to meld their theology with their culture to the extent that their faith is held captive (the inverse of Paul's admonition to hold all things captive) and its suggestions for how congregations may creatively address the culture in the midst of a major cultural shift. Helpfully, the authors do not belong to that faddish group of popular alarmist theologians who believe postmodernity suddenly happened with the fall of the Berlin Wall. They understand the variety of streams at work in the collapse of the West, which has taken a long time, and they understand that whatever postmodernity will be has not been settled yet.

The section on discerning the gospel does not attempt to define the gospel in terms of the message of the ancient kerygma. Rather, it proceeds from an assumption that the revelation of God in Jesus Christ addresses the issues of any culture at any place in time. To a great extent the authors struggle to disentangle the gospel from the ecclesiastical structures and cultural trappings that have been wed to it by the involvement of the church in the world. The essays do not so much present an orthodox statement on the

content of the gospel message as they discuss how a Christian ought to go about understanding that message and presenting it to an alien culture. To a certain extent, the book represents an argument for embracing a post-denominational church that has the freedom to be that mediator between gospel and culture it was placed here to be.

Harry L. Poe

Harry L. Poe is Associate Professor of Christian Studies at Union University, Jackson, Tennessee.

*Evangelism & Theology in the Wesleyan Spirit*

By Albert C. Outler. Nashville: Discipleship Resources, 1996. Pp. 144.

This makes available in a single volume two sets of lectures by Outler which were originally published separately. The first, *Evangelism in the Wesleyan Spirit*, were given as the Denman Lectures at the United Methodist Congress on Evangelism in 1971. The second, *Theology in the Wesleyan Tradition*, were based on the Fondren Lectures of 1974.

What is so striking in rereading these classic essays is their continuing relevance and challenge. Outler's observations on the state of the church and the characteristics of North American culture are as relevant today as they were perceptive twenty years ago. Indeed, having traveled further down some of those roads which he described, Outler's diagnoses and warning take on a new urgency.

Here, too, is Outler's careful and insightful exposition of the heart of Wesley's theology and practice. What we have in short form is a masterful analysis of the inner logic of Wesleyan theology. So much of this is simply presupposed in Wesley studies today it is hard to realize how new and significant these lectures were to their original hearers and readers.

The outline of each book is deceptively simple, and does not do justice to the depth of analysis in each chapter. For example, the four chapters of the theology text have to do with method, sin, justification, and holiness, certainly a normal sequence of topics for a book on Wesley's thought. But Outler consistently delivers more than he promises: he begins to show the how and why behind Wesley's constructive integration of elements which other theologies disjoin--grace and works, original sin and Christian perfection, justification and sanctification, evangelism and nurture, field preaching and sacrament, word and deed. When Outler speaks of Wesley as simultaneously and genuinely catholic and evangelical he is seeking a comprehensive label for this integrative approach to theology and practice.

Combining the books in a single volume is more than handy; it has a kind of Wesleyan logic. For as Outler makes clear, the end of salvation is the Christian life, and most especially holiness of heart and life; evangelism and the means of grace are the means to that end. Thus the theology text discusses the various aspects of salvation not simply as concepts but as life-changing realities, given through the grace and power of God. The evangelism text is centered on the question of how we receive and grow in this Christian life, and how the good news of its availability is made known.

Outler especially emphasized that early Methodism was largely a movement of lay evangelists whose verbal witnessing had authenticity because their lives were marked by compassion and service. He calls for a new awakening, led by a church of "martyrs and servants" whose lives testify to the gospel they proclaim.

Though intended for a wide audience, this book nonetheless presupposes enough of a theological background that it is most appropriate for clergy and seminary classroom. Besides its insight into Wesley's theology and practice, it has value as a critique of our own theology and practice in light of contemporary culture, as well as suggesting on how to move forward. We are perhaps only now beginning to heed some of Outler's prophetic advice. If so, we may hope as well that we are in the beginning stages of the third great awakening for which he so deeply longed.

Henry H. Knight III

*Evangelism For a New Century: The 1994 Denman Lectures*

By Bishop Earl G. Hunt, Jr. Nashville: Discipleship Resources, 1994. Pp. 72.

*Evangelism for a New Century* represents the Harry Denman lectures delivered before the Congress on Evangelism in 1994. Dr. Denman, a Methodist layperson, for whom the lectureship is named, served many years as the General Secretary of the Board of Evangelism of the United Methodist Church. The fourth lecture, "An Expanded Epilogue: Preaching For a Verdict," was written solely for this book.

Bishop Earl G. Hunt, Jr., is a retired bishop of the UMC. In the Denman lectures he sounds a clarion call for a rebirth of authenticity and vigor in the task of evangelism. He does this with the passion of a prophet and the wisdom of an elder statesperson. Readers may know Bishop Hunt from his earlier books, *I Have Believed* (Upper Room, 1980), *A Bishop Speaks His Mind* (Abingdon, 1987), and *Recovering the Sacred* (Jonathan Creek Press, 1992).

Bishop Alfred Norris in the Preface highly endorses the book, as I do. Norris correctly identifies the thesis that mainline denominations, among them The United Methodist Church are held captive to the pernicious secularity of our culture, a crisis from which "our churches cannot seem to extricate themselves" (p. 11).

Bishop Hunt is hopeful that a "radical transformation" is possible if pastors and church leaders are passionately serious about the evangelistic task. Only when we acknowledge human lostness without Christ and claim Jesus as the only one able to restore and heal broken, sinful humanity, can the gift of the gospel be reclaimed. I admire Bishop Hunt's spiritual and moral courage to say what needs saying, when the ecclesiastical ship named mainline Protestantism is way off course! He invites his readers to reenlist in the renaissance of Christocentric evangelism. Therein lies the enduring value and power of this book.

There are four lectures (four sections) to the book plus Endnotes and a select bibliography for further reading. In "The Situation We Face Today" Hunt describes the nature of the post-Christian and post-modern society in which the church is called to witness to the gospel. "The Rationale" articulates the universal need in every human being for Christ's salvation. In "Making It Happen" the author urges pastors to exercise the hermeneutic of ecclesiastical alarm and the hermeneutic of absolute commitment (pp. 38-42). In the final lecture, "An Expanded Epilogue: Preaching For a Verdict," Bishop Hunt offers seven axioms for vital evangelistic preaching, accompanied by the dynamic rubrics of prayer, trust, expectation, winsomeness, concern, and invitation. It's no small order, but his solid counsel regarding preaching is exceedingly helpful (pp. 43-51).

Members of the Academy for Evangelism in Theology Education will appreciate Bishop's extensive reading, scholarship, and life-long passion for the church's task of evangelization. In *Evangelism For a New Century*, he honors what others like George Hunter III (*How to Reach Secular People*), Leander Keck (*The Church Confident*), William J. Abraham (*The Logic of Evangelism*) and Lesslie Newbigin (*Unfinished Agenda*) have argued regarding the urgency of the gospel.

Who should read this book? Teachers of evangelism, apologists for the faith, observers of mainline Protestantism, seminary students in the Wesleyan tradition, and pastors serious about making Christ known through their preaching. If pastors will read this book, I believe they will discover Bishop Hunt to be a caring and perceptive man of God, who understands the seductiveness and power of secular culture. He does know about the pain of dry, dismal, doubtful time in the ordained ministry. He desires a deep joy, a

renewed sense of vocation, a love for lost people, and the gift of the gospel for all of God's people.

In the light of the tragic deaths by mass suicide of 39 persons, all members of the Heaven's Gate cult, all followers of the charismatic leader Marshall Applewhite, the urgency and authenticity of the biblical gospel looms even larger before us. Given such stark realities, Bishop Hunt's volume is a needed and substantive affirmation of Jesus Christ along!

Paul S. Fransen

Paul S. Fransen is Professor of Stewardship and Parish Administration at Trinity Lutheran Seminary, Columbus, Ohio.

*God the Worker: Journeys in the Mind and Imagination of God*  
By Robert Banks. Valley Forge, PA: Judson Press, 1994. Pp. 292.

A prominent Christian leader and educator told me he, as a new teenage convert, tried to evangelize his father, a non-believing labor organizer. His father promised to attend church for a year and, if the workplace was mentioned in a sermon, he would consider becoming a Christian. Unfortunately the year's sermons did not produce one reference to the workplace.

A missionary to an unreached African ethnic group employed a contrasting evangelistic plan. At the outset of his ministry among them, he simply sat with the men of the group as they discussed their life. They always asked him his opinion on what they were discussing--usually something about women or agriculture.

In *God the Worker*, Robert Banks explores biblical images of God related to the world of work. As such it is a book about God, work, and imagination--subjects Banks insists Christian communicators have neglected. The introduction and conclusion discuss the relevance of imaginative language for understanding God and communicating the gospel in evangelism, preaching, and teaching. Between these two discourses on simile, metaphor, and other comparisons, Banks presents eight chapters treating the meaning and relevance of biblical images of God taken from the world of work. He portrays God the worker as composer and performer, metalworker and potter, garmentmaker and dresser, gardener and orchardist, farmer and winemaker, shepherd and pastoralist, tentmaker and camper, and builder and architect.

The author starts each chapter with a discussion of its area of work in today's world and in the world of the Bible. For example, in the chapter on God as tentmaker and camper, he begins with "Mobility Today" followed by

"Mobility in Biblical Times." The bulk of each chapter features a thorough discussion of images of God related to the type of work under discussion. For example, under "God as Shepherd" in chapter 6, the author discusses God as "shepherd of the individual," "shepherd of the chosen people," and "shepherd through the Messiah."

Banks proceeds from the Old Testament to the New Testament, usually ending with an eschatological perspective. In every chapter, he balances images of God's grandeur with images of God's intimacy. Utilizing the kind of language and discourse typical of the Bible, Banks illustrates and enriches his analysis with perspectives and examples from poetry, music, theater, and personal narrative, among other artistic and creative sources. Consequently, while he exegetes the Bible thoroughly, soberly, and impeccably, Banks interprets and applies biblical truth lyrically with exuberance.

Judging from his call in the introduction and conclusion for imaginative language in apologetics, preaching, teaching, and evangelism, I believe Banks writes primarily to people in ministry. While he intends to address believers in general both personally and pastorally, his chapters, bracketed as they are by the introduction and conclusion, function more as examples for practitioners and teachers than as direct address to the person in the pew. Thus, the introduction and conclusion of the book contribute significantly to our agenda as teachers of evangelism by arguing for the use of images and imagination in the communication of ministry, while the book's eight chapters serve as well by illustrating forcefully the importance and utility of applying biblical images of God to the world of work.

In short, the book treats effectively three areas crucial to evangelism and the teaching of evangelism: God, work, and imagination. Apologists and evangelists tend to neglect the intimacies of God's relation to human beings and their tasks, in favor of the ultimate issues of the world of salvation. We tend to neglect the biblical language of simile, metaphor, parable, and allegory in deference to the plainer language of instruction and exhortation. Banks believes our commitment to what we think of as clarity and urgency needs to move over and make room for the Bible's commitment to intimacy and relevance. *God the Worker* can help this happen.

A. H. Mathias Zahniser

A. H. Mathias Zahniser is Professor of Mission at Asbury Theological Seminary in Wilmore, Kentucky.

*Effective Pastors for a New Century: Helping Leaders Strategize for Success*  
By James E. Means. Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 1993. Foreword by Bill Hull. Pp. 240.

Pastoral ministry today comes off like a menacing proposition, given the strength of the world's opposition and indifference to the gospel. Add to the pastoral challenge the Protestant church's Laodicean lethargy. If that analysis is even partially correct (which I believe it is!) the key questions author James E. Means poses for us are:

1. What makes for ineffective pastoral leadership?
2. What kind of leadership will it take for pastors to tackle courageously the third millennium for the sake of Christ?

The crisis facing church leadership is the subject of Dr. James E. Means' volume, *Effective Pastors for a New Century: Helping Leaders Strategize for Success*. Professor Means, a faculty member at Denver Seminary, is also the author of an earlier work, *Leadership in Christian Ministry* (Baker Books, 1989). He sounds the alarm that the present secularism that eviscerated Christianity in Europe now threatens to undo the church in the U.S.A. (p. 47).

A major theme is a call for a theologically driven church in a time and in a culture which is driven by marketing, success, and crass pragmatism. The book as a whole focuses on what constitutes "the right stuff" for pastoral leadership and on the identification of some of the major components needed to establish again a "revitalized church." Or, to put it another way, what makes for an evangelical church which is true to the gospel and faithful in mission and ministry?

As we face the next century Means is convinced that effective pastors are (will be) those who:

- \* depend mightily upon God's abundant grace
- \* show passion for the ministry and are theologically faithful
- \* utilize the best ethical means and technology available in preaching, teaching, reaching others
- \* think globally and pay attention to detail
- \* equip the laity for the work of ministry by well designed discipling efforts
- \* work and pray for excellence in the life of the church (p. 15)

I appreciate this book and I will use it in my senior year seminary courses. I am especially impressed with the thoroughly way James Means sketches out the kind of society and world the gospel encounters. His extensive reading of the literature and his research are apparent in the chapters entitled: It's a Small (and Scary) World After All; Syncretism, Pluralism, Eclecticism: What a Ride!; Ministry Mutants or Ministry Models. The author

painstakingly identifies and elaborates on the sobering plethora of issues which mostly threaten and surely shape the global community in which we seek to proclaim the good news of Jesus Christ. He succinctly walks the reader through a global litany of realities which have to be acknowledged.

In the middle of the book he delineates the nature of the ill health facing the church in North America. He draws strong linkages between the general decline of evangelical fervor in the church and what he names, "the growing impotency of the pastoral office." Dramatic signs and marks of this decline, he argues, are:

1. a compromised gospel message
2. lack of missional passion and vision
3. clergy functioning today as fragmented generalists
4. pastoral firings and forced resignations (conflict-ridden churches)
5. pastors operating as competitors/not colleagues
6. uncertainty about what are the chief pastoral roles
7. evidence of poor administrative skills

The latter part of the book is given over to what it will take, by God's grace, to turn the leadership situation around as we head into the third millennium.

There is so much that Means points to as the rich resources available to us to reestablish the primacy of the authentic gospel, servant leadership, and an empowered, sent laity. From the many images of renewal he paints on his canvas I am personally struck by his uncompromising insistence upon:

- \* renouncing compromise of biblical standards
- \* common sense
- \* a lifetime love affair with the scriptures
- \* careful listening and evaluation of feedback
- \* fostering a Nehemiah vision of we-can-do-it!
- \* the fundamental task of discipling
- \* old fashioned tenacity = "stick-to-itiveness"
- \* a deep commitment to transformational change

Teachers of evangelism and professors of pastoral leadership can readily hear Mean's central concern for the message of the gospel--its clarity, its integrity, and its urgency. Who can be against that?

The book is valuable to those serving in the local church and to those teaching in the seminary setting. The text is thoughtfully critical, biblically grounded, responsible in its diagnosis, and realistic in outlining needed directions to be taken.

Paul S. Fransen

*Redemption and Dialogue: READING REDEMPTORIS MISSIO and DIALOGUE AND PROCLAMATION*

Edited by William R. Burrows. Maryknoll, New York: Orbis Books, 1993. Pp. 244.

One learns much by reading much. One learns much by listening much, and by reading and listening to Pope John Paul II and the members of two prominent Roman Catholic magisterial congregations, we can learn about the ways in which the Catholic Church deals with contemporary issues confronting the church. So, there is a method of approach in problem solving, but even more than that, several of the issues relating to evangelization/evangelism, proselytizing, religious pluralism, planting the church, and understanding culture are covered and highlighted.

William Burrows, the editor of this volume, has done all of us who teach a great service by laying out these two documents side by side with penetrating and authoritative commentary, as integral elements of the whole volume. In addition to the two thorough commentaries by members of the RCC hierarchy, there are nine respondents who accepted the invitation to interact with the two documents; of the nine, only one is a citizen of the U.S., allowing readers to observe an intercultural dimension as well.

The recent publication of "Evangelicals and Catholics Together" and the ensuing interaction only point out the need for those involved in teaching and mentoring students of evangelism in our theological graduate schools to be alert to the issues underlined in these two documents. The role of revealed truth in Holy Scripture, the power of the gospel, and the crucial position of the evangelist/pastor/teacher, require the theologian to attempt to understand the issues, to reflect on them with both scholarly and practical integrity, and then open them up for classroom discussion and debate. As one who teaches in the related fields of mission and evangelism, I can testify that the challenges facing the Roman Catholic Church continue to provide case studies for my classes and my colleagues. My courses on contemporary Roman Catholicism will only be enhanced by reflecting on the documents examined in this volume, and the helpful commentary offers many insights to be evaluated and applied in my own teaching.

Perhaps the value of the book for those of us involved in both the theory and practice of evangelism lies in the more controversial and provocative sections of both documents, namely those sections which deal with the ways in which gospel proclamation encounters the world's non-Christian religions. As with many of the conciliar documents--for example, those of the Second Vatican Council--there is considerable ambiguity when one attempts to reconcile the exclusivity of the Christian message and the religious

commitments of those in the other religions. Unfortunately, this attempt falls on hard ground, when the concepts of conversion to Christ, the urgency of the gospel proclamation, biblical integrity, and a subtle but unmistakable tendency toward universalism are brought together without seeing the paradox and the virtual impossibility of reconciliation.

The mainline Protestant churches continue to struggle with decreasing numbers of people attending worship services and the difficulty in recruiting new blood for the ministries of evangelism and cross-cultural mission. It might not be far off the mark to suggest to those who consider themselves in the broader circle of evangelical thinking and practice, that this volume concerning explicitly Roman Catholic theology and practice, would also bear closer examination for us as well. These issues themselves are urgent and applying them in an evangelical context would not be wasted effort at all.

With confidence I can say that this book represents an indispensable tool for the seminary classroom as well as for those who are involved in curricular planning for the theological graduate school.

John W. Nyquist

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## ACADEMY FOR EVANGELISM IN THEOLOGICAL EDUCATION

Twenty-fourth Annual Meeting

Asbury Theological Seminary  
Wilmore, Kentucky

October 10-12, 1996

## MINUTES

Theme : Evangelism through Small Groups

Thursday Evening, October 10

7:30 Welcome by Academy President, George Hunter of Asbury Theological Seminary

Announcements by annual meeting host, Ron Crandall of Asbury Theological Seminary

7:45 Opening worship lead by Academy Vice President, Sam Wilson of Trinity Episcopal School of Ministry

8:00 Keynote address delivered by Ralph Neighbor

9:00 Break

9:15 Questions and discussion

10:00 Adjournment

Friday Morning, October 11

8:30 Hal Poe brought devotional thoughts based on Matthew 5:14-16.

9:00 Morning session convened by Ron Crandall.

9:20 Ralph Neighbor brought his second message on the cell church as a new paradigm to replace the program church. Each cell represents a Christian

community. Such a transition requires the spiritual death of the members at the foot of the cross. This presentation focused on the half-year process of equipping Christians for cell membership. These people then participate as a team to produce a convert.

Cell members are taught to discard all tracts and gospel presentations. They are then taught to talk through the main issues a person must embrace to make a faith response to Christ: God, mortals, life, sin, death, human efforts to reach God, the coming of God in Christ, the faith acceptance, the resurrection, the death of Christ for our sins, the baptism by the Holy Spirit into the body of Christ represented by cell communities. The goal is that each believer will bring someone to faith in Christ during a six-month period. The task of the cell is to be set to "catch" those who become new believers.

The cells also function as "spiritual fathers" to the new believers, who are spiritual children. New believers are taught to know their enemy as well as their Lord. The spiritual fathers are placed in share groups and special interest groups. The cell church has three "harvest events" each year. These cell churches are part of larger "zones" which have harvest events, and all of these combine for one mega-harvest event each year. Only trained "fathers" may lead harvest events. Typical events have a 2:1 presence of non-believers to believers. Cell groups are suspended from meeting for the ten-week period following harvest events, to have time to cultivate the unbelievers.

The cell group divides the responsibility for reaching different types of unbelievers. "Young men" approach Type A unbelievers who are seeking peace. "Fathers" approach Type B unbelievers who have no interest in Christ. Share groups deal with Type B unbelievers and relationship issues with Christians, the reputation of Christians, and information about Christianity. These share groups involve three believers and six unbelievers. Groups are based on shared interest and they meet at a different member's house for each of the nine weeks. This approach depends upon beginning a relationship with the Type B unbeliever based on their interests rather than on Christ.

10:00 Break

10:20 Sam Wilson convened the second half of the morning session and introduced a period of questions and discussion with Ralph Neighbor. In his terminology, Neighbor clarified that "fathers" means both men and women. Type A responsiveness means someone whose heart is seeking peace. Cell members discover these people by asking. New Age people represent this group in the United States. This approach stresses the evangelism of networks rather than of individuals.

10:50 Introduction of members present.

11:05 Dale Galloway, director of the Beeson Center at Asbury Seminary, spoke on the subject "What We Learned at New Hope Community Church about Reaching People through Small Groups." Galloway stressed the importance of both the small group and the celebration service. He discovered that these two structures feed and support each other. Galloway proceeds from the concern of how people move from unbelief to faith in Christ and incorporation into his body. Meeting needs is a key approach which small groups can provide. Small groups can meet needs and interests, but in North America, small groups must be flexible. In addition to reaching people, discipling must take place.

Small groups provide a way to close the back door for churches whose main entry point is the big service. Small groups are a way of connecting. Galloway also noticed a side door. People who become a part of small groups before their participation with the large group have an automatic connection. Thus, "the front door of your home and relationships become the side door of the church through which people enter in."

Carl George wrote the book *A Church for the Future* by observing New Hope Community Church and developing a theoretical base for their approach. This model involves cell groups, congregational or district groups of cells mentored by a pastor, and the overall celebration group of which all were a part. This model calls for leadership development through mentoring.

In contrasting this model with the traditional model, Galloway observes:

#### Traditional Model

1. Pastor centered
2. Sunday School centered
3. Building centered
4. Organized for control
5. Pastor and staff do ministry
6. Centralization
7. Program driven

#### 20/20 Vision Model

1. Sharing ministry together
2. Seven days a week church
3. People centered
4. Organized for outreach

5. Pastor and staff equip laity in ministry while modeling ministry
6. De-centralization
7. Ministry driven

In the process of developing this approach, New Hope was reaching about 500 people a year, but these people were leaving by the back door. The new people were not connecting. At that point they divided Portland into three geographic districts. Each district has a pastor responsible for developing leaders within the cells of each districts. Within each cell leaders are developed who will then lead in forming new groups.

Success of small group ministry is related to a clear understanding of the purpose of the small groups. In Korea, the purpose of small groups is evangelism. In many churches in North America, evangelism is not a concern of small groups. New Hope had small groups for the purpose of evangelism, discipleship, pastoral care, fellowship, and leadership development. Originally, New Hope had five different kinds of groups that focused on one of these purposes.

12:00 P.M. Lunch

1:00 Presentation: "A High-Tech Approach to Theological Education": Bob Mullholand and Ken Boyd of Asbury Seminary gave a guided tour of the new facilities of the Beeson Center, which include totally wired classrooms with networked computer/media access, distance education classrooms with televideo equipment, a nerve center for distribution of electronic educational media, and a training lab for faculty development.

2:45 Meeting reconvened by George Hunter. Thomas Wright, book review editor of the AETE Journal led a discussion on "What's New in Books." Wright solicited members to write reviews for the Journal. A general discussion of this year's most helpful books followed.

#### Questions for Discussion

"What Have You Learned Since Last We Met?"

Norm Thomas has observed how different the younger generation of Christians in Korea is from the older generation. A discussion followed of how the Korean Church is one generation removed from the United States which is one generation removed from Europe.

John Nyquist mentioned St. Helen's Bishopgate, a church in the City of London that has three distinct congregations in a parish that has no residents: Sunday evening medical students, Sunday morning commuters, Tuesday noon business people. Oddly, this medieval Church of England building has a large baptistry for immersion, which is used every week. Growth has occurred primarily as a result of preaching.

Woody Davis mentioned a similar downtown church in Oklahoma City that grew through weekday lunch meetings for office workers centered around preaching.

George Hunter mentioned the Brooklyn Tabernacle, which reaches the discarded classes that most churches do not want.

Jerry Reed mentioned the Apostolic Church of God in Chicago, an African American church, which has grown to over 10,000. Reed emphasized that the Academy has not succeeded in networking with churches like this.

Bob Coleman recommended Jess Pritchard's dissertation on Willow Creek.

Ron Crandall described how the Methodist Church Pastors Conference of Ghana is still tied to the old English Methodism of the colonial period, but that the congregations are free and indigenous.

#### "What Issues and Challenges Are Emerging?"

Postmodernity

Reaching the X-generation

Preparing for the turn of the millennium

Cross cultural models

#### "What Movements and Approaches Are Promising?"

Cell groups

Alpha Movement - Holy Trinity Brampton in London, a ten-week introduction to Christian faith

Partnerships with Campus Crusade, such as with Park Street Church in Boston and Frazier Memorial in Montgomery which are designed to reach local college campuses

Jesus Film

Recovery groups such as Twelve Steps

#### "What Topics Should Future Meetings Address?"

Rick Warren

Reaching Generation-X (Danny Harrell at Park Street Church)

Recovery Groups

More inter-action by members of Academy

Postmodernity

The Church in a Secular Culture

Meet at an innovative church

#### "What Speakers Should Address Future Academy Meetings?"

Archbishop Carey

Alister McGrath

Peter Berger

Robert Wuthnow

Fitzsimon Allison

George Barna

Lyle Schaller

Desmond Tutu

Stan Grenz

Bill Pannell

Ann Graham Lotz

Martin Marty

Bill Moyers

George Gallup

Stephen Carter

Nancy Volz

Kathleen Norris

Nancy Murphy

Michael Green

Charles Colson

Harvey Cox

Paul Cedar

#### Future Meeting Schedule

1997 - Beeson Divinity School, Birmingham, Alabama (Lewis Drummond, host)

1998 - Trinity Episcopal School of Ministry, Ambridge, Pennsylvania (Sam Wilson, host)

1999 - McAfee School of Theology, Atlanta, Georgia (Ron Johnson, host)

#### 4:30 BUSINESS MEETING

George Hunter convened the annual business meeting of the Academy. The business of the meeting included the following items:

1. Hal Poe reported the printed minutes in the Journal. The president will call for a vote to approve the printed minutes at the business session tomorrow.

2. Hal Poe reported the election to membership of the following people:

Larry Gilbert	Ted Leenerts
Mary Graham	Arthur McPhee
Thad Hamilton	Larry Michael
Darrel P. Heide	Ron Waters
Harold Shank	

3. Woody Davis presented the treasurer's report. The balance as of October 1, 1996 was \$5026.93. Dr. Davis tendered his resignation as treasurer, because of a change in vocational responsibilities.

4. The executive committee recommended the election of Ron Johnson as treasurer to continue serving also as business manager of the *Journal*. The motion passed.

5. The annual written report of the AETE *Journal* is attached to these minutes. In the absence of editor Richard Armstrong, managing editor Ron Johnson reported that the use of desktop publishing has resulted in savings of approximately \$1500. He underscored the need for authors and book reviews to submit disks with their manuscripts (preferably in WordPerfect format). Back issues of the *Journal* are available from Dr. Johnson at the McAfee School of Theology of Mercer University in Atlanta.

6. The executive committee recommends that the *Journal* begin the sale of ads allowing up to 10% of space for ads. The motion passed. The executive committee recommends that the Academy accept the invitations to Trinity Episcopal School of Ministry in Ambridge, Pennsylvania in 1998, and the McAfee School of Ministry in Atlanta, Georgia in 1999. The motion passed.

8. The executive committee was asked to explore the possibility of conducting the annual meeting of the Academy in Oxford, England, in the year 2000.

9. David Hester has offered to undertake the writing of a grant proposal to support leadership development for churches through providing support for speakers at annual meetings who are equipped to address the critical issues facing the church in its evangelistic work. A motion to endorse Dr. Hester in this project was offered by Chic Shaver and seconded by Jerry Reed. The motion passed.

10. Commendation of Woody Davis by the Academy for his devoted service as treasurer for the last four years was expressed by an ovation from the members.

11. The first session of the annual business meeting adjourned until the next day.

6:00 President's Banquet

Following a welcome by Bob Mullholand, provost of Asbury Seminary, Bonnie Crandall led singing and sang a solo, "Embrace the Cross."

George Hunter presented the annual president's message, "Ten Reasons Not to Leave Evangelism to the Pastor." He commented that the United States is becoming an increasingly secular society in which adults have no religious training in their background. He sees three main responses by the churches: (a) denial, (b) the placement of responsibility on the secular person to seek out the church, and (c) the view that outreach is the pastor's job. This last reason is the primary cause of stagnation and decline in American churches. Hunter took as his theme the maxim "Shepherds don't beget sheep; sheep beget sheep." In addressing this issue, he borrowed from David Letterman's reverse order to identify the top ten reasons not to leave evangelism to the pastor:

10. Jesus commanded the whole church, not just the clergy.
9. Evangelism is a team game, not a lone ranger ministry.
8. The pastor lacks the contacts with pre-Christian people that the people of the church have.
7. The pastor may never have enough credibility with half of the pre-Christians of the community.
6. Because of the expansion of job descriptions, the pastor cannot shepherd the flock, much less evangelize the pre-Christians.
5. When the pastor does reach a number of unchurched people, a number of unanticipated problems arise.
4. The exceptional pastors who do reach a lot of people do not remain in the same church forever.
3. When evangelism is the pastor's job, many reachable people are never reached.
2. When reaching people is the pastor's job, the rest of the people sit on the bench.
1. When evangelism is left to the pastor, the church's membership strength declines and so does everything else.

Conclusion: evangelism should be assigned to the laity, with clergy serving as the equipping staff.

Saturday, October 12, 1996

9:15 Following a devotional by AETE President Hunter, Richard Peace, of Fuller Theological Seminary, presented "A Course Model for Evangelism through Small Groups," describing a course he has taught for more than twenty years. His approach grew out of a mission group he and four friends started in the early 1960s, called Africa Enterprises. Their intention was to evangelize the emerging African cities in the post colonial era. They needed a model that focused on lay leadership rather than the vocational mass evangelist. The group intended to use small groups as pre-evangelism, to funnel people into mass meetings. Instead, people in South Africa kept getting converted at the wrong place, at the wrong time: in the small group! In the late 1960s, Peace began a Bible study ministry among hippies of the so-called counter culture. In the 1980s he reconnected with InterVarsity and began working with Serendipity to produce small group materials.

The course Peace teaches focuses on developing the skills to conduct small groups and to train others to lead small groups. The course involves both theoretical foundations and experimental learning through participation in the planning, development, and execution of a small group ministry. Actual involvement in the event creates high anxiety in the students before the experience, but after the experience the anxiety turns to confidence. Following the experience, class time focuses on evaluation of the students' experience and further theoretical foundations now informed by experiential learning.

10:30 Break

10:45 Dr. James Logan was the next speaker to address the Academy. His topic was, "An Issue Upon Which Christian Evangelism Stands or Falls: The Finality of Christ." Logan spoke from the perspective of three contexts: secular residence in a community where Christianity is seen relatively as one of many good causes, seminary teaching with students trained with the uncritical assumption that everything is relative, and church membership in a congregation and denomination that reflect the broad cultural view that everything is relative.

For evangelism in theological education today, the theological issue is primary. Evangelism can no longer live off an assumed theological position. Today the theological task will not be done by someone else. Religious pluralism has created a dangerous situation for the church.

Lessing constructed a fable to explore the issue of whether Christianity is the true religion or if there is any way to prove it. The fable concludes that all

religions should be held with the view that tolerance over absoluteness should be cherished, that religion falls within the realm of opinion rather than fact, and that moral code should prevail over religious truth claim. The Enlightenment placed religion outside the marketplace of objective reason and verification.

Logan approaches the question through Ernst Troeltsch rather than through the contemporary debate, because the nineteenth century dealt with the issue in greater depth and the contemporary debate has nothing to add. He focuses on three fundamental questions related to the pluralism of religion:

1. Is it possible to support the thesis that the multiple manifestations of religion are cultural manifestations of the one true religion? This view would hold that no single religion can adequately express the true religion. Logan counters: how does one gain access to this ineffable religious core so to assert it? Is this approach not one which focuses on functional results?
2. Is it right to take doctrines of the world's religions and say that they have no cognitive value, but are only useful as a means of transforming the social order?
3. The consequences of the subject-object Enlightenment epistemology renders statements of idolatry invalid, because all religious truth claims would be thus rendered subjective opinions.

Given these issues, how should theologians go about their business? Some of contemporary apologetics are no longer helpful. Credibility of Christian affirmation is no longer the issue in late twentieth century Western thought. People no longer hold to a universal objective reason that stands over all human experience. The relativising of plausibility structures negates the universal. The fundamental problem for apologetics today is plausibility. Most phenomenologists of religion do not argue for a common core of religion shared by all religions.

If the primary issue is plausibility, what does that mean for evangelism? Any attempt to make a faith statement begins from a commitment or vantage point. The church from the beginning has practiced a particular logic or grammar. This grammar has been the gospel, with an internal logic of its own. The logic of the Christian gospel is premised on divine initiative. This initiative is grace.

1. The logic of divine initiative is Christological logic. Divine giving lies at the core.
2. The logic of grace is soteriological logic. In Jesus we have the substitution for the human plight, which is soteric.
3. The logic of grace is eschatological logic. Jesus is the manifestation of God's ultimate eschatological intention for the human race.

This being so, the church has no option but to use the language of finality. Christian apologetics must:

1. be as clear as possible about the internal logic of its own confession and address itself to the internal logic;
2. express that this logic makes the most sense of the wide range of logics available;
3. seek for a coherence between the Christian world view and Christian behavior as a people of God. The church must be a substantial, living world in which faith is seen as true.

12:00 P.M. BUSINESS MEETING (second session)

George Hunter reconvened the annual business meeting.

1. Positions available for evangelism professors:

Louisville Presbyterian  
Perkins School of Theology  
Columbia Bible College  
Covenant Seminary  
Drew  
Dubuque

2. The minutes of the last annual meeting were approved as printed in the Journal.
3. The next meeting of the Academy will be at Trinity Episcopal School of Ministry, Ambridge, Pennsylvania, October 8-10, 1998.
4. The meeting was adjourned with prayer.

Attachment:

JOURNAL OF THE ACADEMY FOR EVANGELISM  
IN THEOLOGICAL EDUCATION

Annual Report  
October 11, 1996

Advanced copies of Volume 11 of the AETE Journal should be available for distribution to those attending this year's meeting of the Academy, hosted by Asbury Theology Seminary.

The current edition marks a significant departure from our normal production in two respects: (a) we have a new printer, whose competitive bid warranted our shifting our business from Capital City Press; (b) we have

submitted the manuscript on disk at a considerable saving over the normal cost of printed manuscripts.

We have our Managing Editor, Ron Johnson, to thank for finding an easily accessible printer with whom he has worked in Atlanta, and for arranging for someone to put the balance of the manuscript on disk for a very reasonable price. Ron has been working with AETE Treasurer Woody Davis and AETE Secretary Hal Poe in a major overhaul and update of our subscription lists. I am immensely grateful to Ron for the significant contribution he is making.

From now on we will expect all articles and book reviews to be submitted on disk, preferably in WordPerfect format. I wish to thank those who did so for the current edition. Their disks greatly reduced the retyping task.

I also want to express my personal thanks to Thomas Wright for his vital work as our Book Review Editor. He hopes that those who have agreed to write reviews will come through as promised. Book reviews and articles should be submitted by the May 31 deadline.

Our subscription lists have been expanding steadily, as the Journal becomes more widely known. Our readers have been very gracious in their responses to the content. We continue to receive a steady number of requests for past issues. We now have subscribers all over the world, but we aim to increase our numbers substantially. We are also discussing possible changes in format and appearance, in the hope of increasing the Journal's visibility and attractiveness.

My colleagues Ron and Thomas may want to add their own comments to this brief report. For now I want to conclude by thanking the Academy on their and my own behalf for the privilege of serving in this way.

Respectfully submitted,

Richard S. Armstrong  
Editor

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# JAETE

Journal of the Academy for Evangelism in Theological Education  
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\_\_\_\_\_ I have already paid my AETE membership dues (\$35) and am therefore entitled to receive the copy of Vol. 11 of the *JOURNAL*, which I received in the mail.

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## INFORMATION FOR SUBSCRIBERS AND AUTHORS

*The Journal of the Academy for Evangelism in Theological Education* (ISSN 0894-9034) is published annually in October and distributed free of charge to all paid-up members and associate members of the Academy, and to supporting institutions. Copies may be purchased at a cost of \$10.00 per single issue, or \$30.00 per subscription for four issues. Subscriptions, renewals, orders, and change-of-address notifications should be sent to Prof. Ron Johnson, Managing Editor, AETE *Journal*, Mercer Univ. School of Theology, 3001 Mercer Univ. Drive, Atlanta, GA 30341-4415 (tel. 770-986-3477; FAX 770-986-3478; E-mail address: johnson\_rw@mercer.edu.). Remittances should be made payable to "The Journal of the AETE."

*The Journal of the AETE* was established to provide a medium for the responsible sharing of ideas among those engaged in the teaching of evangelism, primarily at the seminary level, as well as those whose ministries involve them in serious research and writing in the field. In addition to scholarly articles and book reviews, the *Journal* includes the Minutes of the annual meetings of the Academy and occasional items of interest to AETE members.

The Editorial Advisory Committee of the *Journal* is seeking well-written, high-quality articles relating to any aspect of evangelism, and issues relevant to the theology and practice of evangelism, including biblical, doctrinal, pedagogical, and methodological concerns, and matters relevant to evangelism and the cognate disciplines. Responses to articles in previous issues of the *Journal* will also be considered. Pending the appointment of a new Editor, manuscripts should be submitted both on paper and on a floppy disk (WordPerfect or compatible format to Ron Johnson, Managing Editor. Book reviews should be sent to Dr. C. Thomas Wright, Book Review Editor, *AETE Journal*, 4200 North Point Pkwy., Alpharetta, GA 30202-4174 (tel. 404-898-7708; FAX 404-898-7782; E-mail address: cserve 71173,2126).

Manuscripts (including book reviews) should be double spaced (including endnotes, tables, and appendices), using only one side of a page (8 1/2 x 11 inches). Articles should be carefully documented, with notes appearing at the end. For style, including the citation of sources, authors should be guided by the University of Chicago Press' *Manual of Style* or K. L. Turabian's *Manual for Writers*. For spelling, punctuation, capitalization, etc., use an up-to date style manual, such as *The Gregg Reference Manual*, published by McGraw-Hill. For example, pronouns for Jesus and terms like gospel (except when it refers to a book of the Bible), eternal life, kingdom of God, body of Christ, are not capitalized. A good rule is, "When in doubt, don't capitalize!" The use of gender inclusive language is expected.

Manuscripts need to be submitted by May 31 in order to appear in the following October issue. The desired length of articles is normally 3000 to 5000 words, with preference on the shorter side. Book reviews are usually in the 600 to 750 range. Authors and reviewers are requested to indicate their present place of employment, complete title, and full name. They may include a brief explanatory statement about their article, if such is needed. Contributors receive no compensation except for five complimentary copies of the issue in which their article appears.

The contents of *The Journal of the AETE* reflect the ideas and opinions of the individual authors and do not necessarily represent the views of the editorial advisory committee or the officers and other members of the AETE.