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Princeton Theological Seminary  
P.O. Box 821  
Princeton, NJ 08542-0803
- Book Review Editor:** **Dr. C. Thomas Wright**  
Home Missions Board, SBC  
1350 Spring Street NW  
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## EDITORIAL INTRODUCTION

Included in this ninth edition of the *AETE Journal* is an index of the articles, authors, book reviews, book notes, and reviewers for the first eight issues (1985-1993). We hope this will be a useful reference for those who wish to review the contents of, or look up particular articles or reviews in, past issues. The index reflects a remarkable breadth and variety of topics and an impressive number of contributors and reviewers for our relatively young journal.

The members of the JAETE editorial advisory committee are eager to receive your suggestions as to how we can make the *Journal* an even more useful and effective publication. We are discussing ways of expanding our subscription list and are considering the feasibility of publishing two editions annually. These possibilities can be realized only with your support and participation in the effort. The more articles submitted the more selective we can be in order to maintain the high standard we have achieved.

I should like on your behalf to express our deep appreciation to our new book review editor, Thomas Wright, who has ably taken up the reins handed him by George Hunsberger. George has kindly agreed to continue to serve on our editorial advisory committee. Hearty thanks are also due our managing editor, David Young, who is working hard to coordinate our various mailing lists.

Featured in this edition are articles from four different continents, including a well-documented essay by Stephen P. Clarke, who examines the theological, missiological, and evangelistic implications of inculturating the gospel in the predominantly unchurched Australian context. Although the article is lengthier than we would normally accept, we deemed it to be of such quality to warrant our making an exception and are happy to include it in this issue.

Those who were privileged to hear Roger Hedlund at our 21st annual meeting will be pleased to have his address in writing. Roger has provided a brief but helpful overview of the immense evangelistic challenge posed by the urbanization of the Indian sub-continent, concluding with what he feels are reasons for hope in the face of what others see as a discouraging future.

From South Africa comes an article by our colleague Jurgens Hendriks, who in responding to my own article entitled "Questions for the Reformed Church of South Africa" (*JAETE*, Vol. 7), reports on the work he and others are doing to further the cause of racial reconciliation in their dramatically changing society.

Samuel H. Moffett's opening paper, which he presented at a meeting hosted by Presbyterians for Renewal at the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) on June 14, 1993, is an appropriate missiological introduction to the above three articles. It is an inspiring and refreshing reminder to all of us of the need for a balanced and obedient response to God's call to mission.

In his concluding article Harry L. Poe argues for the need to renew and continue the quest for the historical kerygma. He rejects all attempts to interpret the entire gospel in terms of a particular doctrine and appeals for those who proclaim the good news to apply it to the particular needs of the hearers.

We have included thirteen book reviews in this issue and express our appreciation to all of the reviewers for their important contributions to the usefulness of this *Journal*. Many thanks also to Henry Schmidt, our former secretary, whose minutes of our annual meeting are a most helpful summary of our packed-full agenda for those three days. If you have never attended an annual meeting of the Academy for Evangelism, you have missed a most worthwhile experience. The program is always stimulating, inspirational as well as informational, not to mention the rich fellowship, which regular attenders find so meaningful and enjoyable. None of us could afford the true value of what we receive at these meetings for such a ridiculously low registration fee. We owe a debt of gratitude to the institutions which have hosted and/or supported the Academy over the years.

So send in your dues to Woody Davis (\$25/year), renew your subscription to the *Journal* (\$10/year to David S. Young), and keep those articles and book reviews coming!

Happy reading to all!

Richard Stoll Armstrong

## MISSIONS: HAVE WE LOST OUR WAY?

Samuel H. Moffett

I wanted to call this short address, "It's the Theology, Stupid!" But in the interests of a more irenic General Assembly I have toned down the title to "Have We Lost Our Way?", remembering how Jesus once said to doubting Thomas, "I am the way and the truth and the life; no one comes to the Father but by me" (Jn. 14:6). I wonder if in this new age of doubt, we aren't losing that Way again.

There was a time, back before the great theological depression in the mainline churches—there was a time when Christians didn't feel the need to re-examine or re-imagine the world Christian mission every three or four years. They didn't need to ask why they had missionaries, and what missionaries were supposed to do. It was axiomatic. It was simple, and dangerous, and overwhelmingly urgent. It was as simple as the command of Christ, and as urgent as life and death. For millions upon millions were dying without Christ. Every second saw more souls slipping into a Christless eternity. No one had ever given them a chance. No one had ever told them they were lost. No one had ever told them that they could live forever in Christ. Faced with a challenge as simple as that the Church exploded into the modern missionary movement, a race against time and against the devil for the greatest of all prizes, the eternal salvation of the human soul.

If I've oversimplified and over-dramatized it, forgive me, but that is the classic, and to many people the most familiar, theology of missions. It is evangelical theology: salvation free for all, but only in Christ. And if you are expecting me to ridicule it, I am going to disappoint you. It is not as old-fashioned and outdated as some people think it is. It was my parents' theology. But—and this is important—that same theology is also the theology of the Korean Presbyterian church today, a Presbyte-

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Samuel H. Moffett is the Henry Winters Luce Professor of Ecumenics and Mission, Emeritus, at Princeton Theological Seminary. His address was presented at a meeting hosted by Presbyterians for Renewal during the 206th General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) in Wichita, Kansas, on June 14, 1994.

rian theology which gains three or four times more members every year than Presbyterians in America lose every year. In fact it is not just Presbyterian; it is the theology of the vast majority of the churches of the third world, and who are we to call them ridiculous? They're the ones who are growing, not we.

I must also confess that in large measure that was the theology that sent me to China and one of my brothers to inner city America, and another to India, and still another into medical missions not all that long ago. No, I don't ridicule it.

This is how it happened to me. One day in Princeton's Miller Chapel, the chairman of the Board, Robert E. Speer, was speaking. At one point he stopped, took out his watch, and said to us (we were all men at the seminary then), "Young men, this watch could tick for nine and a half years without numbering the unbelievers in China alone." I couldn't get the picture out of my mind.

That theology of the lostness of unbelief, and of salvation in Jesus Christ alone still sends more missionaries around the globe than any other theology of missions. Most people do not seem to realize that the number of foreign missionaries from North America has been growing every year—except, alas, in our mainline churches. It is a missionary theology.

But you know as well as I that there came a day of the shaking of the foundations. The old urgencies were denied, or at least ignored. No one seemed sure of anything eternal any more. So the challenge changed. The 1928 Jerusalem Conference of the International Missionary Council said (if you will excuse their language) "Our fathers were impressed with horror that men should die without Christ; we are equally impressed with horror that they should live without Christ."

It was a shift of balance, really, more than a denial—a strategic withdrawal, they thought, to what was considered firmer theological ground. Millions upon millions are living in misery and in filth. No one can deny that. No one has ever given them a chance, they said. No one has ever helped them to the life abundant that Jesus came to give them. This was a challenge to a future in history—a future without hunger and without hate, without sickness and without tears, where all men are brothers, and all women are sisters, where justice rolls down like the waters, and the nations shall study war no more.

This is the *second theology of missions*, more modern, more practical, more "works" centered than "grace" centered—a theology of the kingdom. In its most popular form it is a theology of liberation, an attempt all too often to try to build the kingdom without the King. But I do not intend to ridicule kingdom theology either. Even the King keeps his eye on the sparrow. It has never seemed ridiculous to me to feed the hungry and to heal the sick and to work for peace and justice. Jesus who said, "I am the way . . ." also said, "I am the life." What you have done "for the least of these"—the hungry, the thirsty, the naked, the sick, the prisoners—what you have done for them, you have done for me. That kind of liberation I can never ridicule.

But again, you know as well as I how the paralysis of doubt struck once more. The foundations shook, and the roof fell in. War, holocausts, depressions, brutalities, corruptions, AIDS, drugs, and failed revolutions—all this in a disheartening crescendo of defeat. Worst of all, much of this was happening right here in our "Christian" west, in what too many had believed was the kingdom, western civilization. That kind of a kingdom somehow refused to stay built no matter how hard the liberators tried, and the builders began to lose hope. Have we lost the Way?

Those have been the two familiar descriptions of the missionary: on the one hand, the savior of souls, the evangelist, and on the other, the builder of the kingdom, the social activist. The problem of missions today is that neither the evangelist nor the activist has proved to be able by himself or herself to carry the whole church together into mission. Critics of the left still caricature the evangelical promise as "pie in the sky by-and-by," and critics from the right even more devastatingly point out that the "paradise-here-and-now" activism of yesterday's failed revolutions has given us more hell on earth than hope of heaven.

So where do we begin mission in this kind of a world, and in our kind of a discouraged church? Where can we find a compelling motive to unite and renew the whole church in Christian mission? For those who will listen there is still a way. Jesus is still saying, "I am the Way. . . ."

It might help if both the unfairly caricatured evangelists, and the well-intentioned but much criticized builders of the kingdom, would first take one step backward for a better start on their way to mission, and then together take another step forward toward a deeper, more Biblical theology of missions, a Christ-centered theology. Christ defines our mission, and he is not pluralistic. Our mission witnesses to the One Way, Christ. Anything more is idolatry. Anything less is no longer Christian. The evangelist is not the way; neither is the social activist. The Bible reminds us that the evangelist can no more save souls than the social gossamer can build the kingdom of God. Souls are saved by the Holy Spirit, whose witness is never separated from Jesus Christ as the only way. And only God can build the kingdom, whose promised King is Jesus Christ, Prince of Peace, King of kings, and Lord of all of life.

But both the evangelist and the activist are so right in so much of what they are doing. The evangelist proclaims the good news, the gospel; the activist seeks to serve and improve the world. We need them both. And in all fairness to our forebears, whatever their other faults may have been, the pioneer missionaries had them both. They didn't polarize the evangelistic and social gospel. While they preached, they opened schools and hospitals; they laid foundations for the liberation of women and the oppressed; and the churches they planted changed the lives of whole nations. Moreover, the evangelist and the reformer are actually not all that much different in their basic motivation. At their best, both honestly believe that their motive is love, Christian love.

But love has lost much of its Biblical meaning in today's post-Christian

world. America's modern culture-captive theologies use the word "love" in such a warm, loose, fuzzy way that I am beginning to question just how far we can use that word any more to describe our motivating base in Christian mission. Some, even in the church, confuse it with erotic love, or trivialize it with sugary sentiment. How very American! The "Love and justice" slogan is a better watchword. But that too easily turns into a polarizing double track for mission, with the soft-hearted opting for love, and the hard-headed for justice.

I am thrown back, therefore, to a yet more primal level of motivation for mission: not love, but obedience. Obedience in love, I hasten to add. C. S. Lewis once observed in his pithy way, "[We] do not fail in obedience through lack of love, but have lost love because [we] have never attempted obedience."<sup>1</sup>

Of course love is fundamental, love as the New Testament describes it. It is still "the great and first commandment" (Matt. 22:38). But was love the motive in the original mission of the church?

It was love that started the mission. Yes. "For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, that everyone who believes in him might not perish but have everlasting life" (NRSV). But that was the love of God the Father. The missionary was God the Son.

But surely, the Son came on his mission with no less love than that of the Father who sent him. Yes, I believe that. However, it is interesting to note that the Bible does not say so. The life of Jesus on this earth was filled with love. His was a compassion that knew no bounds. He loved the publicans and sinners, Jews and Gentiles, unbelievers as well as those who believed. That is all true. But where are we told that he came into the world because he loved it? Insofar as the Bible distinguishes between the Son and the Father (a dangerous distinction, I know, and one which slips easily into heresy)—but so far as it does distinguish between those two persons of the Trinity in reference to the mission, it tells us that the Father founds the mission because he loves; the Son goes on the mission because he is sent. He obeys. The motive of the Son, the missionary, is obedience.

Look at the rare glimpse Paul gives us into the mind of Christ before the mission of his incarnation. The lesson is not love, but humility and obedience, obedience "even unto the death of the cross" (Phil 2:5-8). He loves the world, of course, but he goes because he is sent. That is the only explanation Jesus gives of the narrowness of his mission, "I am not sent but to the lost sheep of the house of Israel" (Matt. 15:24). He loves the world enough to die for it but he goes to the cross because he obeys: "Not my will but thine be done" (Lk. 22:42). The insistent, compelling motive of the mission is obedience. God is love; but it is obedience that forges and focusses and incarnates that love into a mission.

The lesson is the same when we turn to the apostles, the first missionaries of the church. Was it love for a despised and rejected race that sent Philip to the Ethiopian? Not according to the record. "The angel of the Lord spoke to Philip and said, 'Arise and go' . . ." (Acts 8:26).

And he went. Was it love that sent Peter to the proud and unclean, the Roman centurion? Not according to the record. "The Spirit said to him, 'Arise and go . . .'" (Acts 10:20). And he went.

Was it a passion for millions of lost Gentile souls dying without hope and without Christ in this world that made Saul into Paul "the apostle to the gentiles"? He loved his own people, the Jews, too much for that, as the record shows. It was obedience that made him a missionary. "Set apart for me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them," said the Spirit (Acts 13: 2), and obedience sent him almost reluctantly to the Gentiles. In the "strange new world of the Bible" (Barth), apostles and missionaries are made not by looking at the world in love (though that they must do), but in the most basic sense, by listening to God in obedience. They go in love, or they should not go at all. But they go because they obey.

At this point most of us are inclined to change the subject in embarrassment and wish we could go on to more practical missionary matters than theology—go on to things like techniques, and methods, and cross-cultural relations, and fund-raising appeals. How can we wait around to listen for the voice of God, when there is a whole world out there that needs to hear the good news and see it practiced?

I remember an incident back in my college days. This story, I admit, won't sound like most colleges today. One of the young women, earnest and intense, desperately wanted to go as a missionary to Africa. But God had not called her, she thought. There were no voices, no visions, only this inexplicable silence on the part of God. It was making her almost ill with anxiety. So one night a tough-minded, realistic, practical-joking friend stepped in to take a hand. She gathered a group of women together, robed them all in white sheets, and at midnight they stole into the troubled girl's room, moaning in hollow tones, "Come to Africa; come to Africa."

Don't laugh at the poor girl waiting for the voice of God. She was partly right, but partly wrong. Wrong in her stereotyped notion of how God ought to speak to her, but completely right in believing that without the positive assurance of God's leading she would never be a missionary even if she did go to Africa. And don't rush to condemn the practical jokers, either. They were wrong to pose as substitutes for the voice of God, a temptation not unknown also among preachers and professors. But they were right that God does in his own mysterious way, choose to work through imperfect human means. Especially in missions. That is why our theology is so important. It keeps us on the right way. We are only dressing up in white robes and stealing in upon the unwary with false guideposts and lesser challenges if we settle for anything less than truth, love, and through it all obedience, according to the Scriptures.

Two years ago we had a surprise call. A Korean pastor whom we did not know, from the Sangdo Presbyterian Church in Seoul, with which we were not familiar, wanted to fly us down to Chile for the groundbreaking of their new missionary project, of which we had never heard. They

told us that the church was celebrating its 25th anniversary, and wanted to commemorate it by undertaking a missions project in Chile. Why Chile?, we wondered. Well, they said, we remembered that Jesus said, ". . . to the uttermost ends of the earth." So our people got out a globe and put a pin in South Korea. Then they stretched a string as far as it would go all the way to the opposite end of the globe. It turned out to be Chile. They found out that there were already three Korean evangelists at work in Chile, but no Korean missionary doctor. They said, "The missionaries who came to us opened hospitals. So the best way for us to obey Christ's command would be to celebrate our 25th anniversary by building a Christian hospital for the Mapuche Indians in southern Chile." And they did it. It was dedicated this Spring.

As simple as that. A firm faith; and cheerful obedience. If that sounds too simple for us sophisticated American Presbyterians, I suspect we may be getting too academic, like the professor from Yale who visited our mission in northern Korea years ago. He wanted to preach in a country church. So the mission sent him with a missionary interpreter out into the country. The professor began his sermon, "All thought is divided into two categories, the concrete and the abstract." His interpreter looked at the little congregation sitting with eager attention on the floor of the little church—toothless grandmothers, schoolboys without shoes—and made a quick decision. "Dear friends," he began his translation, "I have come all the way from America to tell you about the Lord Jesus Christ," and from there on the sermon was firmly in his hands.

I vote for more simplicity in our Presbyterian challenge to mission: Who knows what this General Assembly will do? How will people remember Wichita '94 fifty years from now? Will it be, "Oh yes, those Presbyterians. They lost it at Wichita. They talked about 'the concrete and the abstract,' and about gods and goddesses, and who knows what else. And no one understood. And then they got angry; and no one wanted to listen. And they went home, and disappeared. Whatever happened to the Presbyterians?"

Or will the Holy Spirit, the Great Interpreter, take over here and now with grace and power, so that people will hear us saying, "We have come all the way to Wichita to set a course to tell the world about the Lord Jesus Christ." If so, perhaps fifty years from now they will say, "Look at what those Presbyterians have done in only fifty years."

Jesus said, "I am the Way—No one comes to the Father but by me." We know the Way. God gives the power. Our part is to obey.

In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, AMEN.

#### NOTE

<sup>1</sup> Quoted by Chad Walsh in C. S. Lewis, *The Visionary Christian* (NY: Macmillan, 1981), 83 f.

## EVANGELISM AND THE AUSTRALIAN CONTEXT: THE CHALLENGE OF INCULTURATION

Stephen P. Clarke

### A Personal Prologue

Professor Darrell Whiteman, editor of the international journal *Missiology*, aroused my interest several years ago when, at the beginning of a doctoral seminar, he claimed that people did not respond to the gospel because evangelists, while interested in the biblical text, actually thought little about the social and cultural context into which their text was to be preached. This, I thought, was a provocative statement indeed. Surely the gospel, in all its timeless truth, stands above culture and only needs to be delivered in its purity by a faithful messenger for God to do His work.

I found myself reflecting further on this matter. Having spent twelve years in itinerant evangelism in Australia, planting churches and proclaiming Christ, I realized that evangelism was not quite that simple. Australians did not fall over each other as they beat a path to the door of the churches crying, "What must we do to be saved?" Yet I could not agree with many of my clerical counterparts that Australians were just "hard to reach," a response that seems to absolve us of the real work of understanding people and relating to them in their social and cultural context.

### Introduction

This study seeks to analyze, in the light of Whiteman's challenge, the sociology of Australian religious consciousness, its implications for

Stephen P. Clarke is a Lecturer in Church in Australian Society, Evangelism, and Cultural Anthropology at the Bible College of Victoria in Melbourne, Australia.

theology, and the subsequent challenge for those concerned with the gospel's inculturation.<sup>1</sup> This paper is concerned with two specific questions, namely:

What indicators exist in our vernacular culture<sup>2</sup> that tell us about our own sociological and cultural self-perception; and

How may the church recognize and respond to this perception in its theological formulations, particularly as they relate to inculturation?

### I. The Sociology of Religion and the Sociology of Theology

The study of the sociology of religion helps us identify cultural factors conducive to the formation of religious experience, or conversely, those that undermine it. We may ask with Moberg, "What kind of group processes nurture and strengthen sacred feelings of devotion and consecration, and what kinds destroy and diminish these feelings? How are religious values affected by the general mode of the life of people . . .?"<sup>3</sup> Or, in more specific terms: Do people misunderstand the gospel when the church fails to understand and relate to them in their social and cultural context?

To answer these questions we must examine the past so as to understand the present, in order to discover "the social script," which in turn forms "the seed-bed of indigenous culture."<sup>4</sup> This indigenous, or vernacular, culture is of particular significance to those concerned with inculturation. Tragically, the historical data seems to suggest that the world shared by the Australian people and the perspectives indigenous to their socio-cultural roots, are largely disregarded by the church in its evangelistic efforts.<sup>5</sup> Understanding the social script, that which unites the consciousness of the Australian people and defines their worldview, will be a key to any meaningful encounter between them and the church. As Dr. Alan Walker reminds us,

Australia needs a truly Australian church. The Christian faith will not reach the hearts of the Australian people unless it is interpreted in the light of our own national consciousness and social situation. Only a fully indigenous church will be able to respond to the unfolding moral and spiritual demands of the nation . . . The task of Christian thinkers is to come to grips with the distinctive problems and characteristics of Australian consciousness.<sup>6</sup>

Walker's assertion confronts us with the need for a sociology of theology. A sociology of theology concerns itself with "how particular [theological] forms of thought might be related to particular cultural condi-

tions."<sup>7</sup> It relates to the sociology of religion, but moves a step further in that it focuses on particular theological paradigms, and assesses their adequacy in the light of the social and cultural context in which the gospel is preached. It further acknowledges a range of possibilities in terms of the theological forms the evangelist uses in presenting the gospel.<sup>8</sup>

### II. The Biblical Antecedents of a Theology of Inculturation

There is no doubt that the Old Testament is the seed-bed of a theology of inculturation. Yahweh's self-revelatory acts all occur within specific historic contexts which, over a broad time span, embrace a variety of socio-cultural influences. From the very outset the biblical faith is seen as engaged in an on-going dialogue between the culture of Israel and the cultures of the surrounding nations.

The religion of Yahweh does not emerge from these cultures, inasmuch as it does not come to Israel through, say, the religion of the Canaanites, but it certainly embraces many of their concepts and forms, challenging and purifying them in the process. For example, the Genesis creation account appears in a literary and conceptual form similar to that of the Mesopotamian epics of the period yet, though sharing these forms, is regarded by many scholars as an ontological polemic against them.<sup>9</sup> Similarly, the Covenants are built on a widespread ancient Near-eastern legal tradition that is to be found in texts such as the Code of Hammurabi.<sup>10</sup> The Sinaitic covenant appears in a form very similar to that of a Suzerain-Vassal treaty, commonly used among the Hittites.<sup>11</sup> These few examples show that the religious responses of Israel are expressed in ways that reflect the various cultural influences upon the nation at different times in its history, and are not supra-cultural. As Shorter notes,

God's relationship with his people is influenced in each epoch by the prevailing cultural form or milieu. Israel's response, too, is similarly conditioned by the successive cultural influences. Whether it responds positively or negatively to the covenant, it does so in harmony with the religious psychology of the contemporary cultural framework.<sup>12</sup>

The prophet Hosea is a prime example of inculturation in the Old Testament. Israel had fallen into the trap of Canaanite religion, with its idolatrous worship of Baal and of nature. Hosea calls them back from the agrarian paganism of the Canaanites,<sup>13</sup> to worship the God of the Exodus.<sup>14</sup> Hosea uses the analogy of a sacred marriage as a counterpoint to the sacred prostitution that was an integral part of the Canaanite

religion, and by uniting these opposite symbols shows Yahweh to be a God who is a faithful husband to Israel, despite Israel's infidelity. Senior and Stuhlmüller show how the earlier covenantal language of Lord and vassal has now given way to that of fertility language, imagery that is indigenous to Canaanite religion and culture.<sup>15</sup> This fertility language is even more explicit in chapter 2:16–23, where the imagery is distinctly Canaanite, though impregnated with new meaning. As Senior and Stuhlmüller rightly conclude,

We see that Hosea so challenged Canaanite culture that its finest perceptions are salvaged and purified, and then given a new life within the Mosaic covenantal tradition. The sensuous laxity of the Canaanites was fiercely counteracted by Israel's remembrance of the Sinai desert and its strong homespun morality. At the same time Canaanite culture had its own impact on the covenantal theology by enabling Israel to speak of God's love in terms of marital union and mystical depths.<sup>16</sup>

During the inter-testamental period, under Seleucid rule, Hellenistic culture began to make inroads into Palestine. Various responses followed among the Jews. The Hassidim withdrew into a legalistic expression of Judaism, refusing to accept the culture, language, sports, theater, religion or beliefs of the Hellenists. When Antiochus Epiphanes IV attempted to annihilate the religion of Israel by desecrating the Temple, the Hasmoneans, led by the revolt of the Maccabees, liberated Jerusalem. After an initial period, however, they too began to adopt Greek customs and ways. As a result another group similar to the Hassidim, the Essenes, withdrew into an apocalyptic community at Qumran.

However, as Shorter notes, "revolt against, or flight from, Hellenistic culture was impossible." Inculturation became an essential factor for the preservation of the biblical faith. The great Diaspora occurred during this period and the Jewish writings were translated into koine Greek, the result being the Septuagint. It was this translation that was arguably the most profound part of Diaspora inculturation, as it ensured the cultural heterogeneity of the biblical writings throughout the civilized world. This marks a significant point in understanding the preparatory effect of the inter-testamental period with regard to the coming of Jesus and the ensuing missionary activity of the early church.<sup>17</sup> When Paul and the apostolic bands began to move throughout the Mediterranean region, they met a people who were already familiar with the moral, prophetic, and cultic writings of the Old Testament. The Septuagint was the primary text of the early church, to which would be added the New Testament writings.<sup>18</sup> It is true to say that the inculturation of early Christianity was founded upon the inculturation of Palestinian Judaism in the Hellenistic world.

In considering the significance of Jesus to a theology of inculturation, we may be easily side-tracked into discussing his enculturation as a Palestinian Jew in a Hellenized world. As Shorter reminds us, "it is not

his cultural education as a Jew, so much as it is his contestation of that culture, which interests us."<sup>19</sup> Of particular significance to this study is the fact that Jesus belonged to the popular, or vernacular, level of his culture and thus found himself outside of the formal culture of the religious and political establishment and its socio-cultural power bases.

Jesus is the epitome of inculturation in action, in that he held an inclusive, not an exclusive, view of culture. He freely interacted with Syro-Phoenicians, Roman officials, proselyte Greeks, and heterodox Samaritans. Judaism had made the mistake of particularizing a religion whose focus was universal, whereas Jesus universalized the particular, by himself challenging the ethno-centric legalism of Judaism in his day. He addressed this tendency by reminding the people that "Israel was chosen for a constructive dialogue with God's Word, for an inculturation of that Word."<sup>20</sup> It was their enculturation as Jews that was preventing the inculturation of the Word in the world, which was God's intended purpose, as expressed by the prophet Isaiah:

Indeed he says,  
 "It is too small a thing that you should be my servant  
 to raise up the tribes of Jacob,  
 and to restore the preserved ones of Israel;  
 I will also give you as a light to the Gentiles,  
 that you should be my salvation to the ends of the earth."<sup>21</sup>

It is this inclusive tendency of Jesus that seems to convince the early church of the universality of its mission.<sup>22</sup> In this sense inculturation becomes a synonym for mission, in that the kingdom of God is intended for all peoples. Inculturation as mission reminds us that "God's ultimate purpose involves a project combining God, his people, and the created order in a single reality in which his glory will be fully and completely manifest."<sup>23</sup> To interpret this statement in the context of this study, I would add that "the created order," as it relates to human persons, is the diversity of cultural configurations that comprise the human race. Therefore, the cultural context is of immeasurable significance to mission. I therefore agree with Dyrness, who concludes "It is hard to understand how any conception of mission that underestimates this context can be fully biblical."<sup>24</sup>

This brief consideration of the biblical antecedents of inculturation theory reminds us of the drama of God's historic role in engaging culture throughout history. In the biblical record we are confronted with the fact that God's salvific and revelatory acts are always experienced in a culturally specific context. It is within this framework that we can develop a theology of inculturation. The dialogical nature of Yahweh's interaction with culture finds its fullest expression in the incarnation of Christ himself. The incarnation then becomes paradigmatic for the apostolic mission, which is conducted in the belief that Christ can be known within any cultural configuration. Paul, in particular, is constant

in resisting any attempts to enforce an enculturated Christianity on new believers, encouraging instead a culturally congruent expression of faith.

For example, there are paradigmatic differences between Peter's sermon on the day of Pentecost (Acts 2) and Paul's sermon on Mar's Hill (Acts 17), which can be readily explained by the sociology of the respective situations. Whereas Peter places the gospel in the context of a variety of Old Testament and historical references, Paul places it in the context of Greek religious thought and local poetry. The important fact to note is that the gospel needs these respective socio-cultural contexts in order to be intelligible. To force Peter's sermon on Paul's hearers, or vice-versa, would be disastrous from an evangelistic point of view. Both Peter and Paul, via indigenous plausibility structures, construct a theological paradigm that is appropriate to their listeners, true to the ontological demands of a biblical Christology, and yet markedly different in terms of their cultural referential orientation. Such an approach ensures that the recurring biblical themes of the kerygmatic tradition are dealt with in terms of the local context, without being either violated or ignored.

It is in the light of these observations that I now turn to address the Australian situation, and suggest how an inculturated local theology might be constructed, that is both biblically authentic and culturally congruent.

### III. The Great Australian Emptiness

In a speech given in May, 1976, former Governor-General Sir Paul Hasluck offered his own tragic, yet challenging assessment of the contemporary Australian condition:

Australian society today is only a temporary arrangement for quick and present gratification of those who know little of the depth of the past and have little concern for the future Australia—the land that adopted the motto, "Advance Australia"—is a land without vision, a high speed vehicle without a compass or any other aid to navigation, consulting neither the stars nor anything else external to itself, but hurtling headlong into what it calls progress, and finding satisfaction in appeasing its own physical appetites.<sup>25</sup>

Hasluck's insights, although given 17 years ago, still raise an important question: Have we in the church, too, been guilty of knowing "little of the depth of the past," even while bemoaning the fact that Australians lack a transcendent vision, and do not flock to our doors, to charge us with their guidance? While rushing to join Hasluck in bewailing Australia's secularism, the church may be guilty of ignoring its own loss of contact with the ethos of the Australian consciousness. As one frustrated clergyman has put it, "A lot of what happens here in

the churches is so divorced from what goes on out there in the community that it is not funny."<sup>26</sup>

Professor Manning Clark, in his 1976 delivery of the Boyer Lectures, drawing on the Nietzschean image of "The Madman," poses an important question:

Assuming that mankind has killed God, what did Australians put in His place? Did they bestow on each other the love and tenderness that they previously lavished on the Mighty Disposer? Or have we become bored survivors, sitting comfortless on Bondi Beach, citizens of the Kingdom of Nothingness, who booze and surf while waiting for the barbarians. What is an Australian? By what faith does he live?<sup>27</sup>

Australian thought has been marked by a brooding agnosticism, rather than a violent atheism. Although we have few philosophers in the classical sense, it is important that we look to the works of our poets, our artists, our playwrights and authors, and enter their "shared world," particularly as it relates to religion.<sup>28</sup> We must admit that these men and women often wrestled with the deep questions of faith in terms far more personal and poignant than did the professing church. One of our great writers, Marcus Clarke (famed for his classic work, *For the Term of His Natural Life*), echoed the anguish of many Australians when, in 1866, he wrote,

Happy is the man who can believe. I cannot. I am no desperate destroyer, no denier of God in heaven. I am rather as one who, wandering through the pleasant gardens of Faith and implicit belief, has stumbled upon the stern rocks that border them; the rocks of Reason, and Practicality, and Materialism, and stunned by the fall is no more able to return to the pleasant paths and rest with ease upon the dewy turf but must cling to the rugged and sharp stones around him, lest he fall into the raging sea of despair and utter incredulity that boils and seethes beneath him.<sup>29</sup>

Another great Australian, poet and author Henry Lawson, struggled with the same issues as Clarke. Smith gives us this vignette of his life.

Here, too, we find a man unable to find the answer to the painful questions. He loved his wife Bertha, but could not live with her. His own family had consisted of a tyrannical mother whose view of God was a cross between Calvinism and the occult, and a European father with a traditionally strong sense of the importance of man who worshipped a distant, powerful God, rather than a loving Father-God. As is often the case in Australian history, his father had little real influence on the life of young Lawson. He grew up with a great deal of pain, and, with only the smatterings of a Christian world-view, he saw God as distant and man as impotent.<sup>30</sup>

Many of Lawson's poems and stories deal with themes strangely reminiscent of biblical ones. He and his fellow poet and contemporary, Andrew Barton (Banjo) Patterson (noted for his epic ballad *The Man From Snowy River*), captured the ethos, echoed the questions, and voiced the protests of middle Australia, particularly in its perception of Christianity.

Patterson's poem, *Only a Jockey*, powerfully expresses the disillusionment of many toward the church. He wrote it upon reading the following excerpt in a Melbourne newspaper.

Richard Bennison, a jockey, aged 14, while riding William Tell in his training, was thrown and killed. The horse was luckily uninjured.

Having graphically described the tragedy of the fall, he concludes the poem thus:

Only a jockey boy! Foul-mouthed and bad you see,  
 Ignorant, heathenish, gone to his rest.  
 Parson or Presbyter, Pharisee, Sadducee,  
 What did you do for him?—bad was the best.

Negroes and foreigners, all have a claim on you;  
 Yearly you send your well-advertised hoard,  
 But the poor jockey boy—shame on you, shame on you,  
 "Feed ye My little ones"—What said the Lord?

Him ye held less than the outer barbarian,  
 Left him to die in his ignorant sin;  
 Have you no principles, humanitarian?  
 Have you no precept—"Go gather them in?"

Knew he God's name? In his brutal profanity,  
 That name was an oath—out of many but one—  
 What did he get from our famed Christianity?  
 Where has his soul—if he had any—gone?

Fourteen years old, and what was he taught of it?  
 What did he know of God's infinite grace?  
 Draw the dark curtain of shame o'er the thought of it,  
 Draw the shroud over the jockey boy's face.<sup>31</sup>

Lawson died an alcoholic; Clarke an opium addict; Patterson's skepticism followed him to his grave. Despite asking searching questions of faith in their literary works, they felt shunned by a church they thought was indifferent to their struggles. While they perceived themselves as honest inquirers, the church treated their questions, and their lifestyles, as evidence of apostasy.

The paradox of perspective that lies at the heart of this struggle between seeker and church is captured by Sir Keith Hancock in his 1973

Boyer Lectures. He tells the story of two drunks, one of whom says to his mate,

I bet you can't even say the Lord's Prayer.  
 Bet you two bob<sup>32</sup> I can, says the other.  
 Go ahead, his friend replies. Say it.  
 Now I lay me down to sleep, I pray the Lord my soul to keep.  
 You win, says his mate. Here's your two bob.<sup>33</sup>

Hancock says you can argue the story from two perspectives. One would say that their ignorance proves how utterly pagan Australians are, whereas the other would say it shows that even when drunk, Australians have some Christian roots, though badly misinterpreted. What can the church learn from this story? Simply, that we should change our focus and, rather than decry the spiritual ignorance of secular Australians, do all we can to identify and build upon the blurred images they have of God. Did not Christ come to a people who had a distorted view of God, the legacy of a religion that told them *what* to believe without telling them *how* to believe? John Smith is right when he says, "We have been mildly Christianized as a nation but never evangelized."<sup>34</sup>

#### IV. Constructing a Theology of Evangelism

In considering the similarity between religion in Jesus' day and religion in our own, we are struck by some remarkable parallels. In Pharisaic thought God hated sinners and withdrew from them, and therefore the religious maintained an elite and condescending distinction between themselves and the people. Those familiar with the earliest efforts of the church in Australia will immediately recognize the similarity between this Pharisaic tradition and the teaching and actions of ministers such as Samuel Marsden, one of the first colonial chaplains, who became known as "The Flogging Parson."

Appointed as a magistrate by the British military Governor, Marsden enjoyed the privileges of the upper class, and exploited them accordingly. He amassed large land and property holdings, and used convict labor to clear and develop his land into prosperous farms. Thus was created a stereotype that is still encountered today; that of the cleric who enjoys privileges not available to the ordinary people, that may in fact have been obtained at their expense.

Marsden, as a magistrate, became embroiled in a bitter conflict between some Irish convicts and the military government. Many Irish citizens had been transported for their part in the rebellions against the British presence in Ireland. They were treated very badly by their English jailers, feared both for their political independence and their fierce loyalty to the Roman Catholic faith. This acrimony was a direct legacy of the sixteenth century British Reformation. When a suspected insurrec-

tionist was caught, Marsden did not hesitate in sentencing him to one thousand strokes of the lash, in the hope that he would betray his fellow rebels. Manning Clark captures the effect of this brutal punishment upon the emerging religious consciousness.

Marsden as a magistrate had stooped to the temptation that the truth could be flogged out of a man, just as in other quarters he had stooped to the idea that souls could be flogged away from damnation. The man who wanted to be known as the dispenser of divine love became identified with one of the most savage punishments in the early history of the colony.<sup>35</sup>

Muriel Porter shares Clark's assessment of Marsden's influence. She writes,

His legacy to the future Australian Church can only be described as tragic, for the legend of the "flogging parson" ensured a lasting bitterness toward institutionalized religion. His behaviour compromised the church for decades, and cemented the ancient hatred between Protestant and Catholic, on the other side of the world. He is symbolic of the attitudes and mistakes on the part of the Christian churches which helped in the creation of secular Australia.<sup>36</sup>

Even when natural disasters touched the infant nation, Marsden, rather than offering the care of the church to those afflicted, was quick to pronounce that these were acts of direct, divine retribution meted out on a godless people.<sup>37</sup> The emerging concept of God in early Australian thought is one of a vindictive tyrant who was on the side of the aristocracy, who took delight in the sufferings of the poor, and reigned over a church that was God's principal arm of repression. Early Australians felt this keenly, and the resentment continues today.

Despite this antipathy, we Christians are often concerned about the wrong issues as we try to introduce fellow Australians to Christ. John Smith points out,

There are those who fear that finding out why the Australian behaves as he does excuses or ignores the fact of original sin. While recognising this problem, I believe Christians are in even bigger danger of treating people as objects of conversion rather than as people whom Jesus loves and died for, and whom Jesus cares about in the minute details of their lives. The devout must recognize that people in Australia get drunk for many reasons. It isn't as simple as dismissing them as drunkards, pagans or sinners. There is a passage in Proverbs which helped me considerably. Chapter 31 in Proverbs says that kings and rulers ought not to drink wine because they will forget the rights of the poor and needy, but that alcohol is for the oppressed and dying.

Give beer to those who are perishing,  
Wine to those who are in anguish;  
Let them drink and forget their poverty  
And remember their misery no more (vv. 6-7).

This is an extraordinary biblical statement. The Bible looks not only at the behaviour but the cause behind it; God understands why we do things. Yet there is abundant evidence that Christians of this country have been guilty of a shallow and pharisaical judgmentalism, being highly insensitive to many of the Australian traits which offend Christian morality. When I see how Jesus treated the woman taken in adultery and the woman at the well, I have to ask myself whether some—perhaps most—of our approaches are wrong. Plainly, Jesus is seen by these women, not as a moraliser, but as someone who cares and understands at the deepest level.<sup>38</sup>

Much of Jesus' evangelism was done in contrast to the prevailing attitudes of the religious authorities. The Pharisees taught the people that "There is joy before God when those who provoke Him perish from the world."<sup>39</sup> Some commentators feel that the three parables recorded in Luke chapter fifteen [the Lost Sheep, the Lost Coin, and the Prodigal Son], were given with this statement as their background. Religion had left a distorted image of God before the people. The religious leaders vilified Christ with the taunt, "This man welcomes sinners and eats with them" [Luke 15:2]. Like so many in the church today, they were reacting to the people's circumstances rather than relating to the people themselves. To enter into a meaningful relationship with a person is to enter into their world, their history, and their culture. This is vividly portrayed in the incarnation of Christ himself. To denounce their world is to denounce them. As Smith points out, "Jesus never treated people as objects of his theology. He treated them as individual persons, and located the reasons for their position, challenging them where they were."<sup>40</sup>

The fact that Jesus chose this moment to teach the aforementioned parables shows how acutely aware he was of his audience, which consisted of tax collectors and sinners, and scribes and Pharisees. The former group had been repelled by a teaching that presented God as a vindictive tyrant, and a religion that was pedantic in its legalism. The latter group, although the duly ordained representatives of God in that society, were guilty of perverting their office [cf. Matt. 23:1-36]. Jesus' teaching would have had an explosive impact on both groups, though for different reasons. For the common people it was a message of hope, for the Pharisees a stinging rebuke. In these parables Jesus exposes three common misconceptions. In the first parable he corrects a wrong idea about God, in the second a wrong conception of themselves, which was the natural result of thinking wrongly about God, and in the third a wrong perspective of how to find God.

The power of the first parable lies in the fact that, when found by the searching shepherd, the lost sheep is neither scolded nor punished. The shepherd has only joy, and shows an incredible sensitivity to all that the sheep has endured in its lostness. The parable is full of sublime mystery. Why would the shepherd even bother to search? Why is he not angry with the sheep? Why is his joy so unbounded, as to arouse his neighbors? There is also the subtle inference that they, the tax collectors and sinners, were represented by the sheep, and everyone in the crowd knew that sheep were essentially stupid and would wander if left to themselves. Having awakened these people through this simple story he sweeps them into the transcendence of its content and infers, "So it is in God's kingdom. You are worth more to him in your sin than one who is consumed by smug self-righteousness. Despite your waywardness, you matter to God." In this brief parable Jesus has penetrated the spiritual consciousness of these people, using images from their own socio-cultural milieu, he has shown that he shares their repugnance of the scribal teaching, and he has given them a new vision of God.

The second parable logically follows the first. If people have a wrong perception of God, they will have a wrong perception of themselves. Opinion is divided as to whether the woman's lost coins were of any real value. Some contend that, because they were her wedding dowry, they were invaluable, while others point out their relative insignificance in strictly monetary terms. They would be worth less than \$5.00 in modern currency.<sup>41</sup> Regardless of their worth, the message is clear. People generally entertain one of two misconceptions. They think either too much or too little of themselves. The Pharisees thought too little of those around them, and too much of themselves. The question raised by Jesus through this parable is, "What makes people valuable? What they think of themselves, or what others think?" The answer is, neither! The worth of the coins is determined by the one who is searching for them. As Shepard writes,

Jesus would have us understand that the soul of the lost man bears the image of God, however much it may be covered up with the rust or filth of sin. . . . The sinner is so precious in the sight of God that no effort is too great to reclaim him.<sup>42</sup>

This is a potent message in this day of alienation, when the poor and marginalized people in our society are often forgotten by the church.<sup>43</sup> Notice how the woman is earnest, thorough, and persistent in her search. Jesus is saying something about the ministry of the Holy Spirit here, and it should be reflected by his church.

The imagery of the third parable reveals an important progression. Although a sheep is valuable, and a coin is treasured, a son is loved. Here Jesus deals with the attitude of God toward those who have de-

parted from him, and shows them how they can find their way back to him. The son in Jesus' story is confused. He is ignorant of life and its issues. His self-confidence is a facade, and later reflection shows him that he has lost far more than he has gained. This is a parable of reflection, something Australians are not often encouraged to do, yet are wonderfully capable of. The son's life lacks meaning, so he seeks it in a moment of pleasure, which ultimately leaves him confused and alone, with pigs as his only companions. There is a terrible, haunting pathos to this story, perhaps because it is so real a reflection of the human condition. In a moment of rare illumination and self-analysis, the son "comes to himself." He discovers not only that he is wrong, but that he is alienated, he is lost. He is lost within himself, he is lost from his father, and he is lost from his real purpose in life. In an incredible instant of self-honesty he realizes what he must do, and he rises up and returns to his father, to seek his forgiveness. His attitude is different from the son who left. He is able to say, "I've blown it! I was wrong." He returns to find a father whom he'd previously never recognized, one who was full of compassion and love. The father had not changed, the son had. His confession was his freedom, it enabled him to experience the love and acceptance of his father, as never before.

Similarly, to accept that the heavenly Father is concerned about us, that he values us and gives us our worth, is to realize our alienation from him, and will free us to recognize our waywardness, and awaken the desire to return to him. That we are met by him along the road is amazing. His willingness to welcome us home, his joy at our return, his warm embrace, his tender kiss, are all an incredible witness to his all-forgiving love.

It is with the powerful trinitarian images<sup>44</sup> presented in these three parables that the church in Australia must concern itself. John Smith writes of "the Australian need for sensitive evangelistic communication." He goes on to ask,

What aspects of the historic gospel and the Jesus of the gospels should we see as obviously appropriate to our national/personal needs?

It's not that we haven't presented an Australian God, but that we haven't presented the Biblical God — the God of the Bible is relevant to Australia simply because he is God. The key to evangelising Australians is to begin to rectify the shocking images of God we have developed — the God who is a standover merchant, the God who is not interested in wholeness, but who snoops about ready to wallop me when I mess up, the kind of God who says "No" more than he says "Yes." They're the images the Aussies have of God. Australians have had the wrong image of God bequeathed to them by a history of neglect and tragedy and a delinquent church.<sup>45</sup>

## V. Rationalism or Personalism?: A Question of Epistemology

We in the West have too long assumed that evangelism is primarily an exercise in the rationalistic transfer of information,<sup>46</sup> based on an impersonal command, rather than a relational imperative that explains how we live as the community of faith. It is a perspective that reflects an epistemological problem, more than a methodological one.<sup>47</sup> Newbigin is right when he says, "it is plain that we do not defend the Christian message by domesticating it within the reigning plausibility structure."<sup>48</sup> Rather, the evangelist must welcome the challenge of engagement with that structure, by showing that our faith is based, not upon dogma as a series of abstracted propositions about Christ, but upon the narrative tradition of His life among us as a confessional community. The gospel then becomes a commentary on the life of the Christian community, for, as Hauerwas and Willimon remind us,

Christian community . . . is not primarily about togetherness. It is the way of Jesus Christ with those whom he calls to himself. It is about disciplining our wants and needs in congruence with a true story, which gives us the resources to live truthful lives.<sup>49</sup>

Sadly, rather than critically engaging the plausibility structures of modernity, Christian thinkers and evangelists have reduced this narrative tradition, in keeping with the epistemological demands of the Enlightenment, to a series of abstract metaphysical propositions about God and the world, and forgotten the importance of the story itself, the story "which gives us the resources to live truthful lives."

In response to this reductionist tendency Newbigin reminds us that "the way we understand human life depends on what conception we have of the human story." He then asks, "What is the real story of which my life is a part?"<sup>50</sup> This is a crucial question for human existence because if we don't know the purpose for which we exist then we cannot know how we ought to live. Post-Enlightenment thought has reached a crisis point, in that the critical method upon which it depends has made it impossible to speak of right and wrong with any meaning, the only criterion being personal choice.<sup>51</sup> If the "facts" tell us that human existence is the product of mere chance, then Nietzsche's "will to power" is probably the best option. This plausibility structure will inevitably implode upon itself, not because of a scientific crisis, but a moral one. Western Christianity has so long sought for respectability within this structure, through conformity to its epistemological demands, that it has neglected its role as interpreter of the story of Jesus as a relationally based moral imperative.

If evangelism is to be both effective and authentic, the rationalism of Descartes must give way to the personalism of Jesus. Cartesian consciousness cannot escape human relatedness, a point the Western church seems to have forgotten. Truth in the Bible is relational, not

impersonal. When this is understood then the crisis of meaning that the Enlightenment has produced in Western society will ultimately provide the most fertile soil for the gospel in this age. But what if the church has bought into these Cartesian plausibility structures? How can it possibly respond meaningfully? This is the challenge facing Australian Christianity at this hour. While we are sure of what we believe we have never been more unsure of what it means to believe. Our own irrelevance, not the world's hostility, has marginalized us to the point of obscurity.

If, as I have previously suggested, the average Australian is not a raging atheist, but a brooding agnostic who secretly longs for a sense of meaning, then we must approach evangelism sensitively. To "make sense out of life" and to "make sense out of God" implies understanding both life and God simultaneously.

### *Effective Evangelism: Becoming Meaning Makers*

In his critique of Australian society, sociologist Jonathan King writes,

Ours is a secular society, and most of us are unconcerned by this. Our daily life has little spiritual foundation; there is no universal theological background which we all share and most of us have very little grasp of the metaphysical or transcendental. For some there is no higher authority than the television newsreader, unless perhaps it is the Prime Minister himself. God seems irrelevant. . . . Consequently there are few activities less fashionable than attending church and few notions more amusing than the idea of learning something from a sermon.<sup>52</sup>

If church attendance and sermon-listening are considered "unfashionable" and "amusing" by the average Australian then the evangelistic task facing the church is indeed a daunting one. Posterski reminds us that,

The world has stopped coming to church. Charging up the program machines will keep the saints busy but it won't win the world. Preaching louder is not the answer. Engaging culture is a better way—listening, probing, questioning, interacting with people who live in the world and make no faith claims.<sup>53</sup>

And if, as we have previously demonstrated, the average Australian is not a raging atheist, but a brooding agnostic who secretly longs for a sense of meaning, then we must approach evangelism sensitively. Again, Posterski's insight is helpful;

Non-Christians need Christian meaning makers in their lives: people who make sense out of life, people who make sense out of God, people whose lives ring with clarity in the midst of contemporary ambiguity, people who have integrity, who reside in today's world,

revealing with their lives and their lips that Jesus' death is the source of vital life.<sup>54</sup>

### Feeling Deeply

The dual challenges of developing effective evangelistic strategies and establishing Christian communities of "meaning makers" must be faced concurrently. For too long we have told people to evangelize when they themselves are unsure of who God is in their own lives. To "make sense out of life" and to "make sense out of God" implies understanding both life and God simultaneously. A great danger in discussing evangelism is that of merely seeking new techniques to emulate, without considering what it means to be responsive to the Holy Spirit as the One who breaks into our own lives as the ultimate "meaning-maker."

Too often the technology of evangelism is allowed to displace a heart for evangelism. Julia Howes, authoress of *The Battle Hymn of the Republic*, once wrote to a U.S. Senator on behalf of a man who had suffered a great injustice at the hands of the State. The Senator replied, "I am so taken up with plans for the benefit of the Nation that I have no time for individuals." Howes kept this letter pasted in the front of her Bible. Beside it she wrote, "When last heard from our Maker and Saviour had not yet reached this altitude."

Sadly, this scene is re-enacted in many Australian churches, and by many Australian clerics. To be so taken up with plans, that often reflect nothing more than our ecclesiastical ambitions, that we have no real interaction with people, is a blasphemy. It can produce only condescension.

### Conclusion

Henry Lawson, in his poem *The Christ of the Never*, tells of "a sort of bush missionary up-country and out back in Australia" who, "before he died . . . was known from Riverina down south in New South Wales to away up in the Never-Never country in western Queensland." In describing him Lawson creates a compelling comparison;

God's preacher, of churches unheeded,  
God's vineyard, though barren the sod,  
Plain spokesman where spokesman is needed,  
Rough link 'twixt the bushman and God.

By his paths through the parched desolation,  
Hot rides the terrible tramps;  
By the hunger, the thirst, the privation  
Of his work in the furthestmost camps;

By his worth in the light that shall search men  
And prove—aye! and justify each—  
I place him in front of all Churchmen  
Who feel not, who know not—but preach!<sup>55</sup>

Lawson's insight is powerful. With what does he charge the "Churchmen"? With not feeling; not knowing—and yet preaching! What wins the "bush missionary" his approval? It is his readiness to live as the bushmen, to experience the parched desolation, the hunger and thirst, the privation of their camps. This man knows, this man feels, therefore this man has the right to preach. He is a "plain spokesman where spokesman is needed, rough link 'twixt the bushman and God." How ironic that an alcoholic, agnostic poet should be the one to remind us of such a vital biblical truth.

The biblical call to mission is not founded on an impersonal command, but a relational imperative. It is a call for our engagement in the unfolding drama of God's actions and presence in the rich cultural diversity that is evident wherever human society is formed. We are called, in faithfulness to life as a community of faith, to be the interpreters of the story of Jesus in a world of alienation and moral confusion. We must respond to the questions and longings of those, who, faced with the inadequacies of their own plausibility structure, see in the indigenous Christian community a new paradigm of reality. As Newbigin reminds us, "It is a striking fact that almost all the proclamations of the gospel which are described in Acts are in response to questions asked by those outside the church."<sup>56</sup>

It is only in our willingness to engage the socio-cultural reality in which we find ourselves that we will make sense of our theological traditions, and become effective interpreters of the gospel. The nurturing environment of a community of faith, that is itself committed to "life formed around the truth that is Jesus Christ," is an essential factor in the formation of Christian character, without which the gospel becomes anachronistic. We must live in such a way that we may witness faithfully, authentically, and compassionately, reflecting a deep understanding of, and empathy with, the socio-cultural roots of those we are seeking to reach.

### NOTES

<sup>1</sup> Inculturation is a theological descriptor that is to be distinguished from enculturation [the acquiring of one's own cultural imperatives] and acculturation [the assimilation of another's cultural imperatives]. The importance of this distinction becomes apparent in the process of definition. Inculturation is "the dynamic relation between the Christian message and culture or cultures; an insertion of the Christian life into a culture; an ongoing process of reciprocal and critical interaction and assimilation between them" [M. de C. Azevedo, *Inculturation and the Challenge of Modernity* (Rome: Gregorian University, 1982) p.11]. Inculturation differs significantly from acculturation in that it claims

a symbiotic relationship with theology [cf. Aylward Shorter, *Toward a Theology of Inculturation* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1985) p.6ff.]. As it deals exclusively with the Christian faith and its cultural expression, it can only be properly understood in the context of missiology.

<sup>2</sup> For a description of vernacular culture, as distinct from formal culture, see Barbara Kirshenblatt-Gimblett's article "Ordinary People/Everyday Life: Folk Culture in New York City" in *Urban Life: Readings in Urban Anthropology* (Prospect Heights, IL: Waveland Press Inc. 1988), eds. George Gmelch and Walter Zenner, pp.403-411.

<sup>3</sup> David O. Moberg, *The Church as a Social Institution* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, 1984), p.7.

<sup>4</sup> Mal Garvin, *Us Aussies* (Sale, Vic: Hayzon Pty Ltd, 1987), p.158.

<sup>5</sup> cf. "Churches in Australia have given little thought to the cultural appropriateness of their ministries. Yet, if the same people were to work in a foreign culture overseas, it would be perfectly natural to establish . . . patterns of church life and ministry that were culturally appropriate. In the missionary fields in our own backyards these principles are no less important and must be rediscovered." Peter Kaldor, *Who Goes Where? Who Doesn't Care* (Homebush West, Australia: Lancer Books, 1987) p.219; "Either Australians have become hardened, or the churches are making belief unnecessarily difficult." David Millikan, *The Sunburnt Soul* (Homebush West, Australia: Anzea Publishers, 1981), p.49.

<sup>6</sup> Alan Walker, *St. Mark's Review* (Canberra, Australia: St. Mark's Library, 1972), p.4.

<sup>7</sup> Robert Schreiter, *Constructing Local Theologies* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1985), p.80.

<sup>8</sup> There is a growing body of literature that addresses this issue, which has come to be called the study of inculturation. Eg. Gerald Arbuckle, *Earthing the Gospel* (Maryknoll: Orbis Books, 1990); M. de C. Azevedo, *Inculturation and the Challenge of Modernity* (Rome: Gregorian University); David Bosch, *Transforming Mission* (Maryknoll: Orbis Books, 1991); Charles Kraft, *Christianity in Culture* (Maryknoll: Orbis Books, 1979); Louis Luzbetak, *The Church and Cultures* (Maryknoll: Orbis Books, 1988); Robert J. Schreiter, *Constructing Local Theologies* (Maryknoll: Orbis Books, 1985); Aylward Shorter, *Toward a Theology of Inculturation* (Maryknoll: Orbis Books, 1988).

<sup>9</sup> Cf. Yehezkel Kaufmann, *The Religion of Israel* (London: George, Allen and Unwin, 1960) pp.24-101.

<sup>10</sup> Cf. John Bright, *A History of Israel* (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1980) p.50.

<sup>11</sup> G. Herbert Livingston, *The Pentateuch in its Cultural Environment* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, 1974) p.153ff.

<sup>12</sup> Shorter, *Toward a Theology*, p.108.

<sup>13</sup> Hosea 2:8-13, 4:12-19.

<sup>14</sup> Hosea 11:1; 12:9,13; 13:4-6.

<sup>15</sup> Donald Senior and Carroll Stuhlmueller, *The Biblical Foundations for Mission* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1983) p.68.

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>17</sup> Johannes Blauw, *The Missionary Nature of the Church* (New York, NY: McGraw-Hill, 1962) pp.55-64.

<sup>18</sup> For insight into the relationship between the translation of the biblical text and the process of inculturation, see Lamin Sanneh's *Translating the Message* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1990).

<sup>19</sup> Shorter, *Toward a Theology*, p.119.

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid.*, p.113.

<sup>21</sup> Isaiah 49:6.

<sup>22</sup> Cf. Senior and Stuhlmueller, *Biblical Foundations*, p.157.

<sup>23</sup> William Dyrness, *Let the Earth Rejoice* (Westchester, IL: Crossway Books, 1983) p.14.

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid.*, p.27.

<sup>25</sup> Sir Paul Hasluck, *Speech*, 1976.

<sup>26</sup> Peter Kaldor, *Where the River Flows: Sharing the Gospel in Contemporary Australia* (Homebush West, Australia: Anzea Publishers, 1988), intro.

<sup>27</sup> C. H. Manning Clark, *A Discovery of Australia* (Sydney: Australian Broadcasting Commission, 1976), p.13.

<sup>28</sup> Schreiter writes, "The poet has the task of capturing those symbols and metaphors

which best give expression to the experience of a community . . . especially that which captures the imagination of the majority of people (*Local Theologies* p.19). This aspect of interpreting culture is vitally important.

<sup>29</sup> Marcus Clarke, "A Letter to Cyril Hopkins," in *Biographical Notes of the Life and Work of Marcus Clarke* (Melbourne: Archives, University of Melbourne).

<sup>30</sup> John Smith, *Advance Australia Where?* (Homebush West: Anzea Publishers, 1988), p.26f.

<sup>31</sup> A. B. Patterson, *Singer of the Bush* (Sydney: Landsdowne, 1983), p.52f.

<sup>32</sup> Two bob is Australian slang for two shillings or twenty cents.

<sup>33</sup> Sir Keith Hancock, *Boyer Lectures* (Sydney: Australian Broadcasting Commission, 1973).

<sup>34</sup> Smith, *Advance Australia* p.33.

<sup>35</sup> C. H. Manning Clark, *A History of Australia* (Vol.1) (London: Oxford University Press, 1963), p.156.

<sup>36</sup> Muriel Porter, *Land of the Spirit: The Australian Religious Experience* (Geneva: WCC Publications, 1990), p.12.

<sup>37</sup> Manning Clark, *A History* p.155.

<sup>38</sup> Smith, *Advance Australia* p.222.

<sup>39</sup> Alfred Edersheim, *The Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah* (vol.2) (New York: Longmans and Green, 1912), p.256.

<sup>40</sup> Smith, *Advance Australia* p.228.

<sup>41</sup> J. Dwight Pentecost, *The Words and Works of Jesus Christ* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1981), p.333.

<sup>42</sup> J. W. Shepard, *The Christ of the Gospels* (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing, 1939), p.418.

<sup>43</sup> I should like to recognise at this point the terrible years of abuse the Australian Aboriginal people have suffered at the hands of the church, the state, and private enterprise. Beginning with white colonisation, theirs is a story of neglect and tragedy, of racism and rejection. While not the subject of this paper, there is need for repentance and restitution by those who, both individually and corporately, have been part of this abuse. See John Harris', *One Blood* (Sutherland, Australia: Albatross Books, 1990).

<sup>44</sup> It is this author's view that these three parables, in order, teach the social interpenetration of the Son as the Good Shepherd who searches for the lost sheep, the Holy Spirit who affirms the worth of men and women, and the Father who joyfully receives those who return to Him. The passage, read in this light, brings us to what Moltmann calls, "the social doctrine of the Trinity, according to which God is a community of Father, Son, and Spirit, whose unity is constituted by mutual indwelling and reciprocal interpenetration." See Jurgen Moltmann, *The Trinity and the Kingdom* (San Francisco: Harper Collins Publishers, 1981), p.viii.

<sup>45</sup> Smith, *Advance Australia* p.225.

<sup>46</sup> As Vernon White notes, this view implies that the central issue in evangelism is knowledge and that faith is "primarily a matter of knowing things. This tends to intellectualize faith. It implies that our predicament is ignorance, and salvation is by knowledge." *Atone-ment and Incarnation: An Essay in Universalism and Particularity* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1991), p.21.

<sup>47</sup> Our penchant for this apologetic approach to witness demonstrates how deeply we have bought into the Cartesian dichotomy between knowing and believing, and between reason and revelation. Modern Western thought has its roots in an epistemological particularism which reserves "objectivity" to the empiricism of a scientific worldview. Evangelism that accepts this perspective fails to recognize that the so-called objectivity of the scientific worldview is itself founded upon a subjective particularity within a belief system, that is itself open to challenge. Newbigin explains this when he writes, "The definition of what is reasonable and what is not will be conditioned by the tradition within which the matter is being discussed" [*The Gospel in a Pluralist Society* (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1989), p.9] In terms of evangelism, if the tradition is founded on the assumptions of rationalism, then any attempt to explain things in terms of God's will and purpose can only evoke a skeptical response, as the a priori assumption in such a system is that God does not exist. The epistemological weakness of rationalism lies in its attempt to

appeal to "facts" as if they exist outside of the human situation. [See John Macmurray's *The Self as Agent* (New Jersey: Humanities Press, 1991) and *Persons in Relation* (New Jersey: Humanities Press, 1991)] This concept of "objectivity" is a denial of the rationality it relies upon, as it is predicated upon a personal commitment to the plausibility structure itself, before being able to test anything by it. One must first trust the method if one is to proceed in gathering or testing evidence by it. Believing therefore precedes knowing, as it is impossible to simultaneously doubt the process and trust its results. Likewise, doubt is only possible in the light of belief. You cannot doubt everything you believe. Even the skeptic holds his or her skepticism to be true. See also Colin Gunton's *Enlightenment and Alienation* (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1985).

<sup>48</sup> Newbigin, *Gospel* p.10.

<sup>49</sup> Stanley Hauerwas and William Willimon, *Resident Aliens* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1989), pp.77-78.

<sup>50</sup> Newbigin, *Gospel* p.15.

<sup>51</sup> MacIntyre calls this "emotivism". See Alisdair MacIntyre, *After Virtue* (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1984). pp.23-36.

<sup>52</sup> King, *Waltzing* p.131.

<sup>53</sup> Posterski, *Faith Today* p.20.

<sup>54</sup> *Ibid.* For Posterski's elaboration of this subject see his book, *Reinventing Evangelism* (Downers Grove: Intervarsity Press, 1989).

<sup>55</sup> Henry Lawson, *The Prose Works of Henry Lawson* (Sydney: Angus and Robertson, 1948), pp.518-527.

<sup>56</sup> Newbigin, *Gospel* p.116.

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## SOMETHING ON EVANGELISM IN MEGA-CITIES OF THE INDIAN SUB-CONTINENT

Roger E. Hedlund

### Introduction

In case you wonder about the title, well, that's what Bob Anderson asked me to talk about. Twenty years ago my wife and I were drumming up support for "Operation Yavatmal," and since that time we have been involved in several forms of ministry in the sub-continent, primarily related to theological education, hopefully contributing to evangelization in South Asia. I still have a lot to learn, but from the observations of two decades let me share something about evangelism in the mega-cities of the Indian sub-continent.

### Urbanization Realities

Urbanization has become a fact of life in South Asia. India today has more than 200 cities, each with a population of 100,000 or more. In a traditionally rural society, a huge and rapidly-expanding urban population brings tensions. Mega-cities are appearing, small cities are growing. In India the largest are Bombay, Calcutta, Delhi, and Madras. In Bangladesh Dacca is massive, and in Pakistan Karachi leads. The rate of urbanization is revolutionary. Push and pull factors are in operation with no end in sight.

These are cities of the poor. Massive poverty is evident. Half of the population is considered below the poverty line. These cities contain

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Roger E. Hedlund is Coordinator and Lecturer at the Church Growth Research Centre in Madras, India. He and his wife June have been missionaries first in Italy and since 1974 in India under the auspices of the Conservative Baptist Foreign Mission Society. His address was presented at the 21st Annual Meeting of the AETE in Deerfield, IL, on Oct. 8, 1993.

slums. Slums are found everywhere. An estimated 65% of the inhabitants are slum dwellers. Many are oppressed. The cities manifest oppression. According to some, a fourth of India's population is classed as oppressed.

Urbanization means change. The population shift means gradual change from an agrarian to an industrial economy which is accompanied by other changes in society. Yet the newly urbanized carry rural characteristics with them into the city. Old gods die in the city? Perhaps. Or they may be abandoned as new possibilities arise.

### Experience of Some Cities and Environs in South Asia

**CALCUTTA.** "O, Calcutta, City of Joy!" Is it really? Rajiv Gandhi described Calcutta as a dying city. Calcutta is the city of Kali, Hindu goddess of destruction, and of the Communist Party, the Marxist rulers of West Bengal. Calcutta was also the home of William Carey, and has a noble tradition of Christian activism and movements of social reform.

Calcutta today is the city of Mother Theresa and the poorest of the poor: that is the reality. Perhaps because of Mother Theresa, as well as Mark Buntain and others, Calcutta is a city of hope. Viv Grigg identifies two kinds of slums—slums of despair and slums of hope. Ministry in the slums requires bands of disciples choosing voluntary poverty, a lifestyle of simplicity, to proclaim the good news of the kingdom to the poorest of the poor. Calcutta's slums at present have relatively little active incarnational evangelism designed to plant churches.

Affluent foreigners and the Christian elite find it difficult to identify with the poorest of the poor. Credibility demands it. Costly identification is necessary and possible, as Mother Theresa exemplifies. Compassion ministries are a Christian obligation, an integral part of outreach, not as a substitute for the gospel, nor as a precondition, but simply as part of Christian obedience.

Historically the poor have been the most receptive to the gospel. In India in the past, sections of the oppressed responded eagerly, mainly in rural areas. Churches and missions appear, however, to have neglected the city. Calcutta today is a least-evangelized mega-city.

**BOMBAY.** India's leading and most cosmopolitan city, Bombay is the nation's business capital, film centre, and fashions pace-setter. Bombay is headquarters of India's Mafia and of the Hindu fundamentalist's Shiv Sena. Dharavi, said to be the largest slum in Asia, is located in the heart of Bombay.

Bombay has a Christian population of something under 7 percent, representing various denominations and traditions. Churches in Bombay have grown primarily because of migration from South India and Maharashtra. Among the migrants have come Christians. Bombay churches active in evangelistic outreach include the Methodists who

have multiplied ethnic congregations in the city. Also in recent years the charismatic New Life Fellowship, meeting in rented church and other facilities, has grown rapidly.

Most churches, however, lack a comprehensive plan or strategy for the city. Such a plan should begin with an understanding of the targeted urban population. Bombay is noted for its ethnic diversity. A helpful study of two prominent South Indian communities shows the impact of cultural backgrounds in the adjustment of Tamils and Keralites in the city of Bombay (Michael, 1989). The Tamils tend to live in huddled settlements according to caste ranking and region of origin. The Keralites are more scattered and dispersed. Consequently the Keralites enjoy greater possibilities of economic and social mobility. The Tamils, on the other hand, tend to perpetuate caste and cultural traditions.

These dynamics and other cultural, social, economic and religious factors are important for planning evangelization procedures. Viju Abraham, India's leading evangelical urban missiologist, is fond of saying that urban ministry requires that we identify the gods and goddesses of the city. In Calcutta the reigning deity is Kali. Bombay has two: Laxshmi, goddess of wealth, and Ganesh, god of happiness and prosperity. Pursuit of money is the major obsession. Bombay does not need a "wealth and health" prosperity doctrine. The gods and goddesses of this world must be dethroned. The compassion of Jesus Christ, his concern for the poor, and the significance of the Cross and suffering are important aspects of the gospel to be proclaimed in Bombay.

**DELHI.** Delhi, the nation's capital, is the centre of bureaucracy. If wealth is the obsession of Bombay, Delhi is preoccupied with power. Communal tensions pervade. Not infrequently Delhi is the scene of riots and violence. The Punjabi crisis spills over into Delhi. The Central Government has to resist the regionalism of the subcontinent and tendencies toward isolation and dissolution. When Khalistan is repeated in Kashmir, and cession threatened in other regions, Delhi must intervene. Evangelization in Delhi must come to grips with issues of power.

The Christian presence in Delhi is not strong and needs strengthening. A survey a few years ago revealed more than 100,000 persons affiliated with 211 congregations of 16 denominations, a membership which is about double that of the prior Census report. This increase is probably due to migration of Christians from other regions, but also indicates potential receptivity in the capital city. Traditional denominational churches seem paralyzed by inertia. The greater possibility for evangelistic impact among non-Christian populations would seem to be with the newer independent groups committed to evangelization.

A recent unpublished study of the Muslim population has indicated some of the difficulties in targeting that sector with aggressive Christian activity. Hindu-Muslim tensions are never far beneath the surface throughout the region. Hindu sensitivities must also be respected. Ayodhya is but one indication of rising Hindu fundamentalist militancy. Bomb blasts in Bombay and Calcutta are now being repeated in other

cities. The Church's evangelistic mission is carried out in an increasingly volatile situation throughout North India.

**MADRAS.** If Delhi is preoccupied with power, Madras is obsessed with cinema! Cinema star billboards and cutouts dominate the landscape. The ruling party is in the hands of cinema stars. Politicians appear most successful who first became popular movie idols. The Church has not escaped this imprint. Evangelistic events are well-staged and publicized through banners, posters, signs and handbills. Bishop elections are conducted in the style of major political campaigns and include the exchange of large sums of money, employment of thugs and use of inducements. Installations become spectacles. Religious conferences exalt the role and name of the convener. Questionable mission schemes are filmed with the finesse of Hollywood, Bombay and Madras. This is the seamy side of South Indian Christianity.

The other side is much more positive. Madras has more churches than any other city in South Asia. Madras churches are active churches. Mainline denominations as well as independent bodies are engaged in various forms of outreach. Old churches are growing. New churches are beginning. Some 525 congregations were identified in 1981. Five years later the number had increased to 700. During this five-year period, the Christian population of Madras increased from 7 percent to more than 8 percent. Growth continues. By now Christians should comprise about 9 percent of the city's population, and should reach 10 percent by the end of the century. Much larger percentages and numbers suggested by some appear inflated.

Increase is due both to migration and evangelistic outreach. Churches that reach out experience evangelistic growth. An excellent example is seen in the Methodist Church which increased by 96.7 percent during five years from 1981 to 1986. Methodist growth was due largely to extensive outreach in the city's slums and villages and into the surrounding region.

The greatest church growth at the present time, however, is Pentecostal. Madras' largest church today is the 2000-member New Life Assembly of God. In addition to the Assemblies of God, Pentecostal groups experiencing rapid growth include the Indian Pentecostal Church, the Church of God in India, Madras Pentecostal Assembly, the Apostolic Christian Assembly, the Apostolic Church, Maranatha, Full Gospel Church of God, the (Ceylon) Pentecostal Mission, the United Pentecostal Church, and others.

Madras is the beneficiary of a 2000-year Christian tradition in South India! The presence of an ancient Christian community has created a favourable impression among Hindus, which is one of the factors promoting a climate of response. Another advantage is that great Roman Catholic and Protestant missionary evangelists and scholars of the past laid a foundation upon which the Church continues to build in South India. Roberto de Nobili, for example, provided a theological vocabulary through which the Church continues to communicate Christian con-

cepts in the Tamil culture. Christian influence is far-reaching, Christians are prominent in society, and Christianity is well-known. The coastal areas of South India including Madras can be designated "Christian India." A majority of India's Christians are located in the densely populated coastal areas of Kerala, Tamil Nadu, Andhra, and Karnataka.

Christians can be found in all of India's cities. Ahmedabad, Allahabad, Bangalore, Hyderabad, Lucknow, Nagpur, Pune, Trivandrum and 200 others are beyond the scope of this paper. In some cities the Church is more actively engaged in evangelization efforts than in others. Evangelization remains "Mission Possible," but the situation varies.

### Evangelization's Urban Variables?

India's Christian community has a predominantly rural mind-set. Rural Christians migrate to the towns and cities. There they form new congregations or join old, existing ones, retaining rural ties and traditions. This kind of transfer growth is important for conserving the life of the Church and for evangelizing new arrivals in the city. But it may be inadequate for evangelizing other urbanized populations. Migrating Christians often form Christian colonies in the city, perpetuating a mission-compound mentality. Thus the largely rural denominations of Central and North India struggle to begin new churches in the city. A rural mentality obstructs urban evangelism. South India, with a greater abundance of Christians, more easily transfers rural members to old and new urban congregations, with or without doing evangelism.

Bonds of relationship often function as important vehicles for communication of the good news. McGavran's typology of churches demonstrates the importance of this reality. At the same time, in a caste-ridden society, these social ties can impede the further spread of the gospel. Caste is the ancient feudal system of hierarchical segmentation which for millenia has governed relationships and the patterns of life in India's rural villages. Caste is institutional racism sanctioned by Hindu religion.

Caste is an integral part of Hinduism, and a formidable barrier to the spread of the gospel. Caste segmentation is modified in the urban setting, yet caste is resilient, persisting in new forms rather than disappearing. To complicate matters, urbanization brings the development of social classes which cross over caste distinctions. Class is superimposed upon caste. Both exist simultaneously in urban industrialized society. In this context, the gospel must be communicated and the life of Christ become incarnate in the city.

If Christianity becomes identified with a particular segment, it can encapsulate rather than liberate, turn inward rather than serve as leaven in society, and prevent the growth of the Church. If caste/class segmentation is incorporated into the Christian message and mission, the gospel is compromised and the Church becomes syncretic.

This paper has been confined to India. If one were to expand the

scope to other countries of the subcontinent, I suppose it would proceed along certain lines. For Dacca, think Muslim. If Karachi, think Tribal. In Colombo think Buddhist. With Kathmandu, think Hindu. Conversions to Christ in those cities (and countries) will come from the populations indicated.

### Neglect of Urban Majorities

Strategy and theology should take cognizance of a near-universal neglect of North Indian cities. Consider the indigenous missionary movement. Promotional work and headquarters of the mission agencies are in the cities, but missionaries work in rural areas. Attention for the most part is on tribal populations. There are exceptions, but the missions to a large extent by-pass the cities except for fund-raising. Focus is primarily rural, frequently toward tribals and other ethnic minorities.

This emphasis is not wrong: evangelization of India's many tribes and other backward and oppressed communities should be a priority. Christians ought always to uphold the cause of the oppressed. Unfortunately the much greater challenge of the Hindu and Muslim majority populations inhabiting the towns and cities is overlooked. According to a recent survey (Lazarus, 1992), 33% of the missionaries work in rural areas, and only 7% in urban areas. Where the other 60% work was not revealed by the survey! While 57% state that they are doing church planting, and that 39% work cross-culturally, there is little or no focused effort toward Hindus or the cities.

The indigenous missionary movement is wrongly perceived as a remnant of vestigial colonialism. Nevertheless, an outmoded comity mentality inherited from a rural past perpetuates an anti-urban bias. Much of the European and American missionary work of the past was based in rural areas. Response primarily came from backward and oppressed communities.

Christianity in North India began with the coming of William Carey only 200 years ago. Christianity which is well-known in the South is scarcely known at all in the North. The contrast is sharp. In many regions the gospel has not begun to scratch the surface.

For the most part the Church has yet to learn how to evangelize in North India. Nevertheless Christian influence is far-reaching, especially in education and social issues. The great growth of the Church is yet to come in most regions of North India. Strategizing toward the least evangelized must be informed by history and the present context.

Evangelism efforts bypass the MISSING MAJORITY, urban as well as rural, core Hindu populations and Muslims. North India's least-evangelized cities and peoples and their environs—surroundings, culture, and economy—are solidly Hindu and Muslim. Unevangelized or unreached, whatever you call it, definitions will not change the realities: when lists of "unreached peoples" are reduced to zero, the Hindu and

Muslim majorities are still there, for the most part without an incarnational Christian presence. Whether that seems reasonable or unreasonable, for most of them the good news still is not an option.

Evangelization of the Hindu majority in particular must be seen in terms of massive neglect. Wesley Ariarajah in his book, *Hindus and Christians*, complains of the neglect of Hinduism in ecumenical conferences after 1910. Likewise Hindu evangelization has not been a strong point at recent Evangelical conferences. Even in India there is little focused incarnational evangelism devoted to Hindus. Media agencies tend to miss the mark. For example, a FEBA study found that while 80% of the Tamil programmes were intended for non-Christians, actually 75% of the programming was directed to Christians (judging by the music, format, and issues addressed).

What can we then do? Computers, calculators and slide rules will never evangelize the cities! But they can help the evangelizers. So let us employ technology, and recruit competent committed persons to use the tools.

Consider further the potential of the seminaries. India has more than 150 Protestant theological training institutions, seminaries and Bible schools. Most are located in urban areas. Students' practical work assignments to some extent are carried out in the city. But analysis of curricula, courses, and program is required to determine whether urban issues are addressed as part of the training.

Theological education tends to be traditional (Hedlund 1991). Missiology has not yet found its rightful place at the heart of theology! Much depends upon the faculty, but it is possible that a rural mind-set prevails. The seminary mirrors the churches. It also reflects the composition of the student body (rural Nagaland is represented in every seminary!). Perhaps also the rural "Tirunelveli culture" of South India has been exported to the North by migration and imposed by indigenous missionaries to a greater extent than is recognized. While there are notable exceptions, the seminaries for the most part are not a significant force for evangelization in the great cities of the subcontinent.

Least evangelized peoples are not the exotic or remote so much as elite majority populations inhabiting the cities! The real issue is effective communication. That is where we have not yet found our way, at least in India. As Fr. Stephen Fuchs states, we have only evangelized around the fringes. Many of the Hindu majority may be non-literates, but they are elite members of an oral culture. Little effort is being made to develop an apologetic approach, or to develop appropriate methodologies to communicate Christ in the dominant culture.

For the above reasons, Christians feel that Hindu evangelization is difficult. They wonder how to evangelize Hindus. Yet, despite the problems, there are encouraging exceptions. Our major challenge is this: how to communicate the good news so that South Asians of every strand may come to salvation in Christ. The place to begin, I believe, is in the city.

## Conclusions

Barrett suggests that we are losing the cities, and at a disturbing rate. He bases his conclusion on unquestionable facts—statistics. Despite the evidence, I wish to conclude with a statement of hope for the city.

I see great hope for India's cities because of the Pentecostals. The Pentecostal movement was born in the city. Pentecostals are at home in the city. Pentecostals know how to evangelize in the city. Great growth of Pentecostal churches has taken place in the cities of the world—Rio, San Paolo, Chicago, Naples, Seoul. It is also true in South Asia at the present time. Rapidly growing Pentecostal churches have appeared in Colombo, Madras, Palayamkottai, Calcutta, Bombay, Hyderabad. Pentecostal church planting takes place among the urban poor. Not infrequently Pentecostal churches are made up of Hindu converts. A survey of 15 smaller cities of Tamil Nadu revealed the rapid growth of Pentecostal churches. Pentecostals know how to evangelize urbanites in the Hindu world.

Further hope is in the possibility that mainline churches will be able to make a vital urban transition. Most denominations are already in the city. Some churches are asleep. Others preserve various traditions and their rural past. Methodists in Bombay and Madras, Baptists in Hyderabad, have proven their ability to adjust to the urban setting to become a force for evangelizing the city. Lutherans, the Church of South India, the Church of North India, and the Salvation Army have yet to find their true urban potential.

Another reason for hope is in the indigenous new expressions of the Church beginning to arise and flourish. Already a start is seen in two or more directions. One is in the movement related to Bro. Bakht Singh centered at Hebron in Hyderabad, and similar independent assemblies of a "Brethren" type. The other is in a number of Pentecostal-type independent church movements such as the indigenous Indian Pentecostal Church of God with extensive branches in Kerala, Andhra, and several North Indian cities.

An emerging third direction can be discerned in the Laymen's Fellowship founded by Bro. Daniel in Madras as well as the Bible Mission of Fr. Devadas at Guntur and a number of "fringe" movements which do not entirely fit either the Brethren or Pentecostal typology but are a promising development in indigenous South Asian Christianity.

Finally, and above all, our hope is in the Holy Spirit, giver of life. The Holy Spirit is the prime mover in the Church's urban mission. That belief gives supreme hope for evangelization in today's mega-cities anywhere.

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## RACIAL RECONCILIATION: A CHALLENGE TO THE INTEGRITY OF EVANGELISM

H. Jurgens Hendriks

### Introduction

Racism among Christians is challenging the integrity of our faith, the truth of the gospel message, and the reality of the church as a sign of the kingdom of God in the world. If those of us who hold evangelism as one of the most central concerns of the gospel do not face and address the issues concerning racism, our evangelistic endeavors will be idle pursuit.

I am responding to the article "Questions for the Dutch Reformed Church of South Africa" asked by the retiring AETE President, Richard S. Armstrong, at the Oct 1992 annual meeting of the Academy (Armstrong, 1992:34-43). The article draws upon the report which Armstrong submitted to the Institute for Research Development of the South African Human Sciences Research Council, which sponsored his visit to South Africa in 1990. The published report raised the following questions:

1. *Can there be any real change of heart and mind without genuine dialogue at the grass roots level between racial groups?*

Answer: No. The problem, in South Africa and elsewhere, is that the leaders of the different church communities very seldom have honest dialogue and open, natural relationships with one another. Grass roots members need an example!

2. *What role can a linguistically, socially, and racially homogeneous church play in solving the black-on-black violence which is now plaguing South Africa?*

H. Jurgens Hendriks is a member of the Department of Practical Theology at the University of Stellenbosch, South Africa.

I find this a very difficult question to answer. The reasons for the violence are complex. It has many causes, political, economical, and social. If the church wants to influence the situation, it needs a stronger ecumenical unity. In 1993 churches worked together in staging peace-rallies. The public response from all population groups was overwhelming. Nobody wants the violence. However, the root causes of the violence need to be addressed. It will take time and a combined effort by all the parties concerned to address the issue.

3. *Is the DRC's traditional "shepherd-flock" image of pastoral leadership not counter-productive to the lay involvement and leadership needed if the church is going to be a force for positive change in South Africa?*

Yes. As elsewhere in the Western world the younger leaders in the churches understand the problem and they are struggling with it. However, tradition plays a major role in many congregations. The problem also manifests itself in the Dutch Reformed Mission Church (DRMC, colored community) and especially in the Dutch Reformed Church in Africa (DRCA, black community).

4. *Can a doctrinally oriented, catechism-bound church learn to listen?*

Hardly. A paradigm switch is required to achieve it. The orthodoxy versus orthopraxy tension is intense. It exists in all churches between the older and younger generation.

5. *Can a racially divided church contribute to the building of a new society?*

No.

6. *Does an encapsulated, isolated denomination bear witness to the Christian unity that is the main hope for a peaceful change in South Africa?*

No.

7. *Are pastors dealing realistically and forthrightly enough with these needs in their preaching and teaching ministries?*

Some are. Many avoid the issue for fear of losing more members to the Afrikaans Protestant Church, the newly formed rightwing oriented church formed by dissident DRC pastors. Those understanding the dynamics of the small rural congregations will understand the anxiety caused by such matters. The leaders of these communities need help in conflict management skills as well as in handling the process of change and reconciliation.

8. *Are seminary students being adequately prepared for ministry in the changing world they are called to serve?*

This is a question to all seminaries or faculties all over the world. I shall answer it by pointing out how we try to handle it at Stellenbosch.

9. *Are there aspects of NGK polity that hamper the mission and ministry of the local church?*

Armstrong referred to three problem areas: the parish concept of rigid boundaries, the absence of a head of staff in multiple staff churches and the resistance to the ordination of women (42). They do hamper ministry. These questions are appearing in one form or another on the agendas of the DRC family synod meetings.

### Answering the Questions in a New Paradigm

How are we to address these questions? It is important to understand the problem. Deep down the problem is universal: racism. Newsweek ran an article on it (Whitaker 1993:52-63). Christianity Today (Tapia, 1993:16-27) speaks of the myth of racial progress in America and Billy Graham, in the concluding address of the article, states: "Racism—in the world and the church—is one of the greatest barriers to world evangelization." The opening remark in a publication of Perkins and Rice (1993: 7) on "racial healing for the sake of the gospel" reads: "It should be apparent to even the most casual observer of racial trends in America that the controversy over the color line is raging out of control." To my mind this issue is a challenge to the Academy of Evangelism in Theological Education. It is a test of our integrity in dealing with one of the most difficult issues confronting the church.

How do we address the problem? To address this and many related problems, theology needs a new method and strategy. The church also needs a reformulation of its ecclesiology. We shall have to "revision" (Hodgson, 1988) our core identity. The change of method has to do with the paradigm change that we are experiencing (Bosch, 1991:181-189,349-367; Mead, 1991:8-29).

A specific example can illustrate the paradigm change. Nel (1992: 5-33) and Armstrong (1992:39) mentioned the interdenominational church meeting held at Rustenburg in South Africa. At the occasion Prof. Willie Jonker of the Faculty of Theology of Stellenbosch confessed on behalf of the DRC that apartheid was wrong and that the DRC was wrong when it partook in the ideology. The DRMC and the DRCA refused to accept the confession. Why? Because they heard enough words without seeing the truth thereof in actual life situations. Reconciliation at Rustenburg would, for them, be a cheap reconciliation. At the grass roots level, the congregational level, and the personal level they would have experienced nothing of the confession. They were actually saying

to the "mother": "We shall be able to believe your confession and grant you forgiveness only when we are able to see the truth of what you are saying in real life situations."

The old paradigm was one of words (orthodoxy). The new paradigm asks for deeds (orthopraxy). The new paradigm is from the bottom up (Pannell, 1992:93-108; Schreiter, 1985:1-25)<sup>1</sup>. One of the key aspects of the new paradigm is that it will be built on honest relationships across racial barriers. Therefore, the theological method required to answer Armstrong's questions in a truthful way, requires stories, factual accounts. They will relate where and how we are struggling to correct the injustices of the past and where and how we are struggling to shape our students, leadership and congregations to reformulate and revision our identity (ecclesiology) in accordance with the biblical principles, as they are to be applied in our contextual situation.

### Hypotheses

I am answering the questions and addressing the issue from the point of view of one involved in theological education in South Africa. I want to present the following as hypotheses and then illustrate them with case studies:

Seminaries and those involved in evangelism training have an inescapable responsibility to address racial issues. It implies that those teaching in such institutions should personally guide and help their students to go through emotional boundary-crossing experiences. This cannot be done on campus. We need to reach out to and stay with people "on the other side."

For seminaries this approach implies that faculty members need a discipleship relationship with their students, the ministers-to-be of the church.

The same principle applies to denominational and ecumenical relationships: personal relationships, based on trust and understanding, between seminary professors and the denominational leaders are required to influence the process of change and reconciliation between divided racial groups.

A divided society needs people who can act as bridge-builders between separated communities. The church, being the (one) body of Christ, should spearhead this bridge-building process. Seminaries and church-related academic institutions, can play a vital role in this regard.

Research is vitally important in the reconciliation process. Empirical congregational analysis helps congregations to become involved in diagnosing and understanding their own problems and

prejudices and those of their communities. The process helps them to overcome the tendency to react emotionally to changing circumstances. Insight is gained in their own story and identity and the contextual nature of hermeneutical frameworks. This leads to openness to accept diversity and change in a positive way.

The first case study refers to the relationship between staff members and students and answers Armstrong's eighth question (theological training). Note that the bottom up approach implies a keen sense of process. Process needs time and starts from below. The questions pertaining to dialogue (question 1), leadership style and lay involvement (question 3), method of instruction (question 4), have no "quick-fix" solutions. Quick-fix solutions are like cheap grace, or cheap reconciliation, or easily-spoken words without real intent and deep commitment. A process of personal and congregational upbuilding is required before these issues can be adequately addressed.

### Evangelism and Boundary-Crossing

It started as an experiment in 1987. Two staff members of our Faculty took about fourteen students on an "ecumenical" tour. We visited other denominations, held in-depth discussions with major church and political role players, stayed in the townships, and worshipped with the DRCA. Within our group most of us had several "first ever" experiences. For most of our white students worlds unknown to them unfolded. It was a very emotional experience to somehow see and experience the world from the other side of apartheid. The evaluation sessions and theological discussions went on long into the night.

Within a few years the Faculty made the annual tour compulsory for all students and faculty members! It became part of the curriculum. All fifth-year theological students, accompanied by their evangelism and mission lecturers as well as two other faculty members (on a rotation basis), leave campus for an extended fourteen day trip to one of the major urban areas in our country. During the first five days we do an evangelism course, usually with an interracial group attending the course. In the evenings we reach out with the gospel to different communities. This is done under the supervision and guidance of lay leaders of the local church. What always amazes me is the impact of this experience on the group. The understanding of faith and the theological issues involved are much more profound than in academically oriented classes! The spiritual bonding that takes place within the group serves as a foundation for the tough second part of the immersion experience.

The second, or "ecumenical" leg of the experience concentrates on linking evangelism and social responsibility (Mott, 1982:109-127). It

focuses on the other ways of proclaiming the Good News. In certain situations deeds (service, Armstrong, 1979), justice, relationships are a more powerful way of doing evangelism. We usually visit churches, leaders, and institutions linked to the far left as well as to the far right. Social issues play an important part of the itinerary. The "youth leagues" of the churches discuss their concerns with our students. Nothing and no one is spared in these often heated and sometimes emotional exchanges and debates! However, without a single exception, bonds and friendships have been formed and a new understanding of one another has resulted from the experience.

The emotional experience is often very intense. Students (in our own group) with differing views oppose one another. The traditional evangelical versus ecumenical debate is a fixed item on the agenda. The challenge is to lead the group to refrain from emotional outbursts and to help them handle the problem in a theological way. We are learning to integrate our theology with real life issues! As seminary professors we soon found that we were able to discuss theological issues with our students based on shared experiences. Faculty and students became partners in theology and co-servants in our struggle to discern the divine praxis. During 1993 we had the first opportunity to join in such a tour with our neighboring, traditionally DRMC "colored" seminary (the University of the Western Cape).

### Research, Evangelism, Social Ministries, and Reconciliation

Armstrong's first question had to do with dialogue between people and communities divided by racism. The answer to this question holds the key to the two questions regarding church unity and ecumenical cooperation (questions 5 and 6). They in turn hold the key to the church's role and part in addressing the black-on-black violence, (question 2).

There is no "quick fix" solution to these problems. One should understand it as a process and choose the best place to start addressing the issues. My basic assumption is that one should start by committing oneself to the process and by getting the leaders of the different groups involved. In most cases it is quite difficult to get the church leaders, the pastors, involved in the struggle. We started to assist the pastors who needed help on a congregational level.

The case studies which follow confirm how personal relationships and academic research help pastors and church members to begin to understand their identity (Hopewell, 1987:46, 50, 103). The case studies will also be used to illustrate how two universities, once racially segregated, are starting to work together and how the seminary Faculty can play a major role in facing and addressing racial problems.

I shall use the data of four M. Th. research projects. The case studies are all from the same area in the Cape peninsula. The first case study will tell the story of the Afrikaners' plight, their unfortunate romance with apartheid and the subsequent disillusion. The second case study will tell the story of those who suffered severely because of apartheid. The third and fourth cases will illustrate the post-apartheid developments in that area.

### *In Search of Identity and Security*

C. C. Nel (1990) examined the financial situation of the Vrijzee DRC congregation. Nagging financial problems prompted the church council to request that their minister find the root causes of the problem. The general view was that their financial problems were caused by the growing number of pensioners in the congregation, the lack of commitment of the younger people, the fact that their members are basically blue-collar workers, and the high contributions paid to the denominational budget. It was clear that the story and identity of this congregation were linked to their financial struggles. In his research Nel (18-70, 129-131) concentrated on the history of the congregation and the country as a whole, highlighting the fluctuating economic and political developments. In many ways the key to understanding the problems of our country and church unfolds with the story of the Vrijzee congregation.

The depression of 1929 and ensuing years had a severe effect on South Africa, leading to a second wave of urbanization. Poverty and unemployment amongst white people were regarded as a national problem. In these circumstances, in 1939, the congregation was founded and called **Raymond**. With its 1080 Afrikaans-speaking members, children included, they called their first minister. Within a year the English-sounding name *Raymond* was changed to **Elsiesrivier**. It was the first of four changes of name. According to the church minutes almost every item on the church council's agenda was debated with financial implications in mind. However, a beautiful, expensive church was built between 1945 and 1948. Members contributed well and in financial terms the congregation was flourishing. It is clear that the Afrikaans-speaking whites were struggling to secure their self-respect, financial security, and identity. They were being discriminated against by their English-speaking (political) opponents. Racial tensions abounded, competition for work in the mines and cities was tough. When the congregation bought the *Central Hall* in 1941 they gave it an Afrikaans name, *Moedhou Saal* (i.e., Keep-faith Hall), and stipulated that it was to be used by whites only. After 1948, when the National Party came into power, the problem of the poor whites was gradually solved, and apartheid was enforced. The Group Areas Act was passed by Parliament. In the Goodwood-Parow area, where Afrikaans-speaking white and colored people were living side by side, the colored people were forced to leave.

The colored group area, southeast of the railway line, was referred to as *Elsiesrivier*. As a result the congregation again changed its name from *Elsiesrivier* to **Noordweg** (1957). Eventually the mortgage on the church was paid.

With money in the bank they felt secure. Once again, in 1975, they changed their name, this time to **Vrijzee** (after one of the ships of the Dutch settlers). The word can be associated with freedom (at last they were free from all financial burdens!). Since 1983, however, they had not been able to make ends meet. The whole South African economy was taking the strain of sanctions. Inflation was averaging 15-16% annually.

Because of the congregation's tradition of strict financial discipline and a sound organizational system the research was able to come up with specific answers. To their astonishment the facts proved that the offerings of the elderly people (including the pensioners) were above average. The younger members were letting the congregation down. The church council represented the elderly people, the old-timers, at whom, in actual fact, the practice of ministry was directed. Church attendance analysis showed that they were not communicating well with the younger generation. They were also not able to attract new members. During the fifty years of their existence they were pre-occupied only with themselves, losing 14.86% of their members between 1981-1989. The traditional DRC members were moving out of the area and people from other cultural groups were moving in (Nel, 1990:71-111, 124-125).

### *Raped of Humanity*

The second case study concerns the Dutch Reformed Mission Church (DRMC)<sup>2</sup> of Goodwood. Marco (1992:43-51) tells the story of the Goodwood DRMC, which was officially founded in 1950. The church was situated in what is presently the white suburb of Goodwood. Most of its members were living in that area at the time. The Group Areas Act forced the colored people living in the residential Goodwood-Parow area to move. Africans were forced out of *Elsies River* to black group areas. "The first few years of this congregation's existence were marked by tremendous upheavals and psychological traumas experienced on a personal, a family, and a congregational level. Families who owned property and were not willing to move voluntarily were forced to move. Most families moved to *Elsies River* where they had to start from scratch. Many were left penniless and, raped of their pride, had to find homes in the bushes of *Elsies River*, by then declared a slum area" (49).

Today the inhabitants of *Elsies River* are estimated to be about 120,000 people, living in 18 neighborhoods of predominantly sub-economic, four-story apartments and semi-detached dwellings. In the early sixties the living conditions were appalling. Marco remarks (20): "When people's humanness has been taken away, so that they become objects and

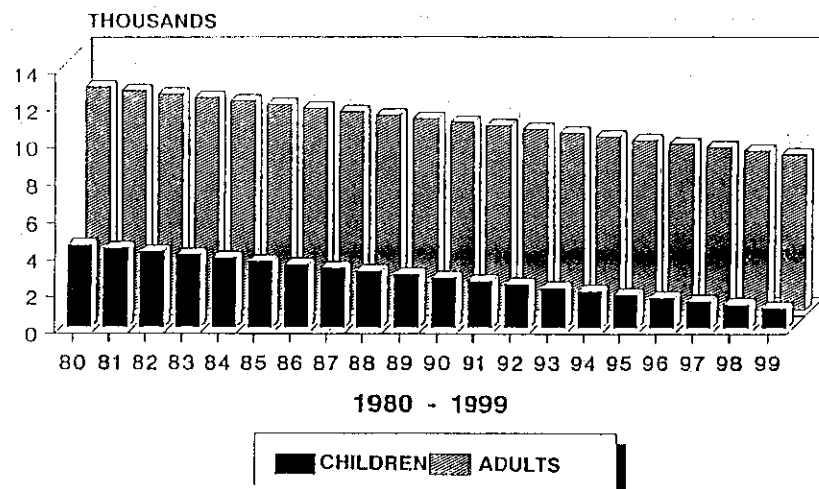
caricatures to be exploited at will, they are raped. When the classification ("coloured") of people determines where they should live, where they should attend school, to which of God's beaches they can go, where they can work and with whom they can associate, then it can be said that these people are raped. When people have succeeded against all odds to attain certain successes in life and are then still subjected to negative etiquettes of racial classification, they have been raped."

The DRMC congregation played an important role in the lives of its members. It gave them a sense of belonging. The church maintained itself and grew to a total of 969 members (children included, 1992). Today it is financially independent, with a constituency of predominantly working class people. Social problems, however, abound. Alcohol and drug abuse, unemployment, bad housing, marriage and family problems, deviant behavior amongst the youth, all evils of a poverty stricken society, are rampant.

### For Those Who Have Eyes to See

For those who had eyes to see, it was obvious that there was something wrong in the older "white" DRC congregations. Facts were needed to convince people that radical changes were taking place. A couple of ministers from this area joined an M. Th. Practice of Ministry course at the University of Stellenbosch. The Presbytery of Parow requested the Rev. Stephen Spies to do research on membership trends in their twelve congregations (1990). The result of his research is shown in the following figure:

### MEMBERSHIP TREND



The figure shows the factual drop in overall membership over ten years, as well as a ten-year projection (98). Membership dropped from 16,715 in 1980 to 13,203, children included, in 1989 (97). The financial implications and tendencies indicated a worsening picture. Further research revealed that only 37 houses were demolished but that 332 living units (most of them apartments) were built in the area. The white population within the geographical boundaries of the twelve congregations actually increased. The market segment of the DRC dropped from 41.16% of the population to 35.7% (102). Research results came as a shock to the Presbytery. These facts led the Presbytery to ask the writer of this article to lead them in a process of strategic theological planning.

### No Evangelization Culture

The leadership in the Presbytery of Parow was slowly but surely bringing the congregations to pay attention to the results of the previously mentioned research. Ministers and church councils were, for a start, facing facts and asking honest questions. According to the 1989 church census (Smuts, 1991:1-15) and the 1991 population census, the (white) DRC was, for the first time in its history, not growing<sup>3</sup>. On the local scene the picture was clear: the three affluent churches were holding their own, but the nine older churches were all experiencing a loss of membership while the population in the area was increasing (Spies, 1990: 19-103). It was obvious that the first-generation inhabitants of the area were moving out. To aggravate the agony, the local Pentecostal church, the Lighthouse, was experiencing a heyday. It was clearly a well-run show business, but people, especially the young ones, flocked to their emotional evangelistic meetings.

The Parow-North congregation, a younger and affluent congregation, asked one of their ministers to do research on the issue of evangelization<sup>4</sup>. They realized that they were co-responsible for the problems facing the church in their area. The Rev. Van Niekerk (1991:22) took as his research hypothesis that a disparity existed between the theory of ministry pertaining to evangelization and its actual practice. The idea of equipping and involving the laity in an evangelization ministry appeared only after 1950 in the official minutes of the DRC.<sup>5</sup> However, the disparity between theory and practice still existed. It takes time for a mainline denomination to change its culture and identity! It was obvious from his research that the DRC, and for that matter the Protestant church, did not have an evangelization culture at all. Van Niekerk's research proved that there was indeed a gap between the theory of ministry and the actual practice thereof (111-112). As a result the Presbytery of Parow took steps to address the problem. An evangelization ministry was founded and positive results are being experienced.

### The Process is Continuing

As more and more research was done with the help of the academic institutions, the leadership of the presbytery was gaining insight into the history and identity of the white congregations as well as the contextual nature of parish developments. These facts led to the discovery of the hermeneutical frameworks used by different groups at different times and thus provided insight into the reasons for and the nature of the conflict in our society. Part and parcel of the process was the theological evaluation of the facts in terms of the difficult struggle to discern the divine praxis. The immediate result of the process in the Presbytery was the founding of an evangelization ministry and several social ministries. At the moment the Presbytery is considering regrouping the twelve congregations into four groups of three congregations each. Each of the three affluent congregations is grouped with two struggling congregations. Each group of three may merge into one congregation retaining more than one church building. Church services may then specialize according to the needs of specific cultural groups moving into the area.

In the meantime the academic institutions of the previously racially separated Universities of Stellenbosch and the Western Cape are moving closer to one another. In September 1993 the two Universities co-sponsored an inter-racial conflict mediation course attended by fifty-five ministers from six denominations. Through the example set by the academic institutions the ministers in the area of the above-mentioned case studies are beginning to work together to face the evangelism and social challenges of a post-apartheid society.

Let us reiterate the hypotheses and relate it to Armstrong's questions. Armstrong is basically asking the DRC: How are you going to face the racism issue and lack of unity in your church and country? Our hypotheses answered: From below. The only way to overcome the deep-rooted bitterness and distrust is to start building a new foundation of relationships. Leadership needs to set the example and commit themselves to be bridgebuilders. We must use our theological research methods to help our congregations and communities come to grips with the reality of racism and the consequences thereof. It is a slow process; it takes considerable patience and skill. But in ever widening circles we must advance, one step at a time, as we endeavor to discern the divine praxis.

### A Working Group for Congregational Studies and Reconciliation

The process, described above, began in the eighties. The "results" are only now beginning to surface. In 1992 the commissions of the DRC family started working together in the Cape. The four churches have only one commission for public witness (that is, evangelism, mission, and ministries). To achieve unity on all levels required a carefully struc-

tured process which addressed the often delicate intricacies of church culture. The "quick fix" (unsuccessful) unification between the DRMC and the DRCA ran into serious difficulties on all levels because individuals were forcing the issue. The preparation for the unification of churches that were divided by something as bitter as apartheid can be compared to the process needed to remarry a divorced couple. A basic requirement for the success of the process is a dedicated leadership who are willing to spend time with one another and build relationships of trust and understanding.

The typical denominational leaders are often not the ones ideally suited to address the intricacies of the process. What is needed is dedicated ministers from the divided groups who can act as a "practical theology think tank" and who can subsequently start implementing and experimenting with the unification process. Such a group was formed in 1990.

The group went through two stages. At first we thought we wanted to address the problems of the "white" DRC church. We invited a few members of the DRMC to help us. It was soon obvious that churches divided by racial segregation are caught within a spiritually deadly web of either racism or bitterness. Reconciliation is a group effort. We have to set one another free. It can be attained only if we work together. In order to achieve reconciliation, the leaders must be reconciled. We therefore reconstituted the group to be representative of the parties involved in the reconciliation process. The reconciliation process is by no means an easy or cheap process. Augsburg explains (1992:283-284):

Forgiveness re-creates the relationship as it releases the anger, guilt, and pain from the past, reopens the future by resolving fear and suspicion, and restores the relationship by renegotiating the differences and reclaiming the other as a brother or sister in a reconciled present. Forgiveness is the mutual recognition that repentance is genuine and right relationships have been restored or achieved.

The group has a submission, a type of faith statement, from which I quote:

*We believe that congregations play a fundamental role in the process of reconciliation between people and groups. Furthermore, we believe that the rift between individuals, congregations and churches in our country can be cured if relationships of trust can be built between leaders of the different communities. We commit ourselves towards this end. Our hope and inspiration emanate from our belief that God the Redeemer, in Jesus Christ, is the Father of us all.*

*The group believes that relationships of trust are fostered in a*

process where we share our own bitterness and suffering and that of the church that we belong to. We will have to share and discuss, we will have to confess and forgive, and we will have to be involved in rectifying wrongs of the past. This process demands longer and closer inter-relationships. In order to attain this we aim to work together on specific projects and to subject ourselves to exposure experiences. We know that we will learn a great deal within an ecumenical context.

We believe that it is essential and important that church members must understand that the church should be focused on the world, that being a believer implies involvement in the church as well as in society.

We believe that the Christian faith is transmitted through faith communities. Research on congregational life is therefore of the utmost importance.

We adhere to a biblical spirituality and believe that living before God and being concerned with the needs of the poor, are inseparable.

We aim to develop a practice of ministry where the gifts of all members are developed and autonomous ministries evolve.

The structural unification of the family of Dutch Reformed Churches as well as ecumenical participation is an implicit aim in all our endeavors.

We declare that we believe in the catholicity of the church, which provides room for different cultural groupings and styles of spirituality on the congregational level.

Our approach is Reformed-ecumenical. That implies that we take the Holy Scriptures seriously and that we want to be ecumenically open, because we honestly believe that God works in and through one universal church.

**Our vision is to help congregations to be carriers of faith, agents of reconciliation, islands of hope, and signs of the Kingdom.**

### In Conclusion

In conclusion, if one compares the questions Armstrong raised in 1990 with the above statement (compiled in 1991), it is easy to recognize that the agenda of our work group includes the same issues. I believe that racial reconciliation can be addressed only if those at the top are prepared to start from the bottom. People will follow, if their leaders set the example. It is the way Jesus taught his disciples. If the church can demonstrate racial reconciliation, evangelism will have integrity

because the power of the Spirit and the all-conquering love of Jesus Christ will be visible.

### NOTES

<sup>1</sup> Words and deeds are of course never to be separated. In a specific situation, however, one should discern from which point to start (Newbigin, 1989:128-140).

<sup>2</sup> In order to gain some perspective of the South African scene, some statistical facts may help. Most colored people are living in the Cape Province. The DRMC has 564,278 members out of a population group total of 3,258,718, i.e. 17.17%. It is by far the largest denomination among the colored people (S.A. Population Census, 1991, No. 03-01-22: 143-145).

<sup>3</sup> Some statistical background: The family of DRC churches is the largest denomination in South Africa, 3.2 million (10.37%) of the total population of nearly 31 million people. The "white" DRC is according to the population census 1,597,000 of the total white population of 5,068,000, that is 31.52%. When the three other Afrikaans speaking white churches of Dutch-Protestant background are added to DRC figures, it adds up to 39.4% of the white population (SA Population Census, 1991, No. 03-01-22:143-145). The DRC church census of 1989 shows a membership loss of 7.54% or some 109,397 members. Between 1987 and 1989 14,000 of these members broke away and formed the whites-only, right-wing sympathetic Afrikaans Protestant Church (APC). Their numbers have increased since 1989. According to the 1991 population census they have 32,175 members. An analysis of the DRC membership loss shows that the declining birthrate is the main reason for the drop in membership (Smuts, 1991:1-15). It should also be noted that the constant growth of the DRC over more than 300 years was largely due to biological growth.

<sup>4</sup> In South African Protestant circles evangelization used to refer to alienated church members (basically whites). Mission referred to reaching out to the heathen (basically non-whites). This type of distinction has largely disappeared.

<sup>5</sup> The dissertation of J. C. G. Kotze proved to be a watershed: *The Divine Charge to the Christian in the Church. An Historico-dogmatic Study in the Reformed Conception of the Universal Priesthood of Believers with Special Reference to Evangelism* (Stellenbosch SCA, 1959).

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## RENEWING THE QUEST FOR THE HISTORICAL KERYGMA

Harry L. Poe

Critical study of the New Testament in the twentieth century has tended to neglect at best, ignore on average, or deny at worst God's role in the composition of the books that became the New Testament. This attempt to avoid the transcendent arises from a legitimate concern to maintain objectivity in study, but this concern collapses in the face of the enormity of subjective presuppositions scholars bring to their study concerning what could or could not have happened two thousand years ago. Even worse cases of subjectivity arise when scholars attempt to reconstruct a life situation in the early church that would have called for the church to construct miracle stories or ascribe claims to divinity by Jesus.

In the case of *The Acts of the Apostles* and the effort to reconstruct the gospel as the apostles preached it, some have concluded that Acts cannot reveal how the apostles preached because Luke constructed it as a literary work to express his own theological concerns. Others argue for the acceptance of the material in Acts as the legitimate tradition of the church and an accurate representation of how the apostles would have preached. Neither approach seems entirely satisfactory, however, since neither grapples with the place of God in the development and preservation of the gospel. Historians, scientists, political scientists, grammarians, musicians, and the full range of academic disciplines have the luxury of pursuing their research with respect to the finite world. By positing the existence of God, however, the disciplines of theology cannot with integrity study their areas without thinking about God.

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Harry L. Poe is Associate Professor of Evangelism at the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, KY. He is the recently elected Secretary of the Academy for Evangelism.

## Reliability of Acts

Martin Dibelius argued that the speeches in Acts were compositions by the author, although they represent what he understood the apostolic message to be.<sup>1</sup> The apostles' message did not concentrate on the biographical details of the life of Christ. Instead, they emphasized "what faith longed to hear and . . . what was likely to impress and convert unfaith, vis. that here it was God who spoke and who was at work."<sup>2</sup> Bo Reicke argued that the similarity between sermons in Acts rests on a real tradition rather than on later constructions by Luke.<sup>3</sup> Reicke developed his view that the apostles adopted the forms of preaching they had learned from Jesus. Because of the similarity in form of the apostolic sermons but the slight differences in theology and development, Reicke suggested that these early sermons preserved the early tradition of the apostles rather than the creativity of Luke.<sup>4</sup>

Bertil Gärtner took strong exception with Dibelius over the reliability of Luke. The church still living at the time of the writing of Acts who had heard the apostolic preaching would have insisted upon reliability.<sup>5</sup> Furthermore, any similarity between the sermons does not rest on Lucan composition, but on the fact that Peter and Paul had the same message to deliver. C. S. C. Williams joined Gärtner's criticism of Dibelius. He accused Dibelius of failing to take seriously the extent of disagreement among scholars over the degree to which ancient historians freely composed or relied upon factual material in their reports of speeches.<sup>6</sup> The position of Dibelius also assumes a monolithic approach to writing history by the ancient historians. Michael Green has identified the variety of approaches pursued by Thucydides, Lucian, Livy, Cicero, and Philostratus to suggest that "it is exceedingly unsafe to argue from other writers as to what Luke could or could not have done in his speeches."<sup>7</sup> Rather than a Gentile approach to history, Williams argued that Luke would more likely have followed a Jewish model for history. Such an approach would have included the Rabbinic method of memorization to preserve important words or sayings.<sup>8</sup>

Dibelius does not stand alone in viewing the sermons in Acts as literary creations of Luke. Hans Conzelmann credited Luke on this account with being the first Christian author consciously to try to conform to the standards of Hellenistic literature.<sup>9</sup> He believed the sermons in Acts represent Luke's attempt to imitate the style of Thucydides. C. F. Evans insisted that Luke had greater freedom to write as he pleased in composing Acts since a model did not already exist in the church for writing that kind of book.<sup>10</sup> This argument falls, however, in a comparison with the Gospel books. Though they were a different kind of book, the inclusion of speeches comprised a major part of them. Evans held that the speeches of Acts must be Luke's composition rather than the preserved tradition of what was said by the apostles because Evans had difficulty envisioning the *Sitz im Leben* of the church that would have preserved and repeated the apostles' words. He further argued that no one would remember a speech twenty, thirty, or forty years after it was

heard unless it was repeated, and he found no reason for such repetition in the church.<sup>11</sup>

## The Role of the Witness

The role of the witness plays a critical part in the Gospel of Luke and The Acts of the Apostles. Luke's gospel begins by attributing his and other gospel narratives to the testimony of witnesses (Lk 1:1-4). It concludes by describing the instructions of Christ to his followers that they should be witnesses to the fulfillment of Scripture, his death, his resurrection, the call for repentance, and the offer of forgiveness of sins and the Holy Spirit (Lk 24:44-49). The Acts of the Apostles begins with the final instructions to his followers in which Christ promised them the power of the Holy Spirit and charged them to be his witnesses (Acts 1:8). Acts closes with Paul in Rome "testifying to the kingdom of God and trying to convince them about Jesus both from the law of Moses and from the prophets" (Acts 28:23), while the preaching and teaching go on unhindered. The substantial internal evidence of Luke's writing indicates his methodology, which concentrates on preserving the testimony of witnesses. Luke, more than any other New Testament writer, paid attention to details of setting and people involved (Lk 2:2; 3:1-2; 3:23, 7:40; 8:2-3; 19:1ff; 24:19).

In The Acts of the Apostles, Luke's citation of names increases dramatically in relation to the dramatic enlargement of the field in which the story unfolds. The life of Jesus from birth to ascension took place in a small geographical area with a small number of devoted followers. In Acts the story spreads throughout the Hellenistic world to the very capital of the empire. All along the way Luke documents names and "addresses" of people who heard the testimony and believed. The internal evidence of Acts indicates how Luke would have come by so many sermons and sermon fragments years after their delivery.

C. F. Evans and other skeptical critics can imagine no situation in the life of the church that would have led to the preservation of the sermons in Acts. This position reflects the unfortunate separation of theological scholarship from the dynamic community of faith. Had these critics been more involved in the proclamation of the kerygma instead of the mere study of it, their experience would have told them what Paul's conversion testimonies demonstrate. At one place Luke described Paul's conversion (Acts 9:1-30). In two other places Luke described how Paul gave testimony of his conversion experience: first before the crowd in Jerusalem (22:1-21), then before Agrippa (26:1-23). Converts to faith in Christ remember the circumstances of their conversion until they die. What is more, converts tend to obey the command of Christ to be his witnesses. External evidence of this phenomenon fills volumes of Christian devotional literature of the last 2,000 years, including such classics as Augustine's *Confessions*, Bunyan's *Grace Abounding* which

he allegorized as *The Pilgrim's Progress*, and C. S. Lewis' *Surprised by Joy*.

### The Conversion Testimony

While Peter, Paul, Philip, and certainly Stephen would not likely have remembered what they preached precisely on a given occasion, they would have known generally that they had preached Christ. With only that to go by, Luke would have to resort to literary license. Luke had no such handicap, however, when writing his account of how the church fulfilled its commission to bear witness to Christ. Just as the apostles remembered the words of Christ, the converts would have remembered the words of the apostles. Of the three thousand converts on the Day of Pentecost who returned to the corners of the empire after their pilgrimage to Jerusalem, Luke undoubtedly encountered many in his travels who shared their testimony of how they had met Christ through the gospel on Pentecost when Peter preached.

The church did not preserve the debates, sermons, or discussions that accompanied the appointment of the seven deacons, the election of a twelfth apostle, or the Jerusalem Council. Only brief statements by the participants survive. If Luke had exercised freedom in constructing speeches, one would have thought he would have fortified those episodes with some Thucydidean monologues. The church had seen no reason to preserve such historic details. On the other hand, a convert would not forget the terms in which he or she heard the gospel preached (cf. 1 Cor. 15:1).

### Origin of the Kerygma

The concept of the witness, which Luke forthrightly accentuates, explains both the preservation of the sermons of the apostles and the origin of the apostolic kerygma tradition. But witness alone does not fully explain it. The disciples witnessed many things Jesus said and did during his ministry, but they understood little or none of what happened in their midst. They did not understand the parables, the transfiguration (Mk 9:6), talk about a resurrection of Jesus (Mt 17:9; Jn 11:24; Mk 9:9), talk about the coming passion (Lk 9:22, 44:45; 18:31-34; 17:25; Mk 9:31-32; Mt 17:23), or their place in the kingdom (Lk 22:24-27). What they had witnessed of Jesus did not have meaning nor meet with understanding among the disciples until after the resurrection.

All four of the Gospels bear testimony to the fact that the disciples had not expected the resurrection. Though singled out for his articulation of the denial of Jesus, Peter spoke for most of the other disciples, whose absence from the crucifixion and burial belied the disappointment of

their expectations. Prior to the resurrection the disciples had more expectation than faith. Luke described how understanding commingled with faith as the disciples met their risen Lord. In his description of the resurrection appearances, Luke explained the origin of the apostolic kerygma tradition.

### The Role of Jesus

When Cleopas and the other unnamed disciple met Jesus on the road to Emmaus, they recited the basic events in the ministry and death of Jesus (Lk 24:19-24). They knew of his teachings and miracles. They knew how the power structure of the establishment had conspired to bring about his death. They even knew the stories of the resurrection which had begun to circulate that day. They had information, but they did not know the meaning of the information. After the two disciples told Jesus the news of the crucifixion and the rumors of the empty tomb, Jesus replied, "O foolish men, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken! Was it not necessary that the Christ should suffer these things and enter into his glory?" (Lk 24:25-26). Luke then adds that "beginning with Moses and all the prophets, he interpreted to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning himself" (Lk 24:27).

Luke wrote that Jesus did not leave the work of preserving his gospel to memory guided by chance. Instead, Jesus taught his disciples during his resurrection visits the meaning of all that had happened concerning him.<sup>12</sup> Luke gave the substance of this teaching in the last verses of his gospel:

Then he said to them, "These are my words which I spoke to you, while I was still with you, that everything written about me in the law of Moses and the prophets and the psalms must be fulfilled." Then he opened their minds to understand the Scriptures, and said to them, "Thus it is written, that the Christ should suffer and on the third day rise from the dead, and that repentance and forgiveness of sins should be preached in his name to all nations, beginning from Jerusalem. You are witnesses of these things. And behold, I send the promise of my Father upon you; but stay in the city, until you are clothed with power from on high" (Lk 24:44-49).

Luke clearly describes a gospel tradition that originates with Jesus during his resurrection appearances. The command to be witnesses came as a command to be witnesses "of these things" which Jesus recapitulated and the meaning he ascribed to them.

## The Role of the Holy Spirit

Before undertaking the responsibility of a witness, however, the disciples received the further instruction to wait in Jerusalem for the fulfillment of the Father's promise to clothe them with power (Lk 24:49). The Holy Spirit forms the final critical link in the origin and preservation of the gospel. While Luke emphasizes this dimension of the gospel, he does not stand alone. In the Great Commission recorded by Matthew, the activity of going, making disciples, baptizing, and teaching is framed by (1) the declaration of Christ's supreme authority in heaven and on earth, and (2) his promise to always be with his disciples as they fulfilled this command (Mt 28:18-20).

The origin and preservation of a gospel tradition by the early church has been described as a sociological phenomenon by many critical scholars during the twentieth century. Efforts to reconstruct the life situation of the church focus on the survival needs the church would have had which might have prompted a particular tradition. Efforts at analyzing the minds of the authors focus on the attempt to discover the creative theological contribution of the authors as they responded out of their faith to the situation in the church. In contrast to this approach, the New Testament seems to present the Holy Spirit as the dominant "life situation" of the church, out of which the gospel witness emerged.

In the Gospel of John, Jesus told the disciples that the Holy Spirit would "teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all that I have said to you" (Jn 14:26). This concept of the role of the Holy Spirit in the witness to Christ finds a parallel in Luke where Jesus said,

And when they bring you before the synagogues and the rulers and the authorities, do not be anxious how or what you are to answer or what you are to say; for the Holy Spirit will teach you in that very hour what you ought to say (Lk 12:11-12).

These passages acknowledge both creativity in the gospel message and the preservation process while ascribing both processes to the Holy Spirit. By calling to remembrance the circumstances related to Christ, the Holy Spirit maintains the objective basis for good news, rooted in what Christ said, what he did, and who he represented himself to be. On the other hand, the teaching ministry of the Holy Spirit takes the truth of Christ expressed by the gospel to impact each person, culture, and age in a creative, personal way.

## Preaching and Teaching in Context

When C. H. Dodd began "the quest for the historical kerygma," he sought to identify a gospel creedal formulation acknowledged by the apostles. Any deviation from this formulation constituted "develop-

ment," or the introduction of new theological views by an author. The primary theological idea he attacked as a new development was the idea of a future return of Christ. Dodd wrote from what many would call a conservative point of view to establish a tradition that went back to the early church. Rudolf Bultmann wrote from what many would call a liberal point of view to free the gospel from tradition altogether. Both share a presupposition common to many who try to study the New Testament, that the New Testament is a human book full of traditions about what people believed or taught about Jesus long ago. From this perspective, any differences in the gospel message or nuances in theological formulation occur as a result of the personal quirks of the authors of the New Testament books.

If, on the other hand, the Holy Spirit actually guided the apostles in what they said and how they said it, one would expect a change in the expression of the message without an alteration in the substance. Rather than the recitation of a creedal formula, the apostles presented Jesus Christ, the Savior. In presenting Christ, they said enough about Christ to set him apart, to indicate in what sense he is the only Savior, and to explain from what and to what he saves people. Presenting Jesus in the Hellenistic world required the translation or transformation of terminology wed to the Jewish context; such as the substitution of "Christ" for the term "Messiah."<sup>13</sup>

In moving beyond the Jewish context to the nations, more than terminology needed attention. The gospel assumes several fundamental elements that Peter did not have to elaborate in Jerusalem. Peter could assume a common understanding and belief in the Creator God who upheld the universe by his power. This represented not only the religion of the Jews, but also their world view. The Creator God had taken the initiative to provide salvation for his creatures. Toward this end, God had spoken by the prophets to prepare Israel for the appearing of the Messiah. Floyd Filson has criticized C. H. Dodd's study of the apostolic preaching in Acts for concentrating his analysis on the messages that appear in a Jewish context while ignoring Paul's messages in the pagan settings of Lystra (Acts 14:15-17) and Athens (Acts 17:22-31).<sup>41</sup> In these settings, Paul first had to proclaim the Creator God who made the heavens and the earth. Filson observed,

In a world of polytheism and idolatry it was necessary to present the basic message of monotheism, the one God who is Creator, Lord, and Judge, and under whom all life is lived. It was necessary to state clearly man's moral responsibility before God, and in doing this the Resurrection and the final judgment were proclaimed.<sup>15</sup>

This theme forms the prologues to John's gospel and to Hebrews. It figures prominently in Paul's letters; particularly in Romans 8, Ephesians 1 and Colossians 1.

In Jerusalem Peter spoke of Jesus as Lord (Acts 2:36). He never referred to him as "Son of God" the way Paul did in Damascus after his conversion

(Acts 9:20). Though Paul used the terminology "Son of God" in his writings (Rom. 1:4; 1 Cor. 1:9; 2 Cor. 1:19; Gal. 1:20), he more frequently used the term of preference used by Peter in Jerusalem which had constituted the confession of Thomas: "My Lord and my God" (John 20:28). Rather than a "theological development," the "Son of God" terminology constituted the effort to express to the Gentile what "Lord" meant to the Jews.

For centuries, the Jews had refrained from speaking the holy name of Yahweh, the Lord God almighty who redeemed Israel from Egypt and declared his name to Moses. When the rabbis came to the holy name in scripture, rather than speak it, they substituted the word *Adonai*, the LORD. Modern translations of the Hebrew scriptures maintain this tradition by capitalizing all the letters of LORD whenever the name Yahweh appears. Instead of a low Christology, by using the divine title when referring to Jesus Peter expressed the highest of Christologies.<sup>16</sup> The title "Lord" ascribed to Jesus had its origin in Palestine in the Jewish community, as the ancient Aramaic prayer *Maran atha*, "Lord, come" (1 Cor. 16:22) indicates.<sup>17</sup> The confession "Jesus is Lord" meant something to those who understood what Lord meant. The Gentile world, however, had lots of lords. The term "Son of God" expressed for the Gentile the divine relationship which "Lord" conveyed to the Jews.

In Jerusalem, Peter never stated that Christ died for sins. Paul stressed this meaning of the death throughout his writings. Instead of a theological development in the understanding of the atonement, the difference between Peter and Paul reflects the cultural difference of their audiences. In Jerusalem, on the day of Pentecost, Peter could assume a common understanding of sin and its remedy. In the shadow of the temple, the pilgrims that day understood better than any that the law of Moses prescribed that forgiveness of sin only came through sacrifice. Peter proclaimed the death of Jesus which took place at Passover time, and he proclaimed forgiveness of sins in Jesus' name. The details did not require explanation. The understanding of atoning sacrifice had formed over a thousand years of the consciousness of Israel.

In the Gentile world, however, Paul had a formidable problem. The Gentiles offered sacrifices to their gods, but sacrifices served as bribes to enlist the aid of a god or to pacify an offended deity. Paul had to explain the moral demands of a holy God and the significance of the death of Jesus with respect to the problem of human sin. Without the preparation of the law and the prophets, the Gentile world required explanation that the Jewish community did not need.

Paul indicated in the strongest of terms that the apostles felt no freedom to alter the terms of the gospel. He claimed that his manner of presenting the gospel to Gentiles came to him by way of revelation from Jesus Christ (Gal 1:6-12). Peter also claimed divine revelation as the basis for his message to the Gentiles when he had his vision in Joppa before witnessing to Cornelius (Acts 10:9-16, 19-20, 28, 34-35). Philip received similar guidance in witnessing to the Ethiopian eunuch as he expounded the fulfillment of Scripture in Christ (Acts 8:26-29). Like-

wise Ananias received divine counsel before witnessing to Saul when he demonstrated the power of the Holy Spirit (Acts 9:10-17). By divine revelation, Stephen of all the apostles bore witness to the exaltation of Christ to the right hand of the Father and the freedom his reign gives to those in persecution (Acts 7:56). In each case, however, the revelation did not alter what the witness had received of the gospel. Rather, the revelation amplified and gave deeper meaning to particular aspects of the gospel.

Instead of the rigid distinction C. H. Dodd drew between kerygma and *didache* expressed by evangelism and discipleship, the New Testament seems to imply that the gospel cannot be separated from the meaning ascribed to it in the apostles' teaching. The gospel may declare that Christ died for our sins, but the meaning of this declaration includes deliverance, redemption, cleansing, forgiveness, and justification. The gospel may declare that those who have faith receive the gift of the Holy Spirit, but the meaning of this declaration includes regeneration, adoption, assurance, sanctification, and empowerment.

The evangelist has the responsibility to demonstrate what the gospel of Jesus Christ means to each individual and culture. For Paul it meant freedom from the curse of the law, but to the Gentiles he addressed in Colossae it meant freedom from the "elemental spirits of the universe" (Col 2:8). For Stephen the gospel offered hope to die, but for the Philippian jailor it offered hope to live.

As the church prepares to enter the third millennium of its mission on earth, the same Holy Spirit that guided the apostles moves in its midst to bring the gospel to a world suffering from the consequences of sin. The challenge now as then involves presenting Christ as the Savior to a world of different people and cultures. Whether the message focuses on the fulfillment of Scripture in Christ, as it did when Philip witnessed to the Ethiopian; the Creator God, as it did when Paul spoke at Lystra and Athens; the challenge to faith, as it did when Paul witnessed to the Philippian jailor; or the gift of the Holy Spirit, as it did when Paul taught in Ephesus; the message addresses the gospel to the world's experience of the effects of sin and presents Christ as the Savior.

## Conclusion

Jesus Christ formed the sum and substance of the apostolic message. People who joined themselves to the fledgling band of disciples did so because they had joined themselves to Jesus Christ. The message presented Christ as the one who answered life's deepest questions; thus, he came through the message as a savior. In presenting Christ, the apostles told the significant aspects of Christ and demonstrated their saving import. Though the apostles used different terms in different settings, they spoke about the same basic elements. Even though they spoke about one set of elements in one setting and spoke of other elements in other

settings, the total message told of Christ from eternity, through earthly ministry, to eternity.

When the apostolic *kerygma* focused on the death of Christ, the apostolic *didache* for that person would relate the significance of the other saving activity of Christ. When the apostolic *kerygma* focused on the fulfillment of Scripture in Christ, then the apostolic *didache* for that person would relate the significance of the other saving activity of Christ. Thus, the New Testament contains no single formula of the gospel, though the many instances of gospel proclamation and teaching form a consistent pattern.

Through the centuries, these simple foundational elements of the faith have grown into the body of systematic theology and dogma. By the third century, the church had begun to develop a gospel formula in the form of creeds. In their earliest form the creeds summarized the basic teachings about Christ, but over time they grew longer as the church added to them in response to theological controversies. The final form of the Nicene Creed had grown to twice the length of the final form of the Apostles' Creed as the church sought to clarify, amplify, define, and set the boundaries for the orthodox faith.

The Apostles' Creed reads like many of the twentieth century reconstructions of the *kerygma*. It does indicate how the emphasis of teaching had shifted. In the early apostolic preaching, the apostles stressed the descent of Christ from King David. The Apostles' Creed of a church now long removed from Palestine and the Jewish world did not speak of the Davidic descent and all the messianic implications that would connote. Instead, it stressed the virgin birth. Both the Davidic descent and the virgin birth, however, strike at the human nature of Jesus in counterpoint to his relationship to God the Father Almighty.

Each element of the gospel became the foundational element for the major doctrines of the church over time as the church attempted to address the issues of life and culture through the centuries. The basic elements of the gospel have their corollary doctrines in the body of systematic theology (see Figure 1). Through the centuries theologians have tended to organize their theological systems around one of these elements, or around a related group of these elements. Thomas Aquinas oriented his theology around the Creator God and the doctrine of natural revelation. Martin Luther oriented his theology around the Scriptures and the doctrine of revelation. John Wesley oriented his theology around the gift of the Holy Spirit and the doctrines of sanctification and regeneration. Karl Barth oriented his theology around Christ as the Son of God and the doctrine of specific revelation. Reinhold Niebuhr oriented his theology around the Creator God and the doctrine of humanity. Anselm oriented his theology around the death of Christ and the doctrine of atonement. Walter Rauschenbusch oriented his theology around Christ as Son of God and Son of David and the doctrine of incarnation. Incarnation, likewise, forms the basis for much black theology and liberation theology. Rudolf Bultmann oriented his theology around the response to the gospel and the doctrine of conversion. Pentecostal, charismatic,

THE GOSPEL AND ITS MEANING

KERYGMA	DOCTRINES	THEOLOGIAN OR SYSTEM	EVANGELISTIC ISSUES
Creator God	God Creation Humanity	Augustine Aquinas Francis Process Theology Plantiga	Self-worth Meaninglessness Human Nature Ecology
Fulfillment of Scripture	Revelation	Justin Henry Luther Origen Tertullian	Direction Values Authority Proof
Son of God/ Son of David	Incarnation Christology	Early Councils Barth Brunner Ramm Black Theology Liberation Theology	Social Justice Reconciliation Identification Divine Initiative
Death for Sins	Atonement Justification	Anselm Stott	Love Forgiveness
Raised from Dead	Resurrection	Moltmann Pannenburg Eastern Orthodoxy	Hope Liberty Victory
Exaltation	Lordship Ecclesiology	Bunyan Bonhoeffer	Sympathy Prayer Perseverance Belonging
Gift of Spirit	Sanctification Regeneration Adoption	Wesley Otto Pentecostalism, et al. Wimber	Fruit (Meaningful life; Abundant Life) Eternal Life Empowerment
Return for Judgment	Eschatology	Dispensationalism Montanus Fifth Monarchists Shakers	Judgment Accountability Problem of Evil Justice
Response	Conversion Election Predestination Grace	McArthur Calvin Bultmann Revivalism	Decision Repentance Faith

and "Third Wave" theologies are oriented around the gift of the Holy Spirit. Dietrich Bonhoeffer oriented his theology around the exaltation and the doctrine of the Lordship of Christ. C. I. Scofield oriented his theology around the return of Christ and the doctrine of eschatology. John Calvin oriented his system around the Creator God and the doctrine of grace.

Though most of these figures or movements would acknowledge the truth and reality of most of the elements of the gospel here identified, their theological agenda gives entirely different nuances to the meaning

of the gospel. This approach to theology has tended to explain the entire gospel in terms of a particular doctrine. In the past century, Protestant evangelical Christians have tended to equate preaching the gospel with explaining the doctrine of justification with the parallel tendency to equate salvation and justification.<sup>18</sup> Salvation certainly includes justification, but it also includes regeneration. The twentieth century has witnessed the strange phenomenon of evangelical gospel presentations which inquire if someone is "born again" or would like to have eternal life. Rather than explaining how to be born again or receive eternal life, however, the presentation explains how to receive forgiveness of sins and the imputed righteousness of Christ. This theological abridgement of the gospel has emerged as evangelical Christians have avoided reference to the Holy Spirit for fear of identification with the pentecostal or charismatic movements.

If the gospel is the good news of salvation in Jesus Christ, it must be free to address more than the issue of justification. For the person experiencing the conviction of sin as guilt, which would include a significant number of people in the United States, then justification is the issue and the death of Christ should be stressed. People experience conviction of sin, however, in other terms than guilt over transgression. This would have been particularly true for those who have never known the law. The gospel demonstrates how salvation extends to whatever way the Holy Spirit is convincing of sin, righteousness, and judgment.

Bearing witness to Christ by proclaiming good news to people laboring under sin will always be a spiritual exercise. It involves the willingness to care about people as Christ cared, to listen for how the Holy Spirit is convincing them of sin, and to rely on the Holy Spirit to give guidance in demonstrating how Christ saves from the manifestation of sin in a person's life.

## NOTES

<sup>1</sup> Martin Dibelius, *The Message of Jesus Christ*, trans. Frederick C. Grant (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1939) 129.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, 128.

<sup>3</sup> Bo Reicke, "A Synopsis of Early Christian Preaching," *The Root of the Vine*, eds., Anton Fridrichsen, et al. (New York: Philosophical Library, 1953) 129.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, 140.

<sup>5</sup> Bertil Gärtner, *The Areopagus Speech and Natural Revelation* (Uppsala: C. W. K. Gleerup, 1955) 33.

<sup>6</sup> C. S. C. Williams, *A Commentary on the Acts of the Apostles*, Harper's New Testament Commentaries (New York: Harper & Row Publishers, 1957) 37.

<sup>7</sup> Michael Green, *Evangelism in the Early Church* (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1970) 67.

<sup>8</sup> Williams, 38.

<sup>9</sup> Hans Conzelmann, *The Theology of St. Luke*, trans. Geoffrey Buswell (London: Faber and Faber, 1961) 218.

<sup>10</sup> C. F. Evans, "The Kerygma," *Journal of Theological Studies*, New Series, 7 (April 1956) 27.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*, 28.

<sup>12</sup> F. F. Bruce, *The Acts of the Apostles* 2nd ed. (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1952). C. H. Dodd reached a similar conclusion to account for the early church's way of using Old Testament texts to support their claim that Jesus was the Messiah: "But the New Testament itself avers that it was Jesus Christ Himself who first directed the minds of His followers to certain parts of the scriptures as those in which they might find illumination upon the meaning of His mission and destiny. . . . To account for the beginning of this most original and fruitful process of rethinking the Old Testament we found need to postulate a creative mind. The Gospels offer us one. Are we compelled to reject the offer?" C. H. Dodd, *According to the Scriptures* (London: Nisbet & Co., Ltd., 1953) 110.

<sup>13</sup> J. N. Sanders, *The Foundation of the Christian Faith* (New York: Philosophical Library, 1952) 114.

<sup>14</sup> Floyd V. Filson, *Three Crucial Decades: Studies in the Book of Acts* (Richmond: John Knox Press, 1963) 40-41.

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*; cf. Bultmann, *Theology of the New Testament* (1:65; Hans Conzelmann, "The Address of Paul on the Areopagus," *Studies in Luke-Acts*, eds., Leander E. Keck and J. Louis Martyn (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1966) 228.

<sup>16</sup> See also Michael Green, *Evangelism in the Early Church* (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1975) 31.

<sup>17</sup> Archibald M. Hunter, *The Message of the New Testament* (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1944) 41.

<sup>18</sup> William Abraham raised this issue in *The Logic of Evangelism* (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1989). Abraham offered the Kingdom of God as a more helpful category for understanding the meaning of the gospel. The kingdom motif in Scripture relates to the element of God as Creator. By virtue of creation, God relates to his creation metaphorically as a king relates to a kingdom. The kingdom motif also relates to the element of fulfillment of Scripture, for the kingdom was a cultural/historical experience of Israel with cosmic implications fulfilled in Christ.

## BOOK REVIEWS

### Reaching a New Generation: Strategies for Tomorrow's Church

By Alan J. Roxburgh. Downers Grove, Ill.: InterVarsity Press, 1993. Pp. 140. PB.

This book has taught me once again that titles alone are not a sufficient reason for the purchase of a book. Because I regularly teach on the subject of evangelism and the baby boomer and bustle generations, I am always looking for new contributions in that field. Spotting this title, I dared to order the book sight unseen, assuming that it would address that issue.

Such was not the case. Instead, this volume contributes to a growing and important field of literature by authors who are endeavoring to relate the gospel and contemporary culture. Guided by the inspiration of Lesslie Newbigin and given direction by George Hunsberger, there is a growing association of pastors and teachers who loosely comprise the Gospel and Culture Network. They are seeking to provide articulation of the place of the gospel in contemporary Western culture and the reasons why it has found itself in this place of marginalization in the late twentieth-century. This slender volume by Roxburgh is a valuable addition to that field.

Along with Newbigin, George Hunter, Loren Mead, and many others, Roxburgh seeks to wake up the church to the need of a missional thrust toward the secularized North American world following the demise of Christendom. While other books analyze the philosophical roots of modernity and secularity in a better fashion, the particular contribution of this book is to describe one of the non-Christian sub-cultures, or 'tribes', which has emerged in this period. The uniqueness of Roxburgh's study is that he finds, in almost anthropological fashion, a gathering place for such a 'tribe' around a cooperative health food store down the street from a church which he pastored in Toronto. In and around this small business enterprise, The Big Carrot, Roxburgh discovers aspects of a system of meaning which he believes is important for the church to understand, as it ministers to a "new generation." The author highlights

three particular areas for discussion: ecology, community, and a search for the transcendent.

The Big Carrot is devoted to organically grown foods. It offers an alternative to foods which are mass produced through the means of potentially dangerous fertilizers and pesticides. Through the lens of this Roxburgh guides the readers on a quick tour of the ecological theologies of the day.

Community is a second essential ingredient at the Big Carrot. The community which runs it and the one which gathers around it are as vital as the actual commodities which draw them together. It is managed in a non-hierarchical way which affords a very personal touch. In this Roxburgh identifies one of the hungers of the modern Western person. They want authentic community as a reaction to and against the depersonalization of a technological and bureaucratic society.

Finally, in shops which have clustered around the Big Carrot, in an area called the Carrot Common, Roxburgh discovered small businesses devoted to a variety of goods and services which promote the popular concept of wholeness through spiritual transcendence. Like many moderns, they want spirituality but without the encumbrances of institutional religion.

In the brief epilogue, the author urges a new evangelism for this new season of cultural change. Here is the closest thing Roxburgh has for "strategies," yet they won't seem very strategy-like for pragmatic North Americans.

In summary, the book is a helpful introduction to the issue of the change in the context of ministry in Western civilization. As a general overview it is of limited value compared to what is already in print. Its real value is in the cultural analysis of the sub-culture which Roxburgh studies. While I am not convinced that it is a large or pervasive 'tribe,' I do think it is important to understand, especially as it has its roots among the cultural elite. I am not clear about the numerical breadth of the ecological movement. Neither am I certain that modern North Americans are actually hungering for community. I think that they would buy community without commitment, but most modern North Americans seem to prefer their cocoons with the pizza delivered.

There is a new context for evangelism, and thus a great need to understand our many sub-cultures. Roxburgh helpfully adds to the discussion.

James M. Singleton, Jr.

The Rev. James M. Singleton, Jr. is pastor of the Whitworth Community Presbyterian Church, Spokane, WA.

## Jesus and the Reign of God

By C. S. Song. Minneapolis: Augsburg Fortress, 1993. Pp. 304. PB.

*Jesus and the Reign of God* is a pleasant book to read but difficult to review. The author quickly and deliberately moves us outside the familiar categories imposed by Greek philosophy. "Christology, just as theology, is an open inquiry." From a background of doing theology in a cross-cultural world (Pacific School of Religion, Berkeley), the author invites the reader to a contextually relevant view of Jesus for whom the reign of God is the central hermeneutical principle. Depending upon one's background and bias, that is enough to raise a number of theological eyebrows as well as the hackles of evangelical conservatives. The author's approach exemplifies the contrast between a Western analysis and an Eastern appreciation of an event. An Eastern approach is more likely to focus on the character and relationships of the people involved. Prof. Song creatively demonstrates Eastern insights while he skates thinly over traditional Western theological assumptions.

First, we are treated to an exposition of the Great Banquet of Luke 14:16-24. The poor and the marginalized are there, a human community irrespective of divisive, diverse religious affiliations. The truth of God's reign means freedom (John 8:32). "Truth here is not propositions to be accepted and theories to be followed. . . . Truth, to be truth, is time-conditioned and space-oriented. . . . Truth, in essence, is contextual." Oops, conservatives will not be happy with this pluralistic excursion, nor will most evangelicals, Song obviously desires that we not confine the Christian understanding of truth to dogmas, creeds, or traditions. He opens up the possibility of not only cultural expressions but new indigenous perceptions of the message of Christ and the Bible, Missiologists, take note! The author's intention is noble. The question is whether the outcome enriches an ecumenical understanding of Christ or disrupts Christian unity.

According to Song, Jesus' purpose, and the meaning of the reign of God, is to bring abundant life (John 10:10). Not an abundance of Western materialism, but life with a purpose—breaking fatalism, striving for justice, overcoming constant fear of death, struggling for freedom—themes revolutionary to the traditional contexts of Asia. Proclamation of the reign of God becomes a radical event, far different from the cultic Jesus of popular piety which tends to focus on eternal bliss in heaven and which equates the kingdom with heaven. Song complains that few Asian Christians join the struggle for human rights, freedom, and democracy. He also objects that popular piety confines God's salvation to the Christian church to the exclusion of what other religions teach. This polemic, however pleasing to some, will be challenged by others. Evangelicals from William Carey onward will endorse the struggle for human dignity. But they will not appreciate an inclusiveness which obscures the finality of Christ. Questions can be raised about C. S. Song's

hermeneutical principle. Does he proceed from the text (the reign of God as posited by the Old and New Testaments), or from a contemporary (and ever-changing) context? In other words, does he allow the text to interact with context, or does he impose the context upon the text?

The author warns that we not merely substitute Jesus for the various protector-provider deities of former religions. The point is valid not only for polytheistic settings of Asia but for a proliferation of simplistic theories, flawed methodologies, and superficial theologies from the West. The proclamation of God's reign must not evade the public, social issues of the world in which we live.

A discussion of Chinese "face" culture brings fresh significance to the banquet parable which centers upon God as the Grand Initiator. "God's love is amazing. What God does for outcasts and strangers is unbelievable." The point is startling in an Asian setting. "As long as certain men, women, and children are treated as outcasts and outsiders, God chooses to be the God of outcasts and outsiders." That conclusion is both provocative and challenging. The Hindu caste system tends to regard everyone outside one's own exclusive group as outsider or outcaste. In many regions of India Christianity continues to be viewed as "outcaste religion" and Jesus as "God of the Untouchables."

Song takes issue with those mission theorists (and missionaries) who devalued the conversion of India's untouchables and China's uneducated. The assumption that conversion of the elite would lead to conversion of the oppressed is a faulty strategy and reflects a deficient theology.

The author's sensitivity provides a valuable theological insight. God, according to Song's theology, is color-blind. God is not mono-colored but multi-colored. Translated, we can say God is multi-cultural, not mono-cultural. Therefore racism—or casteism or classism—is an attempt to abolish God!

Crusading against imperialism, colonialism, and racism, Song berates as religious imperialism "our evangelistic zeal to win other people to what Christians believe and what the Christian church asserts to be true." Song, along with a number of other Asian and African theologians struggling with the yoke of former colonial bondage, finds it difficult to distinguish Biblical faith from Western aberrations of that faith. The question is, how does one set a correct course in the present stage of the Church's rapid growth and development in a multi-cultural world?

The evils of Western cultural and religious imperialism are well-addressed by this important book. Where is the remedy? Song points to the ecumenical implications of the banquet as an ingathering involving the whole inhabited world. That the history of God's reign includes the nations, that He is God of the "pagans," is undoubtedly biblical. That all religious traditions are part of God's saving love is debatable. The author appears to stumble at a theology of conversion. All theologies being imperfect, he suggests, Christians need to explore the life and faith of other religions for that is how the banquet grows greater. Evangelical missiologists will groan.

From theological speculation, the author moves to the reality of exposure to India's slums—not those of Calcutta but of India's Garden City, Bangalore. Slums, notes Song, are a countersign to God's reign. Slums are an offense against God. The poor and oppressed need empowerment. *This is a book about theologizing, about empowering people for the reign of God.* Mission, if I understand C. S. Song, means getting people to participate in the reign of God. That is radically different from familiar oppressive systems and institutions. Jesus is building a culture of empowerment. This requires a new way of doing theology, not the old doctrinal and propositional approach but engagement with the poor and oppressed in an anxiety-free atmosphere.

To Song, God's grace is all-inclusive. It is not confined to Christian converts, the other 95 percent of Asian humanity is not excluded. No stingy grace, please! God's reign thus conceived is inclusive. Christian exclusivists will disagree. Evangelicals will wonder, where, then, is the need for conversion?

Here are insights for mission and for theologizing in the context of doing mission in today's multi-cultural world. One need not endorse the author's hermeneutical presuppositions, nor accept his theological conclusions, to benefit from his creative engagement with the task of doing theology in the contemporary world.

The book ends on a happy note: the demonic can be overcome by Jesus who embodies the power of God. This is the work of the reign of God. A vision of God's reign is "our inspiration as we struggle for a new society and a new earth."

Roger E. Hedlund

Roger E. Hedlund has been a CBFMS missionary in India since 1974.

### Discipling the City: A Comprehensive Approach to Urban Mission

By Roger S. Greenway, ed. Second Edition. Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1992. Pp 302. PB.

This book is designed as a textbook, a reader, attempting "to stimulate people committed to Christian ministry in cities throughout the world to think better and work better for Christ." It is a welcome addition to the growing body of literature brought forth by evangelical scholars committed to evangelizing and discipling the urban areas of the world. The contributors are scholar-practitioners devoted to reflection, writing, ministry, and strategizing for urban mission. They represent three main

traditions: Christian Reformed, Presbyterian, and Baptist, and are European-American, African-American, and Hispanic-American. Of the 16 contributors two thirds are men and one third are women.

The editor and contributors propose that the task of evangelization in urban areas requires more than proclamation and involvement in social concerns. It is the painstaking task of discipleship carried on by committed urban pastors and lay persons who reach individuals and guide them into "the grace and knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ," in whatever setting these disciples can be found.

Roger Greenway provides an overview and summary of what "discipling the city" means. First, the essential missionary goal: filling the world and all its great cities with the knowledge of God and salvation in Jesus Christ. Second, increasing the number and influence of those who in all areas of the city live by God's grace under Christ's lordship. In "Confronting Urban Contexts with the Gospel," he pleads for a realistic reappraisal of the churches' tasks of evangelization and discipleship in the cities. The new strategies must include a tough stance, aware of the prevailing pluralism and poverty, and a renewed commitment from schools and seminaries to equip future city ministers with adequate tools of cross-cultural sensitivity.

Sydney Rooy's "Theological Education for Urban Mission" discusses some important aspects and basic principles of theological education, but fails to consider the more popular and less elitist forms that must be employed for effective and urgent theological education in urban areas.

The four articles written by women scholars are incisive analyses of significant issues, well researched, and open windows of insight to areas of urban mission that are left out in standard texts. Ruth A. Tucker's "The Role of Women in Discipling Cities: A Historical Perspective," delineates the contributions of pioneer women in urban ministry of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, surveying the work of significant women in the Salvation Army, the Sunday School Movement, and urban philanthropic missions both in England and the United States.

In "Diverse Worship Traditions in the City" Corean Bakke presents a panoramic view of the rich worship traditions of different types of urban churches. Bakke presents her analysis by surveying the different urban congregations of the Chicago neighborhood where she lives. She pleads for acceptance of diversity in unity, as those claiming the lordship of Christ in the earthly city provide a glimpse of what worship in the heavenly city will be like.

Judith Lingenfelter's "Getting to Know Your New City" is an anthropological guide with helpful directives for those who wish to move from tourists to explorers or "from outsider to insider" in the intricacies of city life. She recommends the use of the ethnographic method for researching the variety of people in the city.

Edna Greenway writes about a topic of concern to urban mission leaders: children of the city. "Discipling City Kids" offers the results of a case

study of an urban congregation's experiments attempting to minister to African-American children. Greenway analyzes the needs of urban children, presents options for Bible study curriculum which is adaptable, and suggests methods that should be tried by congregations in urban centers, who are serious in their attempts to disciple children.

Ray Bakke argues that the majority of city pastors and churches are not ready for the mission, which he defines. He posits that "most of the world's unreached peoples are culturally rather than geographically distant from local churches and that local urban churches and their pastors can be at the leading edge of cross-cultural, international mission in our time." He pleads for a comprehensive vision for the city by urban pastoral leaders which must include the Colossian vision-transcendence of Christ, and the Philippian vision—incarnational/servant view of Christ.

Craig Van Gelder writes "Secularization in the City: Christian Witness in Secular Urban Cultures." After sketching a historical overview of the process of secularization, he deals with a subject which is becoming a topic of intensive research—the Post-Modern worldview and how the church in a secular setting must confront it.

Harvey Conn's two articles, presented as first and last chapters of the book are in my estimation the most significant and creative contributions of the book to urban mission studies. They provide new materials from this distinguished evangelical urban missiologist. "Genesis as Urban Prologue" is an interpretation of the role of major biblical personalities in the development and sustenance of cities under God's providential guide. Conn argues that the grace of the God of the covenant with Abraham was manifested in urban realities in the lives of the patriarchs. An interesting insight is the view that in the creation stories God presents an urban apologetic that contrasts with the nature gods of the pagans. In the creation story "nature is not deified, and God is not urbanized. [God] is the cosmic sovereign who has made the creation his house-city."

In "The Kingdom of God and the City of Man: A History of the City/Church Dialogue" Conn presents a thirty-page illuminating monograph surveying the interpretations and interactions of major Christian thinkers and movements dealing with the relationship of the city with God's kingdom and on occasions with the church. The last part of the article delineates the renewed evangelical interest in urban mission of the Lausanne movement in comparison with efforts of conciliar and Catholic perspectives.

This work, as is the case with many edited books, is uneven. Some authors present aspects of previously published materials. Timothy Monsma, writing on research repeats what he wrote in *Cities: Missions' New Frontiers* (1989). Craig W. Ellison presents the novel view that counseling should be considered discipleship as he proposed in *Healing for the City: Counseling for the Urban Setting* (1991). Viv Grigg pleads for unique urban church structures for the poor as he did in *Cry of the Urban Poor* (1991). Robert Linthicum reaffirms what he wrote in *City*

*of God: City of Satan* (1991) about networking and community organization in the city as components of "Authentic Strategies for Urban Ministry."

The book provides what the editor envisioned: a panoramic discussion of major themes that must be required reading for courses in urban mission. There are significant topics that this work does not address, and which future anthologies must consider. Some of these are: the development of cell and house churches as integral part of effective discipleship in urban contexts; the impact of ethnic enclaves and churches in urban mission; and adaptable theological training which is contextual, urban, and multicultural, developed from the "street pavement" and not from the academic ivory towers of suburbia.

David F. D'Amico

David F. D'Amico is the Billy Graham Professor of Evangelism at The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Louisville, KY.

## Evangelism through the Local Church

By Michael Green. London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1990. Pp. xxii + 574. PB.

In *Evangelism through the Local Church* Michael Green has identified most of the major issues that confront a pastor who hopes to lead a church in an evangelistic ministry. One need not agree with Green in all his conclusions, some of which are controversial, in order to benefit from his assessment of what a church must address in order to have an effective evangelistic ministry. To a certain extent, this book could have been three different books, for Green deals with three major categories of concern: a theology for evangelism, confronting the secular society with the gospel, and methodological considerations in a local church.

This volume would have particular value for a pastor, because it does what few books in the area of evangelism and church growth do; it intentionally interacts with theology and methodology. For the same reason it would have value as a text in a seminary classroom. In one thick volume Green provides an outline for addressing the major theological themes related to evangelism, as well as the major methodological issues and trends. Because people tend to universalize their own experience, pastors can have a tendency to see only the glaring pragmatic issues of evangelism, while professors see only the theological issues of evangelism. Perhaps because of a career that has alternated between the academy and the local church for over three decades, Green brings an integrating perspective to the subject.

Green begins by making a case for the ministry of evangelism in contemporary churches. This section forms an apologetic aimed at the Christian leader who may be prejudiced against evangelism based on a stereotype, or a bad experience with a particular methodology, or a weak theological foundation. He examines conflicting claims by other belief systems and presents a case for the need to present the good news of Jesus Christ. Writing from within the context of the Church of England, Green makes no attempt to hide his own prejudices on the subject of baptism. A Baptist reviewer may take a cheap shot and inquire why a New Testament scholar neglects to mention the meaning of the Greek word transliterated as "baptism." Despite this point of contention, Green's book will probably be used by more Southern Baptist seminary students than by any other confessional group. Though his research does not reflect awareness of the fact, Green's discussion of methodology reflects the Southern Baptist strategy of "preaching for a verdict," personal evangelism, small group assimilation and discipleship, the use of special events, and direct mission involvement.

Where Green strikes a controversial chord for an evangelical is in his treatment of the eternal condition of the lost and the hope for those who have never heard the gospel. Green denies a universalist position that all will be saved, but of the lost he believes they will suffer annihilation rather than eternal punishment. For those who have never heard the gospel, Green holds out the hope that "We are saved not by our knowledge of how God was able to manage it (Abraham and David had no inkling of such a thing), but by trusting our case wholly to him—that is to say, by faith" (pp. 72-73).

Unlike his previous classics *The Meaning of Salvation and Evangelism in the Early Church*, *Evangelism through the Local Church* does not reflect Green's careful scholarship. He takes a more anecdotal approach to this book, which makes it a more personal and perhaps more accessible book for the average reader than the earlier works, though one misses the opportunity to chase down his references.

Though the book offers nothing particularly new, it does offer in one place a collection of issues upon which the thoughtful evangelist must reflect and take action. The methodological section reflects an English setting, but Green has endeavored to write in a way that makes basic principles accessible to a wider audience.

Harry L. Poe

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Harry L. Poe is Associate Professor of Evangelism at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Louisville, KY.

## The Word of the Cross: A Contemporary Theology of Evangelism

By Lewis A. Drummond. Nashville: Broadman Press, 1992. Pp. 383.

Many years have passed since anyone has attempted to write a full-blown theology of evangelism. While several important works about the theology of evangelism have appeared in the last few years, notably those by William Abraham and Ben Johnson, a full theology of evangelism has not been in print. Lewis Drummond wrote *The Word of the Cross* to fill that void.

This book represents many years of teaching and reflection on the great doctrinal themes of Christianity and their implications for evangelism. As might be expected, Drummond relates such doctrines as revelation, the Trinity, Christology, pneumenology, and eschatology to the more specific doctrines usually associated with evangelism; such as soteriology, justification, eschatology, and conversion. Drummond acknowledges that a study of this sort cannot give the sort of exhaustive treatment of systematic theology that these doctrines deserve. This sort of theological treatment has taken place elsewhere, and Drummond builds upon the theological foundations established by others in his effort to draw out the theological implications for evangelism. In particular, Drummond builds on the foundations of evangelical theology. Where appropriate to his argument, Drummond interacts with other theological traditions, but he does not write so much to prove a position as to elaborate a position.

The book has four major divisions: *The Basis of the Theological Enterprise: The Question of Authority*; *The Trinitarian God of the Bible and Evangelism: A Unity of Purpose*; *Key Biblical Words in Evangelism: A Scriptural Survey*; and *The Ministry of Evangelism: A Pragmatic Theological Study*. The book reflects Drummond's interest over the years in the thought of three theologians who have contributed to the theological conceptualization of evangelism in the twentieth century. From T. A. Kantonen comes the interest in a theology of evangelism rooted in the Godhead. From A. Skevington Wood comes the interest in a theology of evangelism that has a systematic perspective and correlation. From Michael Green comes the interest in a theology of evangelism that has its basis thoroughly established in Scripture. Though Drummond's work was influenced by these thinkers, his book clearly goes beyond a mere recitation of the opinion of others.

The first division of the book most clearly sets forth Drummond's contribution and his critical concern. He begins by establishing an authoritative basis for the enterprise of evangelism. Apart from divine revelation, the work of evangelism would be a rather arrogant enterprise. The first section of the book, therefore, presents in apologetic fashion a philosophical basis for the intellectual rationality of the idea of revelation. Though Drummond has spent his academic career teaching evan-

gelist both in Britain and the United States, his academic preparation came in the field of philosophy. In a time of radical cultural change in which values and assumptions about reality can no longer be taken for granted, Drummond makes a strong argument that those who do the work of evangelism must be prepared to give a rational argument for the legitimacy of a message that makes elaborate and exclusive claims.

The book goes beyond the usual discussion of theological themes in the last division, in which Drummond deals with the integration of theology and ministry. Here the discussion centers on issues of application and the implications of this theological approach for the life of an individual church and for the church in the world. This division forms a bridge to other issues related to evangelism. Such issues as church growth, multi-cultural society, social action, and piety relate to the substance of this division, but Drummond makes no attempt to deal with the wide range of topics that are the "hot" issues of the early 1990s. The last division indicates how specific issues would relate to the framework he has sketched without elaborating what position should be taken on all the topics. Just as he does not elaborate the theological presuppositions upon which he has developed this treatment of the theology of evangelism, he does not elaborate upon the conclusions that might be drawn in different ministry situations. He leaves those books to be written, but the bridge is here.

This book was undoubtedly written to serve the evangelical community, as is attested by the documents Drummond includes in the appendix to the book. He includes The Chicago Statement on Biblical Inerrancy and The Lausanne Covenant of 1974 with the Manila Manifesto of 1989 as basic theological documents that address either the foundations for a theology of evangelism or the implications of such a theology for the practice of evangelism. Drummond's study represents a classic approach to evangelism that acknowledges the challenges to that position in the late twentieth century.

Harry L. Poe

### How to Break Growth Barriers

By Carl F. George and Warren Bird. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, 1993. Pp. 232. PB.

Carl F. George is Director of the Charles E. Fuller Institute of Evangelism and Church Growth and adjunct professor of church growth at Fuller Theological Seminary, Pasadena, California. His colleague, Warren Bird, is the former founding pastor of a church in Suffern, New York. They propose that if the church is to break the barrier through

the 66 to 125 church membership level, the "rancher-style" of pastoral leadership is necessary. Although the terminology is not new, the authors are persuasive enough to show that it is the only necessary form of leadership for a growing church.

They quote Lyle E. Schaller in support of the ranching-style: "Small congregations and many of the congregations that are declining in size tend to have shepherd-style pastors" (p. 21). They are quick to defend the role of shepherding (p. 86), but the pastor's (shepherd) role needs to change from simply sheep-herding to a ranching model. This means that leadership skills coupled with administrative abilities are needed to accommodate the rise of membership.

This book is written in easy-to-read language with clear outlines and headings. Each chapter concludes with guided questions for discussions. Anecdotes are also appropriately included.

It is divided into 3 parts. Part 1 deals with the identification of the vision, or the church growth mission. Part 2 deals with a comparison of the sheep-herding style and the ranching-style, and points out the benefits of the rancher-style. The last four chapters compose Part 3, which is the "how-to" section of the book.

"The Berry Bucket Theory" introduced in chapter 8 on "Problem People," reveals George's perceptiveness of group dynamics within the church. His insights on the possible remedies are indeed valuable.

The evaluation and worksheets in the "Further Thought" section could be dealt with in more detail in group studies on church growth. It is an excellent resource as a supplementary text in a "strategies for church growth" course in a college or seminary.

Chek Yat Phoon

Chek Yat Phoon is President of the Seventh-day Adventist Mission, Singapore, and Professor of Religious Studies, Southeast Asia Union College/Southeast Asia Adventist Seminary, Singapore.

### The Book of Church Growth: History, Theology, and Principles

By Thom S. Rainer. Nashville: Broadman Press, 1993. Pp. 351.

A contemporary summary of the church growth movement, the book's subtitle accurately conveys the contents. This is a review of the history, theology and principles of the church growth movement. It is not really THE book of church growth because it lacks practical application features that are characteristic of much church growth literature.

The first 69 pages present the history of the church growth movement in six chapters. Though uninspiring, it is accurate and thorough. The author does an excellent job of identifying the importance to the church growth movement of evangelistic church growth. This is particularly true since much contemporary church growth seems to result from "sheep swapping" rather than reducing the population of hell. There are also several good definitions of evangelism throughout the material. Particularly nice for a Southern Baptist reviewer is the inclusion of Southern Baptist contributions to the church growth movement. Many of the pages deservedly recount the influence of Donald McGavran, Peter Wagner and The Fuller Theological Seminary. Wagner was Rainer's mentor and receives a little more reverence than is probably deserved. Chapter One provides a good introductory definition of church growth and an enlightening unit on "What is the Difference Between Evangelism and Church Growth." The first section provides an uncritical chronology of the development and major players.

The second section (78 pages) summarizes the theology of the church growth movement. This very readable section is valuable to proponents and opponents alike. The first chapter in the section entitled "A Systematic Approach to Church Growth Theology," is thorough and helpful. Rainer then accurately presents separate chapters on the movement's teaching about bibliology, theology, Christology, pneumatology, angelology, anthropology, soteriology, ecclesiology, and eschatology. It is particularly helpful to those who wish to respond to critics of the church growth movement. A very helpful resource in Chapter 7 is the text of the 1974 Lausanne Covenant. Many contemporary students have not been introduced to this important document. There are also several helpful charts and good documentation.

The third section consists of 14 chapters, each outlining a separate principle of the church growth movement. The author notes "Most church growth principles in the following chapters come from the Bible. . . . Some of the principles, however, do not come from the Bible but they are not *unbiblical* (171)." All of the major principles are included. He includes prayer, leadership, laity and ministry, church planting, evangelism, worship, finding the people, receptivity, planning and goal setting, physical facilities, assimilation and reclamation, small groups, and signs and wonders. Each chapter concludes with an evaluation of the church growth principle(s) discussed in that chapter. They are well-written, thoughtful, and concise. Rainer's evaluation of signs and wonders at the end of that chapter is particularly fair and balanced. There is enough information in each chapter for practically-minded readers to apply to their work. The major weakness of the text is the lack of additional practical information for implementation. Understandably, this is not intended to be an implementation text, but students are tending to demand more practical application in all of their courses.

The final section, "Concluding Matters," briefly summarizes the ideas presented in the book. It also indicates "The church growth movement began with one man asking the question, 'Why do some churches grow

and some churches don't?" In this reviewer's opinion the modern church growth movement began when one man became the voice for the many who were asking that question. Rainer presents a very good conclusion calling for the balanced use of church growth tools. As in any discipline there are extremes, so balance is a needed virtue. The book concludes with an excellent church growth bibliography, a good name and subject index, and a thorough Scripture index. All three are useful tools for further individual and classroom study.

The book is an excellent introduction to the field and should be seriously considered in church growth and missions courses. The highly readable and non-academic style also makes it a viable option for church libraries and interested lay-readers.

C. Thomas Wright

C. Thomas Wright, Ph.D., is Director, Materials Development, Evangelism Section, Southern Baptist Home Mission Board, Atlanta, GA. He is Book Review Editor of the *AETE Journal*.

### Creating Understanding

By Donald K. Smith. *Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1992.* Pp. 384. PB.

It is a pleasure to begin reading a new book and realize it is exceptional. The joy of reading replaces the responsibility to read. This text is one of those treasures—a book on communication that actually communicates! The content and design are well-matched to present important information in an interesting manner. This book is destined to become a classic next to Hesselgraves' *Communicating Christ Cross-Culturally*.

Smith indicates the book is "built on three foundational positions: 1. All communication is cross-cultural to some degree. 2. Culture is the way we organize our experiences to develop a worldview, values, beliefs, a social framework, and behavior patterns. 3. Communication is the human part of proclamation and discipling. The Spirit of God works inwardly to produce response and transformation (p. 8)." These foundations are particularly important if we are to evangelize by clearly communicating the gospel of Christ in a way that encourages response from the lost. The global context of ministry in the nineties and beyond

2000 requires communicators to learn cross-cultural communication skills, even if the cultures crossed are professor to student, or yuppie to truck driver.

Each of the twenty-three chapters is accompanied by a proposition which has "to do with a process—(of) communication—and must be used, expanded, and applied in the process of ministry before they can fulfill their potential value to Christian workers (p. 8)." The first proposition is "Communication is involvement." The accompanying chapter is entitled "Involve Me, So I Can Understand." The message of the chapter is to find out about the audience so you can communicate to their needs while being careful of possible trigger points. He uses the example of a Catholic priest who was talking about Africa to raise interest and support. An African in the audience was offended by the presentation. The Priest realized he would have said some things differently had he realized who was in the audience.

The content of each chapter is highlighted by sidebars, quotes and well-placed design techniques using bullets, lists, illustrations and, get this, cartoons. At last a book that realizes students and academicians learn through illustrations and cartoons. One example is a cartoon of a preacher going full tilt. Gliding up next to him is a paper airplane with the words "time's up" on the side. The cartoons are even relevant to the lesson. A particularly effective illustration has a picture of a loaf of bread, a stick of French Bread, a croissant and a dollar bill. All are possible interpretations of the word "bread." A sidebar in this chapter reads, "Evangelism takes place only when there is communication. Communication takes place only when there is involvement." These very effective communication tools are used throughout the book.

Each chapter also begins with quotes or hypothetical sayings that represent the opinions, problems or concerns addressed in the chapter. For example, chapter five is entitled, "Knowing What We Are Doing." The proposition is, "Clarification of goals increases the possibility of effective communication." There are three introductory sayings in this instance, "I really don't know where I am going but I am trying hard," "God will guide me, there's no need for setting objectives," and "He who has no target is sure to hit it." It is easy to see this chapter provides practical helps to improve communication.

The author also includes excellent summaries and a short bibliography at the end of each chapter. The summaries are thorough and concise. In fact a reviewer could just read the summaries.

The book concludes with an excellent eleven-page general bibliography, an index of persons, a subject index and a Scripture index. Each provides additional information for classroom and individual study.

*Creating Understanding* is highly recommended for classroom and individual use. A practical, readable text that applies to any course on evangelism, missions, or communications. The principles addressed here are important to ministers/communicators in every field.

Dr. Donald K. Smith is professor of international communication at Western Seminary in Portland, Oregon. He is a former missionary in southern and eastern Africa, where he developed programs for communications research and training. He also is the pastor of Faith Baptist Church in Portland.

C. Thomas Wright

### New Millennium, New Church: Trends Shaping the Episcopal Church for the 21st Century

By Richard Kew and Roger J. White. Cambridge, MA: Cowley Publications, 1992. Pp. 177. PB.

In *New Millennium, New Church*, Kew and White set themselves the difficult yet essential task of diagnosing a reluctant patient in hopes of developing a treatment and eventual cure. The task is complicated by the fact that the "patient," in this case the American Episcopal Church, has already been in failing health for some time, exhibits a wide variety of often-contradictory symptoms, and has a persistent tendency to dislike its medicine—even that which it prescribes for itself.

Added to these liabilities is the fact that predicting the future is at the best of times an inherently risky business. According to its authors, this book "is intended to be a compass for the 1990's, not a detailed road map. Its task is to help . . . find the way forward, not give precise details of how to get there" (p. xi). Armed with this disclaimer, the authors draw on statistical data, survey results, and personal observations to formulate thirteen general trends that they see emerging within the denomination.

Some of these trends will come as no surprise to observers of the Episcopal scene, whereas others are likely to occasion lively debate. For example, Kew and White foresee a waning of liberal influence in church programs and leadership, a revitalized interest in spirituality and spiritual formation, the continued maturation of evangelical, charismatic, and Anglo-Catholic "renewal" movements, and a return to biblical and theological orthodoxy. In terms of the church's ministry, they anticipate a growing de-clericalization, diversification, and democratization of ministry roles, within which women will play an increasingly significant role. There will be an accompanying de-emphasis on centralized administrative structures, fuelled in part by a general societal suspicion of hierarchies, and in part by financial exigencies. At least on this latter

point the authors are certainly correct, for budget cut-backs are already exercising a powerful effect on a number of constituencies within the Anglican Communion.

Perhaps more difficult to evaluate is their confident assertion that church-goers from a wide range of denominations will increasingly "flock" to the Episcopal church. They will be drawn by a vibrant liturgy, by an intellectually open, comprehensive spirituality, and, above all, by "a search for identity" (p. 93). Even to the ears of a life-long Anglican (and the book is certainly written for Anglicans) such a claim sounds smug and triumphalistic. At the very least it deserves additional research into the complex dynamics of what Michael Green once felicitously termed "sheep-shuffling" — the transfer of membership from one church or denomination to another. The question of how this anticipated influx will affect the trends outlined in other chapters also requires further treatment. Particularly interesting could be the interplay between a rising tide of theological conservatism, the anticipated influx from denominational transfer (not infrequently motivated by a flight from conservatism), and the characteristically Anglican virtue of "comprehensiveness."

The chapter on denominational transfer is followed by a discussion entitled, "A New Confidence in Evangelism." Here the authors' expectations are considerably more modest, as they acknowledge the widespread, indeed systemic Episcopalian aversion to evangelism. At best, they see a slow and cautious acceptance of the need for evangelism, notwithstanding the fact that the 1990's are for Anglicans the "Decade of Evangelism" but with little real growth from this source well into the next century. It might be observed, in fact, that if their predictions about denominational immigration prove true (and North American Anglicanism has long depended on "growth by immigration"), it could serve as a powerful disincentive to any new evangelistic initiatives.

The patient's condition is grim. As Kew and White declare at the outset, "Consciously or unconsciously, at local, diocesan, and national levels we have made the decision to shrink, have pursued policies that will guarantee it, and covered it up with high-sounding theological words like 'prophetic witness'" (p. 7). Yet they take considerable offense at those who predict the patient's imminent demise, preferring to conclude that the prospects for health and "A Bright, Bright Future" (p. 169) are better than average, if the right course of treatment is applied.

The book is intended as a discussion-starter, and as such it serves its purpose well. It will be of interest not only to Anglicans, but to all who are interested in the dynamics of denominational change. The material is made easier to digest by a brief summary entitled "Trends To Watch" that follows each chapter. As for whether or not the patient will survive, and in what form, the Physician has not yet delivered a verdict. In the meantime, his ancient advice in Deuteronomy 18:22 will have to do:

"If the prophet speaks but the thing does not take place, the Lord has not spoken it." In other words, we'll just have to wait and see.

Michael Knowles

Michael Knowles is the Assistant Director of the Wycliffe College Institute of Evangelism, Toronto, Canada.

### Great Expectations? Preparing For Evangelism Through Bible Study

By Michael Marshall. Cambridge, MA: Cowley Publications, 1991. Pp. 160. PB.

Bishop Michael Marshall, former director of the Anglican Institute in St. Louis, Missouri, has recently been appointed as one of two "Advisers in Evangelism to the Archbishops of Canterbury and York" in the Church of England. His counterpart, representing the evangelical wing of Anglicanism, is Michael Green. Writing from an Anglo-Catholic charismatic perspective, Marshall offers a series of daily Bible studies intended for personal or congregational use during the six weeks between Easter and Pentecost. His stated purpose is to move his readers "from the celebration of Easter joy to a new commitment to Pentecost mission . . . [as they] rededicate themselves to be witnesses of the Resurrection of Jesus."

Marshall (who admits his "lust for alliteration") selects "Expectation," "Experience," "Explosion," "Explanation," "Expansion," and "Expression" as themes for the successive weeks. For each week he provides a brief introduction, a set of carefully focused discussion questions, and seven Bible studies. Each of the daily studies begins with a brief passage from the Book of Acts. This is followed by three sections of commentary under the headings "Event," "Explanation," and "Experience." Generally speaking (although there is a great deal of overlap between them), these sections seek to clarify the literary or historical context of the events described in the biblical text, their theological significance, and their practical application for the life of the modern church.

The great strength of these studies is that they confront the reader with the testimony of Acts to God's powerful work in establishing the earliest Christian community. They are wide-ranging in focus. Conversely, their most frequent weakness (one to which all preachers are prone) is that the commentary is sometimes tangential to the substance of the biblical text. So, for example, the exposition of Acts 5:19-21 focuses largely on how William Neil, an earlier commentator, is reluc-

tant to admit any supernatural identity for the angel who sets the apostles free from prison (pp. 62–63). Nonetheless, the consistently practical and explanatory emphasis of these studies is appropriate for their intended audience.

Marshall's reflection bear the marks of a long pastoral career, and seems intended for at least two groups within the contemporary church: predominantly cultural Christians who either seek or need to be challenged by the reality of God's work, and those who have experienced some form of charismatic "renewal." Referring to the first group, he is eager to see his own church break out of its spiritual doldrums, discover the power of the Holy Spirit and recapture some of the vitality, appeal, and initiative of the early disciples. To this end, Marshall takes care to outline the nature and cost of Christian discipleship. He also calls the reader to repentance and faith, as well as to discipleship, spiritual formation, and a willingness to change the church (e.g. pp. 91–92, 107, 116–117).

With regard to the second group, issues of controversy within the charismatic movement are easily discernible beneath, for instance, Marshall's interesting contention that the events of the day of Pentecost "should not be confused with glossolalia" (p. 35), or his assertion that Paul and his companions must have made a joint decision to enter Macedonia rather than Bithynia (Acts 16:6–10). According to Marshall the church's decision-making must always be corporate and consensual, in contrast to claiming "God told me," which "is a very individualistic, unscriptural, untraditional and ungodly phrase" (p.67). But apart from particular issues of contention, Marshall's over-riding concern seems to be that, as he states at the outset, "the renewed church today has lost its way" (p. 25). He apparently means that many who have experienced the power of the Holy Spirit have not allowed such experiences to impel them outside the confines of the church into mission, evangelism, and social concern. The experience of the earliest church is thus cited as correcting spiritual self-absorption, as well as inertia.

Given that the earliest disciples were all Jewish, the same experience might have added some nuance to Marshall's unfortunate characterization of the Jewish people as "consistently stiff-necked, blind, and unteachable" (p.88). In a post-Holocaust era, such comments cannot be allowed to pass unnoticed by those within the church, for they will certainly not pass unnoticed by those outside the church.

In summary, this series of studies concentrates on motivating church members to prepare for evangelism through a fresh personal encounter, as mediated by the biblical text, with God's power and priorities for mission. Marshall specifically avoids, however, dictating the details of how his readers should go about the task of evangelism.

The book concludes with a suggested outline for a "Pentecost Vigil Service," and an index of Scriptural passages cited.

Michael Knowles

## Church Growth and the Power of Evangelism: Ideas that Work.

By Howard Hanchey. Cambridge, MA: Cowley Publications, 1990. Pp. xii + 247. PB.

Howard Hanchey is professor of pastoral theology at Virginia Theological Seminary, with previous publications in the field of Christian education. Writing here for an Episcopalian audience, he aims to make certain essential principles of evangelism and church growth more accessible for a constituency that, until recently, has proven somewhat resistant to such ideas.

Hanchey begins by setting out in admittedly exaggerated terms the now familiar contrast between a "maintenance-minded" and a "mission-minded" congregation. Whereas for Hanchey "most mainline Protestant congregations" (and the Episcopal church in particular) demonstrate the former outlook, the latter perspective is typified above all by a congregation's ability to discern, celebrate, and take its cues from the present, "here and now" evangelizing activity of God. "God is near and they know it" is a description that recurs throughout the book. Hanchey goes on to discuss the process of learning to identify the signs of God's presence in the lives of individuals, using a number of stories from his pastoral experience to illustrate. This leads him to treat various biblical images and categories for God (Immanuel, Friend, Provider, etc.), and to deal with typical objections to the notion of God's being active in the present (so, for example, the title of Chapter 6: "Why Do Bad Things Happen in God's World?").

Specifically addressing church leaders, Hanchey discusses a number of church growth and leadership strategies (pausing on the way to deliver a powerful broadside against what he perceives to be the misguided priorities of seminary education in mainline denominations). He pays particular attention to ministries of welcoming newcomers, as well as to the development of a comprehensive Christian education program, stressing the importance of incorporating children into worship and of offering classes for newcomers and new members. Hanchey not only outlines general principles, but suggests specific strategies and areas of focus. The strategies include developing a personal style of evangelism, striving for excellence in worship, and encouraging a vision for financial stewardship. Episcopalians in particular will appreciate Hanchey's practical suggestions for carrying out these proposals in a liturgically-oriented context. They also will understand (if not concur with!) his positions on several issues of relevance to Anglican polity, notably the admission of children to communion and the question of adult, as opposed to adolescent confirmation.

Of course, there are certain limitations inherent within the specificity of his denominational focus. For example, Hanchey counsels us to "Forget about inviting a friend to church," and to concentrate instead on

those whom God brings in the door. While this advice may yet apply within the American Episcopal church, where going to church still has some degree of cultural relevancy, it is markedly less applicable elsewhere in the Anglican communion (Canada, Britain, or Australia, for instance), where people are less likely, for social and cultural reasons, to walk in the door of an unfamiliar church.

Finally, it may be helpful to point out what precisely Hanchey means by "mission-mindedness" in a congregation. For he barely touches on what is often meant by that term, namely active outreach beyond the bounds of one's own congregation or culture. In this work, "mission" seems simply to designate theological intentionality about the true purpose of the church, as a means for gaining needed clarity with regard to specific goals, standards, and strategies.

In summary, this work will likely be most helpful for the constituency within which its ideas were first developed: those who are already in or are presently training for pastoral leadership within mainline, liturgically-focused denominations (Catholic as well as Protestant), and who are not yet familiar with the basic principles and strategies of evangelism and church growth.

Michael Knowles

### New Directions in Mission and Evangelism 1: Basic Statements 1974-1991

Edited by James A. Scherer and Stephen B. Bevans, S.V.D., Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1992. Pp. 324. PB.

Orbis Books has provided yet another valuable resource for the contemporary missiologist. This volume introduces a new series "which offers collections of recent articles and papers, all previously published but not easily available to students and scholars of mission." Further volumes in the series will include Roman Catholic, Orthodox, Conciliar Protestant, Evangelical, Pentecostal, and other points of view." But this volume, edited by two competent and experienced missionary/scholars, sets a high standard for the ensuing volumes.

The title is significant in that "new directions" reflects the work done by David Bosch in 1991 *Transforming Mission: Paradigm Shifts in Theology of Mission* (also published by Orbis). The "basic statements" consist of both official and unofficial-but-representative statements of the World Council of Churches, the Roman Catholic Church, the Eastern Orthodox and Oriental churches, and the Evangelical Protestant churches. Most of the statements are excerpts from larger documents, but in a few instances, entire documents are reproduced. We can be

grateful to the editors for pulling out those significant statements and thereby saving us lost of valuable time as well as for indicating what they (at least) deem to be valuable and significant. It is also important to point out that in view of the long histories of the churches involved, the last two decades are primarily in focus, bringing us right up to our present day.

It is first of all obvious that greater amount of space given to Conciliar and Catholic documents reflects the *MODUS OPERANDI* of these two bodies: They are well organized; they have established working groups; and they meet in their respective groupings on a fairly regular basis. The more modern contributions given over to the Orthodox and the Evangelicals indicate (at least with the Evangelicals) a lower priority given to the above concerns and a wider diversity of ecclesiological structures; hence, with fewer official meetings, there are fewer documents to sort out.

A second observation relates to the way the documents are arranged. Each part is organized historically, so that we have a chronology of the last twenty years or so (Lausanne '74 is the earliest) and are therefore able to trace the development in thinking within the respective churches and groupings of churches.

Third, the reader is given the opportunity of comparing definitions and descriptions of subjects and issues treated in most all of the statements. And the issues are addressed for all to see and evaluate: What role does mission play in the theology and practice of the contemporary church? Does Luke 4:18-19 define and describe the essence of the church's mission? What role does culture play in evangelizing the unchurched and in establishing new churches? How do the respective religious communities evaluate inter-religious dialogue as a part of evangelization? And, what is the biblical and theological motive for an ongoing and effective missionary perspective in today's world? These and other issues can be laid side by side, with much profit to the interested and diligent reader.

Fourth, each document is preceded by an editorial introduction which orients the reader to the historical and theological context of the document. Particularly helpful are the introductions given to "Dialogue and Proclamation" (RCC) with respect to the encyclical of Pope John Paul II entitled *Redemptoris Missio* (pp. 177-78); the revealing candor of editorial statements introducing "Consultation on Simple Lifestyle" (p. 268), and "Consultation on the Church in Response to Human Need" (p. 281) (CCWE and WEF statements); and the description of the development of Orthodox thinking on mission in the opening "Introduction and Overview" (pp. xiii-xvi).

Finally, it will be helpful in future volumes if more balance can be achieved in the selection of documents, editorial effort showing greater diversity, and the inclusion of relevant documents which would clarify ambiguities within the wide-ranging discussions—for example, on the church's relationships with non-Christian religions, the only statement about that dynamic (involving the Jewish religion) is from Evangelical

Protestants (pp. 306–14). Certainly it would have been helpful to include the background and relevant excerpts from “Nostra Aetate” (“The Church’s Relationship to Non-Christian Religions,” Vatican II, 1965). Furthermore, an excellent illustration of inter-confessional dialogue would be the *Evangelical-Roman Catholic Dialogue on Mission*, 1977–1984, which, with extraordinary candor, shows representatives from both communions agreeing and disagreeing in ways sure to enlighten and encourage the skeptical and cynical among us.

This is a fine volume and will find its place alongside the other missiological resources, as well as on the syllabi under “required reading.”

John W. Nyquist

John W. Nyquist is Associate Professor of Mission and Evangelism, Trinity Evangelical Divinity School, Deerfield, Illinois.

### Introducing Jesus: Starting an Investigative Bible Study for Seekers

Peter Scazzero, Downers Grove: IVP, 1991. Pp. 90. PB.

Peter Scazzero has hit the nail squarely on the head in this helpful and practical guide to small-group evangelism. Although he doesn’t mention it in the book, he seems to have profited from his association with the author of *Small Group Evangelism*, Dr. Richard Peace at Gordon-Conwell. This book is basically divided into two sections, the theory and the practice, with a supplement section at the back for handouts (to be duplicated), and bibliographic resources.

The author obviously takes the Bible, evangelism, and culture seriously. He also demonstrates that he understands the mindset and questions of most non-Christians. But throughout, these pages are written to motivate and equip *interested* evangelizers (not necessarily gifted evangelists), who are seeking culturally relevant ways to introduce *interested* unbelievers to the Savior. And one of the most attractive features of the book is that Scazzero, as a pastor himself, demonstrates a way for those who have had formal theological training to be effectively involved in leading others to Christ. Pastors and other “professional Christians” often find it difficult to relate personally, and on the same level, to those who don’t share the same background and training; the author does a good job here.

But the outstanding feature of the book from this reviewer’s perspective is the balance Scazzero maintains between the power of the gospel—in and of itself—and the sensitivity needed to understand the seeker

without being authoritarian or heavy-handed. The inductive questions suggested for the six studies (Luke 3:2–18; Mark 4:1–20; Mark 1:15–34; John 4:4–26; Luke 15:11–32; and Mark 10:17–31) are clearly arranged along the lines of *observation*, *interpretation*, and *application*. But it is clear that the author expects more than just an enlightened and stimulating religious discussion; the questions are all framed with a clear purpose: to lead the members of the small group to deeper understanding of Jesus Christ, after which a legitimate challenge can be issued.

This is a good book on contemporary evangelism. The leader is encouraged to pray for open doors for the gospel’s entry; to learn how to ask good, thoughtful questions; to take the initiative to invite “first-name-basis” friends; to sensitively, but intentionally, present the gospel using some kind of gospel outline; and to be ready to issue an invitation to the entire group or to individuals in that group. Furthermore, the leader is encouraged to have a definite plan for each week’s study, including a thorough and personal encounter with the text of Scripture to be used.

A final word of encouragement to those who take the Great Commission and the Great Commandment seriously: Peter Scazzero helps us all to see more clearly the necessary link between God’s powerful word and building significant relationships. Using the familiar graphic indicating the “Spiritual-Decision Process,” the author enables the reader to see the unbeliever somewhere on a continuum, closer or further removed from the point of entry into God’s Kingdom. “An investigative Bible study recognizes that while each person who becomes a Christian does make a decision at a specific point in time, there is a process which leads a person to that point” (24). And the chapter on “Going Fishing” emphasizes the importance of building a network of unbelieving friends who will be more open to an invitation to an investigative Bible study. Establishing relationships with non-Christians is just as important in our day as it was when Jesus gained the reputation as “the friend of sinners and tax collectors.”

This book—although brief—makes a significant contribution to the methodology of evangelism, and will certainly be profitable in the classroom, in the church, and for individuals seeking an effective evangelistic tool for reaching unbelieving seekers with the Good News.

John W. Nyquist

# ACADEMY FOR EVANGELISM IN THEOLOGICAL EDUCATION

21st Annual Meeting

Oct. 7-9, 1993

THEME: "Target: The Cities and  
Their Environs"

## MINUTES

The twenty-first annual meeting of the Academy of Evangelism in Theological Education was hosted by the Trinity Evangelical Divinity School (TEDS), Deerfield, Illinois, Oct. 7-9, 1993. Sessions were held at the Seminary (Thursday and Friday evenings), the Embassy Suites (Friday and Saturday a.m.), and Willow Creek Community Church (WCCC, Saturday afternoon and evening). President Robert Anderson opened the meeting at 7:30 p.m. and welcomed the participants. He noted that AETE has "come of age" since it is in its 21st year. Dr. Anderson read a number of letters of regret from members who could not attend this meeting. Members introduced themselves: Wheaton Graduate School students (5); AETE members (25); spouses (2); and guest speaker Lee Strobel.

Dr. J. David Hester, led a liturgy of worship and read from Psalm 148. His devotional was anchored in Prov. 14:4, "Where there is no oxen there is no grain." He reminded the Academy that "ministering churches are 'messy churches,' " because you can't be an active church ministering to people and "keep a clean stall." "A thriving ministry has no shortage of messy stalls." "Dead and dying churches are neat and predictable but are without life or ministry." "Crowds leave messes, so thank God for messy churches."

Dr. John Nyquist, host member, welcomed the Academy to the TEDS campus. He outlined the weekend program, including the Saturday visits to the Billy Graham Center, Wheaton College and Willow Creek Community Church. He introduced Lee Strobel, Director of Communi-

cations, Preaching Pastor and Director of Evangelism at WCCC. He became a Christian in 1980. He joined the WCCC staff in 1987 with a professional background in law and journalism. Lee Strobel addressed the Academy on the subject of "Reaching Unchurched Harry and Mary." In a testimonial style he outlined a seven step strategy used by WCCC to reach unchurched people: 1) Build authentic relationships with the unchurched; 2) Share a verbal witness; 3) Invite the unchurched to seeker sensitive services; 4) Use creative communication in the church (i.e., drama, contemporary music, messages that are relevant and application oriented); 5) Involve people in small groups; 6) Help people discover their spiritual gifts; and 7) Invite people to invest financially. The meeting concluded with a discussion time.

On Friday morning Dr. Robert Anderson called the meeting to order and introduced Dr. Richard Armstrong, who led in a devotional. Dr. Marty McMane, who was originally scheduled to lead the devotions, could not be present because of the death of her mother. Dr. Armstrong shared some poetry from his own personal pilgrimage in ministry over the years. Eight additional AETE participants were welcomed.

Dr. T. V. Thomas introduced plenary speaker, Dr. Roger Hedlund. Dr. Hedlund has served as a pioneer in mission work and leadership training in India. He is the founder of the Church Growth Institute and Director of the McGavran Training Institute in Madras. He spoke to the Academy on the subject, "Evangelism in Mega Cities of the Sub-Continent." Dr. Hedlund addressed two major issues: 1. Understanding the spirit of four megacities: a) Calcutta, a city of the poor and of hope; b) Bombay, a "pace setting" city with a major preoccupation with materialism; c) Delhi, a city of bureaucracy occupied with "power;" d) Madras, a city obsessed with bill-boards and movie stars. 2. Evangelization's mission variables: a) rural Christian mindset; b) caste ridden system (institutionalized racism); c) the religious context (Hindu/Muslim); d) neglect of urban majorities; e) neglect of North India; f) lack of incarnational evangelism among Muslim and Hindu people; and g) failure of India's seminaries to address urban issues.

Anderson introduced Dr. Ray Bakke, Director of International Urban Associates, Chicago. Dr. Bakke spoke to the Academy on the overall theme of "The Cities and Their Environs" under three sub sections: 1) Reasons why it is difficult for evangelicals to reach the city (lack of vision, inadequate understanding of urban systems/people, inadequate pastoral training; 2) The big picture of global urbanization (ie. neglected groups, including Latin urban world, Pacific rim cities, and French speaking peoples); and 3) A case study of Chicago (the importance of understanding the connectedness of urban systems, ie. economics, schools, health care, libraries, jails, courts, parks, libraries, gangs, police, businesses, etc.).

The afternoon session began with "What's New in Books?" and was led by Dr. George Hunsburger. Dr. Hunsburger distributed a list of books to be reviewed for the 1993-1994 AETE Journal and made three comments on current trends in evangelism publications:

1) Literature relating to marketing the church. George Barna, *A Step by Step Guide to Church Marketing*; Gary MacIntosh and Glen Martin, *Finding and Keeping Them*; C. Peter Wagner, *Church Planting for a Greater Harvest*. An alternative position is represented by Douglas Webster, *Selling Jesus: What's Wrong with Marketing the Church?* Questions raised included: Are we evangelizing or recruiting? What is the nature of the churches we are planting? Is church planting really evangelizing? Is the church a place where certain things happen? (i.e. word is preached, sacraments are administered)? Have we shifted to a missiology that says "we are a body of people sent on a mission?" Or have we become a vendor of religious services and goods? Marketing leaves questions about the nature of church, mission and evangelism.

2) Literature relating to audience analysis. George Hunter, *How to Reach Secular People*; The books reviewed in the current AETE Journal, (Tex Sample, *U. S. Lifestyles and Mainline Churches: A Key to Reaching People in the 90's*, and Bill Easum, *How to Reach Baby Boomers*), emphasize the importance of finding and identifying a specific niche in reaching people. Other helpful books in this category include: Lee Strobel, *Inside the Mind of Unchurched Harry and Mary: What Can We Do About Church Dropouts?*; Alan Roxborough, *Reaching a New Generation*. When we do market analysis we must confess that we are not only talking about the unchurched but people in the church. How does the gospel encounter culture? What is the interaction between the two? Where do we see ourselves as church people? Church people must continue to ask how the culture is affecting us and how the gospel can continue to convert us. Charles Van Engen's, *God's Missionary People*, emphasizes the need to "be a worshipping community and in the process to be a witnessing community." We also need a generational analysis of our audiences.

3) Literature relating to "translating" the gospel. There is not much literature on this in America. It was a deep attempt to contextualize. This is a great need today. We assume we know this and all we need is communication theory operating on a straight line notion. As an Academy we may need to broaden the missiological content of contextualization. Several good examples include: *Translating the Message; Encountering the West*; Robert Schrider, *Constructing Local Theology*; Tex Sample's *U. S. Lifestyles and Mainline Churches*; Lesslie Newbigin's, *The Gospel in a Pluralist Society*. One question raised was: What is the gospel? Often the gospel shapes itself in the language of Western culture (i.e. "accept Jesus Christ as personal Lord and Savior"). "How can we be right with God?" was a question in the Western church, while the

Eastern church was asking a different question: "How do we share in the life of God?" The gospel is always embedded in the language and values of a culture. There is a need to assess more carefully how our vocabulary, soteriology, and ecclesiology are influencing the evangelization process. Perhaps it is also helpful to distinguish between the unchurched and the unreached.

At 2:30 p.m. Dr. Robert Coleman, who served as AETE president 1977-1979, addressed the Academy on the theme "Admonitions to Persons Teaching Evangelism." He gave seven admonitions to the Academy: 1) Prioritize evangelism in the academic community; 2) Strive for academic and professional excellence; 3) Exemplify a great commission lifestyle; 4) Maximize relational peer connections; 5) Cultivate a zeal for lost souls; 6) Bring your life under discipline; and 7) Celebrate the ministry of evangelism.

After the coffee break a panel of three resource persons (Lee Strobel, Ray Bakke, and Robert Coleman) responded to questions, including the following: 1) Should we distinguish between the unchurched and unreached? 2) Is the church in the suburbs also part of the body of Christ with the "poverty stricken," ghetto churches, and how do the two kinds of churches connect? 3) Has mass evangelism passed its peak? What is its role in the 21st Century? 4) How relevant is seminary education in its present configuration?

After a delightful evening meal, Dr. John Nyquist introduced Dr. Bing Hunter, newly appointed dean of TEDS. Dr. Hunter shared personally about his own pilgrimage to faith in Christ and his involvement in evangelism. He brought greetings from President Meyers of TEDS. He emphasized the need for evangelism departments and faculty to get over their inferiority complex and to make evangelism more of a priority in theological education. He challenged the Academy to centralize the role of evangelism training in the years ahead in their respective institutions.

Dr. Robert Anderson, President of AETE, then addressed the Academy on "The Future Direction of Seminaries." Dr. Anderson highlighted the following needs in future Seminary education: 1) A "back to the basics" approach; 2) Leadership training that is not limited to one model or generation; 3) A model of community in education that is transferable to the church; 4) Less bureaucracy in administration and fewer faculty meetings; 5) New teaching methodologies and technologies; 6) Fewer biblical language requirements for students; 7) Teaming theoreticians with practitioners in the classroom; 8) Make Seminaries a learning community rather than primarily drive-in campuses; 9) Use full-time, specialized professors who are supplemented by adjunct professors, rather than shifting to a primarily adjunct faculty.

On Saturday morning Dr. Hal Poe, Bethel Theological Seminary, St.

Paul, Minnesota, led in devotions from II Tim. 4:1-5 and Luke 15. He reminded us that while preparation in ministry is key, the Holy Spirit does in fact "give us a word in season and out of season." While one of the most outworn clichés in evangelism is "Are you lost?" this is a question that brings us to the heart of where people today are living. Lostness does not tell us so much about how or where we are lost, but it says much more about the pain of the owner. God knows we are lost, even when we don't. He closed the devotional time with prayer.

At 9:30 a.m. President Robert Anderson called the Academy to order for the business session. M/S/C that we express appreciation to Jeff Pitts and Dr. John Nyquist for so capably hosting the 21st session of the Academy.

Dr. Woody Davis reported a Sept. 30, 1993, financial balance of \$1972.54. This compares to a balance of \$6309.24 a year ago. M/S/C that the financial report be adopted. The reasons for the contrast in the 1992 and 1993 financial balance are: a) decrease in paid members dues to date (\$2000 last year and \$950 this year); b) decrease in institutional dues paid to date (\$2700 in institutional dues previously and \$700 this year); c) early payment of journal publication costs.

The Executive Committee recommended the following persons as new members: for full membership, David S. Young, H. Jurgens Hendriks, Darrell L. Guder, James C. Logan, G. Howard Mellor, and C. Thomas Wright (pending application); for associate membership, Bill Jackson, Charles J. Roeper, Guy Glass, Robert T. Henderson (pending application and full payment of dues). All members recommended for full and associate membership were approved. The secretary also reported a letter of resignation from Eddie Gibbs because of a shift from teaching to parish ministry.

Dr. Richard Armstrong, Journal Editor, reported the following developments regarding the AETE Journal: a) David Young is the new managing editor for the journal, replacing Marigene Chamberlin; b) Dr. George Hunsburger has resigned as book review editor. The Academy expressed appreciation to Dr. Hunsburger for his excellent work. Dr. C. Thomas Wright has accepted the responsibility as book review editor for the Journal. c) Dr. Armstrong reminded the Academy of the need to expand the circulation of the Journal. Dr. George Hunsburger gave a report as book review editor. He noted the increased number of book reviews in the current journal over previous issues.

The Executive Committee projected the following future dates and meeting places for the Academy:

Oct 6-8, 1994:

Canadian Theological Seminary, Regina, Saskatchewan

Host Member: Dr. T. V. Thomas

Oct. 5-7, 1995:

International School of Theology, Arrowhead Springs  
Host Member: Dr. Bill and Vonette Bright

Oct. 10-12, 1996:

Asbury Theological Seminary, Willmore, Kentucky  
Host Member: Dr. Ron Crandall

**Election of officers:** The secretary read the following list of nominees presented by the Executive Committee: for President, J. David Hester; for Vice-President, George Hunter III; for Treasurer, Woody L. Davis; for Secretary, Hal Poe; for Journal Editor, Richard Armstrong. John Nyquist was nominated from the floor for Vice President. Hester, Davis, Poe and Armstrong were elected by acclamation; George Hunter was elected Vice President by show of hands.

Chairman Bob Anderson expressed appreciation to Dr. Henry Schmidt for his work as secretary. Dr. Richard Armstrong expressed thanks on behalf of the Academy to Dr. Robert Anderson for his able leadership over the past two years.

A time of discussion followed, during which members raised the following issues: a) Dr. Chic Shaver expressed appreciation for the program and the free books received. M/S/C that the new secretary write a letter of thanks to all the publishers who donated books to the Academy; b) Dr. T. V. Thomas suggested that we circulate a list of Academy members which includes: names; addresses; fax and phone numbers. Members are reminded that we need to keep updating our lists. The question was raised whether this could be made available on electronic media, i.e. disc or E mail; c) Dr. Michael Knowles reminded the Academy to continue to pursue funding for the Academy from the Lilly Foundation; d) Dr. Lewis Drummond announced that the North American Conference on Itinerant Evangelists (June 28-30, 1994) wants 25% of the registrants to be Seminary students. Evangelism professors who bring 5 students will receive free tuition. Itinerant evangelists are defined as those who proclaim and teach evangelism; e) Dr. George Hunsburger expressed appreciation for the participation in the "Gospel and Culture Network" which he leads. The future dates of the conferences are: Feb. 17-19, 1994, in Pittsburgh; and Feb. 15-17, 1995, in Atlanta; f) Dr. Anderson expressed appreciation to Dr. Robert Coleman for his arrangements to visit the Billy Graham Center.

The Chair adjourned the business session at 10:23 a.m.

Following the morning session at Embassy Suites in Deerfield, the members of the Academy traveled to Wheaton College, Wheaton, Illinois, where they had lunch together in the Anderson Dining Commons.

At 1:00 p.m. the members of the Academy received a general orientation to the archives of the Billy Graham Center, led by Paul Erickson, associate director of the archives, and Ferne Weimer, director of the center library. The members then had an opportunity to investigate the resources of the archives, other research facilities, and the museum of the Billy Graham Center. The archives will conduct a search of their collections upon request for specific subjects of research interest. Inquiries should be directed to: Archives of the Billy Graham Center, Wheaton College, Wheaton, IL. 60187 (708) 752-5910.

A 3:45 p.m. Academy members departed Wheaton to travel to Willow Creek Community Church in South Barrington, IL. Lee Strobel led the members on a tour of the impressive facilities. In addition to the worship center, which seats in excess of 4500 people, the members also viewed the new dining atrium, the gymnasium, the children's educational facilities, and the bookstore. Mr. Strobel explained the logistics of seeker sensitive services, as the members observed the worship team rehearse for the service. At 6:00 p.m. the members of the Academy attended the Saturday evening worship service, which was seated to capacity. Though not an exegetical message, the sermon preached by Bill Hybels, senior pastor, was a form of expository sermon as part of a series on the Sermon on the Mount. At the conclusion of the sermon an evangelistic invitation was given, as a couple sang a contemporary medley of traditional gospel hymns.

After the service, the Academy members were hosted for supper at the church. Bill Hybels joined the members at the end of the meal for an extended conversation. He graciously stayed for one and a half hours of substantive and engaging conversation with the Academy. Lee Strobel also introduced Jim Mellado, vice president for publishing/consulting of the Willow Creek Association, who interpreted the work of the Association with the nearly 600 churches that share the ministry of WCCC.

The Academy for Evangelism in Theological Education adjourned its annual meeting at the WCCC.

Respectfully submitted,  
Henry J. Schmidt  
Secretary

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