JOURNAL OF THE ACADEMY FOR EVANGELISM IN THEOLOGICAL EDUCATION

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Editorial Introduction

The annual meeting at Lancaster Theological Seminary in October, 1992, marked the twentieth anniversary of the founding of the Academy for Evangelism in Theological Education. In celebration of that occasion the program featured addresses by some of the former presidents of the Academy. The variety of style and subject matter of the presentations made for a most interesting and informative meeting.

In response to the requests of those present and for the benefit of our members and other readers who were not in attendance, we have been able to include most of the addresses in this issue of the *Journal*, which can properly be called "The President's Edition." The articles appear in the order they were presented and, for the most part, are printed as delivered, reflecting a more informal style. They provide a remarkable blend of practical wisdom and theological insight.

The Thursday night keynote address was delivered by George Hunter, who, although he has not yet served as president, was one of the founders and charter members of the Academy. "Chuck," as he is affectionately known to his friends, got us off to an excellent start by highlighting and expanding upon the theme of his latest book, *Reaching Secular People*. His article defines an evangelistic challenge that concerns all of us.

Past president (1985–87) and former *Journal* editor David Watson maintained the level of excellence the following morning, when he spoke on the topic, "Researching Evangelism: The Need for a Midcourse Correction." Readers will find his theological analysis of the current state of evangelism both edifying and provocative.

Equally interesting but with a totally different focus is the verbal portrait which Lewis Drummond (president, 1977–79) paints of Charles Haddon Spurgeon: the theologian, the preacher, the pastor, and the man. The famous clergyman, as presented in Dr. Drummond's fascinating biographical sketch, is indeed a role model for would-be teachers of evangelism.

Readers will appreciate the statistical data as well as the practical suggestions presented in the article by Richard Peace (president, 1981–83) on the challenge of "Reaching Baby Boomers." Dick's analysis calls into question some of the stereotypical thinking and long-accepted approaches of traditional evangelistic methodology.

Having received no manuscript from our much admired colleague William Pannell (president, 1983–85), I regret we are unable to include a written version of his personal reflections on the challenges of urban

evangelism, a theme to which he has devoted much of his ministry. My own article, which explores the relationship between music and evangelism, completes the list of presidential contributions to this special edition of the *Journal*.

In addition to the aforementioned essays we have been able to include the paper presented by David Greenhaw, Professor of Preaching and Dean of Lancaster Theological Seminary, and an article by Dr. Woody Davis, newly elected treasurer of the AETE. Dr. Greenhaw examines the deductive/inductive dichotomy in relation to preaching and evangelism, while our colleague Woody offers "A Theology of Evangelism for America in the Nineties."

Included in this issue also is a memorial tribute which I was invited to present at our 20th Anniversary Meeting to our first president, George Edgar Sweazey, whose death earlier this year has left a great void in the hearts of all of us who knew him. This was the fifth time I have been asked to pay formal tribute to this remarkable man, whom I was privileged to know as a good friend and colleague at Princeton Theological Seminary. For that reason I decided to present a composite of the memorial tributes which I presented to the Presbytery of New Brunswick on February 11 and to the Faculty of Princeton Seminary on February 19. My earlier remarks have been edited slightly, in order that they might become our tribute as well.

Secretary Henry Schmidt's minutes provide a thorough summary of all that transpired at the 1992 annual meeting, including both the contents of the program and the actions of the business meeting. It is especially helpful to have his written reminders of the excellent devotionals. Readers will also appreciate his notes of the meaty presentation by George Hunsberger, who gave an extensive overview of some of the major themes and representative writings in current evangelism literature. The Academy is indebted to George for the service he renders as book review editor of the *Journal*. Both George and I solicit your cooperation in submitting reviews of books you want to bring to the attention of our readers.

Finally, I want to welcome on your behalf the *Journal*'s new managing editor, the Rev. Dr. David S. Young, who is an adjunct professor of evangelism at Eastern Baptist Theological Seminary. David has very kindly consented to fill the vacancy caused by the recent resignation of our former managing editor, Marigene Chamberlain, who rendered a tremendous service to our Academy in that role for seven years. We rejoice in Marigene's significant promotion at the United Methodist Church national headquarters in Nashville, but regret that her new responsibilities have forced her to sever her working relationship with the *Journal*. So it's farewell to, Marigene, and welcome aboard, David!

Happy reading to all!

Richard Stoll Armstrong

COMMUNICATING THE CHRISTIAN MESSAGE IN A SECULAR SOCIETY

George G. Hunter III

How do we communicate Christianity's message to the growing numbers of "secular people" who substantially populate western society and, increasingly, the U.S.A.? Once, in the thousand-year period that historians call "Christendom," the Christian Church was like a football team with perennial home field advantage; the Church was the central influence within every area of Western life and thought, the society marched to Christianity's drum, and virtually every person understood himself or herself to be a "Christian." However, in the last several centuries, the forces of "secularization" have removed every area of western thought and life from the automatic influence of Christianity; the many subcultures of western society now march to a cacophony of drums, and the Christian football team increasingly plays on alien turf—if it plays at all.

A series of events in the last several centuries have removed western life from any automatic influence of the Church, and thereby "secularized" the West. The *Renaissance* recovered ancient Greek philosophy and science, introduced "pluralism" in western minds, and redirected people's thoughts from ecclesiastical matters and heaven to humanity's freedom and advancement in this world. The *Reformation* split the Church and drove the attention of both sides of the Church inward, toward renewal and theological clarification and away from the management of society. The rise of *Nationalism* fragmented the sense of one humanity that Christendom had achieved, and led to an idolatrous level of patriotism and to unprecedented warfare among Europe's peoples. The rise of empirical *Science* (and of what passed itself off as "scientific thinking") changed western humanity's mental map of reality; consider, for instance, the impact of Galileo, Newton, Darwin, Marx, and Freud

Prof. Hunter is Dean of the School of World Mission and Evangelism at Asbury Theological Seminary, Wilmore, Kentucky.

upon people's assumptions. The *Enlightenment* swaggered into western history with enormous confidence in human goodness and rationality, and in science and education and "inevitable progress." The Enlightenment taught both the underlying unity of all religions and a closed-system "machine" model of the universe that made all the religions unnecessary. The Enlightenment thus produced the ideology of "Modernity" and the acceleration of secularization. If the Enlightenment accelerated secularization, *Urbanization* has stampeded it. The secularization of human consciousness is a wider *fait accompli* in the city. As William Blake perceived: "Great things happen when men and mountains meet; these things do not happen when men jostle in the street."

Historically, the secularization of Europe's populations has preceded, by a half century or more, the secularization of the populations of the USA. So, in the USA we are more accustomed to the declined church attendance of European countries (now ranging from 3% to 12% of a nation's population on an average Sunday). We are somewhat more accustomed to the more recent declining church attendance patterns in Canada (50% decline in 40 years) and Australia (50% decline in 25 years). Several factors seem to have blocked some of secularization's impact in the USA. Some of Europe's most religiously committed people originally established colonies in America. Two "Great Awakenings" gave the Christian faith two lengthy periods of fresh momentum. America's multiple denominations gave people more options to relevant and meaningful involvement in a faith community than did Europe's staid old State Churches. The USA did not develop as a mere adjunct to Europe; it developed its own cultural values, norms, forces, and patterns, and church-going became a more culturally normative behavior in the USA than in most of Europe. Furthermore, the rise of "American Civil Religion" blocked some of the encroachment of secularity, and it disguised some of the secularity that had wormed its way into American consciousness. Until recent decades, the secularization of consciousness in America was largely confined to part of the intellectual community; and even though these intellectuals regarded Christianity's creeds with dubiety, they assumed that Christianity's ethical values and vision were valid.

Nevertheless, the tide that covered most of Europe was to wash across American land as well, and, at the conscious level, that has largely occurred in the last quarter century. For example, George Gallup's pollsters have been asking, periodically, the same questions of the American people long enough to produce some illuminating longitudinal studies. In 1968, when they first asked a random sampling of adult Americans about the religious training in their background, 9% reported no religious training in their background. In 1978, 17% reported no religious background; in 1988, 25%. Are we perceptive enough to perceive a *trend* in that data? The graph would project about 29% as I write this in 1993, and more than one-third of all Americans by the turn of the century. When I add to this data the obvious fact that many people who *did* have some religious training in their past did not "get it," that they

cannot now recall it, that it did not "take"—my estimate of 120 million secular people (age 14 and above) in the USA is a *conservative* estimate. The *cognitive* impact of secularization in the USA is dramatized in this data: While some 80% of the American people still report themselves as "Christians" in surveys, only 40% can correctly answer the question "Who delivered the Sermon on the Mount?" We are also now observing secularity's impact upon people's *ethical* consciousness. The validity of Christian values about character, lifestyle, discipline, sexuality, drugs, violence, the sanctity of life, marriage and the family, and personal responsibility is widely challenged, and many intellectuals assume that there is nothing wrong with, say, the urban ghettoes that social engineering cannot fix. So, the USA has become the largest mission field in the Western hemisphere.

Perhaps the term "secular people" needs more careful definition. The term is not meant as a pejorative term; it is merely a descriptive term, widely used by historians and other social scientists. I work with five definitions: 1) As we can infer from the material above, secular people are people who are not automatically influenced by the Christian religion; they have lived their lives, so far, beyond the range of serious Christian influence. 2) Most secular people have no Christian memory, background, or vocabulary; they do not know what we are talking about. 3) Many secular people are not "church broke." When they do venture into a church, they do not know when to stand up or sit down, or how to find Second Kings or Second Corinthians; they are mute as the congregation recites the Lord's Prayer or the Apostles Creed, and they are culturally unprepared for a musical diet of robed choirs, handbells, old hymns, and organ music (which some secular people associate with "funeral music"). 4) Many secular people have had a superficial exposure to some form of "Christianity" or "church." Some were exposed to a church for awhile as a child or youth, found it "boring" and generalized to all of America's 360,000 congregations from that experience. Others were exposed to some form of "religion" on television, and said "If that is Christianity, it is not for me." 5) Both of those groups were "turned off" by the *form* of Christianity they were exposed to, and they are now "immunized" against that form of Christianity. That is why the only churches that are reaching significant numbers of secular people are pioneering in new, innovative, and culturally relevant language, style, music, liturgy, and other indigenous forms of church.

How can the Christian movement reach this increasing number of turned-off people who don't know what we are talking about? How do we communicate Christianity's gospel to the secular people in our western mission fields? That is one of the driving questions behind my longtime project (finally) published in 1992, *How To Reach Secular People* (Abingdon Press). Some of the insights in this essay draw from that book; some go beyond it. The following insights presuppose something that cannot yet be presupposed but can be hoped for—that a significant number of churches will "lift up" their eyes and see "the fields are ripe for harvesting" (John 4:35), that they will see the preparing and

gathering of that harvest as their main business. There are more churches owning that apostolic agenda today than a decade ago, but they still number less than 2% of all the churches in North America. Perhaps more churches will be stimulated to move from tradition to mission as they read about the approaches known to help in communicating good news to secular people.

Such a substantial "paradigm shift" is necessary for many churches to move from tradition to mission, because, ready or not, secularization has propelled the Western Church into a "new apostolic age." In *How To Reach Secular People* (pp. 35–36), I explain what I believe that means for the Christian communicator:

> For the christian's movement's first three centuries, the communication of Christianity had to achieve four objectives: (1) Facing a population with no knowledge of the gospel, the christian movement had to *inform* people of the story of Jesus the good news, its claims, and its offer. (2) Facing hostile populations and the persecution of the state, the Church had to "win friends and *influence* people" to a positive attitude toward the movement. (3) Facing an Empire with several entrenched religions, the Christians had to *convince* people of Christianity's truth, or at least its plausibility. (4) Since entry into the faith is by an act of the will, Christians had to *invite* people to adopt this faith and join the messianic community and follow Jesus as Lord. These were the components of persuasion in the ancient apostolic setting.
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> The early Church was intentional about achieving each of these four objectives. They informed people by creatively communicating and interpreting their gospel in conversations, synagogue presentations, and open-air speaking. They influenced people's attitudes by their changed lives, their ministries of service, their love for one another, and by their love for nonchristians and even their enemies, even in martyrdom. They convinced people by reasoning from the Scriptures and by their common-sense apologetics. They invited responsive people to confess faith and be baptized into the messianic community.
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> Much later, when Christendom was in place, with the parish church at the center of community life and the Church informing every area of the culture's life, the informing, influencing, and convincing goals were achieved in people's enculturation. Most people were already informed in the faith's basics, were favorably disposed toward the faith, and already assumed its truth. So the christian communicator could largely focus on inviting people, who were already informed, convinced, and favorably inclined, to adopt the faith.
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> With the events of secularization . . . , increasing numbers of people experienced alienation and a negative attitude toward the Church, withdrew from the churches, and in time many western people no longer understood, or recalled, the faith of their ancestors. Today, this secularization is so advanced . . . that no communicator today has the luxury of beginning at point four and appealing for a response, because, as Donald Soper has observed, "Not one in every ten people has the remotest idea of what you and I within the church mean by 'religion.'"
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> So the Church must begin farther back with people today. For centuries the Church was harvesting grain in fields already plowed, seeded and watered. But today we must first plow, seed, and water the fields before we can reasonably expect to gather harvests. . . . But, as Donald Soper contends, most evangelism today presupposes that the Middle Ages are still with us, "and takes little or no account of the fact that the Church today is back in apostolic times."

So, the apostolic shape of our task is clear. What else can we know about communicating Christianity's meaning in our secular mission field?

One might infer, from the material above, that the apostolic challenge to communicate Christianity's meaning to secular people is *sui generis*, i.e., a completely unique genre of communication. It probably is a distinct genre, but it has much in common with the communication of Christianity in any mission field and, indeed, has much in common with the communication of any message to anyone! Most of what we know about human communication may be useful in informing apostolic communication. It is not surprising, therefore, to discover that effective Christian communicators to secular people employ some mental version of a model of the communication process that has prevailed (and developed) for some 2,300 years.

Aristotle was probably the first student of communication who saw that the human communication process has three necessary components. Building upon Plato and several of the Greek sophists who preceded him, while observing and (presumably) interviewing the most effective communicators in the legislatures and law courts of his time, Aristotle perceived that communication necessarily involves an interplay between a *speaker* (or communicator, or sourse), a *message*, and an *audience* (or receiver, or receptor). Many other components have since been discovered, and Aristotle's three components have been "rediscovered" from time to time, but the communicator-message-audience model is basic. All of the effective communicators I have ever studied seem to plan, execute, and evaluate their communication practice at least partly in terms of Aristotle's model, whether they actually got it from him or not.

Those three components must be in place, and interacting, for "communication" (as scholars define it) to take place. For example, stroll downtown in any western city any evening, and you will observe some speakers sending messages that no one is receiving; by Aristotle's model, communication is *not* taking place! On that same downtown street you may observe someone "receiving" messages that no one is sending; once

again, communication is *not* taking place! "Communication" can take place only when all three components, source, message, and receiver, are in place and interfacing.

A vast body of insight has been discovered and written about each of those three components. For instance, Aristotle discovered that how the audience perceives the speaker influences the audience's response to the speaker's message. Aristotle called this factor the *ethos* of the communicator. He observed that *ethos* seemed to involve three variables, i.e., the messages of speakers who are perceived to be (1) intelligent people, of (2) good character, who are motivated by (3) good will toward their audience are likely to be believed and acted upon. Subsequent research has uncovered additional factors in the communicator's *ethos*, such as the speaker's energy, likability, credibility, and identification with the audience.

Aristotle discovered that the effective message has certain factors contributing to its effective reception. The effective message has good reasons supporting it in deductive reasoning, and good examples in inductive reasoning. Furthermore, the effective message is organized in a way to permit people to follow it, and employs imaginative language to retain people's attention and interest, and accurate and clear language to enable the message to make sense.

Aristotle also discovered that the more the communicator knows about the audience, the more likely he or she can adapt the message to engage the audience. Audiences are persuaded when they perceive, and experience, the relevance of the message to their felt needs or to their deeper driving motives, and they more likely respond when the speaker, context, or occasion brings them into the kind of emotional state that enables them to respond to the message.

So, much of what we know about communication is applicable to communicating Christianity to secular people, especially the basic model of the communication and persuasion processes that has prevailed more or less since Aristotle.

I am by no means the first investigator to discover ways of reaching secular people. Some of the literature of evangelism and church growth has published (at least) six important conclusions that my own research has merely "rediscovered":

1. All we have to offer the human race is *original Christianity*, a message in continuity with "the faith once delivered to the saints." The secular people who become receptive to Christianity want "the real thing." There is virtually no market, among secular unchurched people, for new theologies and alleged "improvements" upon original Christianity. Those who do prefer something "new" do not opt for a new type of Christianity; they gravitate toward nonchristian new options like New Age religion. Those who turn to Christianity want to be in touch with the same meaning and reality that engaged the people who became the early Christians.

2. But the secular people who are open to original Christianity do not, generally, respond to the faith if it is expressed in academic, theological, evangelical, or ecclesiastical language. The gospel must be *meaningfully interpreted*, in their language, for them to comprehend and appropriate it. Somewhere in his writings, C. S. Lewis reminds us that "We expect our missionaries to the Bantus to learn Bantu, but we never ask whether our missionaries to the Americans or the English can speak American or English. Any fool can write learned language. The test is communication in the vernacular."

3. Secular people who respond to Christianity do not, generally, respond to a church that features very traditional church forms like robed choirs, or pipe organ music, or a "ministerial" tone from the pulpit. The same generation that will not buy their father's Oldsmobile will not buy a church whose language, inflection, music and style are from a previous generation. In this mission field, like all others, the church that engages people and grows is *indigenous*, i.e., it expresses the faith's meaning through culturally relevant speech, music, liturgy, clothing, leadership style, etc.

4. In some ways, the Christian faith spreads among secular western populations like it spreads through other populations. Wherever it spreads, it moves along "the bridges of God" (McGavran) provided by the kinship and friendship networks of believers, especially new believers. Must secular converts report that the good news, and the opportunity to follow Christ, were communicated to them by a trusted friend, neighbor, colleague, or relative—though other Christians, often a group of Christians or seekers, play their role in a person's evangelization. Paul still plants, and Apollos still waters.

5. Like other populations, secular people are much more likely to become Christians during the "receptive seasons" of their lives when they are dissatisfied with what they have been living for and are open to something else. In such seasons, the Prevenient Grace of God is moving through the events and circumstances of their lives, awakening *receptivity* to good news and life change. The Church is called, in every season, to lift up its eyes and see where the fields are white for the harvest.

6. We keep rediscovering that Paul was right in his observation that "No one can say 'Jesus is Lord' except by the Holy Spirit." By his prevenient grace the Holy Spirit prepares us, and by his empowering grace he prepares and empowers us to be his ambassadors, through whom he will make his appeal. And when, in our ministry to secular seekers the penny drops and they discover the gift of faith, it is not *primarily* because of our great theology or communication skill, but because the Holy Spirit has broken through in revealing grace. Paul still plants, Apollos still waters, and God still gives the increase.

That much, at least, is widely understood in the literature of evangelization—though still ignored by most Christians who attempt to practice evangelism.

My research with secular converts and Christian communicators has led me to eight additional conclusions that are not yet featured in much of the literature of evangelization. Any would-be communicator of Christianity to secular people should keep the following points in mind:

1. Donald Soper has declared that "we must begin where people are, rather than where we would like them to be." This strategy often involves the *demonstration of Christianity's relevance*—by "scratching where people itch," by engaging their felt needs. Often, converts out of secularity report that Christ first helped them by raising their sense of dignity and self-worth, or by giving them power over some problem (such as an addiction) around which life had become unmanageable. Beginning with people's felt needs or driving motives is not necessarily the "pandering." i.e., "Just giving people what they want," that some critics have charged. We do offer the gospel as the fulfillment of some needs and wants that people have, such as their need for dignity. But we offer the gospel as God's liberating power from some of their other needs and wants—such as their greed, or their quest to escape into the perfect "high." Furthermore, we know that people's felt needs are often symptoms of their deeper Need (with a capital "N") for forgiveness, justification, reconciliation, or the power of the Holy Spirit in their life; the gospel addresses both the need and the Need.

2. Churches often reach people through the ministry of *basic instruction* in "Christianity 101." Since, in a secular age, our target population no longer understands elementary Christianity, we begin where they are cognitively rather than where we would like them to be. Soper has long emphasized that any apostle, today, must be prepared to spend his or her whole life "explaining basic Christianity to people, what it basically teaches, claims, stands for, and offers—rather than what they take it to be."

We have learned two particularly important things about this ministry of instruction. First, the clarity of our truth claims is advanced more through story and analogy than through theological abstractions and arguments. For instance, St. Patrick explained our Christian understanding of "One God in Three Persons" through the humble analogy of the Irish shamrock; while a shamrock is one plant, its three connected but distinct leaves suggest how the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit can be distinct expressions of the one God.

Second, we have learned in adult education about the need to get adults "involved" in their learning. This has led some churches to convene and work with "seekers groups" as follows: The Christian convener is more facilitator than teacher. As group members raise questions about, say, Christianity's understanding of God as a "Trinity," the facilitator loans two or three participants some resources from the church library and these participants do their homework and present this Christian teaching at the next meeting of the seekers group. Some churches now stock their church libraries (or book shops) with books, videos, and other materials with proven usefulness to secular seekers.

3. With some secular people, though not quite a majority, we share from a functionally reduced biblical canon in our early conversations. Some of them associate Paul, and John, and the Old Testament with the "dogmatism" that turns them off, but they are usually open to Jesus,

and very interested in what Jesus taught, so our earliest witnessing may be from the gospels.

4. Many secular people who become believing Christians discover this possibility through what Ruell Howe called "the miracle of *dialogue*." The ministry of caring, intelligent conversations—especially conversations around their questions and doubts, opens more secular people to the possibility of faith than any other single approach I know of (though most converts report that multiple approaches helped reach them). Out of my own extensive experience with secular doubters and seekers, I have learned three things about the ministry of reasonable conversation (or "Apologetics") that are worth passing on: 1) You will discover that those years you have spent studying the scriptures and theology are a reproductive investment. You have already been entrusted with faithful satisfying answers to some of the questions that secular people ask! 2) You will hear them asking some other questions for which you do not, for now, have sufficient answers. That discovery will drive you to your knees, to the scriptures, and to theological study and reflection, and—in reflecting upon questions you could not answer, you will learn more useful theology than in a degree program of "desk theology." 3) They will ask some questions for which you will not have, and can not find, answers they will find immediately satisfying, but that will not supremely matter. They have now had the experience of, say, several conversations with a nondefensive, nonjudgmental Christian who cared enough to be vulnerable and talk through their doubts with them, and that experience is often used by the Holy Spirit. You have given them enough good reasons for them to know that Christianity is supported by good reasons, and often they will bring their remaining doubts with them into the first steps of faith.

5. In part because the Christian gospel is a multi-faceted gem, no one "gets" the message from one exposure. It typically takes weeks or months to come to adequate terms with the gospel's meaning, and its implications, and the costs of being a disciple. Because no one gets it the first time, the principle of *cumulative effect* instructs the Christian advocate. The seeker's repeated exposure to the same good news over time is necessary for most secular seekers to be able to adopt the faith.

6. The repeated communication of the same message over time, however, is not achieved by mere repetition, because that loses the receiver's attention and interest long before adoption can occur. So the companion principle is *creative redundancy*. The effective gospel communicator develops the capacity to say the same thing in a dozen or more different ways. The Apostle Paul models this principle in his speeches in The Acts of the Apostles and in his letters; though justification by grace through faith is often his prevailing insight, he never explains it exactly the same way twice. When one views Jesus' parable of The Pharisee and the Tax Collector as a drama with the same meaning, the possibilities of creative redundancy are even more apparent.

7. More and more converts out of secularity report that their *assimilation* into the community of faith *precedes* their *commitment* or their

discovery of faith. When I ask them "When did you feel like you really belonged?", they often report that they felt that they belonged before they believed, and that experience helped them believe. John Wesley observed this reality, and therefore encouraged seekers to join a Methodist class, and in three months a Methodist society, whether or not they yet experienced or believed anything. Wesley even saw the eucharist as "a converting ordinance" and welcomed seekers to find the gracious Presence at the table and altar. However, evangelicals more usually function by the opposite paradigm: Let people first get saved and profess faith, and *then* we will receive them into the fellowship circle. But increasing numbers of churches are rediscovering what Wesley knew—that the world is not stacked on the side of very many people finding saving faith, that occasional evangelical forays into the secular world do not greatly improve the odds, and that people are more likely to find faith through involvement within the Church than outside it, particularly involvement in its redemptive cells.

8. This reality introduces the final principle: The Christian faith is "*more caught than taught.*" In part, the purpose of evangelistic ministry is to enable people to experience the contagion of the Christian faith. I have already alluded to several patterns that help produce this contagion: They are more likely to respond to original Christianity in the receptive seasons of their lives, and from friends or relatives—who begin with their felt needs and questions, who meaningfully interpret the gospel in their language and cultural forms. Furthermore, secular people are more likely to "catch" the faith inside the Church than outside it, more likely in small groups than in the larger church, more likely from lay Christians than from clergy. Increasingly, churches see part of their mission as creating the kind of climate, worship, body life, and conversation ministries that permit seeking people to discover faith.

We can now know more about the effective communication of Christianity to secular people than any other generation of faithful people have known since secularization began several centuries ago and, though they still number less than 2% of America's churches, more churches are now pioneering in apostolic mission than ever before. I have been privileged to observe enough churches that have moved "from tradition to mission" that I can report four discoveries that these churches commonly experience.

First, the churches who "major" in interpreting Christianity to undiscipled people discover the reality of the Lord's prevenient grace—that in every season God's spirit is preparing the hearts of some people for saving grace, so the church can always find receptive people and groups. Second, such churches do themselves discover the meaning of the gospel in new depth (and this helps us understand why, in early Christianity, the apostles—who interpreted the faith to populations that did not yet believe, became the normative theologians of the Early Church). Third, they discover that the secular people who enter the faith and church bring their problems with them—often a different set of problems

than the church is used to; but the church discovers that the grace of Christ is great enough for those problems too.

Fourth, these "apostolic" churches discover a Life, Meaning, Excitement, Power, and Contagion that more traditional churches seldom experience. Skyline Wesleyan Church, in the San Diego area, has "majored" more in recent years on reaching people with no Christian background. One Sunday pastor John Maxwell was to baptize, by immersion, an athletic man into The Faith. As the man reclined in the pool and Maxwell's hand was poised above the man's forehead, the man spontaneously removed his right hand from the water and gave Maxwell the "high five!' People across the congregation started "high-fiving" each other in a spontaneous celebration of New Life in Christ. One day, a multitude of churches will experience such celebrations.

RESEARCHING EVANGELISM
The Need for a Course Correction

David Lowes Watson

The premise of this paper is that biblical and theological research of a profound and far-reaching nature must become a priority for evangelistic studies in North America. Such research is an axiom to which most of us in the field would readily subscribe. Yet it is now an imperative, because the practice of evangelism during the past twenty years has drawn predominantly from the cognate disciplines of communications theory, socio-cultural anthropology, socio-cultural psychology, and systems analysis.

These disciplines are, of course, *sine qua non* for the field.[1] They are the necessary complement to theological treatments of the subject, which otherwise are prone to the pitfall of abstraction, discussing what evangelism is not rather than what it is, and examining more closely what should not be proclaimed than that which should be shouted from the rooftops.[2] However, since the role of evangelistic studies, as with any practical academic discipline of the church, is to bring theory and practice together in a way that impacts the ministry and mission of the church very directly, those of us who engage in such work should pay careful attention to the balance of our collective research and writing. For even a cursory overview quickly reveals that, while there have been some important biblical and theological initiatives in the field in the past two decades, these have not impacted local congregations of the church to any measurable degree.[3] By contrast, work in the other cognate disciplines has significantly shaped the evangelism resources used by a wide range of denominations.[4]

Preliminary Observations

This is not the place to examine the reasons for such an imbalance,[5] but a few preliminary observations are in order. The first is that when

Dr. Watson is Professor of Theology and Congregational Life and Mission at Wesley Theological Seminary, Washington, D.C.

the church shapes its evangelistic strategies around the principles of communication and receptivity without equal attention to the complementary cognate disciplines of theology and biblical studies, it begs a very important question, namely, whether due attention has been given in the first place to traditioning the good news of Jesus Christ. This is a task that each generation of Christians must undertake if the gospel tradition is not to become mere traditionalism. And let us make no mistake, this is extremely hard work.[6] It is the inculturation about which Charles Kraft and George Hunter have written so helpfully,[7] but it is more. It is the acceptance of responsibility for receiving and handing on the *evangel* of God's salvation in Christ at our own time and place in history. Failure to do so renders us little more than Christian parasites, living off the faith and witness of our forebears.

It should concern us, therefore, that many of our present evangelistic models and strategies in North America utilize perceptions and understandings of the gospel that have been copied from our forebears in the faith rather than traditioned, and which are therefore open to challenge, theologically, biblically, and historically.[8] The issue here is not that there should be total uniformity in how we should announce the gospel of Jesus Christ. Contextual realities, to say nothing of sensitivities, preclude any such an ideological imposition. What should rather concern us is that failure to focus on the content of the gospel as well as its communication may well be giving the evangelists of the church permission and even encouragement to call for more steam from the boilers of the Titanic, when the pressing need today is for highly sensitive compass headings in a climate fraught with squalls for those who strive to be faithful to Jesus Christ.

The second observation is that the raising of biblical and theological issues in relation to evangelism seems to generate a lack of collegiality among those of us who write and teach in the field. By this I do not mean hostility, but rather a marked unwillingness to engage in anything other than surface dialogue. While such a reaction might be understandable, though regrettable, in congregational life and work, in the academy of the church it is altogether unacceptable. It renders our discourse partial if not partisan, and it denies the advantage of collegial criticism to those who make biblical and theological studies their cognate specialties. As a result, we seldom bring our collective expertise to bear on the crucial issues of soteriology, ecclesiology, and eschatology that face us today, to the twofold detriment of our work. On the one hand, much biblical, theological, and historical research remains untested by the realities of context and culture. On the other hand, evangelistic models and strategies frequently function with dated theological concepts.

There is, of course, a good reason for this circumspection. Evangelism is still a fledgling academic discipline, and many of us have to justify its very presence in a seminary curriculum. It might therefore seem prudent to maintain a united front, so to speak, toward those with whom we are striving to develop professional relationships. But after twenty years as an Academy, we must surely risk a degree of professional self-

exposure. It was at our annual meeting 1987 that Jim L. Waits confronted this question with some candor:

> Only if our teaching of evangelism participates in the rigor of the academic discipline can it justifiably stand alongside the classic and practical subjects of the theological curriculum. I believe that now is the unique opportunity for professors of evangelism to create precisely that kind of theological and practical discipline. To do so will require that you move beyond the common-sensical methodologies of the past to genuine research and analysis. It will require sophisticated understandings of cognate disciplines such as sociology and cultural anthropology *as well as theology and biblical disciplines* . . . In my judgment, and I think in the mind of many of my colleagues, it is still an open question whether the kind of rigor, definition, and basic research about which I am speaking will be forthcoming. It is my hope that the work of this Academy will provide just such a stimulus to that development.[9]

I have added the emphasis in this passage to stress that the complementarity of biblical and theological disciplines with those of sociology and cultural anthropology is every bit as important as the academic rigor Waits rightly advocates.

The third observation is that those who address theological and biblical issues central to the ministry of evangelism are likely to find themselves willy-nilly in the midst of some longstanding battles in the church. We must therefore be resolute in pursuing the issues which are proper for scholars of the church, lest we submit to ecclesial pressures and fail to question what are essentially anachronistic battle-lines. This is easier said than done, given the way in which many teaching positions in evangelism are financed. But at the very least we must ensure that our research and writing give full weight to the content of the gospel as well as to evangelistic context and method, or we may well find ourselves increasingly market-driven, both with regard to professional self-maintenance and in terms of the resources we provide for the church.

Our task is clear. It is to challenge our ecclesial and evangelistic leaders with faithfulness to the gospel. When, for example, we take as our teaching paradigms those congregations with much to show for their evangelistic ministries, and then extrapolate from their evident success the principles by which others might do likewise, we must also ask whether their success is based on the kinds of myopic soteriology, centripetal ecclesiology, and sectarian eschatology that are so often to be found in our enculturated North American churches. Such inquiries are not an inappropriate distraction, as has been suggested.[10] On the contrary, they are fundamental questions for the field, and most especially for those of us with academic responsibilities.

Not to beat about the bush, the issue is whether those of us who teach evangelism in our seminaries and schools of theology will accept the

task of serious inquiry into the ministry of evangelism as an academic discipline, or whether we will assume the compromised role of "evangelizing" our institutions, thereby precluding any genuine professional relationship with our faculty colleagues, and thereby also limiting our research and writing to subject matter that is most immediately useable. How we answer these questions may well determine our future as an academic guild, for along with the privilege of academic teaching comes the academic responsibility of exploring new and very probably controversial areas of research. If nothing else, this Academy must be the vanguard of the freedom to do so.

Now to the substance of the paper, which will be to lift up three of the key theological issues that affect evangelism today: soteriology, ecclesiology, and eschatology. Clearly this can be only the most preliminary of investigations, but perhaps we can scratch the surface sufficiently to indicate the extent of the work that lies ahead.[11]

Soteriology and Evangelism

The most important soteriological issue confronting the ministry of evangelism today takes us back to the very origins of our faith. As the New Testament makes clear, the pristine Christian communities lived in expectation of the imminent return of Christ (1 Thess 5:1–11; 1 Cor 15:51–58). Accordingly, they viewed themselves primarily as heraldic messengers, announcing the good news of Jesus Christ and proclaiming the promise of his return as the universal sovereign of *shalom* (Phil. 2: 9–11). What their gospel did not make clear, however, indeed could not make clear, was how long it would take for Christ's salvation to come to fulfilment. As the *parousia* of Jesus Christ became increasingly delayed, these early Christians found themselves in a tension which has been common to all Christians ever since. We expect the return of Christ—if we are faithful, that is—yet we continue to live in the world like every other human being. We must proclaim and live out the gospel entrusted to us, yet we must identify with the planet that Jesus came to save. If we fail to accept this tension, we surrender our very identity as messengers of the incarnate God.

More than any other members of the body of Christ, evangelists have the opportunity and the obligation to define this dialectic. To do so in the pristine Christian tradition means that those of us who teach in the field must sustain a profound soteriological tension at the very heart of our research, our writing, and our collegial deliberations. If we do not, then, as with any situation where there are dialectical exigencies, we will tend to ease the tension by opting for one polarity or the other. The result of this will be a compromised gospel which has lost its power to address the deepest human needs, or worse, a gospel that primarily offers an other-worldly salvation—a selective soteriology that is scripturally a self-contradiction, given Jesus' own prayer for the coming of God's kingdom on earth as in heaven (Mt. 6:10).

As an Academy, we have clear duties in this regard. Faced with the

enigma of a world in which some persons respond to the gospel and others do not, and faced with the theodicy of continuing hatred, violence, and tyranny in a world to which Jesus promised to bring love, peace, and justice, it can readily be understood why evangelists prefer not to wrestle with God's seemingly interminable plan of salvation. Yet to resolve the tension prematurely by regarding this life merely as the screening of candidates for eternity is to succumb to that worst of evangelistic failings, a soteriological impatience—the desire to have things much more cut and dried than is warranted either by scripture or by the history of the church. Of course there are severe scriptural warnings about the penalties for sin and the severity of God's judgment.[12] But if we do not give full weight in our *evangel* to the gracious mystery of God's salvation, we run the risk of placing so much emphasis on the need for human response to the gospel that we make faith in Christ the cause of our salvation, rather than Christ himself. In short, our evangelistic impatience can quickly usurp God's salvific prerogative.[13]

Such a soteriology makes our gospel parochial and exclusive, and more, can make those who respond to such an *evangel* spiritually insular. Examples are not hard to find in our North American congregations: well-meaning but misguided churchgoers who understand their salvation to be that of a privileged status with God by virtue of their suspended belief.[14] Not only does this foster an alienation from the rest of the world that is highly subjective, but it also evinces a marked inconsistency; for seldom does the qualitative difference such persons posit between themselves and their fellow human beings prove costly in terms of their discipleship. On the contrary, worldly comforts are often regarded as the legitimate bonuses of their creedal *gestalt*.

By the same token, the soteriological tension of the gospel can be prematurely resolved by opting for worldly idealisms and ideologies at the expense of the scandalous particularity of the gospel. In terms of congregational life, this often takes the form of a gospel that offers the benefits of community life otherwise lacking in our individualized and lonely society. When these benefits are offered without the obligations of Christian discipleship, however, the result is all too often an evangelistic concession to the cultural norms of instant satisfaction and hedonistic self-fulfilment, even when the need for repentance and conversion has been made clear.[15] Suspended disbelief is a small price to pay for the benefits that many congregations offer today, ranging from squash courts and saunas to the wherewithal of a reliable date. And if this observation seems unduly cynical, then it is a cynicism of defence against what would otherwise be unmitigated anger: anger at the extent to which so many of our congregations mis-spend their time, talents, and resources on self-centered procrastinations while the salvific work of Jesus in the world remains unattended; and anger at the extent to which our evangelism fails to challenge such a demonic dereliction of Christian discipleship.

On yet another plane, the soteriological tension of the gospel can be prematurely resolved by equating the coming reign of God with the

perfecting of worldly systems.[16] This too usurps the divine prerogative by separating the promises of Jesus from his personal rule. The scriptural imperative is unavoidable: We must wrestle in our evangelism with the tension of a universal gospel of salvation and the radical particularity of the Christ event. Jesus came with God's forgiveness and reconciliation for all the world (Jn. 3:16); he commissioned his disciples to take it to all the world (Mt. 28:18–20); and he gave them the spiritual power to sustain them in their task (Acts 2:1–4). But he also made clear that he was the one through whom all of this would be accomplished:

> The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, to preach the acceptable year of the Lord.
>
> (Is. 61:1f.; Lk. 4:18f.)

The evangelistic significance of this announcement in the Nazareth synagogue is that Jesus' words carried the power, not only of a future promise, but also of a present breaking in of God's salvation. The sovereign of this coming kingdom is named: Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph Nazareth (Lk. 1:33; Mt. 13:41; Jn. 18:36). The good news he brings is that of a new age, a new order, God's revolutionary *oekonomia*.[17] A new age: when time and eternity will be fused into a glorious new creation (Rev. 21:1–4); when there will be neither Jew nor Greek, neither slave nor free, neither male nor female (Gal. 3:28); when the wolf shall dwell with the lamb, the leopard shall lie down with the kid, the lion shall eat straw like the ox, and the earth shall be as full of the knowledge of God as the waters cover the sea (Is. 11:8ff.); when everyone will know God, from the least to the greatest (Jer. 31:34); when justice will roll down like waters, and righteousness like an ever-flowing stream (Amos 5:24); when there will be no more sound of weeping, nor cries of distress; when all children shall live beyond infancy, and all old people shall live out their days; when those who build houses shall live in them, and not have other possess them; then those who plant vineyards shall eat of them, and not have others take them away (Is. 65:20–5).

If the gospel proclaimed by the church spiritualizes these promises and consigns them to a heavenly realm, thereby relegating this world to a permanent state of inadequacy and ultimate hopelessness, then those of us who reflect on evangelism must marshal our researches and demand that the church's evangelists change their course. As Mortimer Arias has explained, this kind of *evangel* allows people to accept the benefits of God's salvation here and now, but to regard their responsibilities as incidental, on the grounds that it is ultimately impossible for humanity to make any real changes in the world the way it is.[18] This leads people to view their salvation as rescue *out of* the world, rather than a privilege to be shared *with* the world. It denies the incarnational

nature of the gospel, it disempowers the eschatological hope of the gospel, and accordingly renders the atonement of Christ a mere formality.[19]

The incorporation of such a soteriology into so much of our contemporary North American evangelism continues to spawn a privatized faith, which in turn leaves our congregations with little resistance to the corrosive influences of civil and folk religions.[20] Instead of confronting our culture with the gospel of Jesus Christ, the church merely reflects it. As Lesslie Newbigin and others are advocating, it is high time for Christians in the West, and North American Christians in particular, to take a hard look at the salvific content of the gospel they are propagating through their multifarious methods and strategies.[21]

Ecclesiology and Evangelism

All of this requires us also to look closely at the issue of evangelistic identity, which means first and foremost examining the role of the church in the spectrum of the coming reign of God. For the task of the church is not only to proclaim that Jesus Christ is savior of the world, but also to point to a *basileia* infinitely more righteous than its own faith community, and a *shalom* infinitely more pervasive than its own Christian witness.

The problem is that many congregations, due in no small measure to the content of their *evangel*, tend to confuse or even equate the church with the kingdom of God. This is an ecclesiological stance tantamount to saying that the reign of God will be fulfilled when everyone has joined the church—or worse, when God has finally closed the soteriological door on those who have declined churchly status, so that those who have accepted can begin to enjoy the heavenly feast.

It would be difficult to imagine an eschatological scenario farther removed from the spirit and the substance of Christ's teachings. Yet this ecclesial identity is widespread. And since it is contingent on the gathering of everyone into Christian "safe-houses," it engenders an evangelism that avoids those dimensions of the gospel likely to impede such a process.[22] It fosters what Juan Luis Segundo has termed *The General Rule of Pastoral Prudence*: "The absolute minimum in obligations in order to keep the maximum number of people."[23] It adapts the gospel to whatever seems to maximize personal and social response. In a word, it is the very antithesis of the Great Commission.[24]

The inversion of such an ecclesiology must be radical. Our evangelism has to make clear at the outset that in God's plan of salvation the church comes last, not first. Quite apart from the fact that this is what Jesus taught his disciples (Mt. 19:30; Mk. 10:44), it stands to reason that the Christ who emptied himself for the sake of the world expects his disciples to do the same (Phil. 2:1–11). Yet the prevailing evangelistic mindset in countless congregations continues to be that of ecclesial aggrandizement. Awards continue to be made to pastors who have expanded their constituencies. Best-selling books continue to be those that expatiate on how to gain new members. All explications and qualifications notwithstanding, the North American church is caught in a whirlpool of self-preoccupation that is drawing us into a vortex of self-consumption. And those of us responsible for leading the church in evangelism are not doing enough to prevent it.

The question thus becomes, what *is* the identity of this community of faith? For myself, I have long found the exegesis and theology of Jacques Ellul to be compelling, when he identifies the church as the sign of the coming reign of God.[25] Ecclesiologically, Christians are those who, within God's plan of salvation, are entrusted with an understanding of what God has done and is doing for the world through Jesus Christ. Evangelistically, they have the concomitant responsibility of telling what they know to as many as possible, as often as possible, in as many ways as possible.

Such an identity has two weighty implications for our evangelism. The first, to which we have already alluded, is that congregations cannot regard themselves as communities of the saved. They are called to *announce* the reign of God, not substitute for it. But the second implication could in fact be the catalyst for a tremendous outpouring of evangelistic energy that would burst out of our self-imposed ecclesial compounds, namely, the conviction that God's salvation is operative beyond the Christian community, and in every possible time and place. Such a vision could empower the church for its evangelism in ways we cannot begin to imagine.

This is not to deny the uniqueness and centrality of Jesus Christ in our gospel message, but merely to state the obvious: that Christians do not have sole performing rights to the divine drama of salvation. On the one hand, this could absolve the church from the awkwardness of being in yet not of the world—a theological riddle that most church members are never quite able to grasp. On the other hand, it could enable Christians to see neighborly pagans in a whole new light. Indeed, one of the major impediments to effective evangelism is the reluctance of laypersons to regard their neighbors as "unchurched" or "unsaved," with all the negative innuendo of these words. To realize that God is at work in their neighbors' lives no less than in their own would free them to share the gospel in exciting new ways—and, just as important, to learn something new about their own salvation in the process.

This inversion of evangelistic perspective will not come easily. It means acknowledging that God's grace is universal, among all people, all cultures, and, to a much greater degree than many evangelists have hitherto been willing to concede, among all religions. For when the church sees itself as the sign community of the coming reign of God, then the world becomes a means of grace for the church no less than the gospel is a means of grace for the world.[26] Once again, this is not to deny the uniqueness of Christ as savior of the world, but merely to give due recognition to the *whole* of his work. Christ is savior. But Christ is savior of the *world*, not just Christians. God's salvation in Christ is

not limited to the church, any more than the early church was limited to Jews (Gal. 2:11–21).

It further means that the church needs to listen to what non-Christians have to say about the future of the world. This again stands to reason, if our *evangel* is to be an authentic message of good news from the God who made not only planet Earth, but also the billions of stars and galaxies we are beginning to understand the universe to be. This illumination can come at an individual level, if Christians will be open to those who have little knowledge of the gospel, but whose integrity and valor in preparing the world for the coming reign of God are beyond question. It can also happen in human society, where basic good manners and a vital concern for justice, especially with regard to the poor and the oppressed, are often more in evidence among secular leaders than those of the church.

President Jimmy Carter reminded us of this in the forceful address he gave at the fifteenth annual meeting of our Academy at Candler School of Theology in 1987:

> I must confess to some apprehension at addressing a gathering of evangelism professors. But I was a little more at ease after reading this morning's *Atlanta Constitution*. Today, on the front page . . . was a column about a famous evangelist who is running for President. It turned out that he was meticulously going down the list of claims he had made as a TV evangelist and correcting them in the more pristine and demanding world of politics. It was reassuring to note that the standards of truth and honesty he had found in the political arena were much higher than those to which he had been accustomed in the religious and evangelical field.[27]

We should also note that this "mutual evangelization" can open up whole new vistas for inter-faith dialogue if evangelists would be open to the Holy Spirit at work in other religions.[28] If we truly believe Christ to be God incarnate, the only risk in such an openness would be that of possible correction for the Christian. The gospel itself would be at no risk at all. It never is.[29]

Eschatology and Evangelism

Rather than focus on the promises of the coming reign of God, this third section of the paper will address the other side of eschatology, namely, the critical challenge posed by Jesus in his many warnings to be ready for God's justice. The New Testament word that best expresses this is *krisis*, carrying with it the immanence of God's righteous initiatives and the necessity of our response. What makes the *krisis* of God unavoidable is that it has come in Jesus of Nazareth. It is in our midst here and now in the risen Christ, and it will culminate in a day when *all* will be raised, "those who have done good, to the resurrection of life, and those who have done evil, to the resurrection of judgment" (Jn. 5:28f.).

In other words, this reign of God will not come without a day of accountability, when all will be confronted by the justice of a God who is not impartial, but pro-active—and parentally pro-active at that. Thus we find that the kingdom must be received like a little child (Mk. 10:15; Lk. 18:17); it must be sought (Mk. 15:43); and it has standards of behavior which must be observed (Mt. 25:34; I Cor. 6:9f.). Those who refuse to accept it will find themselves shut out (Mt. 22:14; 25:12,30,46; Gal. 5:21); and just as important, if those who are already part of it fail to honor its conditions, *they too will be cast out* (Mt. 21:43). It is salutary to recall that the parables of Jesus about God's justice are predominantly concerned with right *action*, not right belief (Mt. 25:1–46).

The reason we need to give more attention to these teachings is that our evangelism frequently minimizes God's justice. I am not referring here to the question of universalism, which tends to be caricatured in evangelistic discussions rather than properly considered and refuted. The issue is rather the way in which we imply, and even specify, that once people have accepted the atoning work of Christ's salvation in their lives, they are excused God's judgment. Nothing could be farther from the scriptural truth. On the contrary, Christians can expect a more exacting judgment at the *eschaton* precisely because of their privileged relationship with Christ and the obligations of their discipleship (Mt. 25:28–30).

If there are any doubts about this, the history of our own century must surely put them to rest. The suffering, the genocide, the warfare, and the global inequities in our lifetime have reached proportions which, for millions of people, have almost made hell a preferential option. If so much can happen to Christ's little ones in this life, then of this we can be sure, that a God who is just and righteous will not allow the injustices of human history, and especially those injustices committed in the very name of Jesus, to go unpunished in eternity.

Our evangelistic error with respect to this eschatological mystery is weighty. All too often we adapt God's justice to a soteriology that on the one hand says more about our forensic fascinations than about the grace of God, and that on the other hand dispenses spiritual amphetamines to those whose real need is the meat of the gospel.[30] Let us be clear: God's purpose in Christ was not to condemn, but to save the world, and this Christ accomplished on the cross. But let us be equally clear: His suffering and death did not "satisfy" God's justice—a view of the atonement that came out of the Jewish priestly tradition and the niceties of first-century Roman law. On the contrary, Christ's passion *enacted* God's justice, in the Hebrew prophetic tradition of deliverance. For God's justice is also God's righteousness (Is. 2:12–18), and will one day be established throughout the earth (Is. 42:1–4; Jer. 31:31–34; Mt. 12:18–21).

It is precisely this eschatological impetus of God's justice that makes eternal punishment inevitable *and* remedial. If God's justice is merely

a judicial system, with God as impartial judge, then truly we are without hope. But the good news is that God has taken the initiative in Christ Jesus, not only to make salvation available to us, but much more, to enact righteousness and justice throughout the world. Along with the hope of our salvation, therefore, comes the necessary burnishing and refining of humanity, including those of us who are privileged to know Jesus personally. For as long as one little child suffers or starves or is neglected, even one, then God's justice remains unfulfilled. Far from the gospel affording us release from God's justice, it subjects us to it much more searchingly and persistently.

Given our evangelistic penchant for quick and easy salvation, however, it is little wonder that Christ's little ones continue to starve and hurt and die. After all, what motive do we leave with our converts for doing anything about the suffering of the world, given the absolution we grant them once they have "made their decision for Christ"? By contrast, our forebears in the early church wrestled with this question, and eventually formulated a doctrine to express the eschatological and soteriological tension they experienced in their mission to the world—the doctrine of *recapitulation*. Taking into account the progression of human history and the continued delay of Christ's *parousia*, Irenaeus and then Origen formulated the concept of restoration, or restitution, of the human race to its former state (Acts 3:21), and the re-uniting, or re-gathering, of all things under the headship of Christ (Eph. 1:10,22). As Paul had argued, if Adam's fall could wreak so much harm on the human race, surely Christ could go one better and put it all right (Rom. 5:12–21).

This teaching has long been viewed as an "optimism of grace" on the part of Origen.[31] However, it reminds us that the scope of Christ's triumph will never be reduced to the results of our evangelism. The "long, slow victory of Christ" will be universal, all temporary setbacks notwithstanding. While the scriptures are appropriately cautious about details, the psalmist is in no doubt about the extent of the struggle and its ultimate outcome: "If I ascend to heaven, thou art there! If I make my bed in Sheol, thou art there!" (Ps. 139:8). Paul is equally sure that "neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord" (Rom. 8:37–39). The problem does not lie with the salvific intent of God, but with the eschatological impatience of the church, and evangelists in particular.

By the same token, the scriptures are clear that God's judgment has no parameters. God is no respector of persons (Rom. 2:11; 2 Cor. 5:10). The *krisis* of God's justice will continue into all eternity along with the grace of God's *agape*. To limit either of these divine attributes is thus equally presumptuous. Neither God's judgment nor God's righteousness is limited by time. There will always be God's judgment, and there will always be God's grace. It is by no means incidental that Christ's severest words are reserved, not for those who are ignorant of God, but for those who know God, yet persist in disobeying God's law (Mt. 21:28–32, 33–41; 23:23–36; 25:24–30,41–46).

Conclusion

As we noted at the outset, this has been little more than a scratching of the surface. None of these issues is newly on the agenda of theological or biblical scholarship, and some of them are already being addressed by colleagues in the field.[32] But we must now devote more of our energies to a meaningful interpretation of the gospel in order to complement the considerable work already accomplished in the areas of communications theory, socio-cultural anthropology, socio-cultural psychology, and systems analysis.

In some instances, this will mean the incorporation of new and probably uncomfortable changes into the form and the substance of our evangelism. In other instances, it may require us to challenge the work of theologians and biblical scholars as being incongruent with the gospel and detrimental to the mission of the church. This is what makes the work and the collegiality of this Academy so vital. At a time when the church in North America has become self-preoccupied to the point of paranoia, there are few places it can look for trustworthy direction and counsel. Let us make it our prayerful intent to provide that direction and counsel, with academic integrity, and in faithful obedience to Jesus Christ, whose evangelists we have been called to equip for their task of announcing the coming reign of God.

NOTES

[1] See, for example, George G. Hunter, III, *How to Reach Secular People* (Nashville: Abington Press, 1992).

[2] The pastoral implications of this theological ambivalence are well illustrated and helpfully discussed in *Christian Ministry* 23:5 (September-October 1992), pp. 9–20.

[3] For example, the directions set by Alfred C. Krass, *Five Lanterns at Sundown* (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans, 1978), and Mortimer Arias, *Announcing the Reign of God* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1984), remain largely unmodelled for local congregations. There are, however, some hopeful signs, as for example, the denominational resource by Richard Stoll Armstrong, *Faithful Witnesses: A Course in Evangelism for Presbyterian Laity* (Philadelphia: The Geneva Press, 1987), and the consideration for wider use by The United Methodist Church of the resources developed by William J. Abraham, using the principles of Christian initiation expounded in *The Logic of Evangelism* (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans, 1989).

[4] See, for example, the resources edited by Glenn C. Smith, published jointly by the Paulist National Catholic Association and Tyndale House: *Evangelizing Adults* (1985), *Evangelizing Youth* (1985), and *Evangelizing Blacks* (1988).

[5] See William J. Abraham, *The Logic of Evangelism*, pp. 2–10.

[6] On this, see Albert C. Outler, *The Christian Tradition and the Unity We Seek* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1957).

[7] Charles H. Kraft, *Christianity in Culture: A Study in Dynamic Biblical Theologizing in Cross-Cultural Perspective* (Maryknoll: Orbis Books, 1979), pp. 318ff.; George G. Hunter III, *How to Reach Secular People*, pp. 73ff.
[8] See, for example, Alfred C. Krass, *Evangelizing Neopagan North America* (Scottdale, PA: Herald Press, 1982). This remains one of the most perceptive evangelistic analyses of the North American context in recent years. See especially pp. 93ff. and 118 ff.
[9] "Evangelism and the Theological Curriculum," *Journal of the Academy for Evangelism in Theological Education*, Volume Three (1987–1988), pp. 44–45.
[10] Donald A. McGavran, *Effective Evangelism: A Theological Mandate* (Phillipsburg, NJ: Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing Company, 1988), pp. 4ff. This, among other polemical declarations, makes it very difficult to receive Donald McGavran's last book with the respect and affection one would very much like to accord it.
[11] I have addressed these issues at greater length in *God Does Not Foreclose* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1990).
[12] See *God Does Not Foreclose*, pp. 75–96.
[13] Robert E. Coleman goes so far in this direction as to state that "responsibility for salvation rests with each individual" (*Journal of the Academy for Evangelism in Theological Education*, Volume Six (1990–1991), p. 37.
[14] I am indebted to Theodore Jennings for this perceptive phrase in his keynote address to the Ninth Oxford Institute for Methodist Theological Studies, held in the summer of 1992.
[15] See Charles R. Taber, "God vs. Idols: A Model of Conversion," *Journal of the Academy for Evangelism in Theological Education*, Volume Three (1987–88), p. 28.
[16] Thereby engaging in what Jurgen Moltmann has described as presumptive utopianism (*Theology of Hope: On the Ground and the Implications of a Christian Eschatology* [New York: Harper & Row, 1967], p. 34).
[17] M. Douglas Meeks, *God the Economist: The Doctrine of God and Political Economy* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1989), p. 120.
[18] Mortimer Arias, *Announcing the Reign of God*, pp. 8ff.
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C. H. SPURGEON "ROLE MODEL" FOR EVANGELISM IN THEOLOGICAL EDUCATION

Lewis Drummond

Introduction

It all began on a snowy Sunday morning in January, 1850. The village of Coldchester, a small community some 50 miles northeast of London, provided the scene. The snow pelted down; it boded to be a miserable day. A 15-year-old Victorian lad trudged through the snow, making his way to church that Lord's day. Of course, it was not particularly unusual for a Victorian boy to be going to church, for as one historian put it, the Victorians were "notoriously religious." Yet, something different characterized this young fellow. He was going to every church in Coldchester. He deeply desired to hear some preacher tell him how he could come to know God and rid himself of that awful burden of guilt on his shoulders, as Bunyan's Pilgrim put it. Up to this point in time, however, he had been unsuccessful. As he plodded down the street that Sunday morning, shivering because of the cold snow, he passed a deadend lane called Artillery Street. He remembered his mother had told him about a Primitive Methodist Church on that little lane. So, he reasoned, "Although I planned to go elsewhere, because it is so cold, I think I'll turn in to the Methodist Church." He shuffled along Artillery Street and entered the building. The small chapel measured only 30 by 50 feet. He became the 15th worshipper. Could he expect much out of this service? He sat approximately two-thirds of the way back on the preacher's right, under a little balcony. (The spot is marked by a plaque today.) He was so depressed and discouraged he could not look up. He had his chin tucked in his chest as the service progressed. Apparently because of the snow storm, the pastor did not make an appearance. So an illiterate lanky layman came to the pulpit to preach. Later, the young man said

Dr. Drummond is the Billy Graham Professor of Evangelism at the Beeson Divinity School of Samford University, Birmingham, Alabama.

the preacher could not even pronounce the words correctly. But he carried on, preaching on the well-known text in Isaiah: "Look unto me all ye ends of the earth and be ye saved" (Isaiah 45:22). But he really did not know how to preach. The preacher's sermonic style was to quote his text, make a few comments, and then repeat the text, make a few comments more, and repeat the text again. He droned on in that fashion. He declared, "'Look unto me all ye ends of the earth and be ye saved.' Now, you don't have a hundred pounds in the bank to look. Anybody can look. 'Look unto me all ye ends of the earth and be ye saved.' You do not have to have a college education to look or be a successful businessman. Why, anybody can look. 'Look unto me all ye ends of the earth and be ye saved.'" In that boring fashion the preacher continued for about 10 minutes when suddenly he spotted the young 15-year-old boy. He did probably what no preacher should ever do. He stopped, he looked at the lad, pointed his bony finger at him and said, "Young man you look very miserable." The young man said later in life, "Oh, I was so miserable." "Yes," said the preacher, "and you will be miserable in life and you'll be miserable in death unless you obey my text. Young man look unto Jesus; *look, look, look.*" The young man said, "I could have looked my eyes away, but I did look, and I lived. And in the words of Richard Knell, 'Clang went every harp in heaven.'" Charles Haddon Spurgeon had come to faith in Jesus Christ.

Four years later, at the age of 19, young Charles received a call to become pastor of the historic New Park Street Baptist Church of London, England. The church site, located at the foot of Southwick Bridge on the southside of the Thames River, proved to be a terrible spot. Spurgeon said it reminded him of the "black hole of Calcutta." Across the street sat a vinegar factory. Pubs surrounded the area. The auditorium of the church building seated 1,500 people, but Sunday morning, when Spurgeon preached his first sermon, only 80 folks arrived. Could he expect much out of this? In six months, 2,000 people crammed themselves in the 1,500 seat auditorium every Sunday, and many Sundays a thousand were turned away who could not get in. The crowds became so large Spurgeon himself actually knocked out the windows in the gallery with his cane to in let fresh air. He had London turning upside down. Through the 37 years of Spurgeon's ministry in London, the church became known as the Metropolitan Tabernacle and it developed into the largest evangelical church in the world.

Most importantly for this study, in the context of the Metropolitan ministry, Spurgeon founded the Pastor's College. It became Spurgeon's pride and joy. He called the institution, "My first-born and best beloved." He poured himself into the training of ministers. Hundreds and thousands have come through the College and through the years have been graduated with a spirit and knowledge of evangelism with such integrity that only heaven itself can record the remarkable results. The year 1992 marked the 100th anniversary of the death of Charles Haddon Spurgeon, but his legacy, especially in theological education for evangelism, lives on. The pattern and spirit that Spurgeon set can inspire and instruct

us to this day. What did he do? How did he become the inspiration of so many in pastoral evangelism? Four things can be said about the ministry of this unusual man as it relates to theological education for evangelism. Therefore, we shall attempt to see Spurgeon as a *theologian,* as a *preacher,* as a *minister,* and finally, Spurgeon as a *man of God.* We shall then attempt to discover how these qualities relate to evangelism in education in our contemporary moment.

I. Spurgeon as a Theologian

Although Charles Haddon Spurgeon was utterly committed to theological education, and evangelism through theological education in particular, he had never been formally theologically educated himself. He intended to attend a theological institution, but a strange experience precluded it. The story is, he was to be interviewed in a friend's home by Dr. Angus who was then the principal, or president, of Regents Park College, a Baptist theological school. In the friend's house a rather simple-minded maid put Dr. Angus in one room and Spurgeon in another. They had both come at different times and neither knew the other was there. The maid failed to inform either Spurgeon or Angus. They both sat for two hours waiting, and then left at different times. They never crossed paths. It deeply discouraged Charles. As he was walking home, however, like a word from heaven it came to him, "Desire great things for thyself, desire them not." He took that, because he was something of a mystic, as a word from the Lord. He never went to theological college, yet there has probably never been a more educated pastor-evangelist. He had a brilliant, disciplined mind. If they had had IQ tests in those days, he would no doubt have been in the genius category. Being an avid reader, he amassed a personal library of some 30,000 volumes. (Spurgeon's library is today housed at William Jewel College in Liberty, Missouri.) Most of the books are heavy portfolio, theological works by the Puritans, each one heavily annotated by Spurgeon's own hand. Spurgeon was called by Prime Minister William Gladstone, "the last of the Puritans." Rightly so, he reveled in Puritan theology, and he poured over their writings diligently, not to mention a wide breadth of other studies. Spurgeon was an educated man, even if self-educated.

At the same time, Spurgeon said he had learned all his theology from a char-woman who was a maid in the little school he attended immediately after his conversion. That is probably something of an exaggeration. In his early years, Spurgeon was brought up in his grandfather's home. The old man was a Congregational Puritan pastor. Charles no doubt learned much there. His father was, in 20th century terminology, a bivocational pastor. He worked as an accountant for a coal company and preached every Sunday in his little Congregational pastorate. Charles surely learned from his father. Regardless, through it all, he became a "five-point Calvinist," a true reformed Puritan. This posed problems for Spurgeon's later ministry. For example, those of Arminian persuasion would never invite him into their pulpit. Yet, with a fervent

heart to win people to Christ, Spurgeon preached like an Arminian. He believed fully in human responsibility. He always declared, "Whosoever will may come." That put him at odds with the high-Calvinist churches, so they too barred him from their pulpits. One leading Calvinistic pastor (the Surrey Chapel) took time every Sunday morning in the worship service to criticize Spurgeon's previous Sunday sermon which had been published. Spurgeon in a sense became a man without a country. One day, someone came to him and asked how he reconciled this paradox of divine election and human responsibility. Spurgeon replied, "I do not try to reconcile friends." He would actually pray in the great Tabernacle, "Lord save your elect and then elect some more." That is what he stood for, and that is the core of his evangelical theology. He took that stance because he became convinced this is what the Bible taught. He was above all a biblicist and this he continually brought before his students at the College. He believed they should be fully grounded on a solid evangelical, biblical, theological base.

At the age of 52 Spurgeon became embroiled in what became known as the "Downgrade Controversy." He stood unswervingly for the basic truths of evangelical theology and the practice of fervent evangelism, and paid dearly for it. He was castigated on all sides. Five years later, a broken man, he died. After his death, Charles' son Thomas Spurgeon said in conversation with a Baptist leader, "The Baptist Union almost killed my father." The other man replied, "Yes, and your father almost killed the Baptist union." It proved a most traumatic time. The Downgrade Controversy has never really been resolved, as indicated by a recent controversy in the British Baptist Union called the "Michael Taylor Controversy." The issue was Christology. So, it goes on. But the point is, Spurgeon stood for his theology and for it literally laid his life on the line. This spirit he attempted to instill in his students. He contended the gospel was at stake, and no sacrifice is too great to defend the heart of Christ's message and work. Week by week he lectured to his students on these sort of issues. His *Lectures to My Students* remains a classic to this day.

Now the question is, what is our task in the light of this man as a role model? For the professor who would instill the evangelistic spirit in students one thing seems essential: we must help our students develop a solid, mature evangelical theology. With all the tensions, with all the dynamics and misunderstandings that sometimes it will precipitate, we must remain biblical. Regardless of whether we take a "Calvinistic" or "Arminian" approach, or both (as in some sense did Spurgeon), the Scriptures must be the essential base in developing a theology of evangelism. For Spurgeon, the Bible formed the foundation of all his theological concepts, and if he can teach us anything it is this: it is the presentation by the entire truth of the Scriptures to which people respond. Spurgeon would tell us we should therefore lay aside any presupposition that precludes instilling in students a deep appreciation for and commitment to the Word of God.

Spurgeon's reasoning is obvious: a firm grasp of the gospel emerges

from a biblical theology: One cannot do evangelism without a clear view of what the message is. Bible orientation is vital in theological education for evangelism. That appears very elementary, yet we seem to have people leaving theological institutions without that essential grasp. Our task as educators is to see a biblical theology of evangelism fully elucidated. If anyone did that, it was Spurgeon. So many visualize Spurgeon as a marvelous pastor and preacher, the man of social conscience, etc. Those things are true. But study the life of Spurgeon carefully, and one must say that first and foremost here is the knowledgeable evangelist and educator *par excellence*. Spurgeon's entire evangelistic approach and ministry emerged out of a profound, biblically based theology with a clear understanding of the gospel. That he communicated to his students. And they responded in very practical ways. For example, in Spurgeon's lifetime over 50 churches were planted in the London area alone by his evangelistically committed students. We talk much about church planting today. Spurgeon and his students were doing it 150 years ago, and doing it very well. Actually, 250 churches were established in all of England in the lifetime of Charles Spurgeon through his students. Pragmatic principles are important to communicate to students and it all grows out of a proper theology. Prime Minister David Lloyd George declared, "Spurgeon was the greatest preacher of his age." I would add, and a great theological educator in evangelism as well.

II. Spurgeon as a Preacher

Helmut Thielike said, "Sell all the books you have and buy Spurgeon."[1] Joseph Parker called him "a prophet, yea, more than a prophet."[2] Spurgeon unquestionably filled the role of the "prince of preachers." What can we say about his preaching? To answer this basic query we are back to the Bible; he was above all a biblical preacher. A reading of any of Spurgeon's sermons makes it amply clear that when he took a text, he stuck to that text. He not only stuck with the text, he digested it thoroughly. It was incredible what he could do with a brief text. It must be admitted that at times he would do more with it than the text really allowed. But he was biblical. That is most important in all preaching. In Spurgeon's hand the use of the Bible came across as innovative, fresh, and relevant. This no doubt is why he got all the adulation he did, as well as the criticism he received. He broke with conventions and preached the Word to the common people, and they heard him gladly. Virtually every daily paper was talking about him, some positive, some negative. One negative author said he has "gone up like a rocket and ere long will soon come down like a stick."[3] The *Saturday Review*, a weekly periodical, castigated him constantly. Spurgeon said the definition of a real Christian is to love God and be hated by the *Saturday Review*. But he received his praise as well. All today agree he was a pulpit genius with a deep respect for the Word of God and its power to communicate to people's deepest needs. His pulpit style sparked life in the Londoners. James Sheridan Knowles, a former manager of the

Drury Lane Theater in London's famed theater district, said in a lecture to ministerial students, "Boys, you heard the Cambridgeshire lad . . . I would offer him a fortune for a season on the boards of that place."[4] Spurgeon had a natural dramatic flare that captured the people. He was never tied to a manuscript. Actually, he would take only a bare outline to the pulpit, sometimes written on the back of an envelope. He prepared it on Saturday night. But, he preached to people's needs, he preached scripturally, he spoke with language and word pictures common people could grasp. He got on their "wave-length" and they heard him by the thousands despite the critics of the "establishment." At any rate, there are more books in print by Spurgeon today than any living or dead English author. Over 100 million of copies of his sermons have been published and sold. He had an incredible preaching ministry.

The point of it all is, in Spurgeon's preaching he brought the gospel into the context of everyday London life. We talk today about preaching in a cultural context; he was doing it 150 years ago. He understood people; he paid the price to understand people. He learned to communicate. I tell my students, I do not care how theologically correct you see yourself to be, or how honest and sincere you are; if you fail to communicate, you fail. I think Spurgeon felt that way. His *Lectures to My Students*, eliminating the Victorian language, are as helpful and stimulating today as they were years ago. I believe the days of great preaching are not over. I believe preaching can yet be useful in the evangelization of the world. I think Spurgeon would agree with that. Spurgeon said, "the written Word convicted me, the preached Word saved me." Thus it seems to me that we must teach our students to preach the gospel. That means relevant messages based on the Bible. These two principles, relevance and biblically based sermons, are the heart of it, and they were beautifully combined in Spurgeon. We should aid our students to implement those ministry basics in the pulpit as did Spurgeon. There is still power in the pulpit to evangelize. Would that our students were truly committed to that reality.

Of course, most theological students will one day be serving as pastors. Does the pastoral ministry of Spurgeon teach us anything?

III. Spurgeon as a Pastoral Minister

Charles was a pastor. As stated, through the years of his ministry in London he grew the largest evangelical church in the world. The days of the mega-church did not begin in the 1970's. Spurgeon built a mega-church a hundred years earlier, and it was something to behold. A significant measure of that success in growth emerged out of his pastoral, social ministry. Over 25 different services emanated from the Metropolitan Tabernacle. Here was a man whose heart pulsated for the needs of London. Many Londoners on the southside were in straights simply to eek out an existence. When the tide was out on the Thames River, you could see them wade through the muck and mud on the banks digging with their hands trying to find a scrap of metal they could sell to the

junk dealer. Sometimes they would find a penny; it would be a day of rejoicing. The great heart of Spurgeon went out to those needy people. In the inner city, street urchins by the thousands endured terrible circumstances just to survive. Spurgeon built a great orphanage to minister to them. It was a beautiful institution and remains to this day. On and on the record reads. I have never read or heard of a pastoral social ministry comparable to that of Spurgeon and the Metropolitan Tabernacle. The so-called "great divorce" had not taken place in Spurgeon's day, i.e. setting social action over against evangelism and vice versa. This "divorce" is one of the great tragedies of American Christianity. But Spurgeon kept the marriage together. He followed the example of our Lord. What did Jesus do when he addressed a person? He simply met all needs as he found them. Did someone need an arm straightened? He straightened it. Did someone need something to eat? Jesus fed them. Did a person need to be forgiven and get right with God? Then our Lord saved them. Spurgeon took that approach, and in so doing became a great minister. The stories of his social ministry are almost endless. The great philanthropist Lord Shaftesbury deeply appreciated Spurgeon. Students today need to learn that lesson. The principle of social ministry should be deeply instilled in our students as they prepare for service. That is a part of theological education, and that too results in great evangelism. Finally, we look at:

IV. Spurgeon as a Man

The question again arises: What kind of a man was Spurgeon? This last consideration attempts to define what he was as a man. Although Spurgeon was a good theologian, if an unsophisticated one, a great preacher and a significant social leader, he was above all a man after God's own heart. What did that mean for the pastor of the London congregation?

First, a good minister of the Christ must be human. Charles certainly measured up on that score. He exhibited a warm, outgoing personality. He loved people and his sense of humor was winsomely contagious. For example, during a general parliamentary election, he arrived unaccustomedly late for a speaking engagement. Explaining his tardiness, he related to the congregation that he had stopped to vote. "To vote!" exclaimed a super-pious critic, "but my dear brother, I thought you were a citizen of the new Jerusalem!" "So, I am," Spurgeon retorted, "But, my 'old man' is a citizen of the world." "Oh! but, you should mortify your 'old man,'" the critic commented. "That is exactly what I did," Spurgeon rejoined, "for my 'old man' is a Tory and I made him vote Liberal."[5] That ended the encounter.

Spurgeon actually received considerable criticism for permeating his sermons with humor. Charles defended himself saying, "If you knew how much I held back you would not criticize." On one occasion he won the competition for the best joke. It went as follows: A man once said to Charles, "You are out of it in joking about my red hair. It is not

red, it is golden." "Ah! Yes, golden," Spurgeon replied, "*Eighteen carat.*"[6] A friend once remarked, "What a bubbly fountain of humor Mr. Spurgeon had. I have laughed more, I verily believe, when in his company than during all my life beside."[7] His humor spoke of a happy Christian, and that he was. Someone said of Charles, "Spurgeon's cheerfulness is not evidence of his having the natural charisma of a 'good sense of humor.' His humor rather bears witness to the grace that is at work in him."[8] Another said it well when he stated, "Suddenly the kingdom of God popped out not only in men's hearts, but in the diaphragm."[9] An interesting insight into the almost playful humor of the man is found in his application form for life insurance. On the medical questionnaire one question read: "Whether the life proposed has ever been afflicted with any fits or convulsions since infancy." Spurgeon filling in the blank wrote: "No, unless convulsions of laughter are meant."[10]

Spurgeon had his serious side, however. He often suffered depression, at times serious depression. His rheumatic gout became something of the culprit in that continuous problem. Moreover, he took his preaching with deep seriousness, even to the point that often he would be so under the burden of his message and the responsibility of standing in Christ's stead, that when the deacons would come in the vestry for prayer before the service, they would find him literally nauseated. Spurgeon said, "Never have I to preach that I don't feel terribly sick—literally sick, I mean—so that I might as well be crossing the channel."[11] No uncalled for lightheartedness intruded. He had a most sensitive spirit—almost too sensitive at times.

Not only that, if one aspires to be mighty before God, one must have a passion to point people to faith in Christ. Here Spurgeon excelled, as already implied. Consequently, his evangelistic ministry proved as powerful and as profoundly appreciated as his pastoral preaching and social ministries. He preached in barns, theaters, wherever people would gather. As biographer Nichols put it:

> Spurgeon's preaching has been evaluated, his writings analyzed, his philanthropy considered, and his political involvement summarized. However, it was the role of Pastor-Evangelist which dominated his ministry. Evangelism was at the heart of all that he sought to do. Whether preaching for the pulpit or speaking with individuals, Spurgeon was always an evangelist. The many avenues of evangelical ministry all arose from his consuming passion for souls.[12]

Nichols is correct. Spurgeon himself said, "I could scarcely content myself being five minutes without doing something for Christ."[13] He reveled in conversions stemming from his ministry. He stated, "I'd rather be the means of saving a soul from death than be the greatest orator on earth."[14] He translated that passion into helping others to become "evangelists." In 1867 the Metropolitan Tabernacle had 250 members engaged in evangelistic work.

Moreover, Spurgeon, being a very practical man, realized that if London was to be truly taken for Christ, evangelism must center in the planting of new churches. As seen, in this labor he likewise excelled. He knew a passion for souls must result in sensible, practical work, like beginning new congregations. He said nothing would avail without action.[15]

Quite obviously, Spurgeon was a free-thinker. It takes that sort of man also to be effective in ministry. He read widely and was abreast of his day. Uncombered by tradition, he would do anything that was legitimate and ethical to enhance his church and reach people. He could never be bound by the rigid ethos of his day. He became a stellar innovator of the first magnitude. To defy deadening tradition seemed his forte. The preaching that flowed from his pulpit precipitated a revolution in itself. London castigated him as vulgar and crude with his poignant Anglo-Saxon style. Yet, he so captivated the common people that they came in tens of thousands to sit enthralled at his earthy oratory. But, enough has been said concerning his preaching. That free spirit, however, precipitated the many innovative ministries and approaches that characterized his ministry.

Furthermore, for one to be used in the service of Christ, prayer and tribulation are essential ingredients. Tribulation always seems to play a vital role in the Holy Spirit's preparing a servant of God for great service, for trials lead people to fervent prayer. And prayer is clearly the basis of effective ministry. Spurgeon's trials are legendary. All through life he experienced difficulties that drove him to despair and thus to his knees. He confessed, "There are dungeons beneath the castle of despair as dreary as the abodes of the dead, and some of us have been in them."[16] Inspired by their pastor, the people in New Park Street Baptist Church prayed fervently that spiritual awakening and effective ministry would burst out in the ministry of their young pastor. And they were not disappointed. The moving of the Spirit of God in the congregation and through the life of their minister proved quite astounding.

Spurgeon himself actually walked in the spirit of continuous prayer. Though not given to long formal prayers, he prayed "without ceasing". He stated, "You cannot measure fire by the bushel nor prayer by the length."[17] He believed that and practiced it. Actually, he spent only one or two whole nights in prayer in his entire life, but he walked with God in such depth that he could move from conversation with a friend and then into prayer in a moment.

It goes without saying that to be useful to God, a person must be filled with the Holy Spirit (Ephesians 5:18). Spurgeon certainly exemplified what it means to "be filled with all the fullness of God" (Ephesians 3: 19). He stated, "If there were only one prayer which I might pray before I died it would be this, 'Lord, send thy church men filled with the Holy Ghost and with fire.'"[18]

Spurgeon, like all men and women of God, had his full count of critics. As previously pointed out, he became the recipient of a barrage of barbs. Nonetheless, the detractors notwithstanding, no pastor ever preached

with more spiritual power—and popularity—than did Spurgeon. The remarkable conversions that occurred in the Metropolitan Tabernacle attest to his dynamic life and ministry.

Above all, to be used significantly by God one must be God's man or God's woman. Spurgeon had unusual gifts. He was a man with a brilliant mind and a captivating personality. He possessed a marvelous voice and his natural gift of oratory skills amazed the multitudes that came to hear him. He could organize his work brilliantly. But primarily, he loved the Lord Jesus Christ with all his heart. He was a Christian man in the full biblical sense of the word. Spurgeon's deepest desire centered in living his life for God in Christian holiness. He declared,

> I would rather be holy than happy if the two things would be divorced. Were it possible for men always to sorrow and yet be pure, I would choose the sorrow if I might win the purity, for to be free from the power of sin to be made to love holiness is true happiness."[19]

Spurgeon had one consuming purpose and goal: To exalt his Savior in godly living and in preaching the gospel with power. It hardly needs to be said that these spiritual qualities must be instilled in students. A wholesome, contagious, mature piety is essential for effective evangelism. Our responsibility as educators in evangelism is to instill these qualities in our students. That is as important as any other aspect of theological education. Perhaps it is the most vital aspect of our ministry in touching young lives.

Conclusion

Therefore, when Spurgeon stood before his students to lead them into a ministry of evangelism and outreach, they saw in their mentor a great preacher, a philanthropist, a great thinker, and above all, a man of God. He devoted himself to his students, and they loved him with equal commitment to the principles that he constantly taught and lived before them. As a consequence, a host of evangelistic-minded ministers of the gospel have encircled the globe down through the 150 years of Spurgeon's College, and eternity alone can tell the entire story. Here is evangelism in theological education at its personal leadership best.

NOTES

[1] Lewis A. Drummond, *Spurgeon: Prince of Preachers* (Grand Rapids, Kregel Publications) 1992, p. 25.
[2] Ibid., p. 277.

[3] Ibid., p. 214.
[4] Ibid., p. 202.
[5] Ibid., p. 28.
[6] Ibid., p. 28.
[7] William Williams, *Personal Reminisces of Charles Haddon Spurgeon*, (London Religious Tract Society), p. 17.
[8] Helmut Thielike, *Encounter with Spurgeon* (Philadelphia Fortress Press), 1963, p. 24.
[9] Ibid., p. 25.
[10] Archives, Spurgeon's College, London.
[11] *C. H. Spurgeon Anecdotes*, (London, Passmore in Halbastor), 1900, p. 75.
[12] Paul Beasley-Murray, *Mission to the World*, (London Baptist Historical Society, 1991), p. 20.
[13] Ibid., p. 20.
[14] Ibid., p. 20.
[15] Ibid., p. 24.
[16] Williams *Personal Reminiscence of Charles Haddon Spurgeon*, p. 166.
[17] Ibid., p. 165.
[18] Charles Haddon Spurgeon, *The Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit*, (London Passmore and Alabaster), 1864, p. 614.
[19] Charles Haddon Spurgeon, *The Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit*, Volume 58, p. 521.

REACHING BABY BOOMERS: THE CHALLENGE OF THE 90s

Richard Peace

They are the single largest generation ever born in America. They are 79 million strong, nearly one-third of the population. They are the Baby Boomers—the generation that reshaped America.

Development History

The Baby Boomers consist of those people born between 1946 (one year after the end of World War II) and 1964 (one year after birth control pills became widely available). This is the first generation to break the 4 million mark for live births in one year (a feat that would be accomplished some eleven times). Sociologists call them "the lead generation" since as the Boomers go, so goes the nation. As a result of their massive numbers (and their attitudes about themselves) for each decade since the 1950s Baby Boomers have made their developmental issues the issues of America:

> The 1950s (when Boomers were in their childhood) was the decade of children, filled with hula hoops and Ken and Barbie dolls, and informed by television shows such as Howdy Doody, Leave it to Beaver, Father Knows Best, and I Love Lucy. Children were the agenda. After all, this was the generation for which World War II had been fought. The aim in 50s was to create the perfect American family.
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> In the 1960s all those cute little kids turned into raging adolescents and America was plunged into a decade of revolt and rebellion as teenage Baby Boomers sought to establish their own identities. Woodstock, drugs, and protest marches characterized this tumultuous decade.

Dr. Peace is Professor of Evangelism and Ministry at Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary, South Hamilton, Massachusetts.

> Things calmed down in the 1970s. Apart from anything else, everyone was worn out from all the activism of the 60s. The Baby Boom generation turned inward as its members sought to discover who they were (as those in their twenties are wont to do). *Psychology Today* was launched, self-discovery seminars flourished, and Baby Boomers became the "me-generation."
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> In the 1980s Baby Boomers were hard at work creating what they considered to be a comfortable lifestyle. They discovered "the good life" (and forgot their anti-materialism of the 60s). Yuppies became the model for the generation. BMWs, cuisinarts, and computers became status symbols as consumer debt rose astronomically. After all, as the Michael Douglas character declared, in the film *Wall Street*: "Greed is good."
>
> Now in the 1990s another shift is taking place. Having made peace with the outer world, the Baby Boom is turning inward. This is just what Carl Jung predicted when he said that the first half of life is given over to making peace with the outer world; the second half to making peace with the inner world. Mid-life has been reached; death is suddenly discovered to be nearer than Baby Boomers thought possible; questions of meaning are being raised ("What has my life been all about?"); and the focus of life is shifting from the office to the home.
>
> In the decades ahead, the developmental clock of the Baby Boomers will continue to tick. As they age they will start to overtax the nation's medical capability, swamp the Social Security system, and use up the leisure facilities.

Lifestyle Characteristics

Who are these people who have turned their developmental stages into the national agenda in each decade? What are the lifestyle characteristics of Baby Boomers and what are the implications of these characteristics for ministry? We need to understand the Baby Boomers if we are to reach them with the gospel.

Baby Boomers are characterized by:

> *Diverse family structures:*[1] Unlike previous generations in which there was a "standard model family" (whether this was actually true or not, it was perceived to be the case), Baby Boom families are incredibly diverse. For example, 35-year-old Baby Boomer couples may have toddlers or teenagers or no children at all. Furthermore, a lot of Baby Boomers live alone now. The number of "never married" has doubled to 10% of the population. And there are a huge number of single parent families (an estimated one-quarter of all families), with the head of the house generally a woman, since 88% of children of divorce live with their mothers. Most of these single mothers struggle financially, the majority living on under $20,000 per year. Only 4% of American families consist of a father

who works, a mother who stays home, and two children. *Implications for ministry:* the relational needs of Baby Boomers are very strong and those churches that reach out to meet them will find great response.

Smaller families: Baby Boomers have had fewer children (born later in life) than previous generations. In 1976, when Baby Boom women were in their most fertile years, the birth rate hit an all time low of 1.7 children per married woman. The result is that the children of Baby Boomers are precious, pampered, and expected to be super-achievers. *Implications for ministry:* churches with good nurseries and great programs for children will attract Baby Boom families.

An increase in working women: While only 55% of American women work outside the home, one-half of the full time homemakers are over 55 and one-third are over 65. 70% of Baby Boom women work and by 1995 it is estimated that only one women in ten in prime child bearing years will be a full-time wife and mother. With the increase in dual-career families, time has become the most precious commodity for Baby Boomers. *Implications for ministry:* the church as a volunteer organization has long relied on housewives as the core of its workers. New volunteers must be found. A key issue for the church is how to reach over-extended people with little leisure time.

Increased mobility: It used to be that the average American moved once every seven years. Now Baby Boomers (especially the younger ones) tend to move every three years. *Implications for ministry:* How do you train leadership for the church? How do you reach a transient population?

Avoidance of long-term commitments: Commitment is very difficult for Baby Boomers, since to chose one thing is to say "No" to all sorts of other attractive options and Baby Boomers "want it all." According to one survey, when Boomers were asked: "What do you want out of life?" the most common answer was "more." *Implications for ministry:* Christianity is all about commitment, so how does one reach Baby Boomers without compromising the core message?

Networking: Baby Boomers are not joiners, they are networkers. They have little patience for keeping organizations alive for their own sake and prefer gatherings that allow them to connect with a wide variety of people. Their groups are more *ad hoc*: short term, simple in structure, and related to a current need or interest. *Implications for ministry:* Baby Boomers have little interest in the church as an organization and no loyalty to particular denominations. But they are open to short term, interest-oriented small groups.

A high educational level: In 1966, one in ten people had a college education; in 1986 one in four were college educated. The Baby Boomers are the most highly educated generation in American history. However, this increased education did not translate into increased income. In fact, the Baby Boom generation is the first to be less well off than the preceding generation. *Implications for ministry:* There is a great deal of financial stress within the Baby Boomer community. Helping them deal with stress and materialism provides another bridge into their needs.

Addictive behavior: Addictive behavior is reaching epidemic proportion within the Baby Boom generation. The most popular drugs are alcohol and nicotine. New addictions have emerged: addiction to shopping, to television, to plastic surgery, and to exercise. *Implications for ministry:* The church that ministers effectively to the addicted will reach Baby Boomers.

Reaching Baby Boomers

Baby Boomers are more open to the gospel now than they ever have been. This is a simple developmental fact. People are especially open to Christianity at three points in life: childhood (when the impact of a Christian family is felt); adolescence (when the highest number of conversions are recorded); and in mid-life (when inner issues have to be faced). The Baby Boom generation is reaching mid-life. In fact, if the history of this generations holds true, the Baby Boomers are in the process of elevating mid-life issues to the national agenda. This is good news for the church since mid-life marks new openness to the gospel. However, the church must reach out in ways that touch the hearts of the Baby Boom generation. This requires some rethinking about how to do evangelism.

For one thing, the church needs to *recognize the natural bridges* that exist into the life of the Baby Boomer. As the survey of their characteristics indicates, there are two key areas in which Baby Boomers welcome help. They are open to ministry to their troubled relational lives and they want help in dealing with addictive behavior. In terms of relationships, when a church is a vital, "fellowshipping" community in which people genuinely love one another, it will be a magnet to Baby Boomers. If such a church can then develop programs that deal directly and effectively with relational needs (e.g., programs for singles, for single parents, for blended families, for families in distress, for families with teens, etc.) it will reach Baby Boomers with the gospel. In terms of addictive needs, the Twelve Step program is the single, most effective way of helping addicts. The Twelve Step program itself is simply a restatement, in secular terms, of basic principles of Christian growth and change (i.e., repentance, faith, conversion, and a New Testament lifestyle). Instead of just allowing Twelve Step groups to use the church (which is worthwhile in itself), Baby Boomers can be reached with the gospel if churches themselves run the Twelve Step programs. However, it is important that these be genuine Twelve Step groups and not just disguised forms of evangelism. When they are genuine, people are helped in ways secular Twelve Step programs cannot reach them. For

one thing, church-based Twelve Step groups can "name" the Higher Power and not just leave this key issue as some sort of vague spiritual affirmation. For another, the church itself becomes the sustaining community that makes long-term recovery possible.[2]

Secondly, the church needs to *explore new methods of outreach*. Baby Boomers are probably not going to be reached by mass evangelism. They are too suspicious of religious rallies. Baby Boomers are probably not going to be reached by visitation evangelism (except in the deep south). They won't engage in deep conversation with strangers who come knocking at their doors with a religious agenda (and whom they suspect to be Jehovah's Witnesses or Mormons). Baby Boomers are probably not going to be reached by television ministries. Televangelists are a joke and a disgrace to Boomers. Baby Boomers love television but they distrust "ads" of any sort (even religious ones).

However, Baby Boomers will be reached by small groups. Baby Boomers understand small groups. Small groups were a key part of their educational experience. Furthermore, Baby Boomers enjoy small groups. Conversation around topics of import is highly valued. It is not surprising that small groups are growing in use in churches across the denominational spectrum. Forty percent of adult Americans are involved in some sort of small group. Sixty percent of these are church related.[3] Small group evangelism may well become the structure of choice in reaching out to Baby Boomers.

Furthermore, Baby Boomers will be reached via ministries to their children. Often the first question Baby Boom parents ask a new church is "Tell us about your child care facilities." Baby Boomers will support churches with vital ministries to their children. They can, in turn, be evangelized via these ministries.

Finally, Baby Boomers will be reached by vital worship experiences. As so-called "seeker services" have demonstrated, worship may have to be quite different from what it was traditionally. The use of new music with a variety of instrumentation; drama; short, relational, help-oriented sermons in a theater style auditorium does draw Baby Boomers, when it is well executed. Still, a church need not restructure its worship completely in order to reach out to Baby Boomers. Revitalizing worship is more to the point, so that it is filled with life, celebration, and the sense of God.

The challenge the church faces in the 90s is to reach out effectively to a generation that is newly ready to hear the gospel. Baby Boomers have always been open to spirituality. But in the past it has been an amorphous, feel-good spirituality. But now, with their more conservative, family-oriented bent, fueled by disappointment in the outcomes of past dabbling in vague spirituality and driven by developmental pressures, they are open to the Good News about Jesus.

This window of openness will not always be there. As the Baby Boomers move into old age, their interest in spirituality will, predictably, shut down. (This too is a developmental reality.) The challenge to the church is to respond now. To respond properly will take a willingness

on the part of the church to be open, to try new things, and to cope with the messiness of fragmented lives. But the result could be a new, massive turning to Christ.

NOTES

[1] The first three characteristics are taken from the United Methodist project entitled: *Reaching for the Baby Boomers*, by Kirk McNeill and Robert Paul (Nashville: The General Board of Discipleship, 1989). The descriptions of characteristics including the various statistics are drawn from a variety of sources including Cheryl Russell, *One Hundred Predictions for the Baby Boom: The Next Fifty Years* (New York: Plenum Press, 1987); Tex Sample, *U.S. Lifestyle and Mainline Churches: A Key to Reaching People in the 90's*. (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1990); and David Sheff, "Portrait of a Generation: The Rolling Stone Survey." Rolling Stone, May 5, 1989, pp. 46–71.

[2] To explore this possibility see *12 Steps: The Path to Wholeness; Addictive Lifestyles: Breaking Free;* and *Codependency: Breaking Free From Entangled Relationships* by Richard Peace (Serendipity House) 1990 & 1991.

[3] As reported by Robert Wuthnow at the National Small Group Conference at Eastern College, in a lecture on June 3, 1993, entitled "Small Groups and Spirituality: Results of a National Study." See his forthcoming book: *Sharing the Journey: Support Groups and a Quest for a New Community* (New York: The Free Press) scheduled for release in January, 1994.

MUSIC IN SERVICE TO THE GOSPEL

Richard Stoll Armstrong

As an amateur musician and ardent music lover I have always recognized and stressed the importance of music in the worship of God. As a worship leader I have tried to be sensitive to the quality of the music and the theological integrity of the text of the hymns I choose for worship. As an evangelist I want the music to be appropriate to the context in which it is used, so that it will have as powerful a spiritual impact on the participants as possible.

Of the many different courses I have taught at Princeton Theological Seminary and elsewhere one of the most if not *the* most enjoyable was a course that probed the relationship between music and evangelism. It had various titles, as it evolved over the years, but the last time I offered the course it was listed in the catalogue under the heading "Music in Service to the Gospel."

Like every other course I have ever taught this one was a fantastic learning experience for me, as the students and I wrestled with such intriguing questions as

> What is evangelistic music? or, When is music evangelistic?
> What is the relation between the musical medium and the message?
> What is "good" music? What is "bad" music?

The answers to such questions are fundamental in determining the evangelistic principles and practical applications of music to various cultural contexts, settings, and audiences.

To the best of my knowledge we have never discussed this general topic at any of our annual meetings, and for that reason I have decided to make it the subject of my address tonight. In the limited time we have I simply want to share the tentative conclusions I have reached regarding some of these basic questions, as a way of introducing you to the topic and whetting your appetite for further exploration.

Dr. Armstrong is the Ashenfelter Professor Emeritus of Ministry and Evangelism at Princeton Theological Seminary, Princeton, New Jersey.

Let me begin at the beginning with the question, What is music? The first group of definitions given in Webster's *Unabridged International Dictionary* is as follows:

> "The science or art of pleasing, expressive, or intelligible combinations of tones; the art of making such combinations, especially into combinations of definite structure and significance, according to the laws of melody, harmony, and rhythm; the art of inventing or writing, or of rendering such compositions, whether oral or instrumental."

Notice the difference between the subjective and the objective words that are used in the very first definition: Worlds like "combinations" and "tones" are objective; that is, they are objectively identifiable. Words like "pleasing," "expressive," and "intelligible," on the other hand, are subjective. That is to say, they attribute certain qualities to the music, as if those qualities are *intrinsic* to the music itself. They project the hearer's subjective assessment onto the music. The question is, however, are those qualities intrinsic or extrinsic? We are plunged immediately into the age-old dilemma of aesthetics. Is beauty in the eye of the beholder, or in this case, in the ear of the listener? Or is there something intrinsically beautiful in the music itself? The definitions imply the latter.

If that is the case, a further implication would be that the musical medium is, or can be, the message. In other words, music can have an evangelistic impact on the hearer by virtue of the intrinsic qualities of the music itself. But then, why do some people react differently from others to the same piece of music? Is it not one's cultural conditioning which determines one's response to various kinds of music? If one's answer to that question is Yes, then how does one define what is "good" music, or for our particular purpose, what is "evangelistic" music?

We are dealing with a genuine paradox here. The question of the intrinsic and extrinsic value of music reminds me of the subjective/objective dichotomy in theological discourse. How does one answer Feuerbach's charge that belief in God is a projection of one's subjectivity into objectivity? So, too, in music, could we not be accused of projecting our subjectivity into objectivity, when we attribute to music an intrinsic quality or value which is our own culturally conditioned, subjective reaction to the music?

For example, we say we are spiritually moved by certain music, so we attribute our spirituality to the music and say it is intrinsically spiritual, thus projecting our subjectivity into objectivity. But people disagree, as we all know, in their reactions to the same music. Having grown up in the American big band era, I can remember my own and my shipmates' reaction to native Japanese music the first time it was picked it up on our ship's radio and played over the P. A. system. We thought it was the corniest sound we had ever heard. If the beauty of

music is in the ear of the listener, must not its spirituality be in the heart of the believer? How, then, can it be intrinsic?

Here is my attempt to state, though not to resolve, the intrinsic/extrinsic paradox:

> THE INTRINSIC QUALITY OF MUSIC IS ITS ABILITY TO EVOKE REACTIONS (EMOTIONS, FEELINGS, ETC.) IN THE HEARER WHICH ARE CULTURALLY CONDITIONED AND HENCE EXTRINSIC TO THE MUSIC ITSELF.

Given this paradoxical relationship between the intrinsic and the extrinsic, how can one define what is "good" music? Erick Routley, perhaps the most influential and prolific writer of his time in the field of church music and musicology, and many others have attempted to do this.[1]

To speak of good music in contrast to bad music presupposes some kind of standards by which to assess its value and qualities. But who sets the standards? And are not the standards themselves culturally conditioned? Obviously they are! What, then, is good music?[2]

It is easier to define what is good musicianship, which can be evaluated according to rules of composition, harmony, and compliance with prescribed or defined forms. A parallel example in poetry would be a sonnet, which has 14 iambic pentameter lines. We know when a poem fits the definition. So, too, with musicianship. Such things as dexterity, sight-reading ability, accuracy, flexibility, versatility, musical knowledge, instructional skills, and technical composition skills can be measured or tested.

Interpretation, which is entirely subjective, cannot be measured. It is a matter of taste. One can like or dislike a musician's interpretation of a particular piece, but who can prove it is good or bad, right or wrong? And by what standard? I know a music teacher and choral conductor who argues that the familiar tune to "Beneath the Cross of Jesus" is not good music, but that does not keep it from being one of my favorite hymn tunes.

In a highly technical book published in 1983 two M.I.T. scholars forcefully argued that all human beings have an innate musical grammar by which they are unconsciously able to understand a given piece of music.[3] The idea of a built-in grammar has been integral to the study of language for many years. Noam Chomsky, a linguist at MIT, advanced the theory that human beings are born with the general principles of language. Leonard Bernstein and others have attempted to apply Chomsky's language theory to music, but Lerdahl and Jackendoff were the first to identify the inborn principles of musical cognition. The authors have identified 60 such principles, most of which are inbred and therefore universal. The few that are learned account for cultural differences. The authors are quick to assert that they are not making any aesthetic judgment. Their principles simply enable the listener to separate atonal from tonal music, for example, and to organize and integrate what they hear.

In the light of this theory, we could say that music which does not conform to our innate musical grammar will not be understandable and probably not pleasing to our musical sensibilities. But that does not make such music either morally or aesthetically good or bad. It may have been the deliberate and precise intent of the composer to depart from the normal order of things. Such is the character of so-called modern classical music. One may say "I like it" or "I don't like it," but one cannot legitimately say it is good or bad.

Given the subjective nature of aesthetic judgments and the complexities of establishing standards for determining what is good or bad music, is it possible to define what is "spiritual" or "evangelistic" music? What part does the *intention* of the composer play in determining the answer to that question? What part does the subjective reaction of the hearer play? To what extent is each person culturally conditioned, and hence limited, in his or her ability to respond to any given music?

For example, was the composer of the Judas music in "Jesus Christ, Superstar" limited to a particular musical interpretation of Judas, i.e., the rock and roll genre and the frenzied style that was used? The title of the piece is "Damned for All Time." There are many styles of music within the rock and roll genre. Would a more brooding, foreboding, sinister musical mode have been more, or less, effective in conveying the betrayer's mood? Some of us might have preferred the latter, but that is a matter of taste. One cannot say this is right and that is wrong. How, then, can one say some music is evangelistic or spiritual, if it depends on the hearer's subjective reaction to it?

That leads naturally to the question of the relation between the musical medium and the message. How does one determine what is an appropriate musical medium for a given message, and vice versa? Is one's sense of appropriateness culturally conditioned? Does it depend primarily on where the hearer is "coming from"?

A corollary question is, How does the musician find out where an audience is coming from musically? They can tell you what they like and don't like, but they don't necessarily know where they're coming from! That requires an ability to transcend one's environment, to stand outside one's cultural context. It means being able to think philosophically, logically, and from a Christian point of view, *theo*-logically. You don't necessarily find out what you need to know by asking.

The musician, therefore, needs to interpret and explain what he or she wants the hearers to know. This raises another set of questions relating to the intention of the musician. How does the musician take the audience where he or she wants them to go, and in so doing, how does one draw the line between persuasion and manipulation?

With full awareness of the dangers implicit in these questions, there are things which the evangelistically sensitive musician can do to help an audience to be more receptive to the musical message. He or she can start with what people are known to like (or say they like) and then

introduce them to something they can *learn* to like, for other reasons which transcend their musical tastes, such as:

a. The Mood. An individual's mood can make him or her receptive to a new musical experience. So can the corporate mood of the audience, or the musician's mood, which can be contagious.

b. The Setting. The surroundings and what is going on can promote the receptivity of the audience. Contextual factors are extremely important. That would include peer pressure and the desire to conform, incredibly important determinants for young people. They can work either for or against receptivity.

c. The Preparation. When the audience is properly prepared for what is to follow, they are inclined to be much more tolerant of that which differs from their own musical tastes. They will listen more attentively and appreciatively when they understand what the performer, or the composer, is trying to say musically. Understanding increases receptivity.

d. The Personality Factor. Helping the audience to identify with the performer is one of the most effective ways to transcend musical tastes, as, for example, when the musician gives his or her personal testimony, or the introducer tells some interesting highlights from the performer's background. I think of the impact which Bill Mann, the evangelistic singer of the United Methodist Church, had at a youth conference I attended some years ago. Although it was not their kind of music, the young people accepted it and were inspired by it, because they had been moved by Bill's personal testimony. They identified with Bill and what he was trying to say through his music.

The personality factor applies also to choir members when they are introducing a new anthem. They should at least try to look as if they are really "into it" themselves. Sad sacks in the choir loft do not help the congregation to be more receptive.

Where's the fire
in the choir?
Where's the zing
when they sing?
Why do some
look so glum
when they raise
songs of praise?
Why the scowl
when they howl?
Are they bored
with the Lord?
Are they mad
or just sad?
Why the chill?

Are they ill?
Can't they smile
for a while,
when they sing
to the King?
Showing joy
won't annoy,
shock, or stun
anyone.
They have news
for the pews
and it's good,
so they should
sing with zest.
That's the best
way to show
that they know
and they care
why they're there.[4]

e. The Message. The impact of the message can transcend the negative effect of an unfamiliar musical medium. From an evangelistic perspective, it *must* transcend the medium, if the gospel is to be communicated. I shall say more about that in a moment.

These suggestions are the product of my own experience as a song leader. I have proved to myself, for example, that it is possible to teach a thousand young athletes to enjoy singing the great hymns of the church. The guest performers, who were popular recording stars, could entertain their young listeners much better than I, because they were part of the same rock culture. But they never taught their audience the real joy of singing. The audience learned only the fun of the familiar, not the value of singing itself.

That raises another interesting set of questions. Do different kinds of music evoke different kinds of responses? If so, are the different responses culturally conditioned? Totally? Partially? How much? If music does evoke different emotional responses—that is, if it creates different moods in the hearers—is one of those moods "spiritual"? In other words, can music put an audience in a spiritual mood, evoke a spiritual response, cause an audience to be open to the Spirit of God? Does it do that for everyone? Certain people? Which ones? The same people all the time? Sometimes? When? Why? How? Does some music, apart from any message, create a mood that paves the way for a message?

Eric Routley and others I have read are inconsistent in their answers to these questions. They argue conditionally yet talk about "appropriateness." Routley, for example, blasts the hymnody of popular evangelism as dull, stale, and "too complacent to be conformable with the gospel. There is no tension in it. All is repose . . . We cannot denounce too strongly the premeditated and professional use of music of this kind

for purposes of evangelism. We have already remarked on the curious fact that zeal for souls goes with debased musical taste. We feel now able to assert that the debased musical taste, and especially the deliberate debasement of musical taste, tells us something sinister about evangelism."[5]

The answer to the question, "Can music create an evangelistic mood?" is, theoretically, No, but experientially, Yes! That is to say, raucous sound, ear-splitting thumping, does not evoke in me a response of thoughtful contemplation. Yet I think of young people studying or meditating to heavy metal! It can be almost hypnotic in its effect, even put you in a kind of trance. That was my own experience several years ago, when I decided to listen to three straight hours of loud rock music, just to see what the effect of that sustained exposure would be. I became absorbed in and by the overpowering sound. Since then I understand how for young people the loud, rhythmic beat of rock music can have an ecstatic, spell-binding effect. Let me play part of what I listened to that day . . . Your facial expressions reveal your varied responses!

One obvious observation about the music to which I was listening is that the message was totally subordinate to the medium and in most cases unintelligible without reference to the words on the cover of the cassette. The medium was indeed the message, to use Marshall McLuhan's famous line. Therefore, if music *per se* is to have any spiritual impact on the hearer, that effect must be culturally conditioned. That is to say, the effect is due to some prior association the memory or effect of which is evoked by the music. If there is any message to be communicated, it is from that association, since music by itself cannot communicate the gospel.

This raises yet another question: What is the most appropriate mood for receiving the things of God? Think of Elijah, who heard the voice of God not in the wind, earthquake, or fire, but in a still small voice (I Kings 19:11–12). Can the still, small voice be drowned out by an earthquake of musical sound? It very definitely can be, if my own experience with rock and roll was at all typical. One listens without any awareness of the message—only the sound and the beat.

Also, the rock musicians themselves admit that the message is subordinate to the medium. When they want to get a message across, they have to subordinate the medium to the message. The music then becomes an accompaniment to the message.

One valid conclusion to be drawn, therefore, from all that has been said so far is this:

> *In considering music as an expression of, medium for, or aid to evangelism, the medium must be subordinate to the message.*

That is not a self-evident statement, for all the reasons I have pointed out. If it were self-evident, why would some church organists be so insensitive to their congregations when accompanying the hymns?

The organist at our church
makes every hymn a race.
She always sets the tempo
to suit her torrid pace.
The fact that we can't keep up,
she doesn't seem to mind.
The congregation's always
about three beats behind.
Each Sunday I suspect that
she has somewhere to go.
Whatever the last hymn is,
she never plays it slow!
I'm sure of all the churches
our singing is the worst.
But you can't beat our organ—
it always gets there first![6]

On the other hand,

The organist at our church
is just the opposite.
He plays the hymns so slowly,
he gives us all a fit.
The three speeds that he uses
are slowest, slower, slow.
The more we try to spur him,
the slower he will go.
I do not understand it:
Why does he have the urge
to make a hymn that's joyful
sound like a funeral dirge?
We never feel like singing,
accompanied by our friend.
Instead we stand there thinking,
"Will this hymn ever end?"[7]

Music can be an aid to and even a *means* of evangelism by past association (cultural conditioning) or by preparation (cultural pre-conditioning). Hence, a second conclusion is that

> *Evangelism can be a function of music.*

That, too, is a statement that must be justified, as I have attempted to do.

If in the service of the gospel the medium must be subordinate to the message, then it is logically consistent to ask, What is the appropriate medium for the message? But that question is the difficult one to answer,

for all the reasons discussed. Yet there are some logical conclusions to be drawn in this regard:

a. The Message Must Be Heard. The medium must not drown it out. Of course, the message must also be intelligible, but that has to do with the text, not the music. Before the message can be understood, it must at least be heard.

b. The Audience Determines What Is the Acceptable Medium. If the medium is not acceptable to the audience (the hearers), they will tune it out or turn it off. This is a fact which we in the church cannot ignore, if we want to relate to and communicate to the Baby Buster generation.

c. Acceptability Is a Matter of the Hearer's Musical Taste. This, as has been shown, is a culturally conditioned, subjective reaction.

There is an obvious tension in these principles. The Christian communicator, on the one hand, wants the message to be heard and therefore wants the medium to be subordinate. The receiver(s), on the other hand, may feel that whether or not the message is heard is irrelevant or unimportant, that the medium is everything. The clash of purposes is definitely a barrier to the communication of the gospel.

The difficulty is aggravated by the "taste" factor, which affects the judgment of both the receiver *and* the communicator. Matters of taste include such considerations as the match of the message with any one or more of the following:

the melody
the rhythm (tempo, beat, or meter)
the harmony
the tonal quality
the instrumentation
the arrangement (orchestration)
the interpretation (instrumental and vocal).

With regard to interpretation, I have never been particularly fond of the traditional favorite of the Old South, "Dixie." I suppose I had heard it sung too often. For whatever reason it never had any emotional impact on me, until I the first time I heard it sung by the American Boychoir. Their arrangement moved me to tears.

What are the implications of all of this for the selection of music in service to the gospel at an evangelistic rally or in Sunday morning worship? One immediate implication is that to select songs or hymns that some people do not like (or accept) is to risk blocking them from hearing the message. There are people like that in every church service. If they don't like the hymn, they refuse to sing. They get angry and clam up. I wish I could say they are standing there meditating spiritually on the meaning of the hymn text. Far from it! They have just tuned out and turned off at that point, and maybe even for the rest of the program or service!

The challenge to the worship leader or the gospel communicator is

to relate to people where they are, while sensitively trying to increase their receptivity to the medium; that is, to expand the limits of their musical acceptance, to broaden the scope of their music appreciation, and to enlarge their knowledge of hymnody and hymnology. Worship leaders and ministers of music can meet this on-going challenge if they conscientiously but patiently try to do the following:

a. Help the congregation to feel some "ownership" in the planning process and to increase their sense of involvement in the worship experience, through such things as favorite hymn surveys; hymn introductions; articles on hymnody, hymnology, and various aspects of music, in the church newsletter, if there is one; featuring a new "hymn of the month"; quoting parts of hymns in sermons, prayers, etc.; playing the tunes as background music during different parts of the service; using hymn tunes (with improvisations) as postludes, preludes, and offertory music; planning hymn festivals, hymn sings and special music services; being creative about the congregational singing (for example, alternating stanzas between men and women, or left side and right side, or choir and congregation, or spoken and sung).

b. Honor people's right to have their likes and dislikes, and do not belittle, scold, or condemn them for their tastes. Pastoral sensitivity demands that worship leaders and musicians be sensitive to people's feelings. People are intimidated or angered by those who belittle their taste in music, or anything else, for that matter. Many parents have learned that lesson the hard way, having shut off communication with their children by refusing to try to understand or even by angrily rejecting their teenagers' music.

c. Conversely, church musicians and worship leaders should not impose their own tastes on others. Some organists and soloists feel it is their special calling to elevate the congregation's level of musical sophistication, and they do so by bombarding them incessantly with long-haired music the average pew sitter neither understands nor enjoys.

For many years I've asked around
about church music, and I've found
that plain folks don't appreciate
songs some musicians think are great.
Why don't more church soloists choose
their music for those in the pews?
The kind of solo folks desire,
is one intended to inspire,
a song that makes their spirits rise,
not just some vocal exercise.
They don't want soloists to wail
like someone practicing a scale.
Nor do they want solos that sound
like some poor howling Basset hound.
A melody that moves the heart
will stay with them, when they depart.

So many people wonder why
church music has to be so dry.
Musicians (that is, *some*, not all)
believe it is their special call
to raise their congregation's taste
for "better" music. They don't waste
their time on sentimental tripe.
What do they care if people gripe?[8]

d. At the same time, worship leaders can help the people in the pew to understand that other people have different tastes, too, which they need to recognize and respect.

e. And they can help people really to *hear* what they're hearing. The worship leader must be able to stand outside the context, as an observer as well as a participant and leader, in order to help people who are *in* the context.

f. Finally, with regard to the most frequently heard complaint in many churches, "Why do we have to sing so many unfamiliar hymns?", worship leaders can help people to understand that a hymn can never become familiar if it is never sung! People need to realize that it is worthwhile and enriching to learn new hymns and to grow in their knowledge and appreciation of Christian music, which is such an important part of their experience of worship and of their faith development.

Need I say, in conclusion, how important it is to remember that the medium for our personal message is our life-style. Our actions must give integrity to our words. The Scriptures give authority to our words; our life-style gives them their integrity. So, too, in music, it is the message which gives the medium its evangelistic integrity.

As evangelists we also have to remember that our subjective affirmations of faith are not self-evident to people who do not share our faith assumptions. The awareness forces us to come to grips with the WHY of faith. Why do we believe what we say we believe when we sing? And do we really believe what we sing? Are our reasons for believing what we say we believe logically consistent with our faith assumptions, our presuppositions?

When our music reflects and communicates that kind of integrity, then our music is truly in service to the gospel.

NOTES

[1] For an interesting example see Routley's discussion in chapters 11 and 12 of his book, *Church Music and the Christian Faith*. Carol Stream, IL: Agape, 1978. 153 pp.

[2] In his book *Art in Action* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1980. 240 pp.) Nicholas Wolterstorff argues from a Christian perspective that music for worship is good if it enables a congregation to praise God. It is not a matter of its pleasing the senses through aesthetic contemplation. Wolterstorff's utilitarian criterion does not avoid the intrinsic/extrinsic question, however, for congregations may respond quite differently to the same music. What is considered "good" for praise in one chuch may not be "good" in another church.

[3] Lerdahl, F. and R. Jackendoff, *A Generative Theory of Tonal Music*. Cambridge, MA: M.I.T. Press, 1983. 368 pp.

[4] This poem, entitled "Sad Sacks in the Choir Loft," is from the collection *Enough, Already! and Other Church Rhymes*, by Richard Stoll Armstrong (Fairway Press, 1993. 120 pp.).

[5] Eric Routley, *Church Music and Theology*. Philadelphia, PA: Fortress Press, 1959.

[6] "Wait for Us!" from the collection, *Enough, Already!*

[7] "Drag on, Drag on in Gravity" from the collection, *Enough, Already!*

[8] "Why Does It Have to Be Dull?" from the collection, *Enough, Already!*

CHRISTIAN FAITH, CONCEPTS, AND EVANGELISM

David M. Greenhaw

In recent years there has been a veritable inductive turn in theology. That is, theologians of many stripes have either argued for, or been persuaded that, a logic most appropriate to Christian faith is an inductive logic and not a deductive one. Induction moves from the particular to the universal, as opposed to deduction, which moves from universal to particular. Those who have argued this way include, perhaps most impressively, liberation theologians, especially Latin American theologians, but also a whole range of narrative theologies, or linguistic theologies have also held to the priority of induction over deduction. The reasons for this inductive turn are articulated in many eloquent ways, but perhaps no more persuasively than Fred Craddock has argued it in his early book *As One Without Authority*. Craddock says: "Everyone lives inductively, not deductively. No farmer deals with the problem of calfhood, only with the calf. The woman in the kitchen is not occupied with the culinary arts in general but with a particular roast or cake."[1] The focus on the particular and concrete, a demand that the truth of theological assertions be made real and visible in the everyday experience of the people of God, all of these are characteristic of an inductive turn in theology.

There can be little doubt that, for evangelism, such an inductive turn is to be embraced and celebrated. The gospel of Jesus Christ is to be met in the concreteness of radical particularity of the everyday. A retreat from a dry, abstract theological agenda, to a more down to earth theological discourse is not only welcomed, but could conceivably play a role in returning the work of evangelism to the laity, whose more natural way of grasping the gospel is through their own experience and not through the complex abstractions of theologians. And it is often reported

David M. Greenhaw is Dean of Lancaster Theological Seminary. In the tradition of our having a faculty member of the host seminary speak to the Academy, Dr. Greenhaw was invited to speak from his perspective as an associate professor of preaching.

to us that something of this sort is in fact happening in many so-called base communities in Latin America.[2]

In my field, preaching, this inductive turn has opened the flood gates to story-telling in preaching. Even a casual perusal of titles in the area of preaching will yield literally dozens of books on story-telling and preaching. And for the most part it has been a good thing. Carefully crafted stories, anecdotes, and vignettes are woven together in sermons. The gospel is made to speak not just *to* the experience of folks but *in* their experience. That is, the gospel is spoken in the tense, tales and tones of life as lived.

The turn toward induction is worth affirming. It deserves a sympathetic hearing from all who have endured the dryness of unduly abstract theology, preaching, and even evangelism. Its foundation in the particular rings true to the dynamic and complex textures of life as lived everyday. The swing of the pendulum away from an abstract conceptualism is in many ways to be embraced. However, as with many reform movements, it is possible to go too far. Indeed it may be that focusing on the concrete and particular, staying close to the lived experience of believers, avoiding concepts, can lead to a particularity so radical that it is no longer possible to hold anything in common. The gospel, although again and again spoken in the language of the people and speaking directly to their experience, nevertheless transcends any and all concrete experience. The gospel transcends the everyday and speaks imaginatively of a new day.

The vocation of evangelism in the life of the church is greatly enhanced by a move to inductive logic, but it is still a logic. It still involves the proclamation of the gospel, whose character is not solely particular but also universal, not simply concrete but also conceptual.

Concepts in Evangelism

Evangelism involves a high degree of conceptualization. It does so because Christian faith itself has such concepts as salvation, redemption, sin, compassion, and suffering, intricately woven into its fabric. Clearly, faith is not simply a string of concepts, but it *is* conceptual. Concepts are not to be disdained in the church's mission of evangelism; they are rather one indispensable moment in the work of evangelism. Concepts are not the whole of evangelism, but they are a part of it.

In order to appreciate more fully the role that concepts play in evangelism, it will be helpful to look at the role of concepts themselves. I shall be drawing on the work of the French philosopher, Paul Ricoeur, for much of what follows.[3]

Ricoeur has noted that concepts are part of an interpretative process. He argues that interpretation is a dynamic process that moves from the density of symbol, situation, or event, to the transparency of thought or concept. Although one result of interpretation is a concept, it cannot

completely end in concept; it must return to the density of symbol, situation, or event, because without this return it is emptied of its content. If separated from an interpretative process, concepts are emptied of meaning and separated from life as lived. When this happens, concepts are correctly labeled "mere abstractions."

Interpretation begins as an effort to understand what something means. Some event or happening or even a symbol presents itself in our lives and begs for interpretation. This first phase, the phase of immediacy, what might be called a nonhermeneutical moment, is at the opening end of interpretation. For instance, the liberation of the Hebrew people from slavery in Egypt could be such an event. It happens and the people seek to interpret its meaning.

From the more immediate moment arises a mediating stage of description or story-telling, what Ricoeur calls "figurative thought." This stage involves moving from the immediacy of an event, to the capture of the event in story or narrative, or figuring in symbol. The liberation from slavery is taken up into the Exodus story. The events are described, interpretation takes place.

This stage, however, is not yet a completed interpretation. Interpretation involves the movement from the density of a situation or a symbol to the clarity and singularity of a concept. The movement to a concept is an indispensable element of interpretation. That is, the very task of naming the event of the Exodus as a liberation event is already a movement to a concept. Liberation is a concept and it opens the possibility of being applied to a new situation.

By way of example, consider a beginning geometry student who in the classroom looks at repeated examples of right angled parallelograms. The phase of looking at the parallelograms is the phase of immediacy. This is something akin to a nonhermeneutical moment, because the student has not yet formed a "picture" in her mind out of the lines on the page. Once she "pictures" a rectangle, interpretation has passed into the second component, namely figurative mediation. But even this is not the end of the interpretative process. Up to this point the student has only interpreted, or formed, the particular instances of parallelograms into this particular rectangle or that one. It is not until the student is able to transcend in thought the particularity of each of the examples that she can grasp the meaning of rectangle. When she comes to the concept rectangle, she has grasped it as a four-sided, equal-angled plane figure. To grasp in this way is to conceptualize. As a concept, rectangle transcends every particular instance.

Interpretation is a dynamic process that continually moves from the density of the particular instance, be that a symbol, a situation, or an event, to the transparency of a concept. But, as I have said, interpretation cannot end in concepts; it must return to the density of symbol, situation, or event.

Returning to the example of the geometry student, the concept rectangle is empty until it is taken up in a particular instance. Abstracted from the examples in the classroom, the concept is an empty definition. The

student who knows that a rectangle is a right-angled parallelogram has only the half of the concept rectangle. It is on the day that the student opens the front door and sees its parallel sides and right angles constituting the borders of a rectangle that the concept has returned from abstraction and taken on a new figurative mediation.

Ricoeur contends that religious hermeneutics involve a circular process. A process that:

1) keeps starting from, and returning to, the moment of immediacy of religion, be it called religious experience, Word-Event, or kerygmatic moment;
2) keeps generating stories, symbols, interpretations applied to them in the midst of a confessing and interpreting community;
3) keeps aiming at conceptual thought, without losing its rooting in the initial immediacy of religion or in the mediating shapes of figurative thought.[4]

The circularity of religious hermeneutics means that it is never enough to have any one aspect of religious discourse in isolation. Founding religious events cannot be isolated from their appropriation by the communities that tell and retell their story. By the same token the telling in story and symbol cannot be isolated from the appropriation of their meaning in conceptual thought. Even conceptual thought cannot be isolated from its return to further telling or retelling in stories and symbols. These new stories and symbols, however, must again make the movement from figurative thought toward concepts and thus come full circle once again. A concept cannot survive as simply a universal and still have meaning. It must find again a representation, a figurative mediation. If a text says something, what it says must be said again, or it says nothing at all. It is of course possible to say what it says again in the self-same mediation from which it has just spoken; that is, one can repeat the text verbatim. Or it can find a new mediation, a new way of saying.

Appropriating the Gospel

Evangelism involves not only the speaking of the gospel but its appropriation as well. To tell the story of the gospel, which is surely involved in evangelism, requires also a hearer of the gospel who appropriates what is said. That hearers are often unable to appropriate abstract theological propositions, that a gospel spoken abstractly is not appropriated, has lead to the recognition that effective evangelism needs to speak in concrete particular terms. So be it. The concrete and particular aspects of telling a story can make it possible to see in ways not seen before. On the one hand, stories can enrich evangelism by providing concrete elements that make it possible for the folks to see, to perceive, to feel. Evangelism that is endowed with stories fills faith with content. Faith is rescued from the realm of abstraction and met on the turf of concretion.

On the other hand, stories are opaque; their detailed textures can make it difficult to see beyond the story itself. The particularity of a story ties it to a unique setting. When a story is told about Karen, for instance, Karen is a particular, unique person and what is said of her or what has happened to her is true for her. It is in fact true only for her. For what is said of Karen to be true for anyone else, it is necessary to transcend the particularity of Karen's story to a common feature or dynamic more universally true. For this, concepts are necessary.

What concepts add to evangelism is a universal character that makes it possible to transport from one situation to another. A particular story describes events and characters and the happenings in their lives. The particularity of a story ties it to a unique setting. Concepts focus the events and happenings and make it possible to see through the particular to a more universal focus. Concepts are transparent, and through them one can see diverse particular instances. Without a conceptual link to a situation beyond the story itself, the hearer is left without an insight for his or her own life.

To speak the gospel it is necessary to articulate boldly its claims on lives and to announce what is new because of what God has done and is doing. To do this one must move beyond the opacity of the particular to the clarity of a universal. It will not do to speak only of particulars, of what is true for me, or true for you or Karen. For evangelism it is necessary to speak a truth that is capable of transcending a particular setting. Until it is possible to transcend a particular setting, until some universal is approached, the gospel may be an interesting story or an enlightening account of some piece of history, but it lacks the power to transform. It cannot transform because to transform human lives the particularity of the gospel in one setting must be transferred through a concept to a new particularity.

The advantages of an inductive method are lost if an aversion to deductive logic devolves into an abandonment of all logic. Inductive evangelism does not lack concepts; it only reorients the direction of the movement to concepts. Rather than beginning with concepts and moving to particularity, one moves from the particular to a concept.

The most serious problem with story-telling lies in deciding which stories to tell. It is sometimes said that stories evoke or invite other stories. Although it may sometimes be true that a story leads to a story, it is not always true. What is more, sometimes stories that emerge from another story are *non-sequiturs*, seemingly unrelated to anything that has come before. For instance, one could imagine the juxtaposition of an account of a fishing expedition with a narrative description of an infant's first footsteps. In the absence of more detail it would be difficult to see any connection between these two stories. Why were they told together? Without concepts it is simply not possible to make a hermeneutical move from one particularity to another.[5] The connecting link between stories, is a concept. When it is possible to see a connection between diverse particulars, it is a concept that gives the vision. When one says, "Oh, now I see," it is the grasp of a concept that has cured

the blindness. What it means to have a concept is perhaps best seen in the root for the German word for concept. The word is *der Begriff*, which is a form of the noun *der Griff*, meaning grip, grasp, hold, clutch; and the verb *greiffen*, which means to seize, grasp. Having a concept is cognitively to grasp it.

Evangelism involves a continual movement from story to concept, from concept to story. The crucial decision of which story to tell and when to tell it depends on the grasp of a concept. Juxtaposing a story of a fishing expedition and an infant's first steps might not be a non-sequitur if the connecting concept were the needed patience for both endeavors.

Finding a new mediation, a new way of saying the gospel is the crux of evangelism. This may be done by using the self-same figurative mediation; that is, the person hearing the good news can say back what has just been said to him or her. But such a restatement is not enough. It is akin to the rote memorization that a student demonstrates at the beginning of the learning process. The real "Aha!" comes not when the student remembers the definition of a rectangle, but when the concept rectangle finds a particular instance of the student's own making. A hearer's ability to put a concept in motion, to return it to figurative mediation, is the measure of the effectiveness of evangelism.

Conclusion

Evangelism is an interpretative activity. All interpretation involves conceptualization. Conceptualization is one moment in the process of interpretation.To have a concept is not, however, the final moment in interpretation. Conceptualization is a continual, dialectical movement from immediacy of event or symbol, to figurative thinking in the representation, to conceptual thinking beyond the representation, and then back again to figurative thought. Conceptual presentation has the capacity to enlighten a congregation, but lacks the capacity to transform them. The sort of transformation that is called for is that which arises when the congregation takes up the interpretative work themselves, when they speak the gospel in their own lives.

The ultimate measure of effective evangelism is not just that the gospel has been spoken and heard by folks, but that the gospel can and is incorporated in their own lives. When this happens, the Word again becomes flesh and dwells among us.

NOTES

[1] Fred Craddock, *As One Without Authority* (Nashville: Abingdon, 1971) p. 60.
[2] See for instance, Leonardo Boff, *Ecclesiogenesis*, (Maryknoll: Orbis Press, 1986).

[3] Paul Ricoeur, "The Status of *Vorstellung* in Hegel's Philosophy of Religion," in *Meaning, Truth, and God*, ed. by Leroy S. Rouner (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1982), p. 87ff.
[4] Ricoeur, "Vorstellung", pp. 87–88.
[5] Without concepts one is left with the most radical form of solipsism.

IN WHOSE IMAGE
A Theology of Evangelism for America in the 90s

Woody L. Davis

"We live in a post-Christian age." That statement has been on the tongues and pens of many for a number of years. And yet the Church has not quite awakened to that fact. All around us we see signs of increased secularity. Churches no longer occupy the place they once did in our society. Vast numbers of people live their lives completely without reference to the Church or its claims. And yet many churches have not changed the way they relate to the world around them. This is especially true when it comes to evangelism.

Donald Soper and Robert Schuller, two men whose ministries are geared intentionally toward unchurched secular people, have observed seven major changes in the assumptions and attitudes of secular people. Lord Soper notes changes from a knowledge-base to an ignorance-base regarding Christianity, from a death-orientation to a life-orientation, from guilt to doubt as the major factor in people's consciousness, from an awareness of a need for Christianity to a curiosity about it, from a sense of belonging to a sense of alienation. Dr. Schuller indicates that people have become untrusting and suspicious, and therefore do not respond well to unsubstantiated claims and high pressure approaches. But most of all, he says, most people are afflicted with low self-esteem.

These observations are patently accurate. And yet, among churches that have intentional evangelism ministries, many use approaches which assume a certain amount of knowledge about Christianity, focus on guilt and one's need for Christian faith, fail to assimilate people adequately into the life of the church, tend toward manipulation and pressure, and encourage low self-esteem! Is it any wonder most of our "converts" come from among the churched and the under-churched,

Dr. Davis is Conference Teacher of Evangelism for the Oklahoma Conference of the United Methodist Church.

rather than from among secular people? The following theology of evangelism is written as a new step toward addressing this glaring need.

Creation and Consummation

The first question in a theology of evangelism must be, What is God's intention for us? Or to put it differently, What is the final hope and destiny of humankind? To answer that question we must look to creation.

Central to God's intention for humankind is that we are created in God's image. But what does that mean? John Wesley says it well in his sermon, "The New Birth:"

> Not barely in his natural image, a picture of his own immortality; a spiritual being, endued with understanding, freedom of will, and various affections; – nor merely in his political image, the governor of this lower world, having "dominion over the fishes of the sea, and over all the earth;" – but chiefly in his moral image; which, according to the Apostle, is "righteousness and true holiness" (Eph iv. 24). In this image man was made. "God is Love:" Accordingly, man at his creation was full of love; which was the sole principle of all his tempers, thoughts, words, and actions. God is full of justice, mercy, and truth; so was man as he came from the hands of his Creator. God is spotless purity; and so man was in the beginning pure from every sinful blot; otherwise God could not have pronounced him, as well as all the other work of his hands, "very good" (Gen. i. 31).[1]

In other words, we were intended to be reflections of God's person and character. It is important to note that the image of God includes both individual and corporate aspects. The individual aspects we hear much about. But the corporate ones are often forgotten. It is precisely in the moral image to which Wesley refers that these are expressed. The fact that God is love implies relationship, for love is a relational concept. Indeed, divine love is the foundation for and dynamic principle of the Trinity. Justice and mercy also imply relationships. This means that we can bear the image of God only in a relational context. In addition, as God is both one and many, unity and diversity, these aspects must be reflected in us, as well. As Helmut Thielicke writes:

> If God as the ground of being is many, and if his deity is in no way despoiled by the incarnation of the Word, then this necessarily means also that finite being as the image of God is fulness and multiplicity . . .[2]

The nature of God implies not only the necessity of a corporate context, but also a diversity as to how the image of God will be expressed in individuals' lives. These corporate aspects of the image of God will have

important implications when we begin to examine the nature of the church and the nature of evangelism.

The New Testament picks up the theme of the image of God and confirms it as God's intention, not only in creation, but in consummation. Herman Ridderbos writes:

> The new man is renewed after the image of him who created him, that is, of God (Col. 3:10) . . . It is said at the same time that this creation after the image of God does not signify a return to the original image of God. Rather, as the heavenly and life-giving Spirit Christ represents an entirely different order and mode of existence from Adam as the earthly and living soul. To be created or transformed into the image of Christ does indeed mean to share anew (just as the original man (1 Cor. 11:7) in the glory of God, now described, however, as being transformed from glory to glory (2 Cor. 3:18). . . . For the future, this being created after the image of God or being renewed after the image of Christ signifies the glorification of their whole existence, becoming conformed to "his glorious body" (Phil. 3:21; 1 Cor. 15:43ff.).[3]

We are saying that God's intention in redemption is the same as at creation. He has not switched to "Plan B," because his original plan did not work. Indeed, he foreknew the outcome of creation before he started, and the steps he would take to complete its consummation. Not only is God's present intention consistent with his original intention. It is its fulfillment, for the final destiny and hope of humankind is the unmarred image of God, expressed in a relationship of perfect love with God and persons. And this final destiny and hope can be experienced now, in this life, for with the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus, the life of the age to come has broken into this present age and become available to us.

Spiritual Narcissism

If God's intention for us is to be fully formed in his image, sin is choosing our own image instead. Isaiah says, "All we like sheep have gone astray. We have all turned to our own way" (Is. 53:6). Sin is self-centeredness, self-determination. Albert Outler calls it:

> human overreach – the reckless abuse of our distinctive human outreachings and upreachings – those aspirations that make us human but whose corruptions make us less than truly human."

George Morris calls it an "attempt to absolutize the self, to become an autonomous 'I'."[5] I call it spiritual narcissism – an "excessive interest in one's own appearance, comfort, importance, abilities, etc."[6] which extends to the core of the personality, to one's heart of hearts.

This is the rampant disease of our culture in our day. It is expressed

in our music: "I gotta be me!" and "I did it my way!"; in pop psychology: "I'm ok, you're ok. Be yourself."; in the goal of those counselors and therapists who simply want to help people feel good about themselves; in self-help books and seminars like the Erhard Seminar Training (E.S.T.); in the worldview of the "yuppies" and, now, the "dinks" (Double Income-No Kids couples).

Why is this? Why are so many in the American culture so wrapped up in themselves? We could cite several reasons, like our heritage of individualism, or the fact that we have the economy to support self-indulgence on an unprecedented scale. But I think the basic reason is that in comparison with the rest of the world a great many Americans are relatively high on Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs. We Americans live in a society where most of our physiological, safety, and security needs are met fairly routinely. Though we struggle to pay bills, most of us do not doubt that we will be fed and clothed. Though we sometimes worry about the threat of cancer and the like, death is psychologically distant, when we are well. Instead, most of us are striving to fulfill our need for love, for belonging, and for esteem. While their lower needs are met routinely, these higher needs are not being met at all for many people. The solutions they have sought have proved ineffective, and so they bounce from one thing to another, ever seeking but never finding.

Of course, the reason they never find a solution is that there is no human solution which is adequate. For the fruit of spiritual narcissism is:

> . . . bondage (i.e., slavery to our own self-deceptions, to our illusions about life and society that stir up utopias that never quite transpire). The result of our overreaching in each of our distinctively human outreaches does not bring the real self-satisfaction that we keep on expecting, but rather tragic self-stultification instead . . .[7]

This spiritual narcissism has invaded what Urban Holmes calls our "deep memory"—the metaphorical consciousness which affects our behaviour at a far more basic and, therefore, influential level than our rational consciousness.[8]

IWouldifICouldbutICan't

Isaiah says, "Your iniquities have been barriers between you and your God; and your sins have hidden his face from you, so that he does not hear" (Is. 59:2). What more tragic picture could be painted? Made in God's image, humankind now stands separated from the one whose image we were to reflect. Thus, while the image of God remains, it is marred, mutilated to the point that all our attempts at imitation are grotesque distortions. We are less than we are meant to be, and we know it.

> . . . most people "out there" not only dislike their work, they dislike themselves. Psychologists are beginning to say that emotional illness results, not so much from suppressing inherent desire (sex and aggression) as from suppressing basic reality (love and truth), so that we no longer like ourselves and our subconscious minds are forever bailing out into some kind of morbid fantasy.[9]

Life as we experience it is made all the more difficult, and yet hopeful, by this fact. For not only has the narcissism got into our deep memory; the remnant of the image resides there as well. We keep hearing echoes of Eden. From time to time the Holy Spirit gives us a glimpse of it, and we long for what we once were as a race, and what we could become. We try to live up to that image, to fulfill the promise and reach our full potential. But we cannot.

> I do not understand what I do. For what I want to do I do not do, but what I hate I do. So I find this law at work: When I want to do good, evil is right there with me. For in my inner being I delight in God's law; but I see another law at work in the members of my body, waging war against the law of my mind and making me a prisoner of the law of sin at work within my members. What a wretched man I am! Who will rescue me from this body of death? Thanks be to God—through Jesus Christ our Lord (Rom. 7:15, 21–25).

Free at Last

If sin is choosing our own image and being enslaved to that image, salvation is being re-created in the image of God. It is being transformed into his likeness. "If anyone is in Christ, there is a new creation; everything old has passed away; see, everything has become new!" (2 Cor. 5:17). "You have stripped off the old self with its practices and have clothed yourselves with the new self, which is being renewed in knowledge according to the image of its Creator" (Col. 3:9b–10). In other words, God's moral image, as Wesley described it, is re-created and brought to maturity in us.

This transformation is made possible by our justification by grace through faith in Christ. It is accomplished by two means: the New Birth, and the indwelling of Christ through the Holy Spirit.

The New Birth is co-terminous with, yet distinct from justification. Justification is what God does for us in imputing the righteousness of Christ to us. It reconciles us to God and removes the separation between us. The New Birth is what God does in us. It is the beginning of imparted righteousness. In the New Birth, God instantaneously creates a new, clean heart within us, one in which the bondage to sin is broken.

This sets the stage for the dynamic of salvation, in which the Holy Spirit transforms us day by day into the image of Christ. As Christ dwells within us, we come more and more to reflect his character. This is

possible because there is no longer any barrier between us. Just as the veil in the temple was torn, allowing access into the holy of holies, the shrouding veil in our hearts has been rent asunder, allowing the glory of Christ to burn within us. And thus, we can now reflect his glory again.

> This is Paul's meaning when he says that not only he himslf in his ministry (cf. [2 Cor.] 4:1ff.) but "we all," with unveiled face, that is, in the liberty given by the Spirit, may reflect the redeeming radiance of the glory of God revealed in the gospel, in order thus to be transformed according to the same image from (the now already manifested) glory to (the still to be expected) glory, even as that takes place from the Spirit of the Lord ([2 Cor.] 3:17, 18).[10]

Thus, salvation is both instantaneous and gradual, even as Christian perfection is both instantaneous and gradual.[11] We are justified and born anew in an instant, but over time we are changed from glory to glory. Salvation enables us to change directions. Suddenly we can do what we could not do before, and gradually we become more than we thought we could be. We are made "more than conquerors through him who loved us." John says that is why we can approach the day of judgment with confidence, "because as he is, so are we in this world" (1 Jn. 4: 17b). This is not to say that we merely become carbon copies of Christ. This misconception has produced many an "assembly-line Christian." Rather, as I mentioned in our discussion of the implications of the Trinity for the image of God in humankind, it means that each one fulfills his or her unique potential in Christ. Salvation enables us to become what we inherently desire but are patently unable to attain.

The Heavenly Body Shop

All that I have said implies that the church is, among other things, a heavenly body shop. It is a place where the Holy Spirit works on our image—hammering out the dents, sanding out the rust, repairing the broken pieces—until our imge is conformed to God's image. In the fellowhip, teaching, service, and worship life of the church, the Holy Spirit transforms us by the renewing of our minds (Rom. 12:1) into his likeness with ever increasing glory (2 Cor. 3:18). Through the use of the gifts he has given to the body of Christ (Eph. 4:11) and the encouragement, admonition, and building up of one another in love (Eph. 4:15, 16), we reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, even to the stature of Christ (Eph. 4:13).

I indicated earlier that the image of God implied relationships and corporate participation. Notice the corporate context of that passage from Ephesians 4. We find the same in Philippians 2, where Paul speaks of "the mind of Christ," which is another way of talking about the image of God. It is there in John 17:11, 21–23, where Jesus prays that the relationship between the Father and the Son will be reflected in us. Colossians 3:10, which refers directly to the renewal of the image of God, is also set in the middle of a passage dealing with relationships within the church.

It is clear, then, that salvation as we have been discussing it is not possible outside of community. This is consistent with the nature of the Triune God. God, himself, exists in community, and therefore his image in us must be expressed in community. It is also consistent his intention as revealed in creation. "So God created humankind in his own image, in the image of God he created them; male and female he created them" (Gen. 1:27). God created humankind in community. "It is not good that the man should be alone" (Gen. 2:18), for only in community can his image be fully expressed.

If it is asked why community is essential for salvation, we can easily discern two practical reasons. First, community is necessary for salvation because it requires the witness of the church to verify the truth claims of the gospel. If we say that in Christ people can find power over sin and become what they have truly wanted to be, but have no human evidence to verify it, people are not likely to be drawn to Christ. (Indeed, the scarcity of people for whom this is true in the Church is one of the main causes of the Church's lack of credibility among unchurched people whom I have interviewed.) Second, community is essential for salvation because it requires a support system for the nurture and encouragement of the transformation which takes place within us. None of us lives in a vacuum and, beside our own spiritual and emotional inertia, the forces in our environment which militate against any major personal change are voluminous. Only in community can we find the strength to counteract them.

The Good News

The idea of creation and consummation as the image of God fulfilled in us and expressed in community has tremendous implications for evangelism. Evangelism approached from this perspective will look very different from that approached from the traditional reformed perspective.

The traditional approach—from Wesley's "To the unawakened, preach the wrath of God" to Kennedy's "If you were to die tonight are you certain you would go to heaven?"—has been to remind people that they are going to hell, and then offer Christ as the solution to that problem. But people in our culture are not convinced that they are going to hell. (Indeed, they are not existentially convinced that they are going to die!) Nor are their minds easily changed as to that possibility. They are often convinced, however, that their lives are not going exactly as planned and may, in fact, be falling apart. It is to this kind of need that evangelism based on the image of God is addressed.

The traditional approach, focusing as it does on sin and guilt, is especially susceptible to misinterpretation by Christians and misunderstanding by non-Christians.

> Repentance, defined as a feeling of unworthiness and utter wretchedness, becomes the goal of not only the sermon but life in general as well. This is true not only of the more traditional pulpit-pounding, hellfire-and-damnation preachers . . . but also of the avant-garde liberals with their "prophetic" social messages . . . Both assume that merely by condemning people and convincing them of their mistakes, they force people to do better. But merely pointing to people's sins and getting them to feel sorry for those sins will not eradicate their sins . . . People can't always do what they want to do, no matter how bad the preacher makes them feel about it. They are usually more the victims than the villains. They are trapped. And part of their entrapment is their cowering sense of unworthiness and impotency which we foster with our moralizing and condemnation.[12]

In contrast, evangelism based on the image of God appeals to the person's highest aspirations. It builds on their hopes and answers their feelings of weakness and helplessness. It identifies the source of their helplessness and puts them in touch with the One who alone can overcome it.

There are two primary elements in this approach to evangelism. The first is enabling persons to see themselves as God sees them and as they can become in Christ. Paul provides the paradigm for this in 2 Cor. 5: 16–21, when he says, "From now on, therefore, we regard no one from a human point of view." How, then, are we to view persons? In terms of their potential ("If anyone is in Christ, there is a new creation."), not focusing on their sins ("in Christ God was reconciling the world to himself, not counting their trespasses against them"), but emphasizing what they can become ("For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God"). Persons need to know themselves, as they are and as they can become. And yet, in the midst of our self-centered culture, one of the least available commodities is self-knowledge. To this need the gospel speaks with power.

> To speak in general terms, the law gives me self-knowledge by disclosing the gulf between what I ought to be according to my God-given destiny and what I am in fact . . . The gospel, too, gives self-knowledge, although in a very different way and with a very different result. By raising me up and letting me see myself as justified, it gives me final information about myself. I am the one who is right with God, whom the Reconciler has reconciled to God. But this is too weak because it is incomplete. For the gospel is not just an indicatory or interpretative Word which tells me this above all else. It is an efficacious Word which calls into being and puts into effect what is not, namely, the absent peace with God.[13]

This leads to the second element in this approach to evangelism—

helping persons to become what God meant for them to be. This does not mean it is we who convert and save people, independent of the work of the Holy Spirit. Clearly it is the Spirit who convinces the world of sin and of righteousness. Without his work in a person's heart there will be no renewal of the image of God. For this requires a recognition of one's own spiritual poverty, the weakness of one's will, one's utter helplessness. Even more, it requires the renunciation of self and the embracing of God's will and plan for one's life. One must feel in the depths of one's soul the truth that "unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains just a single grain; but if it dies, it bears much fruit" (Jn. 12:24). No one comes to this point without the work of the Holy Spirit.

What this does mean is that we accept our God-given responsibility for the spiritual formation of our brothers and sisters, from conception to full maturity in Christ. It means that we bring the full resources of the body of Christ to bear in providing for their nurture. It means that we take seriously the fact that God gave gifts to the Church "to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ, until all of us come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to maturity, to the measure of the full stature of Christ" (Eph. 4:12–13). In this approach to evangelism there is no false distinction between witness and follow-up, evangelism and discipleship. For salvation is not simply "getting in the door." It is a life-long process in which God works through his Word, his Spirit, and his people to re-create and complete his image in us.

NOTES

[1] Thomas Jackson, ed., *The Works of John Wesley* (London: The Wesleyan Methodist Book Room, 1872) pp. 66–67.
[2] Helmut Thielicke, *The Evangelical Faith* (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1977, Volume 2) p. 162.
[3] Herman Ridderbos, *Paul: An Outline of His Theology* (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1975) pp. 224–225.
[4] Albert Outler, *Theology in the Wesleyan Spirit* (Nashville: Discipleship Resources, 1974) p. 40.
[5] George Morris, *The Mystery and Meaning of Christian Conversion* (Nashville: Discipleship Resources, 1981) p. 84.
[6] *Webster's New World Dictionary*
[7] Outler, *Theology*, p. 40.
[8] Urban Holmes, *Turning to Christ* (New York: Seabury Press) 1981.
[9] Robert G. Tuttle Jr., *Someone Out There Needs Me* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1983) p. 76.
[10] Ridderbos, *Paul*, p. 220.
[11] Some might say that I am confusing salvation and sanctification by including the gradual renewal of the image of God within us in salvation. If so, it is only insofar as sanctification is *part of* salvation. There is a "holiness without which no one will see the Lord" (Heb. 12:14b). As Wesley was fond of saying, "We know no salvation without salvation from sin." How can we be saved from hell if we are not saved from sin, when sin is the stuff

that hell is made of? If sanctification is not included in our understanding of salvation, we end up with the antinomian propositional faith which plagues American Christianity today. That being the case, I will risk a little theological confusion for the sake of practical faithfulness.

[12] William H. Willimon, *The Gospel for the Person Who Has Everything* (Valley Forge: Judson Press, 1978) p. 19–20.

[13] Thielicke, *The Evangelical Faith*, p. 185–186.

A Tribute To GEORGE EDGAR SWEAZEY 1905–1992

In a relatively few words how can one pay adequate tribute to a person who served Jesus Christ and the Church so long and so well, and in so many different ways? In the letter to the Ephesians we are told that God's gift was that some should be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, some pastors and teachers. George Edgar Sweazey was all of the above.

A modern-day apostle, he was sent by God into a world that desperately needs to hear the gospel to which he so faithfully bore witness in word and deed. In the tradition of the great prophets of the past, he accepted the burden of the Lord, sounding from pulpit to pulpit a clarion call for social justice, while proclaiming the good news of salvation with the convincing power of one who believed what he preached. A brilliant defender of the faith, for more than half a century he was doing the work of an evangelist, leading men and women to Christ and exciting others to do the same.

What made George Sweazey such an effective minister was the character of George Sweazey the man. Always curious, always open to new ideas, always growing, he approached life on a "need to know" basis. If he had not been a pastor, he would surely have been an adventurer or an explorer. This was the man who hopped a freight train and slept on park benches that he might experience the life of a hobo; who had himself locked up in a penitentiary for four days, living anonymously in a cell block with sixteen other prisoners that he might understand better their pain; who at the age of sixty parachuted from a plane just to know how it would feel to take that kind of a leap of faith.

As a beloved pastor in five different congregations and an interim minister to a number of others, this modest, self-effacing man shepherded his flocks with energy, intelligence, imagination, and love, and as a teacher he was continually about the task of equipping the saints for the work of ministry.

Born on March 17, 1905, George spent the first thirteen years of his life in Salt Lake City, Utah, where his father, George Beatty Sweazey, was serving on the faculty of Westminster College. The family moved to the mid-west when Dr. Sweazey was called to be Dean and a member of

the faculty of Westminster College in Fulton, Missouri. After graduating from the latter institution in 1927, young George entered Princeton Theological Seminary in the height of the long-remembered Machen controversy. George recalled being met at the train station with other incoming students by members of the faculty wanting to make their particular views known. Although he respected J. Gresham Machen as a teacher, George was dismayed by the schism and by the views of some of his disaffected classmates, who followed their mentor to Philadelphia.

Having enrolled in a dual degree program, George received a Bachelor of Theology degree from the Seminary and a Master of Arts degree from Princeton University in June, 1930. Much of the following two-year period was spent in Germany, where he earned a Ph.D. degree at Friedrick Wilhelm University in Berlin. Returning to the United States, he was ordained by the Presbytery of Newark and installed as Assistant Pastor of the Old First Church of Newark on June 27, 1932.

Later that year he was called to be pastor of the Second Presbyterian Church of Danville, Kentucky. Here he met a vivacious first-year Centre College student named Mary Handy Ensminger, who was participating in a literary society that met in the church. The relationship was purely platonic, however, until Mary Handy's senior year, when the bachelor pastor finally had the good sense to ask her for a date. The courtship shifted immediately into high gear, leading to a February engagement followed by a June wedding, in 1937.

George left Danville to become pastor of the Tyler Place Presbyterian Church of St. Louis, where he served with distinction for six years, before being appointed in 1945 Secretary of the Department of Evangelism of the Presbyterian Board of National Missions. In that capacity he conceived and spearheaded the highly successful New Life Movement, which sparked a period of growth and expansion for churches throughout his denomination.

After eight years as a denominational executive, George returned to the parish ministry, accepting a call to the Huguenot Memorial Church of Pelham, New York, where he served from 1953–1959. From there he headed back to the St. Louis area to begin his last, longest and most significant pastorate, at the Presbyterian Church of Webster Groves, Missouri. In 1968 he exchanged pulpits for three months with a Methodist minister in Johannesburg under the Leadership Exchange Program of the Society of Friends. That was the first of his three visits to South Africa, where he became aware of the complexities as well as of the evils of the apartheid system.

Notable among George Sweazey's ecumenical involvements, which are too numerous to list, were his service as a member of the General Board and Chair of the Department of Evangelism of the National Council of Churches, and as a delegate to the World Alliance of Reformed Churches. Because of the highly visible nature of his executive positions, George Sweazey's reputation as an able administrator, outstanding preacher, and enthusiastic proponent of evangelism, augmented by his numerous writings and lectureships, was nationwide.

In 1969, his eleventh year in Webster Groves, in recognition of his long years of service and influential leadership, he was elected Moderator of the General Assembly of the United Presbyterian Church. Many who were privileged to hear his inaugural sermon at that Assembly were electrified by what he had to say and excited to know that their denomination would be represented by such a distinguished and able church leader. In addition to holding the denomination's highest elective office, Dr. Sweazey also served for three years on the General Council and for twelve years as a member of the Commission on Ecumenical Mission and Relations.

We who sat with George at presbytery meetings could easily forget that this unpretentious man was a former moderator of the General Assembly. In a discussion he would offer his views but never impose them on others. With customary modesty, succinctness, and good humor he had an uncanny knack of getting quickly to the heart of the matter. Yet whenever he spoke, it was always without rancor or malice, though his opinions were often provocative. He took seriously what others had to say, and honored their right to differ.

Throughout his ministry George remained an enthusiastically loyal alumnus of Princeton Theological Seminary, serving on the Board of Trustees for sixteen years, three of which were as an elected Alumni Trustee. His tenure on the Board ended in 1971, when he left Webster Groves to join the Princeton Seminary faculty as the Francis Landey Patton Professor of Homiletics. In 1975 he was a guest professor of church history for six months at Rhodes University in Grahamstown, South Africa.

Despite his prominence as a churchman, George Sweazey was probably best known and will undoubtedly be most widely remembered for his publications, including two books which are highly regarded and well used by professionals in the field of evangelism, *Effective Evangelism* and *The Church As Evangelist*. His excellent textbook, *Preaching the Good News*, is still an immensely useful resource for any pastor who takes seriously the ministry of preaching. His other published titles included *The Keeper of the Door*, *The Christian Answer*, and *In Holy Marriage*. All of George Sweazey's books are an admirable blend of sound theology and practical wisdom, clearly presented, interestingly illustrated, and relevantly applied.

In the pulpit George was a kind of Will Rogers in a Geneva robe. His homespun philosophy, spiced with wit and punctuated with quotable aphorisms, had an uncanny knack of making his hearers laugh and squirm at the same time. A sharp diagnostician of the world scene, his humor made his words palatable but never dulled the cutting edge of his preaching. He could turn a phrase as well as any pulpiteer of his time, but he never tried to be nor pretended to be a pulpit showman. His sermons were consistently excellent, because he worked hard to make them so. Yet he was not charmed by the magic of his own words,

nor overly impressed with his own importance. George Sweazey was a genuinely humble man.

In the classroom Professor Sweazey was regarded by his students and faculty colleagues as a man of integrity, whose views were always worth taking seriously, and whose vast pastoral experience enhanced his authenticity as a practical theologian. Though his academic field was homiletics, evangelism remained one of his primary interests. The students in his elective courses in evangelism were among his most enthusiastic advocates. Always an innovator and initiator, as a Princeton academician he was one of the founders of the Academy for Evangelism in Theological Education, served for two years as its first president, and at the annual meeting in 1985 was elected the Academy's first Life Member. It was fitting that the first issue of the AETE *Journal* should be dedicated to the man who had become the Academy's elder statesman.

Dr. Sweazey was the recipient of honorary degrees from Westminster College (Fulton), Grove City College, Waynesburg College, Westminster College (Salt Lake City), Lindenwood College, and Centre College.

Following his retirement from the Princeton faculty in 1975, George and Mary Handy moved from their Seminary-owned house at 31 Alexander Street to 48 Park Place in the Borough of Princeton. A new and exciting ministry opened up for the veteran churchman during this period, as he found himself besieged by invitations to serve congregations as an interim pastor. Since most of his interim ministries were within commuting distance of Princeton, he continued to be a gracious and positive influence on the Seminary campus, often as a willing and welcome substitute in the classroom. Always in demand as a guest speaker or preacher, he challenged pastors and lay people in churches and presbyteries across America to fulfill their ministry of evangelism, and at the age of eighty he returned for the third time to South Africa to deliver the challenge in that context.

Becoming an octogenarian did not deter the wiry Professor Emeritus from jogging regularly and using his bicycle more than his car. The fact that he insisted on buying only second hand cars was for George a matter of principle, not of penuriousness. His frugality was a reflection of his personal stewardship, some might even say asceticism. Shunning all ostentation, he denied himself that he might give the more generously to others, and especially to the church, believing that "You get more for your money when you give to God." A champion of the poor and the oppressed, this was the man who marched with the freedom fighters in Montgomery, Alabama, and who opened his pulpit to dissident black militants that their protests might be heard.

Yet there was a fun-loving side to George as well. His wit and humor enriched the lives of all who knew him as a friend. The Sweazey household was always a place for happy social gatherings, laced with laughter and seasoned with song. Their guests found themselves inevitably engaged in stimulating conversation and the scintillating party games which George and Mary Handy delighted to play—and usually won!

Those whom they entertained never left the Sweazey's home without a rich taste of Christian fellowship.

Their legendary hospitality continued after they moved to Monroe Village in nearby Jamesburg, until George was permanently confined to the Health Care Center by the increasingly debilitating effects of Alzheimer's disease. His children came to be with him for the final hard days. On January 23, 1992, a few days after suffering a stroke, the veteran churchman breathed his last. It had been a long and demanding ordeal for Mary Handy as well, who through it all was constantly by his side, fulfilling what her husband was fond of saying about her: "She practices what I preach!"

We the members of the Academy for Evangelism in Theological Education will remember our respected colleague, George Edgar Sweazey, as a skilled advocate of evangelism and a stalwart defender of the faith. We join his legions of friends and admirers in expressing our deepest sympathy to his beloved wife Mary Handy, to his daughters Anne and Mary and son George, Jr., and to his five grandchildren and two great-grandchildren. At the same time we rejoice with them in the sure and certain hope of the resurrection to eternal life through our Lord Jesus Christ.

Respectfully submitted,

RICHARD STOLL ARMSTRONG
October 10, 1992

BOOK REVIEWS

From Darkness to Light: Aspects of Conversion in the New Testament

By Beverly Roberts Gaventa. Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1986. Pp. 160.

From Darkness to Light contains a very useful discussion of the major New Testament texts on conversion, focusing on conversion narratives (in Acts) and on conversion images. Dr. Gaventa begins with an examination of those texts in Paul's epistles that allude (or seem to allude) to his Damascus road experience (Gal 1:11–17; Phil 3:2–11; and Rom 7: 13–25). She then moves to Luke's three accounts of Paul's conversion (in Acts 9, 22, and 26) following which she broadens her survey of Acts to examine two other conversion narratives (that of the Ethiopian eunuch and of Cornelius) as well as the view of conversion that is found in Acts. Her examination ends with a provocative discussion of the "born again" metaphor found in John 3 and 1 Peter 1. Her aim in all this is to understand how the New Testament portrays conversion.

Gaventa's handling of the New Testament text is skillful: a model of how biblical scholarship can enlighten the meaning of passages. In her analysis, she rightly insists that we cannot interpret any conversion narrative or comment without taking into account the role of that passage in the unfolding narrative or argument on the part of the author. The reader will find that many familiar passages will come alive in new ways (even at those points when Dr. Gaventa's hermeneutic differs from one's own).

Lying behind this examination is a three-part typology for conversion that Gaventa proposes at the beginning of the book. During the course of her analysis she seeks to show that all three types of conversion are found in the New Testament. The first type of conversion experience is called *alternation*. Alternation is the experience of change that grows naturally out of an individual's past history. This sort of conversion is not disruptive in that it requires a break with the past; rather, it is a joyful discovery that flows directly from what one has affirmed up to that point. Gaventa cites the conversion of the Ethiopian eunuch and of Cornelius as examples of alternation. *Pendulum conversion* is her

second category. In this case, the past is rejected and a new and different future is affirmed. Paul's conversion (at least as described by Luke in the Acts 9 account) is understood to be an example of pendulum conversion. Paul goes from being a violent opponent of the church to being a persecuted member of the church. However, according to Gaventa, when Paul writes about his own conversion it is described as the experience of *transformation*, which is the third type of conversion. Paul does not reject his past as much as reinterpret it. "Transformation applies to conversions in which a new way of perception forces the radical reinterpretation of the past. Here the past is not rejected but reconstructed as part of a new understanding of God and world" (p. 148).

Gaventa's typology of conversion is a useful reminder that the shape and form of conversion cannot be defined by one type of experience alone. In fact, genuine conversion happens in a variety of ways. Of course, this observation raises the question of what, then, defines new Testament conversion? What are the boundaries for the experience we call Christian conversion? At the conclusion of her book Gaventa begins to give an answer to this crucial question (though she does not develop it fully). First, she points to the Christological nature of New Testament conversion. Conversion has to do with coming into a relationship with Jesus—a relationship which is not merely sentimental but has an ethical dimension (a life of obedience) and a social dimension (becoming part of the community of believers). She also points out that conversion is, primarily, an act of God. At times in the New Testament the convert is almost passive in the face of God's powerful (and gracious) act of conversion. Finally, she points to the radical change that takes place in the life of the convert. Conversion is the experience of new life, of a transformed mind, of a new community and a new perspective (p. 152). The title of the book itself defines the nature of this radical turning: it is "from darkness to light." (Interestingly [and regrettably] Gaventa does not examine the "turning" aspect of conversion that is so prominent in the New Testament materials [e.g., Acts 26]). While the experience of conversion has many forms, each type of experience is filled with similar content if it is to be called Christian conversion.

Dr. Gaventa ends her provocative book with challenges both to mainline and to evangelical churches. Her challenge to mainline churches is to explore the concept of conversion (and not simply avoid the issue out of embarrassment) since conversion is so central to the New Testament texts. In fact, the very questions which plagued the first century church and resulted in the reflection on conversion also plague "beleaguered mainline Christianity today": issues such as the question of Christian identity and the constitution of the Christian community (p. 150). Evangelicals, on the other hand, can become so preoccupied with bringing about conversion that they fail to notice that conversion is never a goal in itself. Conversion in the New Testament is a byproduct of the gospel. It is what happens when God is active. Nor have evangelicals adequately taken into account the ethical and social dimensions of conversion.

In summary, this is the sort of book that can be used successfully in the seminary classroom to stimulate students to develop a holistic view of conversion and to open up their thinking about how evangelism can be done given the variety of experiences of the conversion that one finds in the New Testament.

Richard Peace

Richard Peace is Professor of Evangelism and Ministry at Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary, South Hamilton, Massachusetts. He is a past president of the AETE.

Resident Aliens: Life in the Christian Colony

By Stanley Hauerwas and William H. Willimon. Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1989. Pp. 175.

This is a conglomerate critique of most everything under the sun pertaining to Christian faith and the church. There are so many themes in *Resident Aliens* that it reads like a condensed course on church history, practical theology and ethics.

The book arises from the authors' declaration of the death of Christendom. Christendom implies a culture captured by the consumer mentality and the Enlightenment values of autonomy, being liberated, free and detached. The world now ignores or seeks to extinguish the church; churches are tamed, preachers are toned down, and prophets are accommodating. The world is no longer hospitable to the truth of the gospel nor to discipleship. Rather, most live practical atheism, as if there is no God.

The purposes of this book in this context are many: to name again the distinctiveness of the church in the world; to reorient the church to its fundamental task of orienting people to God; to challenge the church's understanding of social action and social strategies, especially by declaring the bankruptcy of a liberal ethical sentimentality; to define the primary responsibility of the church to be the establishment of a community which is truthful on the basis of the truth of God's story, especially in the life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ; and to affirm that everyone's calling is confirmed in their baptism.

There is a particularly stimulating outline of a confirmation program which is based on their "resident alien" thinking. It grows out of the principle that people do learn the faith by catching it from others. The book is critical of the pastors' self-understanding as being part of the "helping professions."

Baptism is the "mark of transfer from one dominion to another and

by it we become resident aliens in whatever culture we find ourselves." Resident aliens are those who swim against the mainstream, whose values come from outside and are not supported by the culture, who challenge consumerism and any focus on meeting unexamined needs. The focus on baptism is refreshing and empowering for all of God's people. All people by baptism are "ordained to share in Christ's work in the world." To live this would be to live differently. They write: "The most credible form of witness is the actual creation of a living, breathing, visible community of faith." This is the community of the cross, the resident aliens, an "adventurous colony in a society of unbelief."

There are questions raised by the book. By condemning culture and affirming these churches as the only contexts for decision for action, how do we discern ways God is at work through culture?

Further, the authors decry most social action which acts as if God were not real or active in the world. Most movements for justice and peace are written off. "Our task is to be the church rather than to transform the world." They argue that both liberals and conservatives "assume the main political significance of the church lies in assisting the secular state in its presumption to make a better world for its citizens." On the basis of such clear critiques the authors could offer more than that the church is to "be the church" in relation to the world.

This book is commendable for all it stirs up. As mainline churches have experienced a loss of "distinctiveness in name, story, song and lived lives," becoming a chameleon to culture, the time has come for the church and Christians to be re-defined, re-charged, and re-commissioned.

Alan Johnson

Alan Johnson is Secretary of Evangelism and Membership Growth for the United Church Board for Homeland Ministries of the United Church of Christ.

The New Catholic Evangelization

Edited by Kenneth Boyack, C.S.P. Mahwah, N.J.: Paulist Press, 1992. Pp. iii + 239.

The book is a compendium of sixteen essays by various authors plus a lengthy introduction by Archbishop Edward McCarthy of the Archdiocese of Miami (an Archdiocese which is known for its leadership in the area of Roman Catholic evangelization). There are brief notes on each of the contributors, among whom are laity and clergy, professors and

practitioners. Three of the authors are female. All appear qualified for the articles which they have written.

Each essay is well documented and concludes with several discussion questions and an additional bibliography related to material covered in the essay. The bibliographies themselves would be reason enough to purchase the book. The book is divided into four sections with the following titles: *New Ideas, New Strategies, New Methods,* and *New Fervor.* The titles of the essays give a summary of the contents of the book: Distinctive Qualities of Catholic Evangelization, Catholic Evangelization in the United States From the Republic to Vatican II, Evangelizing American Culture, The New Catholic Apologetic, The Emerging Role of the Laity, Strategies for an Evangelizing Parish, Family Power: Awaken and Announce God's Love as Real, Work and Evangelization, A New Look at Social Justice, The Empowering Capacity of the Bible for Evangelization, Models for an Evangelizing Parish, The Need for Evangelization Training, Media for the Sake of the Gospel, Come, Holy Spirit! The Divine Spirit and Evangelization, The Eucharist: Summit and Font of Christian Evangelization, Evangelization 2000: A Global View.

The section on New Ideas covers a broad historical overview of evangelization in the Roman Catholic Church, an historical overview of Catholic evangelization in the United States, and new ways of looking at apologetics and culture. These latter two essays would contain really new material for the ordinary reader and they do offer some profound insights into this whole area of evangelization by the Catholic Church. Protestants, too, would gain insight from these articles. One sub-title sums up the section, "Catholic Concern for Culture: Loving What You Evangelize."

The section on New Strategies is one which Catholics would thoroughly enjoy reading since the strategies proposed would be new for Catholics, whereas for Protestants they would be rather old hat. The emphasis is upon the role of the laity, the parish, the family, and the work place. The essay which would be new to most people would be the one which treats Evangelization and Social Justice. The author concerns himself with the transforming power of the evangelized to bring about social justice in our society.

The section on New Methods would offer something truly new only to Catholics. The methods have been used in various Protestant denominations for decades and even centuries. However, as a review for everyone and especially as a means to bring Catholics up to date on what methods are available, this section is worthwhile. Especially noteworthy are the "models" proposed in the essay bearing that word in its name.

The last section, New Fervor, is precisely what has animated the entire rationale of this book. All three articles are worthy of being read and studied. The last essay, Evangelization 2000: A Global View, speaks about the evangelization strategies in which the Roman Catholic Church is engaged in preparation for a celebration of the year 2000 as a special birthday celebration in honor of Jesus Christ. It recounts some of the national strategies proposed by episcopal conferences throughout the world.

Overall, I would recommend the book to Catholics of every kind since it updates the Church's position on evangelization. The book reads easily even when the essays are the product of a professor's hand. Protestants, too, will get some new insights and at the same time be able to appreciate the position of the Roman Catholic Church at this time. The book is highly recommended as a type of encyclopedia on various aspects of Catholic evangelization.

Patrick J. Sena

Patrick J. Sena, C.P.P.S., is a past president of the Academy for Evangelism in Theological Education and Adjunct Professor of Biblical Theology at St. Vincent Seminary, Boynton Beach, Florida.

The Great Commission: Biblical Models for Evangelism

By Mortimer Arias and Alan Johnson. Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1992. Pp. 142.

Persons eager to sharpen their biblical view and practice of evangelism will value this volume by Mortimer Arias, Latin American churchman, theologian, and former professor of evangelism at Iliff School of Theology, and Alan Johnson, Secretary of Evangelism and Membership Growth with the United Church of Christ. In it, they seek to challenge the common notion that there is just one "Great Commission" and seek to bridge the gulf between biblical scholarship and the theory and practice of mission and evangelism (terms used as synonymous). The work is unusual in its format. Arias provides a contextual exegesis (pages 1–97) of the four commissions given the missionary paradigms, models, or motifs (interchangeable terms) which emerge from the texts themselves, while Johnson provides four chapters of questions, reflections, and exercises (pages 98–126) keyed specifically to the previous four content chapters.

In the earlier section, Arias systematically examines the four "Last Commissions" found respectively in Matthew 28:16–20, Mark 16:14–20, Luke 24:44–49, and John 20:19–23. Arias shows how each commission unlocks the evangelistic message, method, and content of each gospel, just as each gospel provides the vital context for "the Great Commission" whose full authority is rooted in scripture, the early church, and in Jesus himself (p. 12–13). To get at the "total witness of each gospel," Arias works with five missiological questions: 1) What is the *content*

of the gospel? 2) What is the *method* (or strategy) for mission? 3) What is the *motivation* for mission? 4) Who are the *subjects* of mission and evangelism? and 5) Who are the *addressees*?

The book's clear goals include earnest Bible study, open theological reflection, and a real engagement in evangelical mission by the reader, or a group of readers. The rereading of the gospels which Arias provides and the rethinking of mission and evangelism which Johnson provokes are urgent, given both the church's need for missiological clarity about its very existence and the church's facile acceptance of success and failure on cultural rather than biblical terms. For example, in the final section dealing with John's incarnational mission model, Johnson asks the reader to evaluate

> the 'witness' that the church and Christians make today with the gospel criteria Arias lists: a) leads listeners to believe in Jesus as the Christ; b) reports what was the fruit of personal experience and faith; c) elicits personal experience and faith in hearers; d) confesses with listeners that Christ is the Saviour of the world; and e) is evangelized while evangelizing (p. 126).

Whether in the church or in the classroom, I fear too few of us are docile enough to hear or committed enough to act on the bold and biblical mission Arias and Johnson open for us from scripture. After a first reading I noted that there was no summation or "wrap-up" provided. Upon further reflection, I see that there can be no such general decontextualized conclusion this side of the Kingdom's eschaton, at least none beyond being faithful to what we have been told and doing what is expected of us where we are with what we have been given. Minor editing will straighten out the jumbled numbering of several sections in the book. However, the real challenge will be the major life "editing" we need to do if the "Great Commission" in all its fullness and the explication of it which this volume gives are taken seriously.

David Scotchmer

David Scotchmer is Associate Professor of Mission and Evangelism at the University of Dubuque Theological Seminary and a consultant-exegete with the Presbyterian Church, (U.S.A.) on Mam (Maya) Old Testament translation in Guatemala.

U.S. Lifestyles and Mainline Churches: A Key to Reaching People in the 90's

By Tex Sample. Louisville: Westminster/John Knox Press, 1990. Pp. 171.

In recent years a number of books have been published about baby boomers and their relationship to the church. Most recently (and most notably) is Wade Clark Roof's fine study: *A Generation of Seekers: The Spiritual Journeys of the Baby Boom Generation* (HarperCollins, 1993). Books are now beginning to be written about the much-forgotten baby busters generation, e.g., *The Invisible Generation: Baby Busters* by George Barna (Barna Publishing, 1992). However, most of these books have been written from a generational studies point of view. They seek to define the characteristics of the "average" person born between certain dates.

Tex Sample takes a different tack in his reflection on how to reach the diverse groups in America in the 90's. He views culture through the grid of lifestyle, not generation. This allows him to look at baby boomers, for example, with a much finer lens than is afforded by generational studies. Thus it turns out that while the overwhelming majority of the "cultural left" is made up of baby boomers, most baby boomers are not on the cultural left. There are even more boomers in what he calls the "cultural middle" and some on the "cultural right." This distinction will prove extremely useful to those pastoring churches to which boomers are returning. It may turn out that the gap between a boomer on the left and a boomer on the right is greater than the gap between either one and a senior citizen who shares that boomer's lifestyle.

Sample makes use of the work of Arnold Mitchell (*The Nine American Lifestyles*, Warner Books, 1983) in defining the various lifestyles. Specifically, he examines three lifestyles on the cultural left (the I-am-me's; the Experientials, and the Societally Conscious), three on the cultural right (the Respectables, the Hard Living, and the Desperate Poor) and three in the cultural middle (the Successful, the Strivers, and the Conflicted). Sample's distinctions help us to understand the specific hopes and fears of each sub-group and thus he enables us to begin constructing culture-specific ways of reaching out to each group.

Sample then makes use of Robert Schreiter's *Constructing Local Theologies* (Orbis Books, 1985) to help us get a bearing on what theologies (or metaphors) connect best with which lifestyle. The resulting matrix is most interesting. Sample argues that a journey theology rings true to the cultural left who see spirituality as an unfolding pilgrimage. For the cultural right, on the other hand, folk theology makes the most sense. This is religion as a way of life rather than merely a view of life. Folk religion focuses on a providential God immediately involved in the events of life; it has a strong communal character and a devotional flavor. For those in the cultural middle an explanatory theology is needed.

This is a theology that can sustain itself in the midst of competing world views. Thus Sample alerts us to the need to explore different metaphors in order to reach different subcultures. He is not urging us to alter or abandon doctrine but he is calling us to develop culture-sensitive ways to help people hear the gospel clearly.

An important characteristic of *U.S. Lifestyle and Mainline Churches* is the warm and knowledgeable discussion of the cultural right. This is a group not normally targeted by mainline churches. Nor is it a group that gets much positive assessment in theological colleges. As Sample points out, seminaries tend to move clergy away from the cultural right. Not so Sample. He values his working class roots even while moving well beyond them personally. Thus he offers the reader useful insights into how one can minister to the cultural right. (In his new book *Hard Living People & Mainstream Christians* [Abingdon, 1993] he develops these themes further as he focuses on one of the three major subgroups on the cultural right.)

Sample's book is nicely structured. After an introduction he devotes three chapters to each of the three, broad lifestyles: the first chapter in each part offers a definition of the lifestyle, the second a discussion of that lifestyle in relationship to the church, and the third the articulation of a theological perspective appropriate to the lifestyle in question. The book is highly readable, filled with anecdotes that bring alive the sociological and theological analysis. It is written in a way that will be highly useful for the local church. This is the sort of textbook that will be of great value to those teaching courses on culturally-sensitive evangelism.

Richard Peace

Richard Peace is Professor of Evangelism and Ministry at Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary, South Hamilton, Massachusetts. He is a past president of the AETE.

How to Reach Baby Boomers

By William Easum. Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1991. Pp. 143.

This third book in Abingdon's Effective Church Series, edited by Herb Miller, is authored by the Senior Pastor of the Colonial Hills United Methodist Church in San Antonio, Texas. As author of the *Church Growth Handbook* and leader of church growth seminars, William Easum brings a wealth of experience to this endeavor.

The well-known facts are presented early and briefly (baby-boomers are persons born between 1946 and 1964 and there are approximately 76 million Americans in this category) before Easum describes boomers

as "the first generation of Americans to live in an unchurched culture." He further states, "The marriage between American culture and Christianity is coming to an end. What was once a separation, is becoming a divorce." Given this key idea, the book concentrates on concrete, practical ways a church can impact baby boomers, leaving for other authors the discussions on the characteristics of boomers.

The theme of this book is well stated: In order to minister to this diverse, changing world of choices, mainstream Protestant churches need to make basic changes in leadership skills, the quality and scope of ministry, and the method of preaching and worship. Realizing effective methods rest on solid biblical foundations, the book then focuses on the practical "how-to" of ministry.

By contrasting Joe/Josephine (representing baby boomers) with Max/Maxine (representing Americans born before 1946) throughout the book, the author discusses leadership skills necessary for reaching boomers, organizational principles necessary for a church to minister to boomers, basic principles and examples of rewarding ministries, reasons why boomers might want to attend church, the development of stewardship related to money, and finally, the changes needed in worship and preaching in order to appeal to boomers. In "A Final Word," Easum offers six steps for implementing the ideas set forth in the book, i.e., moving a church from the leadership of Max/Maxine to the leadership of Joe/Josephine and all that that involves. An appendix offers samples of material that some have found helpful in reaching boomers.

The book is well written, and will serve as another one of many books recently published on baby boomers. The author's stated purpose for the book is "to move baby boomers from the pursuit of self-centered, self-fulfillment to the biblical understanding of self-fulfillment through self-denial." An unstated purpose of the book seems to relate to those persons born prior to 1946. This unstated purpose is either to change Max/Maxine's way of thinking, particularly about church and outreach, or to move Max/Maxine out of leadership positions in the church which directly affect baby boomers. The task, both for the stated purpose and for the unstated purpose, is a formidable one. This book will help churches who are courageous enough to make the attempt.

Dan R. Crawford

Dan R. Crawford is the Associate Professor of Evangelism/Missions, George W. Truett Chair of Ministry, Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, Fort Worth, Texas.

Selling Jesus: What's Wrong with Marketing the Church?

By Douglas D. Webster. Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 1992. Pp. 165.

Douglas Webster is the teaching pastor at Cherry Creek Presbyterian Church, Englewood, Colorado. He offers us a straight-forward, theologically astute, hard-hitting critique of the hype and questionable theology of popular church marketing techniques. Thus, the title, "Selling Jesus: What's Wrong with Marketing the Church."

The author's key task is to open up dialogue on these major questions. "How do we present Christ to a consumer-oriented, sex-crazed, self-occupied, success-focused, technologically sophisticated, light-hearted, entertainment-centered culture? How do we strategize, as Jesus did with the disciples, to distinguish between popular opinion and Spirit-led confession? How does the confessional church, as a community of Christian disciples, engage the world?" (p. 21). In eight tightly fashioned chapters he engages the questions with great clarity and frames the answers and responses with solid Christo-centric grounding. The book concludes with "Practical Suggestions for the Household of Faith."

Personally, I am using this volume in my seminary class on evangelism. Parish pastors who are committed to holding fast the integrity of the Gospel and not caving in to the felt needs of the baby boomers will draw strength and courage from Webster's sustained argument. Quoting John MacArthur:

> Wherever pragmatism exists in the church, there is always a corresponding de-emphasis on Christ's sufficiency, God's sovereignty, biblical integrity, the power of prayer, and Spirit-led ministries (p. 132).

Webster's overview of church marketing, especially in the work of George Barna, and his insight into and analysis of the spiritually empty state of American culture are most helpful. "Who, after all, is Lord of the Church: the consumer or Christ?" (p. 91).

Mainline denominational pastors and lay leaders earnestly desire to see persons connected to Jesus Christ and to grow as disciples. Webster seeks the same goal. But the author is not willing to compromise the centrality of Jesus Christ and the work of the Holy Spirit. Webster sounds a strong protest against subverting worship into entertainment, divesting resources for outreach-diakonia into meeting consumer demands, and treating the Church more like a shopping mall than a household of faith.

Webster gives his readers a wake-up alarm call as he critiques a market-driven, consumer-oriented standard of excellence. In its place the author calls us back to a biblical and confessional posture focused on servant leadership, spiritual gifts, sacrificial giving, quiet meditation and the ethics of the kingdom of God.

Selling Jesus ably reminded me that our job as evangelists is to expect God to walk in people's lives, drawing them to Christ and building them up in faith. That's a far cry from marketing strategy!

Paul S. Fransen

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

After Christendom?

By Stanley Hauerwas. Nashville: Abington Press, 1991. Pp. 192.

This book takes effort to read, but it is worth it. The book is about what it means to be a witness today. "Can we witness to God's rule through the church without ruling?" We become witnesses through effort, through disciplined learning from one who has some authority and skilled experience. The point is made in Hauerwas' central image of bricklaying. It takes time to learn how to lay bricks as well as to become Christian. In doing this, Christians will be in tension with the state and with many other conventions of our culture and assumptions of our society.

Hauerwas finds that today Christians have lost their intelligibility. Society is morally and spiritually empty at its core; there is nothing within the faith which is worth dying for and thus commitments are empty; loyalty to God is compromised; "the church is trying to remain a societal actor in societies that we feel are slipping away from our control"; and "our neutrality about religion has been an attempt to suppress conflict in the name of peace but the result is the creation of a people who think that all substantive convictions are a matter of opinion." Thus the gospel is domesticated. What has robbed us of our witnessing?

The answer to that is directly related to the Constantinian rule and the immersion of the Christian church in the Enlightenment. Hauerwas in particular goes after liberal Protestant theology which has capitulated to these forces.

Two of the most "dense" chapters in this book are on justice and on freedom. These are "bad ideas" according to Hauerwas. It is such "in your face" language which gets our attention and those who will make the effort will be rewarded with a fresh perspective. We cannot pretend in the spirit of Enlightenment that "the church is incidental to the world's

salvation." Such lives given to following Jesus help us remember that "the question is not whether the church has the freedom to preach the gospel in America, but rather whether the church in America preaches the gospel as truth."

The presumptions of power and helpfulness in the Constantinian rule undercut the true capacity of the church to present the gospel as the alternative narrative in which to live and by which to act. A disciplined community subverts modernity.

Hauerwas then takes on the specifics of singleness, marriage, family and sex. He says that if our "true home is not in our biological family but the church" then our thinking and our moral discourse change completely. So "the first enemy of the family is the church." This gets you engaged!

He also takes on an educational system that teaches that "Columbus discovered America," showing the violence in that system. "For education, whether it be public or religious, in most liberal societies has had as its purpose the suppression of minority voices in the interest of ironically fostering communication."

There is an almost doxological closing to the book as he invites us to at least hum along with "I Love To Tell the Story," underscoring the truth with which we are entrusted and the way in which we are to embody that truth through witness sustained in worship. The book concludes with a very moving letter by a graduate student who questions the very "violent and exclusionary language" of a quote and calls into question "witnessing" to the truth of the gospel for all peoples. Given the drive Christians have "to proclaim the news," it is yet "precisely this proclamation which" (may descend) "with such violence."

This book calls for the church to be a witnessing church. Hauerwas challenges us not to let the dismantling of the Constantinian rule nor the bankruptcy of the Enlightenment rob the church of its true calling. Rather let this time be the occasion for profound renewal.

Alan Johnson

Alan Johnson is Secretary of Evangelism and Membership Growth for the United Church Board for Homeland Ministries of the United Church of Christ.

Evangelism for All God's People: Approaches to Lay Ministries in the Marketplace

By Leonard Sanderson and Ron Johnson. Nashville: Broadman Press, 1990. Pp. 203.

Two prolific Southern Baptist authors have teamed-up to write a much needed book on personal evangelism. Leonard Sanderson teaches evangelism at Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary. Ron Johnson teaches evangelism at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary. From a pooled wealth of experience in local churches, state conventions, and national agencies, as well as academic institutions, these two present scriptural and well-tested approaches to doing evangelism in the marketplace, the work-a-day world. Their "ultimate goal is that an ever-increasing multitude of Christians will think of themselves as ministers (servants) of Jesus Christ and not just as followers and financial supporters of their church's 'hired men.'"

In the process of fulfilling their goal, Sanderson and Johnson discuss the call to evangelism as well as the biblical foundations for evangelism. Having presented the apostolic age of evangelism, the authors go on to give a brief history of evangelism in their chapter entitled, "The Good Old Days," affirming that "evangelism is not what it used to be," but then, "it never was." The book's longest chapter concludes by bringing the history of evangelism up to date with a brief look at recent developments in Southern Baptist evangelism.

Sadly, the book's two shortest chapters are, "Ministry-Based Evangelism" and "The Church in the Marketplace." Finally, a hypothetical case study is offered from the Magnolia Baptist Church in Fictitious, Arkansas, which will no doubt be helpful to some.

The book offers a good presentation of the biblical and historical past, especially for those interested in Southern Baptist evangelism. The book then offers concise, relevant proposals for today. It is a well-written work for both ministers and lay persons who want to understand God's call to all for evangelism in the marketplace.

Dan R. Crawford

Dan R. Crawford is the Associate Professor of Evangelism/Missions, George W. Truett Chair of Ministry, Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, Forth Worth, Texas.

The Isaiah Vision: An Ecumenical Strategy for Congregational Evangelism

By Raymond Fung. Geneva: WCC Publications, 1991. Pp. 55.

Drawing upon the knowledge he has acquired of the world-wide church as Secretary for Evangelism of the World Council of Churches, Raymond Fung offers an ecumenical strategy for evangelism, which he rightly insists must be local and contextual.

Fung's three-dimensional strategy challenges congregations to work what he calls "the Isaiah agenda," inviting others in partnership with them to work, to worship, and to discipleship. Based on Isaiah 65:20–23, the agenda specifies that children do not die, that old people live in dignity, that those who build houses live in them, and that those who plant vineyards eat the fruit of their labors.

While recognizing its limitations, the author sees the Isaiah agenda as remarkably relevant and applicable to today's world, arguing that it is biblically grounded, universally understandable, easily communicated and contextualized, and useful as a basis for assessing human behavior and policies. The agenda is Christian but not exclusively, calling for partnership with the world. It is modest, yet it offers life's basic necessities. For that reason Fung sees it as having serious political implications.

Any one of the three elements of the strategy can be a point of entry into the church. Affirming the need for worship in order to meet the demands of the Isaiah agenda, Christians invite their unchurched partners to join them. The invitation imposes in turn a need to revitalize worship, which the author sees as authentic when it embraces everyday concerns and reaffirms one's faith in the sovereignty of God. All elements of worship should be scrutinized in the light of those objectives.

When they observe the awakening of faith in others, it is insensitive, says Fung, for Christians not to extend an invitation to discipleship. The invitation should be clear, direct, and personal. Christians should recognize and rejoice in the fact that God is present and at work among people of good will.

As partners with people in the community, the local congregation is not a savior, a Santa Claus, or a servant. The author discards the servant image for the image and language of partnership, which is a two-way affair. Partners, he maintains, are equals and mutually accountable. They serve beyond the call of duty, precisely because they are partners, not servants.

While rejecting the servant image, Fung has much to say about serving, appealing for Christians to share out of a sense not just of generosity but of solidarity. Ironically, he himself uses the servant image, when he writes, "Be just to your servant, because you too are a servant" (p. 39).

Since we Christians are accountable to the world for our beliefs and actions, we should always be ready to give a reason for the hope that is within us. It is an account not of our achievements but of our aspirations,

what we long for and want to be. Admitting our limitations, fears, and failures, we invite others to share in the struggle to make the world better.

How does a local congregation begin the Isaiah agenda? asks Fung. His response is not a programmatic outline nor a definitive mission strategy. Rather he offers a few general principles which can be summarized as follows: (a) the church must understand itself as the people of God; (b) the work of the church is the work of the people, where they are, expressed in personal acts of kindness and mercy, in corporate efforts to relieve pain and suffering, and in social and political action; and (c) the role of the clergy and elders is "to enable the laity to do a better job" (p. 51), by encouraging, equipping, and praying for them. Because people's concerns are also God's concerns, Fung appeals for members to bring their cares and needs to the church, where through corporate intercession and caring the congregation becomes a genuine community. "The most important place where this should happen is (in) worship" (p. 52).

Raymond Fung's elaboration of the Isaiah Vision is worthwhile reading, not so much as a strategy for evangelism, but as the thoughtful reflections of a widely known and highly regarded evangelism executive, whose exposure to churches and Christians around the world well qualifies him to address the topic.

Richard Stoll Armstrong

Richard Stoll Armstrong is Emeritus Professor of Ministry and Evangelism at Princeton Theological Seminary, Princeton, NJ, and is Editor of the *Journal of the AETE*.

Preaching to Strangers: Evangelism in Today's World

By William H. Willimon and Stanley Hauerwas. Louisville: Westminster/John Knox Press, 1992. Pp. 144.

This book is a gift to those who have been wrestling and rejoicing with the previous work of Willimon and Hauerwas. The heart of the book consists of ten sermons Willimon preached at Duke Chapel and the almost as long responses to each of these sermons by Hauerwas. It will hopefully disturb "liberals" and will not be much comfort to "conservatives" either. Both authors seek to live beyond these categories and invite us "to see how important a continuing, struggling, witnessing, converting community is for the proclamation of the gospel, to see again how dependent are we preachers on a group of people whose daily struggle to embody the gospel makes credible our efforts to speak the gospel."

The additional bonus is the Introduction by Hauerwas and the Postscript by Willimon. In each of these, depth is given not only to the call and task of preaching and the necessity for being trained to listen, but also to their unique understandings of matters important to the church today. They concur on the image of what the Sunday morning space truly is: "an evangelistic tent." Whatever the visions of what this might mean, their intent is to "preach salvation and hope that some are converted." Those at Duke Chapel are like many in our churches, "tourists, people passing through," rather than those who understand themselves as pilgrims. Thus preaching is "part of the whole church's ministry to convert our lives by having them constituted by a narrative that we have not chosen, but which has chosen us."

This book claims integrity for such evangelistic preaching and thus justifies the book's "over-title" "Evangelism in Today's World." If people "come to church to have confirmed what they already know," then rather than blessing the status quo, preaching is to seek conversion, transformation of lives. This means a major part in preaching is "to resituate our lives in terms of a different narrative from the one we normally embody, or perhaps better, that embodies us."

Willimon's sermons are good for getting us into the biblical text, exploding ordinary ways of understanding, challenging accommodating language, and inviting us to "narrate our lives into Jesus' life." He says, "my sermons at their best are a testimony *of* the baptized to how wonderfully strange, surprising and adventuresome is life after baptism and *to* the unbaptized about a way of life in Christ that is more a political matter of 'will you join up?' than a merely intellectual debate over 'do you agree?'"

It is remarkable to read what Hauerwas "hears" in these sermons. He is an archaeologist revealing layer upon layer of meaning. We are reminded that "if our theology finally doesn't preach, it can't be worth much!"

The content of the sermons teaches the importance of the church; preaching helps shape people into a disciplined community. Preaching matters. People may need training in listening just as much as the preacher needs training in speaking.

What a gift to have a listening congregation! What a gift to have a convicted preacher with a calling to evangelism! This book does not invite the congregation to go home after the service and, in the old cliche, "have the preacher for lunch!" Rather it does add more content from the very life of the church in worship to the admonition to let the church be the church.

Alan Johnson

Alan Johnson is Secretary of Evangelism and Membership Growth for the United Church Board for Homeland Ministries of the United Church of Christ.

THE ACADEMY FOR EVANGELISM IN THEOLOGICAL EDUCATION

Twentieth Anniversary Meeting

THEME: "Evangelism: State of the Art; State of the Heart"

MINUTES

The twentieth annual meeting of the Academy for Evangelism in Theological Education was hosted by the Lancaster Theological Seminary, Lancaster, PA, Oct. 8–10, 1992. Sessions were held at the Seminary (Thursday and Friday evenings) and at the Comfort Inn (Thursday, Friday, and Saturday daytime). The meeting was opened at 7:37 p.m. by President Robert Anderson. Dr. "Chic" Shaver then led in devotions based on Matthew 24:44–47. His theme emphasized (vs. 46) "being a faithful and wise servant," who lives in view of the Lord's return. The test and challenge of ministry comes in answering the question, "How far can God trust me?" God rewards faithfulness with additional responsibility. Our task of shaping the next generation of evangelism leaders is both a great opportunity and a challenge.

Host member Dr. Francis Ringer of the Lancaster Theological Seminary welcomed the Academy to the Seminary. He introduced Dr. Peter Schmiechen, President of the Seminary, who briefly greeted the Academy. Dr. Anderson welcomed members from the Seminary community (12), the Lancaster community (15) and asked AETE members (24) to introduce themselves.

Dr. George Hunter of Asbury Theological Seminary gave the keynote address on "Reaching Secular People." He defined secular people in four broad generalizations: (1) No Christian background or memory; (2) "Agnostics"; (3) Most are not "church broke"; (4) Many have some "hang ups" with Christianity as they perceive it. Hunter called pastors and churches to shift paradigms in ministry from a chaplaincy model (ministry in the church, to Christians, by clergy, for leadership fulfillment) to an apostolic model (ministry in the community, to not-yet Christians, by mobilizing lay people and focusing on changed lives and communities). In communicating with secular people Hunter noted the impor-

tance of: (1) the need for authentic Christianity; (2) the role of the Holy Spirit; (3) the sharing of good news along existing goal networks; (4) seasons of receptivity when people are "between idols;" and (5) the instructional dimension of the evangelization process.

On Friday at 9:10 a.m. Dr. Hal Poe, Bethel Theological Seminary, St. Paul, Minnesota, led in a devotional focusing on Barnabas (an encourager) as a model for evangelism professors (Acts 15:36–40). Barnabas was a trainer of "misfits" (Paul, John Mark). He noted that the validation of our ministry is not only in books written or classes taught but in pouring our lives into high potential, "marginal" people in a discipling relationship. The challenge from Barnabas is to be an encourager and an apostle in reflecting Christ to the perceived "misfit evangelists."

From 9:30–10:30 a.m. Dr. David Lowes Watson addressed the Academy on the topic, "Researching Evangelism: The Need for a Midcourse Correction." Watson called the Academy to a balanced perspective in evangelism in terms of content (biblical/theological dimensions) and context (strategies and methodologies informed by social sciences, systems analyses and socio-cultural issues). He encouraged evangelism leaders to ask the hard questions of content and theology particularly as it relates to soteriology, ecclesiology and eschatology.

After the coffee break, Dr. Lewis Drummond, Billy Graham Professor of Evangelism at the Beeson Divinity School, Samford University, Birmingham, Alabama, addressed the Academy on the topic; "Charles Haddon Spurgeon as a Role Model for Evangelism in Theological Education." Drummond elaborated on the impact of Spurgeon on theological education through his role model as a theologian, preacher, pastor, and a public figure.

Dr. William Pannell introduced the afternoon speaker, Dr. Richard Peace, Professor of Evangelism at Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary. Dr. Peace gave an address on the topic, "Reaching Baby Boomers with the Gospel." He outlined some general characteristics of the baby boomer generation (born 1946–1964): diversity of living arrangements; smaller family units; a higher percentage of singles; increase in the number of working women; more dual-career families; more mobile; avoidance of long-term commitment; preference for network over organization; the most educated and addicted generation in history. He concluded by outlining four strategies for reaching baby boomers: recognition of their openness to the gospel; building effective bridges to their lives through relational points and addictive needs; exploring new methods of outreach; and expecting resistance in the church.

At 2:30 p.m. Dr. David Hester, Vice Chairman, introduced Dr. Hal Poe to deal with the subject of "Sharing Ideas for Better Teaching." Hal

illustrated the use of verbatims and role playing as an important evangelism teaching tool.

Dr. Robert Anderson introduced Dr. William Pannell, Professor of Preaching, Fuller Theological Seminary for the afternoon session. Bill Pannell welcomed John and Denise Wood, co-workers in Pasadena, whose story is recounted in the book, *Making Cities Work: How Two People Mobilized a Community to Meet its Needs*, by Basil Entwistle. Pannell reflected autobiographically on his involvement in urban evangelism in Detroit, New York and Los Angeles. In view of a long history of racial conflict, increasing pluralism in our cities, and the recent riots in Los Angeles, he raised the question of how the motif of reconciliation influences our understanding of the gospel, the church and evangelism. Pannell is currently researching the influence of two major religious leaders, Billy Graham and Martin Luther King, on our understanding of reconciliation, evangelism, the gospel, and the church in North America.

After a delightful dinner hosted by Dr. Fran Ringer and the Lancaster Theological Seminary, the evening speaker, Dr. Richard Armstrong, AETE Journal editor, was introduced by the President. Dr. Armstrong addressed the topic, "Music in Service to the Gospel." He posed a series of questions: What is evangelistic music? When is music evangelistic? How can we transcend music tastes? Does music create a different mood, and is one of those moods "spiritual"? Can music create receptivity? His two major conclusions were that: The medium must be subordinate to the message and that evangelism can be a function of music provided the message can be heard and is an acceptable medium for the hearers. After prayer by Dr. T. V. Thomas, the session was adjourned at 8:45 p.m.

Saturday morning Dr. Michael Knowles, Wycliffe College, Toronto, led a devotional based on John 1:1–14. In a society that overuses and devalues words, he reminded the participants that God has spoken a clear, meaningful WORD to us in Jesus Christ. He emphasized that for the good news to be clear our words must be informative, universal, personal, and valuable.

Dr. George Hunsberger led the Academy in a session on "What's New in Books?" Hunsberger noted that Donald Posterski's *Reinventing Evangelism* signals the need for a renewed perspective on evangelism. In his words, we have over-accommodated our message, and even though we are thus "of" the world, Western Christianity has become too privatized and isolated from the world in terms of witness.

After distributing a list of 33 new books in the field of evangelism, Hunsberger traced nine themes in current evangelism literature.

1. Culture. How does culture influence our message and how do people hear the gospel? Bill Dyrness, *How Does America Hear the Gospel?*; Bruce Shelby, *The Gospel and the American Dream*; George Hunter, *How to Reach Secular People*.
2. Pluralism. The reality of increasing diversity in culture and religions and the need for understanding, interaction and communication. Don Posterski, *Reinventing Evangelism*; Mortimer Arias and Alan Johnson, *The Great Commission: Biblical Models for Evangelism*.
3. Demonstration. The challenge to demonstrate the life changing character of our message which is lived out in an integrated way. Lesslie Newbigin, *The Gospel in a Pluralist Society*; William Willimon, *Shaped by the Bible*.
4. Nature of Faith. The need for an integral faith and the relevance of that faith for all facets of life.
5. Community and Congregational Character. Evangelism is something a congregation does as an organism. Evangelism must be both congregational and personal if it is to be authentic. Bob Henderson, *Joy to the World*; Lesslie Newbigin, *The Gospel in a Pluralist Society*; Raymond Fung, *The Isaiah Vision*.
6. Worship. If the congregation evangelizes in community then worship is a crucial ingredient. Raymond Fung, *The Isaiah Vision*; Patrick Keifert, *Welcoming the Stranger: A Public Theology of Worship and Evangelism*.
7. Gospel. What is the content of the Gospel and how is it contextualized in communication? Lesslie Newbigin, *Foolishness to the Greeks*; Douglas John Hall, *Thinking the Faith*; Stanley Hauerwas and William Willimon, *Resident Aliens*; William Willimon, *Preaching to Strangers: Evangelism in Today's World*.
8. Invitation. Evangelism is fundamentally an invitation. The invitation is to worship, discipleship, praise, to follow Christ, and to become part of a community of faith.
9. Modeling the Reign of God. The question is how do we equip lay people to implement it in life.

During a brief discussion the following new books were also noted: Mark Olsen, *The Evangelical People*; Mark Olsen and Brian Burchfield, *An Evangelical People*; Jackie McMakin, *Doorways to Christian Growth*; Martha McMane, *Worship Comes Alive*.

The 10:30 a.m. session began with a tribute to the late Dr. George Edgar Sweazey (1905–1992), former Princeton Theological Seminary faculty member and the first President of AETA. Dr. Richard Armstrong read the tribute to the Academy which he had prepared for Princeton Theological Seminary. The tribute will be printed in the 1992–93 AETE *Journal*. The Academy stood for a minute of silence out of respect and tribute to Dr. Sweazey, AETE's first lifetime member. The secretary of AETE was asked to send a letter of appreciation to Mary Handy Sweazey and the family.

President Robert Anderson called the business session of the Academy to order at 10:30 a.m. MSC that minutes be adopted as recorded in the 1991–92 *Journal*.

The chair expressed appreciation to Ron Crandall for his 9 years of faithful service as treasurer. Ron Crandall gave the treasurer's report. Ron distributed three handouts to the Academy. (1) A treasurer's report reflecting September 30, 1992, balance of $6,309.24 (beginning balance September 30, 1991, $6,809.55), receipts of $5,970.78 and disbursements of $6,470.09, October 1, 1991–September 30, 1992; (2) A list of dues-paying members recorded through September 30, 1992 (53, with a verbal update of paid members through October 10, 1992); (3) A list of institutional contributions (17). The treasurer requested that institutional donations be earmarked so they can be recognized. Vice President J. David Hester urged Academy members to personally remind institutional leaders (presidents and deans) of the $100.00 annual institutional dues. MSC that the treasurer's report be accepted.

Dr. Dick Armstrong, editor of the *Journal*, reported on the current issue. He highlighted new features of the year's *Journal*: (1) Guidelines for the *Journal*. (2) A list of Academy members who have paid their dues. (3) An increase in volume size (from 96 pages to 120 pages).

MSC that the Academy extend a letter of thanks to Marigene Chamberlain, managing editor of the *Journal*.

George Hunsberger, book review editor, raised the question of enlarging the book review section in the *Journal*. Our policy has been to include a section on book notes for those books which need our attention, but have not been reviewed. David Lowes Watson expressed a preference for reviews over notes, but consideration should also be given to including a section on notes if deemed necessary.

Henry Schmidt, secretary, reported on five issues referred to the Executive Committee at last year's business session. The Committee met in Nashville, Tennessee, February 8, 1992.

1. Election terms and continuity on the Executive Committee. It had been suggested that the Executive Committee be elected in staggered terms for the sake of continuity. The Committee members do not favor this because of the continuity provided for in the present structure, where the vice-president becomes the president, and the past president continues to serve on the Executive Committee for two years.

2. Criteria for a life member of the Academy. The Executive Committee recommended the following criteria for a life member:

   a. Ordinarily, a life member would be retired, and unable to attend annual meetings.

b. A life member is recognized for his/her history of active participation and significant contribution to the Academy.
c. A life member will be nominated on a case by case basis by the Executive Committee and approved by the Academy.
d. A life member receives all the rights and privileges of the Academy without paying annual dues.

MSC that the criteria be amended to exclude 2(a) "and unable to attend annual meetings." The constitutional amendment to include a life member category and the criteria will be presented to the Academy for approval at the 1993 annual meeting.

3. Equalizing expenses for members attending the annual meeting. The Executive Committee discussed the matter and felt that the present arrangement of shifting the Academy meeting to different geographic locations was one form of equity. Additionally, the logistics and work for the treasurer would also discourage an equity plan.

Dr. T. V. Thomas indicated that the travel reimbursement is a major issue for Canadian participants. The Executive will take up the matter again for future consideration.

Dr. George Hunter noted that since Academy dues are modest ($25.00) in comparison to other professional associations, we might consider raising membership fees. The question was raised whether the Lowell Berry Foundation would be willing to invest in the Academy. The Lilly and Pew Foundations were mentioned as other possible funding sources. Dr. Lewis Drummond will contact the Lilly Foundation. Other funding options mentioned were (a) denominational agencies, and (b) the introduction of a sliding scale for membership dues. Issues are the inequity of resources (i.e., students, full professors) as well as diversity in travel costs.

4. Geographic location of Academy meetings. The Executive Committee is agreed that shifting the annual meetings to different geographic locations helps to avoid parochialism and provincialism, plus it brings a richness to our meeting through different local resource persons.

5. Updated mailing list, including fax numbers. The secretary will include the final updated mailing list, along with telephone and fax numbers, in the May, 1993, mailing which serves notice of the October 7–9, 1993, Academy meetings.

MSC that Dr. Woody Davis be elected as treasurer, for a one-year renewable term. MSC that a letter of appreciation be sent to Ron Crandall, treasurer, for his nine years of faithful service.

The Executive Committee recommended the following persons for membership: for full membership, John Stewart, Vernon Baum, and Alvin Reid; also for full membership pending application and payment of dues, Carol Weir; for associate membership, Terrence Hayes and Curtis Watke.

The secretary also noted four persons requested dropping their membership: Stephen Abbott, Michael Green, M. V. "Bud" Scutt, Roy W. Stepp. Letters of regret that they were unable to attend the 1992 annual meeting were received from William Abraham, Mortimer Arias, Floyd Babcock, Roger Hedlund, George E. Morris, Malan Nel, Bill Sullivan and H. Stanley Wood.

The dates and location of future Academy meetings include:

October 7–9, 1993—Trinity Divinity School, Deerfield, Illinois. Host Member: Dr. John Nyquist.
October 6–8, 1994—Concordia Lutheran Seminary, Edmonton, Alberta. Host Member: Dr. Milton Rudnick. A back up invitation for 1994 has been received from Dr. T. V. Thomas, Canadian Theological Seminary, Regina, Saskatchewan, should Edmonton not be an option.
October 5–7, 1995—International School of Theology, Arrowhead Springs, California. Host member: Dr. Bill and Vonnette Bright.
1996—Asbury Theological Seminary.

Other Business

Published book displays at Annual Meeting. Dr. J. David Hester made some comments about publishers who had and had not responded to the Academy invitation to send sample books or complimentary copies for display at our annual meeting. *MSC* a letter of thanks to be sent to the publishers who sent sample books. Dr. J. David Hester will send the letter.

It was suggested that publishers be sent a copy of the AETE Journal which contains reviews of books published from their agency. It was noted that a letter from the book review editor to publishers may be more effective in securing sample and complimentary evangelism books for the annual meeting. *MSC* that *Journals* be sent only to dues-paying members. *MSC* that non-paying persons on the mailing list be sent a letter reminding them that receiving the *Journal* is linked to the payment of annual dues.

Dr. Michael Knowles suggested that the Executive Committee address the gender and ethnic constituency of the Academy, both in its membership and programming. It was noted that Drs. Claude Marie Barbour and Dr. Priscilla Pope-Levison are AETE members and excellent resource persons.

Two additional questions were raised from the floor: Is there a mechanism to give feedback and program suggestions? These are welcome and should be sent to Dr. Robert Anderson. The question of whether host members and institutions need hold membership in the Academy was also raised. Membership is not a requirement, but 75–80% of the annual meetings are hosted by participating members and institutions of the Academy.

The business meeting was adjourned at 11:58 a.m. by singing the Doxology.

The final session of the Academy was a dinner meeting at the Comfort Inn at 6:40 p.m. Dr. Henry Schmidt led in prayer for the meal. The President expressed appreciation to Dr. Francis Ringer and the Lancaster Theological Seminary for their gracious hospitality in hosting the Academy and for the wonderful afternoon tour in Amish country.

Dr. Francis Ringer introduced the evening speaker, Dr. David Greenhaw, Dean and Professor of Preaching, Lancaster Theological Seminary. In his address, Dr. Greenhaw noted that there has been a shift in theology, preaching and evangelism from deductive to inductive logic, that is, a move from beginning with the general to starting with the particular. While this is a welcome move in evangelism because story and experience make evangelism less abstract, he raised the question of whether we have gone too far in the inductive approach, since the gospel transcends all human experience and brings us together around certain principles. He stressed the importance of a conceptual framework and foundation in our evangelism, since evangelism involves interpretation and must move one to particular application. The goal is not only to have a final concept, but to move from the universal to the particular. The process can be instructive and transforming.

Dr. Robert Anderson expressed appreciation for the presentation and called on Dr. T. V. Thomas to close in prayer. The meeting adjourned at 8:30 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,
Henry J. Schmidt
Secretary

ANNOUNCEMENT

The twenty-second annual meeting of the Academy for Evangelism in Theological Education will take place at Concordia Lutheran Seminary in Edmonton, Alberta, Canada, October 6–8, 1994.

INFORMATION FOR SUBSCRIBERS AND AUTHORS

The Journal of the Academy for Evangelism in Theological Education (ISSN 0894-9034) is published annually in October and distributed free of charge to all paid-up members and associate members of the Academy, and to supporting institutions. Copies may be purchased at a cost of $10.00 per single issue, or $30.00 per subscription for four issues. Subscriptions, renewals, orders, and change-of-address notifications should be sent to Dr. David S. Young, Managing Editor, 107 Valley Dr., West Chester PA 19382.

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

The Editorial Advisory Committee of the *Journal* is seeking well-written, high-quality articles relating to any aspect of evangelism, and issues relevant to the theology and practice of evangelism, including biblical, doctrinal, pedagogical, and methodoligical concerns, and matters relevant to evangelism and the cognate disciplines. Responses to articles in previous issues of the *Journal* will also be considered. Manuscripts should be submitted in duplicate to Richard S. Armstrong, Editor, Princeton Theological Seminary, CN 821, Princeton, NJ 08542. Book reviews should be sent to George R. Hunsberger, Book Review Editor, AETE *Journal*, 86 E. 12th St., Holland, MI 49423.

Manuscripts should be double spaced (including endnotes, tables, and appendices), using only one side of a page (8½ × 11 inches). Articles should be carefully documented, with notes appearing at the end. For style, including the citation of sources, authors should be guided by the University of Chicago Press' *Manual of Style* or K. L. Turabian's *Manual for Writers*. For spelling, punctuation, capitalization, etc., use an up-to-date style manual, such as *The Gregg Reference Manual*, published by McGraw-Hill. For example, pronouns for Jesus and terms like gospel (except when it refers to a book of the Bible), eternal life, kingdom of God, body of Christ, are not capitalized. A good rule is, "When in doubt, don't capitalize!" The use of gender inclusive language is expected.

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

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