JOURNAL OF THE ACADEMY FOR EVANGELISM IN THEOLOGICAL EDUCATION

Volume One
1985-86

The Academy for Evangelism in Theological Education

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BOOK REVIEWS

THIRTEENTH ANNUAL MEETING OF THE ACADEMY

JOURNAL OF THE ACADEMY FOR EVANGELISM IN THEOLOGICAL EDUCATION

Editorial Introduction

The question of whether to attempt yet another addition to the field of religious publication was faced squarely by The Academy for Evangelism in Theological Education at its annual meeting in 1984. The potential of a journal for the Academy had already been discussed in detail, with feasibility reports in 1981-82, and a trial issue in 1983.

The decision to proceed was taken for several reasons. First, the continued development of the Academy itself has demonstrated the growing concern of seminaries and schools of theology throughout the country for the teaching of evangelism as a discipline of practical theology in preparation for ministry. Not only is it a feature of many M.Div. courses of study, but it is now frequently the subject of D.Min. and other graduate degrees. There is a *prima facie* need, therefore, for a professional journal to develop the field further and to foster inter-disciplinary collegiality.

This is certainly the perception of those who are teaching evangelism in schools of theology and seminaries. As with any new field, the shape of their discipline is still emerging. But a sense of identity is increasingly discernible at annual meetings of the Academy, and requires the further exchange of research and expertise. In addition to which, evangelism, more than most ministries of the church, is noted for its polemics. This renders the disciplined exchange of differing positions especially desirable, for which there are few better channels than a professional journal.

It might be argued that this exchange is already well facilitated by existing journals of missional studies, and by many denominational and seminary publications. Yet the Academy feels that a journal with a more particular focus is required if evangelism is to be developed further as a teaching discipline. As it is taught at seminary level, it is by no means synonymous with missiology. It has its own disciplinary criteria as a component, or feature, of practical theology, and its own contribution to make to inter-disciplinary dialogue. The new journal will therefore illustrate and explore the distinctive place of evangelism in the wider spheres of ministry and mission.

Not that the circulation of the journal will be limited those who teach in academic institutions. The preliminary feasibility studies showed that many denominational executives and pastors expressed great in-

terest in a publication which would provide them with serious reflection on evangelism to complement the many practical guidelines they have already developed. Each church must fashion its own evangelism, and what is often perceived to be lacking in this area of ministry is a theological treatment of the task in hand. For clergy and laity alike, a journal such as this was welcomed as an important additional resource for the planning and implementation of evangelistic outreach.

With any new venture, there is a point at which the only way to determine its feasibility is to test it in practice. The initial commitment is to four annual issues, with more frequent publication to follow if warranted. It is offered prayerfully as a contribution to what many still feel to be the primary task of the church.

David Lowes Watson

This issue is dedicated to

George E. Sweazey

Co-Founder and first Life Member of
The Academy for Evangelism

with the respect and affection
of his colleagues.

GEORGE E. SWEAZEY

A Tribute

It is an honor to have been invited to write a tribute to a man I have known and admired for many, many years, George Edgar Sweazey.

But how in a few words can one do justice to a person who has served Jesus Christ and his Church so long and so well, and in so many different ways? The Apostle Paul declared that God's gift was that some should be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, some pastors, and teachers. George Sweazey is all of the above.

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

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

I think of George as a Will Rogers of the pulpit. His homespun philosophy, spiced with wit and punctuated with quotable aphorisms, has an uncanny way of making his hearers laugh and squirm at the same time. A sharp diagnostician of the world scene, his humor makes his words palatable but never dulls the cutting edge of his preachings. He can turn a phrase as well as any preacher of his time, but he has never tried to be nor pretended to be a pulpit prima donna. Unlike some self-styled pulpiteers of note, George has never been charmed by the magic of his own words, nor overly impressed with his own importance. He is a genuinely humble man.

Despite his prominence as a churchman, George is probably best known for his publications, including two which many consider to be classics in the field of evangelism, *Effective Evangelism* and *The Church as Evangelist*. His excellent textbook, *Preaching the Good News*, is an immensely useful resource for any pastor who takes seriously the ministry of preaching. All of George Sweazey's books are a healthy blend of sound theology and practical wisdom, clearly presented, interestingly illustrated and relevantly applied.

It is most fitting that the man who was one of the founders of the Academy for Evangelism in Theological Education, served as its first President and is its current elder statesman, should be accorded the honor of being named the Academy's first Life Member. This spry octogenarian, who jogs regularly, uses his bicycle more than his car, and who is still writing and speaking prodigiously, was unanimously acclaimed by the Academy at its thirteenth annual meeting, held at Princeton Theological Seminary, October 10-12, 1985, by being the first person elected to that honored status.

A graduate of Westminister College and Princeton Theological Seminary, George received an M.A. degree from Princeton University and a Ph.D. from the University of Berlin. His pastorates included Old First Church, Newark, NJ; Second Presbyterian Church, Danville, KY; Tyler Place Presbyterian Church, St. Louis, MO; Huguenot Memorial Church, Pelham, NY; and the Presbyterian Church of Webster Groves, MO.

George's parish ministry was interrupted by an eight-year tenure as director of his denomination's Department of Evangelism, in which capacity he conceived and spearheaded the New Life Movement, which sparked a period of growth and expansion for Presbyterian churches. Notable among his ecumenical involvements, which are too numerous to list, were his service as a member of the General Board and Chairman of the Department of Evangelism of the National Council of 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 recognition of his dedicated service to Christ and his church, in 1969, while at Webster Groves, he was elected Moderator of the General Assembly of the United Presbyterian Church, U.S.A., that denomination's highest elective office. As one privileged to hear his inaugural sermon at that Assembly, I remember how electrified I was by what he had to say, and how tremendously impressed and proud I was to know that our denomination would be represented by such a distinguished and able church leader. He also served for three years as a member of the Presbyterian General Council, and for twelve years as a member of the Commission on Ecumenical Mission and Relations.

While Professor of Homiletics at Princeton Seminary, George was highly regarded by students and faculty members alike. Those who took his elective courses in evangelism were always his enthusiastic advocates. Still a resident of the Borough of Princeton, he has been an available and most welcome substitute upon whom I have frequently called to teach my evangelism classes, and his presence continues to be a gracious and positive influence on our campus.

George says of his charming and talented wife, Mary Hardy, "She practises what I preach!" The Sweazeys, who have two daughters, a son and five grandchildren, love to entertain, and their home is the site of many a fun-filled gathering. Their guests find themselves inevitably engaged in stimulating conversation and the scintillating party games

which George and Mary Handy delight in playing — and usually win! Mary Handy is a skilled pianist, whose musicianship has been a blessing to the Princeton community.

I had the privilege of introducing George at the annual banquet of our Academy last October, at which he was the Guest of Honor. Those who heard him that night, as he reminisced and reflected on the state of evangelism, past and present, will understand why I think so highly of this man, who, we could justifiably claim, has become a legend in his own time.

So, with deep affection, gratitude and respect we salute our colleague and friend, George Edgar Sweazey.

Richard Stoll Armstrong

URBAN EVANGELIZATION
A Lausanne Strategy Since 1980

Raymond J. Bakke

In June 1980 the Lausanne Committee for World Evangelization (LCWE) held the Consultation on World Evangelization (COWE) in Pattaya, Thailand. COWE was structured around a score of mini-consultations, one of which was the Mini-Consultation on Reaching Large Cities, chaired by Raymond J. Bakke. Participants in this mini-consultation prepared for the Pattaya gathering by compiling data, research materials, and models pertaining to urban ministry in many of the world's largest cities. At Pattaya this material was evaluated, biblical reflections were shared, a report was drafted under the title Christian Witness to Large Cities (Lausanne Occasional Paper #9), and a follow-up program was proposed. Dr. Bakke was appointed a Lausanne Associate, with the assignment of coordinating and servicing an extensive program of consultations on urban ministry around the world. In the following article, Bakke describes the nature and extent of this program. Of special interest is his emphasis on a process approach (rather than a "how-to" approach), and his effort to deal with the sometimes dubious role of the "outsider" mission specialist.

Four years have passed since 110 delegates met in the COWE mini-consultation on large-cities evangelization at Pattaya, Thailand, at which a three-year follow-on strategy of urban consultations was announced. Hence, a cursory report, reflection, and critique are appropriate at this time.

The Pattaya discussions were officially reported in Lausanne Occasional Paper #9, Christian Witness to Large Cities,* which provided formal input into the follow-on design strategy. Equally important, however, were numerous nonreported, informal inputs and conclusions from pre-COWE study groups and dozens of hours in passionate dialogue before, during, and immediately after COWE, during which certain guidelines surfaced:

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* May be obtained from Lausanne Committee for World Evangelization, P.O. Box 1100, Wheaton, Illinois 60187, U.S.A., at $2.00 per copy.

Negatively: The Lausanne urban strategy must not be a high-gloss "here's how," solution-oriented, prepackaged program that promotes guilt by success images and perpetuates dependencies of two-thirds-world-cities leadership on Western, imported, white, male experts.

Positively: The urban evangelistic strategy mandate must be theologically rather than pragmatically conceived, contextually congruent with the sociologically and structurally complex natures of world-class cities, and developed in the light of the churches' total urban mission, which includes everything the church is sent into these cities to be and to do: namely, worship, evangelism, discipleship, stewardship, fellowship, and service. The constituent targets would be as inclusive as the Lausanne Covenant itself.

In the light of these guidelines the follow-up emphasis shifted from content to process/design/strategy consultations in large cities on all six continents with a catalytic or envisioning goal of empowering "the whole church to take the whole gospel to the whole city."

Consultations since 1981

Generally, because the LCWE Associate for Large Cities is a full-time professor at Northern Baptist Theological Seminary near Chicago, cities to be targeted and consultations held were limited to summers abroad and extended weekends within the North American context. Nevertheless, sixty-eight cities have hosted Lausanne-initiated, sponsored or coventured consultations since 1981, thirty-five abroad and specifically facilitated for the Lausanne Strategy Working Group by MARC (Missions Advanced Research and Communication Center) of World Vision, directed by Samuel Wilson.

The cities have included (alphabetically by continent): Latin America: Bogotá, Buenos Aires, Caracas (twice), Lima, Medellín, Mexico City, Quito, Rio de Janeiro, Santiago, São Paulo. An eleven-city Brazilian regional urban consultation was held in Belo Horizonte. Europe: Amsterdam, Belgrade, Copenhagen, Liverpool, London, Zagreb. Africa: Cairo, Harare, Lusaka, Nairobi. Asia: Bangalore, Bangkok, Bombay, Calcutta (twice), Cebu City, Delhi, Hong Kong, Jakarta, Karachi, Madras, Manila, Seoul. Australia: Melbourne, Sydney. Additionally, exploratory meetings have been held in numerous other cities, while consulting conversations and planning conferences occur regularly with existing denominational and mission bodies at home and abroad.

The Consultation Design

Reflection on three years of activities reveals at least six Lausanne Consultation models. Each has a quid pro quo appropriate to the context, start-up time, and resources of the local planning committee, and each has a different role (implicit and explicit) or built-in expectations and outcome for the Lausanne Associate. Flexibility has proved to be very necessary because accountability is almost entirely left to the local committee for venue, themes, schedules, budget, style, constituents, and local follow-up strategies. Briefly, the six models include what we are now calling:

1. *Leaders Urban Evangelization Consultations*: Meetings of three to four days, with forty to eighty denominationally diverse male and female participants that include key pastors, mission staff or executives, lay leaders, seminary or Bible school directors and professors, and communications personnel.

2. *Models Consultation*: Gatherings of 50-200 leaders in which the primary inputs are case studies or visits to and critiques of urban evangelism ministries.

3. *Evangelism Conferences*: Large gatherings that include lay church members with inspirational plenary sessions and practical how-to workshops.

4. *Regional Cities Consultations*: Gatherings like no.1 above, which include three to five persons from each of the major cities in a region, for orientation, envisioning, and the communication of ongoing regional urban evangelization strategies.

5. *Special Theme Consultations*: Where a single theme or a single constituency becomes the primary organizing principle. For example, "Evangelization and the Urban Refugee," ". . .the Elderly," ". . . the Unemployed," ". . .Unreached People Groups," ". . .the Young Urban Professionals." Special resources are marshaled and focused in this format.

6. *The Urban Ministry Congress*: A national or at least regional urban event which brokers a large range of strategies, models and resources for the total mission task of the urban church.

Participants and Their Constituencies

The essential reality of world-class cities can be characterized by the word "pluralism". Denominational traditions and diverse local church or mission agency models should be viewed as gifts to the city—signs and agents of the kingdom. The Lausanne movement celebrates this phenomenal reality that John Stott has been heard to describe as "the polychromed church of God."

Because the kingdom is by nature and mission larger than any one

constellation of churches (younger or older, mainline or evangelical, downtown or out-of-town, rich or poor, ethnic or expatriate), the Lausanne strategy assumes that world-class-city consultations should be as broad-based as the 1974 initial signators and subsequent adopters of the Lausanne Covenant itself. In fact, this covenant may now be the broadest umbrella in the world under which professing Christians can be gathered to pray and strategize for the salvation of their cities. Indeed, Lausanne-sponsored urban evangelization events have included numerous church bodies that have never come together before, from high-threshold and high-commitment membership bodies like various brethren and Pentecostal groups, on the one hand, to national church bodies, Roman Catholic, Coptic, and other Orthodox members and leaders, on the other. In special cases, officials sometimes specify and appoint their church or mission participants, lending status to the event and built-in significance to its subsequent implementation.

The urban church has been fractured by divisions essentially doctrinal, linguistic, racial, class, and a host of other dynamics rooted in history, comity, and interpersonal insecurities and rivalries. Even though we attempt in every case to initiate and create sponsoring committees that network their city with all the holism and sensitivities built into the Lausanne Covenant, it has not been easy to effect that covenant vision in local reality. Because Lausanne is a movement or a catalyst, permission to begin need not require the desired end a priori. The content of the meeting—biblical, historical, and strategic—is expansive, inclusive, and ameliorative in design and tone. Sometimes a major consultation and parallel events are choreographed simultaneously by sponsoring committees precisely in response to such contextual dynamics.

Purposes

The covenant vision is a redeemed city, and the specific task is to encourage, equip, and empower "the whole church to take the whole gospel to the whole city." But there are specific additional objectives of the Lausanne Associate for each consultation, usually stated early in the event. Broadly stated, these objectives, which are intended to convey the Associate's spirit or mood, are as follows:

1. *Fellowshiping*: Urban leaders are special people given the incredible opportunities shared by the church in large cities on all six continents. These people hurt a lot for a variety of reasons. Therefore, the consultations are pastoral, caring consultations by design.

2. *Learning*: "We learn from each other what God is teaching us; this city is our laboratory for investigation of models and reflection on experiences, and you must all teach me because I am a new peer and visitor among you."

3. *Envisioning*: "Some people look at things [cities] as they are and

ask, 'Why?' I dream things that never were and ask, 'Why not?' Vision and compassion are the necessary prerequisites for specialized competencies if we are to reach this city."

4. *Resourcing:* These are chiefly in four categories: biblical, historical, geographical or contextual, and congregational. Some of the experiences of fellow believers in other large cities include a host of evangelization models, strategies, and skills. These can be "brokered" from one community to another, and catalytic communication links between cities can be established.

5. *Strategizing:* "Let us celebrate what we have discovered the church is doing in this city, and all those persons, neighborhoods, classes or vocations that hear the clear gospel witness. But now, let's ask some strategic questions: *Who* are the unreached people groups in this city? *What* would the church have to look like to reach them? *How* would you have to change your ministry style or add to your ministry skills if you wish to equip your church to reach the unreached peoples and sectors of this city?"

Other rather specific, personal, or programmatic objectives are brainstormed and built into the normal consultations, but the five listed here have been specifically identified and shared publicly with the conferees in almost every case.

Program Components

Briefly, consultations have usually included:

1. Committee formation and covenanting.
2. A local urban research component on the city itself and on the range and history of evangelization in this city.
3. A network of key potential participants.
4. A visit (usually) of a Lausanne Strategy Working Group facilitator as a planning assistant.
5. Arrangement of twenty to forty model visits by small teams of conferees for exposure and critique.
6. Intentional recruitment of conferees by specific categories—pastors, mission staff/executives, lay leaders, seminary/Bible school directors and professors, and communications personnel—rather than the general advertising of the event.
7. Blocks of time in the program sequence for introductions, learning-contract development in small group sessions, model visits (one entire day), plenary sessions, small-group interactions, meals, celebrations, and strategy time with the planning committee and/or learning teams after the formal consultation ends.
8. A carefully constructed day-long orientation tour to each city with specific introductions to its history, metro-sectors, ministries, food, and such, precedes the event for the Lausanne Associate, who has also normally received reports or compiled specific bibliography germane

to that city prior to arrival.

Some specific assumptions should also be mentioned at this point. Based on some research and experience, this Lausanne Associate believes that learning potential and motivation is facilitated best *not* by starting from the ideal (biblical or theoretical—"What *ought* ministry to look like?") but by guided explorations that start with "What *does* ministry concretely look like in this specific city?" and then work back in analysis to the "What ought." Rather than lecture on Greek temple ideals, for example, visit the Parthenon. Let them observe, "What a magnificent ruin!" The imagination thus triggered can move us to the "What ifs" and the "What oughts."

Put simply, to lecture on the ideal nature and types of urban ministries is often experienced by participants as a paternalistic put-down or as guilt-producing. Better pedagogy would encourage urban workers to learn how to observe or "read" a model, and then reflect on it for the sake of lifelong growth and change. Hence the Lausanne Associate has developed a ten-question study guide on a single page for participant observation teams that visit three or four unique and diverse urban ministry models:

The Model Analysis Guide

1. What is the unique *context* of this ministry? Walk around the community to observe. Ask questions.
2. What is the *history* of this particular model of ministry? Where did the vision come from? What have been the failures and successes?
3. What is the *program*? Where is it held? What days/times of the week?
4. How is it *organized* or structured? Who is accountable to whom?
5. What does it cost? Who pays for it? (It is very important that we teach where money comes from and how it is accounted for, especially in cities.)
6. What is the *theological rationale* (stated or unstated) for this ministry?
7. What is the primary *target group* or audience?
8. What skills do leaders have here, or what specifically would I have to learn to do what these people do?
9. What does the ministry do well? *Strengths.*
10. What does this model of ministry leave undone? *Limitations.*

After working with this guide, the participant teams are normally euphoric on the second evening of the consultation, as these urban church leaders discover, often for the first time, just what is happening in their city—all the different ways God's people are evangelizing in

Jesus' name. Much of the euphoria comes from the fact that they learned it by themselves and from each other across denominational, color, caste or class, and linguistic barriers. The resultant celebration of what God is doing with and in their city gives the group "permission," new motivation, and energy to strategize for creative additional ministries and resources on the third day of the consultation.

Urban Evangelism Strategies Observed

At least sixteen common contemporary urban mission and evangelism strategies can be found, targeted to or using:

Arts: The ministries of and by the urban artists that use visual, musical, and dramatic arts, theatrical or open-air events and productions to express and communicate the gospel.

Age Group: Ministries and sometimes specialized organizations that isolate one age group and direct their program expertise to children, youth, or adult sectors, that is, professional, aged, singles.

Economic Development: Many urban ministry groups that respond to the urban poor go beyond initial relief and disaster programs to develop projects that teach employment skills or provide housing, health, education, food or financial expertise, and respond to ecological or environmental mandates.

Ecumenical: Access to public institutions (jails, schools, hospitals, media) often requires coalitions, as do urban crisis situations where work with local political institutions becomes necessary. Beyond this, many urban ministry groups share evangelism programs, leadership development events, and combined worship at special seasons.

Education: Ministries for alternative child development through universities in church-sponsored strategies, and Christian education strategies that are usually church-based as well as church-sponsored. New models of lay education, seminary structures, and curriculum are emerging in many cities around the world.

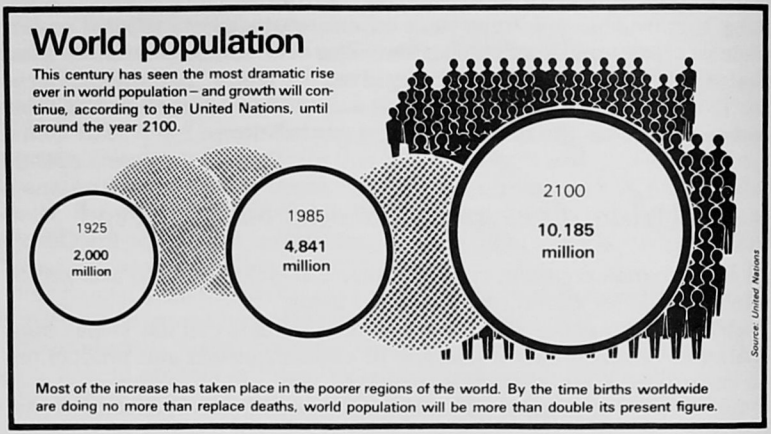
Institutional: Ministries that witness to (structurally) and within (interpersonal) hospitals, jails, universities, secondary and professional schools, homes for the aged or other institutionalized groups.

Language: Programs or ministries that reach across culture and language barriers with literature or other media thay may be used to create or express the work of new church development also.

Lay: Ministries that seek to identify, equip, and empower lay ministries within their vocations and collectively in the city.

Mass Evangelism: Student, personal, language, or media ministries that presuppose target audiences in the metropolitan area. Mass evangelism is taking many forms contextually congruent with cities.

Media: Ministries committed to public communication processes in electronic and print media.



New Church Development: Many local churches intentionally plan to multiply new churches; other churches are started by deliberate, parachurch development strategies that expand the network of a particular group.

Political: The city is a political matrix and frequently a corrupt one. Churches often stimulate empowerment models around political issues with religious implications, and sometimes go beyond that to create alternative political structures that are more just.

Recreational: Those ministries that use athletics and athletes in the city.

Relief: Urban disasters are frequent, personal, and public events. From local-church food pantries, clothing banks, and shelter-care facilities to rather massive church-sponsored international caring programs.

Revitalization: Church groups have served as the catalyst for the creation and renewal of neighborhood organizations; but at another level, there are parachurch ministries that exist for the renewal of the church, and function prophetically and pastorally to Christians and churches.

Solidarity: This is a ministry as old as Paul, who took offerings from daughter churches to express solidarity and support for the mother Jerusalem church suffering at the moment. The church is now globally significant and the churches of the city can and do express solidarity on a broad range of concerns with believers in other parts of the world.

Contemporary Urban Church Models

Models cut across denominational and racial lines, so that Pentecostals,

Baptists, or Catholics may have any number of the following observable models of urban churches defined essentially by forms, structures, and functions. Comparing them as models is not unlike comparing a wooden spoon to a blender. There are structural differences to be sure, and there are some things each can do better than the other. There are few pure types, and probably most often the individual congregations may be evolving constellations of one or more types. Yet the analysis can be useful to identify primary ministry skills or expectations unique to each model. Briefly, the following seventeen types or models of churches can be identified in every large city in the United States and in many large cities abroad:

The Cathedral: The highly visible and symbolic center of church authority, the historic regional church.

The Denominational Mission: A new church development, usually the intentional result of a planned strategy.

The Ex-ethnic Church: A third- or fourth-generation church of side-street Christians, which, while its members may not function in the language of the "old country," still remains a cultural ethos in times of transition.

The House Church: The New Testament model, which takes on many forms in world-class cities from organized cells within larger parishes to informal groups of one or more families seeking to express faith relationally. This may develop into an intentional community, or may exist only briefly around the influence of a single individual.

The Immigrant Church: A first-generation church of port-of-entry internationals where the language, customs, and symbols are imported. These churches may be the spiritual "grandchildren" of missionaries, come home to the countries that sponsored the original mission.

The Intentional Community Church: A contemporary, often single-generational expression of high-commitment faith, functioning both as a sign of the recovery of an Anabaptist vision, and in psychological response to the hunger of many urban people for a spiritual alternative.

The International Church: Serving the temporary expatriate communities.

The Media Church: This may be a group from another part of the country, which meets together as aliens in the familiar sub-culture of back home. "Migrant" has a double meaning sometimes, in that this church migrates from location to location in the city.

The Multilanguage Cluster Church: Often found in transitional neighborhoods, these churches will feature several different language groups meeting separately in one building, or with different levels of interrelationships. Some of these are "Old Firsts," with huge physical plants and a transcendent ecclesiological vision.

The Old First Church: The historic-image church for boulevard Christians of an earlier era, and found at the center of county-seat towns as well as major urban centers. These were the "flagship" congregations for historic denominations.

The New Style Church: The contemporary urban expression of this model might consist of a charismatic, existentially oriented group that stresses a worship style, healing, or other experiential expressions of "body life." Larger than homes can accommodate, they may meet in hotel ballrooms, schools, or rented halls.

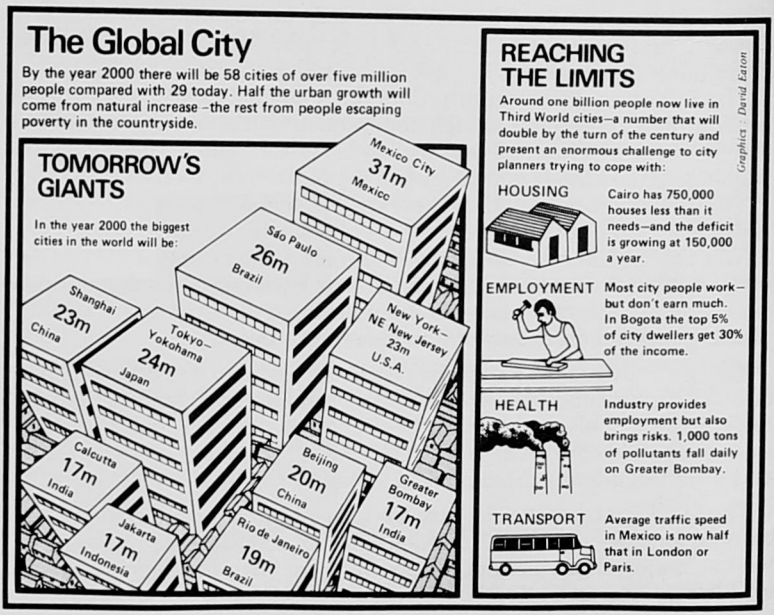
The Parish Church: The European heritage model of church that functions to minister as chaplain to a neighborhood as much as to the persons within it.

The Sectarian Church: These churches may have some bizarre beliefs or behaviors and are usually urban folk who feel marginalized, with or without some justification, both socially and theologically.

The Storefront Church: The unique urban expression of a portable congregation, which may be a splinter group, the flock of a strong leader, or the temporary home of an upwardly mobile congregation.

The Super Church: This is the highly organized, independent, programmatically conglomerate congregation, with strong, usually authoritarian leadership, often competitive, and a compulsive mission desire to grow and reach as many people as possible.

The Task Church: These congregations organize congregational activity into highly sophisticated urban mission projects, and attract activist, usually young professional and well-educated believers with strong commitments to express their faith politically, sociologically, psychologically, liturgically, and sometimes vocationally.



The University Chapel: These chapels are the vestigial remains of a medieval curriculum in universities with a religious heritage in which theology functions as the "queen of the sciences" and to integrate (and control) inquiry.

Barriers to Urban Evangelization

In most Lausanne-sponsored urban consultations, the opening sessions begin with small-group discussions where participants are asked to write down the specific objectives and reasons why they came, or what they need to receive from the event to make it worthwhile. These are compiled on newsprint or a chalkboard and posted as a group-produced learning contract for the consultation to which the facilitator (the Lausanne Associate, in this case) will be accountable and measured before the meeting adjourns. The effect of this group process is generally empowering for participants. Small-group work enables participants to work in their own primary languages (which may be multiple in most large cities).

Similarly, late in the consultation small groups go to work on this assignment: "Define the ten most significant barriers to the evangelization of this city." Groups work, report, and combine these into a single set of ten barriers, which is left with the committee for publishing and follow-on purposes.

Curiously, whereas such lists have been made in cities as diverse as Copenhagen (first world), Cairo and Mexico City (third world), the results to date have not deviated greatly from the following list that emerged in Belgrade, Yugoslavia (second world) in August 1983:

Barriers in Belgrade

1. The lack of organized prayer for this city of 1.4 million.
2. The lack of properly trained leaders, lay or clergy.
3. The lack of vision, motivation, or burden for the lost on the part of the majority of evangelicals.
4. The rural mentality of churches and pastors.
5. The failure to use opportunities that we do have for witness.
6. The ghetto existence of Christians; the loss of non-Christian contacts.
7. The lack of cooperation among churches.
8. The busy lives of Christians compounded by many church meetings.
9. The generation gap. Existing leaders are over fifty-five. There are emerging leaders under thirty, but no leadership in church or society between thirty and forty-five.
10. The lack of appropriate buildings or facilities.

Notice that almost all ten are barriers internal to the life and structures of the church. This is typical of other cities where seven or eight of every ten mentioned are barriers created by church politics, policies, priorities, or personalities — *not the big bad city itself.* Obviously, it is not new technical resources and money from outsiders that will solve these problems. A specific cry from these leaders is to help them address and surmount the *real* barriers to the evangelization of their cities (which incidentally has little influence on the way most outside mission leaders view the situation). Then we shall have their permission and motivation to reach out to the urban masses far beyond the existing churches.

Some Special Burdens of the Lausanne Associate

1. The rural nature of the urban seminaries, which marginalizes emerging urban leadership on all six continents.
2. The theological shallowness and lack of kingdom vision among pastors, which results in their alienation, competition, and high compensatory cravings for status and success, manifested in authoritarian and controlling pastoral styles.
3. The clubhouse nature of urban churches, with the interiorizing of feelings of inferiority and negative congregational behaviors that result so often.
4. The franchising of ministries and market-segmenting of cities by denominations and mission agencies in many places.
5. The "come" structure, programmatic orientation of church leaders, rather than the "go" structure, equiping ministry philosophy that would enable the churches to penetrate the systems of the cities.
6. The authoritarian reductionism of the church's total mission task down to a single mandate (verbally communicated gospel messages and individual responses), which often tends to trivialize the whole creative and redemptive "counsel of God."
7. The packaging of ministry and professionalizing of the clergy rather than the equipping and freeing of laity to use all their gifts in their own unique urban worlds.
8. The church vs. parachurch competition.
9. Denominational and mission "headquarters" mentalities, which lead Christians to use cities rather than minister to and in them with integrity and accountability.
10. The lack of compassion for and solidarity with the very poor who are residents of these huge cities in such great numbers. (One could add that in many cities the middle-class church and mission is equally apathetic toward the professionals and the upper-class privileged.)

Obviously, more research and experience might correct many of the conclusions above. The experiences of the Lausanne Committee since

1980 have nevertheless produced many direct results and beneficial side effects salutary for the churches' task of urban evangelization. Special thanks for this must go to Leighton Ford, chairman of the Lausanne Committee; Edward Dayton, chairman of the Lausanne Strategy Working Group; and Samuel Wilson, director of MARC, without whose vision and encouragement and resources it would not have happened.

PRESBYTERIANS AND ETHNIC EVANGELISM

John R. Hendrick

In 1983, the two largest Presbyterian bodies reunited to form the three million member Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). From colonial days to the present, this predominantly white Anglo denomination has engaged in evangelism and church development among ethnic persons. Yet, as Milton Gordon has said, writing of inter-ethnic work in the U.S.A., this ministry "proceeds like a race horse galloping along with blinders. He doesn't know where he has been, he doesn't know where he is and he doesn't know where he is going."[1] The purpose of this article is to assist interested persons in knowing where Presbyterians have been, are now, and might be going in terms of ethnic evangelism, by sketching its history, identifying some of its most significant trends, and suggesting some ways of moving into the future.

I Overview

The three-century chronology of Presbyterian work among the various ethnic groups in the United States of America has been written in several volumes; each gives one or another aspect of the story.[2] Drawing from these sources, an illustrative outline of Presbyterian evangelistic outreach among specific ethnic groups will be presented as a perspective for the discussion which follows.

Evangelism among Native Americans

The Presbyterian and Congregational ministry to the Indians of North America was begun in Massachusetts in 1646 by the Reverend John Elliot. By 1669 he had established six congregational presbyteries (congregations) and had ordained 24 Indian pastors. In 1742 the Presbyterian synod appointed Azariah Horton as its first native American missionary. He established two Indian congregations on Long Island. In 1744 David Brainerd was ordained to minister to the Indians of New Jersey and

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Pennsylvania. After his death in 1747, his brother John Brainerd continued this ministry until 1754. The first Indian to be ordained by a presbytery was Samson Occom in 1759, a Mohican. His work led to the establishment of a school for Indians later to become Dartmouth College. The Presbyterian General Assembly appointed its first missionary to the Indians in 1803; Gideon Blackburn was commissioned for "the purpose of carrying the gospel and arts of civilization to them."

The Reverend Samuel Worchester, serving under the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions, became a missionary to the Cherokee Indians in 1825. He was imprisoned in Georgia for resisting white expropriation of Indians lands. Upon release he followed the Cherokees on the Trail of Tears to Oklahoma, serving there until shortly before the Civil War. Instructions given in 1833 to Presbyterian missionaries to the Wea tribe on the Kansas-Missouri border illustrate Presbyterian mission strategy during the 19th Century. "Your object is to bring this people to a saving knowledge . . . of Jesus Christ and to the arts of civilized life . . . as the only method to prevent their utter extermination . . ."

By 1925, the Presbyterian Church U.S.A. with a staff of about 200 was ministering to approximately five thousand Indians through 163 organized churches and preaching stations. The Presbyterian Church in the south was doing a similar work among a handful of Indian Churches in Oklahoma and one in Texas. In 1951, total Presbyterian staff ministering to native Americans was 147, 32 of whom were pastors.This work was being carried out in sixteen states among 31 tribes. Today, there are 67 native American Presbyterian congregations.

Evangelism among Afro-Americans

The Reverend Samuel Davis, 1747, was the first Presbyterian minister known to have undertaken preaching and religious instruction among slaves. During his first three years in Virginia he baptized 40 slaves. Many followed this pattern of ministry, most notably, perhaps, the Reverend Charles C. Jones, who labored in Liberty County, Georgia, prior to the Civil War. He prepared a catechism for slaves and encouraged masters to ameliorate the life and working conditions of their human chattel.

The Reverend John Chavis was the first Black ordained by Presbyterians. Licensed by the Presbytery of Lexington in 1801, he served as a missionary "among people of his own color." The Reverend John Glouster, a Black, served "his people" in Philadelphia, beginning in 1809. In 1812, the First African Presbyterian Church was founded there.

In the south, one third of the Presbyterian ministers held slaves; in the north, Presbyterians increasingly supported abolition. This contributed to the division of the Presbyterian Church in 1861. At the time of the Civil War there were 34,000 Black Presbyterians in the south, 20,000 of whom were in the Cumberland Presbyterian Church. By 1874, an independent Colored Cumberland Presbyterian Church had been

formed. Between 1861-1865, Presbyterians from the north began working among Blacks in the south. This work among Freedmen consisted of the organization of churches and presbyteries, general education and training of Black ministers and teachers. In the words of one of the few southern Presbyterian ministers who joined in this work the goal was "the evangelization and enlightenment of the Freed people."

Ministers and church workers who came south to work among the newly emancipated slaves experienced social ostracism. Southern Presbyterians saw their Black members drift away to other denominations. Gradually, lines of separation between the races hardened. At the time of the merger of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church and The Presbyterian Church U.S.A. in 1906, it was agreed by northerners and southerners alike that presbyteries in the south would be segregated. During this time some southern Presbyterian churches carried out work among Blacks by establishing segregated Sunday schools or preaching points.

Large scale migration of southern Blacks to northern cities began in the decade of World War I. This led to the establishment between 1914-1931 of 24 churches in the north and west; ten were founded in the 1940's. In 1950, there were approximately 40,000 Black communicant members in the northern Presbyterian Church. Two-thirds of these were in the south. In the Presbyterian Church U.S.A. there were about 2400 Black members. In 1952, the Presbyterian Church U.S.A. conducted a major campaign which succeeded in building a number of Black congregations. Presbyterian denominations, north and south, made numerous pronouncements in the late 1940's and 1950's regarding the evil of racial segregation. By the 1960's these denominations had integrated virtually all of their judicatories and congregations were forbidden to exclude members because of race. At the present there are 323 Black Presbyterian congregations and a scattering of Black members in predominantly Anglo congregations.

Evangelism among Hispanic Americans

Presbyterian Hispanic evangelism began in the 1830's in Texas. Sumner Bacon distributed scriptures and William C. Blair and Melinda Rankin founded schools with the hope of reaching Mexicans with "the pure gospel of Jesus Christ." However, it was fifty years before the first Mexican Presbyterian congregation was founded in Texas by José Maria Botella, a ruling elder from Matamoros. Walter S. Scott, ordained in 1892, became a tireless itinerant missionary among the Mexican people of Texas. His work led to the establishment of the Presbytery of Texas-Mexican, organized in 1908 with seventeen churches and nearly one thousand communicants. By 1953, just before the Texas-Mexican Presbytery was integrated with the presbyteries of Texas, it had 30 churches and 2,383 members.

Presbyterian missionary work in New Mexico began in earnest after the Civil War. The leaders were David McFarland, John Annin and

James Roberts. Their work centered in northern New Mexico. Education was consciously used by them as a wedge to prepare an opening for the formation of congregations. By the end of the century there were thirty-one congregations and over one thousand members. Besides this educational work, a medical dimension was added to Presbyterian outreach in New Mexico in 1914. It too was done, at least in the beginning, with an eye to fulfilling an evangelistic function. From these beginnings Presbyterian work spread to southern Colorado, Arizona and California; there, because of large immigration, the church has grown most extensively.

In the 1920's a concerted effort was made to supplement congregational work with a settlement house approach. At its high point the church had twenty Houses of Neighborly Service throughout the Southwest. The goal of "Americanizing the Mexican" was the recurring theme of this and almost every endeavor of Presbyterian Spanish work until mid-century. By 1940 in the Southwest the Presbyterian Church U.S.A. had sixty-two congregations with 5,292 members.

Presbyterian evangelistic work among Hispanics has by no means, however, been limited to persons from Mexico. There are now three presbyteries in Puerto Rico and a number of Puerto Rican congregations in the United States. In the last decades, as immigration from Cuba and other Latin American countries has increased, the number of Presbyterian outreach programs to these persons has grown. Today there are 151 Hispanic Presbyterian congregations; 67 Mexican American; 66 Puerto Rican and 18 among persons from other Latin American countries.

Evangelism among Asian Americans

Emigration to California from the Far East led to the establishment of the Chinese Presbyterian Church in San Francisco in 1853. The four charter members had been members of the Presbyterian Church in Hong Kong. Coupled with the formation of congregations, Presbyterian ministry to Asians also included social services such as a home to rescue Chinese women and girls from prostitution. The mistrust of orientials, widespread in the United States in the 19th Century, was reflected by the Presbyterian General Assembly of 1887 when it argued that "Mission among them must be prosecuted with increasing vigor so that their coming among us may not occasion harm to American society, morals, and civil institutions . . ." It was hoped that the conversion of Asians would lead to "the work of evangelizing their native land."

Until 1922, Presbyterian work among Chinese and Japanese immigrants was carried out by its Board of Foreign Missions; in 1923 it was transferred to the Board of Home Missions. In 1937 there were twelve Chinese Presbyterian congregations and 21 Japanese congregations, plus several of Koreans and Philippinos. Presbyterian work among Chinese in New Orleans, begun in the 1880's, eventuated in the formation of a congregation in the 1950's.

Reforms in United States immigration policy in the mid 1960's have made it possible for more and more persons from Asia to enter this country. This has resulted in a dramatic increase in Korean Presbyterian Churches and a significant number of Formosan congregations. Southeast Asian refugees, sponsored by Presbyterian Churches, have either joined Anglo congregations or been organized into house churches under the wing of a larger church. At the present time there are 111 Korean Churches and 45 other Asian churches including Chinese, Japanese and Formosan. Rapid growth of Korean congregations is not so much the result of American Presbyterian intitiative in this decade as it is a fruit of the evangelistic zeal of the many Korean Presbyterians who have entered this country.

Evangelism among European Americans

Non-English speaking European immigration began to increase in the middle of the 19th Century and came to a crescendo in the years just before the first World War. At first these persons came primarily from Northern Europe. They were followed by waves of immigrants from Southern and Eastern Europe. Presbyterians shared the general view that these persons should surrender their language and culture and conform to the Anglo Protestant ethos which was firmly in place in the United States. The Presbyterian aim was to Christianize and Americanize them. Thus, the motive was two fold: to share the gospel and to protect the American way of life.

A German church was organized in 1847 in Dubuque, Iowa. It was followed in 1912 by an entire German-speaking synod. In 1852, the first Hungarian service of worship was held in a Presbyterian Church in New York. By 1856 Presbyterians were conducting missionary work among French, Italian, Welsh and German immigrants. Missionary work among Jews began in Philadelphia in 1870 and in New York in 1894. The high point of city evangelization among the foreign speaking came in the period 1890-1925. In 1924, Presbyterians were ministering in 49 different languages in the U.S.A.

A notable example of this outreach was the work among Italian-Americans. In 1950 there were approximately 100 Italian Presbyterian congregations and missions with 6000 members. After the 1950's it was generally assumed that Presbyterian foreign language work among European Americans, or as they are now sometimes called, white ethnics, would be phased out. Indeed, this has proven to be the case. Today children of Czech, German, French, Hungarian, Italian parentage have been assimilated into Anglo Presbyterian congregations; or, if they have their own churches, these are almost fully Anglicized. It is doubtful whether any effort to start a new congregation for a European-American group would be underwritten today by the Presbyterian church.

This bare outline of Presbyterian ethnic evangelism and church development obscures from our view the inspiring story of dedicated men and women, who, choosing the less appreciated work of home missions,

crossed cultural and racial lines to share the gospel. Nor does it recount the stories of those within each ethnic group who ministered faithfully among their own people. Perhaps it does provide the reader with a sense of the scope and nature of Presbyterian ethnic evangelism and hint at the fact that over the years Presbyterian policy and practice have not remained the same.

II TRENDS

As one views the panorama of Presbyterian thinking and approach to ethnic evangelism, it is evident that there have been over time a number of changes. The trends noted below are stated in the form of hypotheses. Each is followed by a brief discussion.

From a Conviction of Superiority toward a Belief in Equality

Presbyterians of the 19th and early 20th Century believed in the superiority of the white race, American culture and evangelical Christianity. They never intended that their evangelistic efforts would lead to social equality with Blacks, Asians, Hispanics or Native Americans. And rarely was it conceived of as a possibility for the newcomers from Europe, especially those from southern and eastern regions. The test of effectiveness for Presbyterian ethnic outreach was the extent to which persons became evangelical Christians and conformed to the dominant Anglo ethos of the church and society.

Today, it is not accurate to say that Presbyterians are free of denominational, national or racial chauvenism. However, as they reach out now, they do so with a new appreciation of the religious, cultural and racial heritage of other ethnic groups. To be sure, white Presbyterian Americans continue to affirm themselves, but more and more they are coming to value the beliefs and life ways of others as almost equal to their own. As we shall see, the consequences of this shift are far reaching.

From a Policy of Radical Segregation to a Policy of Limited Integration

Prior to 1950 and long before Donald McGavran elevated the homogenous unit principle to a dictum of the Church Growth movement, Presbyterian and other denominations were using it in their ethnic evangelism and church planting. They did so, not because of the preference of ethnics to become Christians without crossing racial, cultural, and linguistic lines, but because of their (white Presbyterian) preference

to segregate ethnic persons from the majority white church. This radical segregation took place in congregations and in the higher governing bodies such as presbyteries and synods.

By the 1950's the Presbyterians had an official policy of working for an integrated church in an integrated society. Congregations were forbidden to exclude persons from membership on the basis of race and virtually all ethnic judicatories were integrated into a majority presbytery. The wide-spread acceptance of integration as a goal accounts for the Presbyterians' tendency to shy away from establishing congregations designed to minister to one ethnic group. A number of racial-ethnic Presbyterians now look back on limited integration as simply another ploy to assure white domination.[3]

From a Goal of Assimilation toward a Goal of Cultural Pluralism

From the earliest days in America, white European immigrants were expected to assimilate by conforming to Anglo expectations or blending into the melting pot. Because of racism, however, there never was the intent that persons of color, racial-ethnics, should be admitted to the primary group life of white Anglo Saxon Protestant Churches. In the 1950's that began to change. Assimilation into the mainstream was and remains a goal of many American racial-ethnics. This is especially true of Blacks who, sharing much of Anglo culture, desire to be fully a part of American civil, economic, religious and educational life.

Disillusionment with the fruits of integration and assimilation, however, and the discovery of Horace Kallen's thoughts on cultural pluralism have given American ethnics a new voice.[4] Black, red, yellow, brown and white are beautiful! Every one has a right to be what and who he is. Each race, each culture has a special contribution to make to the whole of American society. The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) has adopted cultural pluralism as a policy. What it means is a concerted effort to affirm and seek the contribution of ethnic persons who are members of the denomination. Cultural pluralism, in the hands of more evangelical denominations, has meant redoubled efforts to establish mono-ethnic churches. So far, Presbyterians have been reluctant, given their assimilationist mentality, to push hard for such a policy.

From Paternalism to Partnership

In light of the notions of superiority examined above, it is not surprising that Presbyterian evangelistic work among ethnic persons should more often than not have been carried out in a paternalistic way. For years white Presbyterians made the decisions and subsidized pastors

and churches in a way that demeaned ethnics and fostered a welfare mentality.

Today in the Presbyterian Church, *The Book of Order* mandates that ethnic persons be included and empowered in a way that compensates for past disenfranchisement.[5] Caucuses and councils have been created for each racial ethnic group and all groups together. Their views are sought. Their representation is solicited. Today there is an increasing sense of partnership among white and ethnic Presbyterians. Recently a coalition of racial-ethnic Presbyterians called for more new churches in each ethnic group. Perhaps, their voice will be heeded. If so, new energy may be devoted to ethnic church development.

From a Major Focus on Evangelism toward a Major Focus on Social Ministry

In 1903 a long emerging theological consensus among Presbyterians regarding missionary work was formulated and made part of the *Westminster Confession of Faith*.[6] Most then shared the view that the best thing the church could do for any person was to bring him or her to a knowledge of God's love and grace through Jesus Christ. Of course, educational, medical, agricultural, and other "civilizing" services were rendered by those reaching out to ethnic persons; often they included a settlement or neighborhood house approach. Such social ministries, however, had to be justified in terms of the contribution they made to what was considered to be top priority, namely, calling persons to faith, discipleship and membership in the church.

In the 1920's and 30's major denominational strife centered on what has come to be called "the spirituality of the church," the notion that evangelism and the spiritual welfare of persons was more important than all else. A plea went out for ministry to the whole person. Gradually, humanitarian social service and, more recently, advocacy for change in oppressive social structures of society has become the main Presbyterian form of outreach to ethnic persons in the United States. Thus, in the 1960's some argued that working for open housing, affirmative action, voting rights, etc. was evangelism!

Few Presbyterians would like to turn back the clock to a purely spiritual understanding of the church's mission. Today, however, many Presbyterians are beginning to urge their denomination to be more specific in its definition of evangelism and more intentional in reaching out to call persons to faith in Christ and membership in the church.

From Older Theological, Cultural and Ecclesiastical Motivations to Newer Motivations

Before the 1930's, Presbyterian ethnic evangelism was motivated by

several factors. First was the theological conviction that without Christ the souls of all persons were in peril, and that with Christ persons would be saved and become heirs of eternal life. Second was the cultural view that the various European ethnics were in need of being Americanized in order to protect our Anglo way of life and that racial ethnic persons were in need of being both Americanized and civilized. Third was the ecclesiastical judgment that ethnic persons needed to be Presbyterian or, at the very least, a member of a Protestant evangelical church; other varieties of Christianity, and certainly, other religions were not considered adequate. Finally, Presbyterians were motivated by compassionate concern for what they perceived to be the temporal and eternal well-being of ethnic persons.

Today, compassion continues to be in large supply among Presbyterians, but the theological, cultural and ecclesiastical motivations cited above have been seriously eroded. While the old motivations for ethnic evangelism are diminished in influence, new motivations are emerging. Major theological Presbyterian documents of the last decade focus on the vocation of the church to share the gospel with all persons. Culturally, American Presbyterians have gained a new appreciation of ethnic diversity. Many church leaders now state that they wish to increase the number of racial-ethnic persons participating in the Presbyterian Church so that their gifts may contribute to upbuilding of the church. Ecclesiastically, Presbyterians are experiencing a severe decline in membership. Calling racial-ethnic persons to faith and discipleship in the Presbyterian Church is one way to help the church grow again. Assuming that these newer motivations will lead to a renewal of commitment to ethnic evangelism, however, there is still the question of how this work might be carried out.

III PROSPECTS

The Future of Ethnic Evangelism and Church Development in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)

Every denomination has its own life style — a combination of folkways, norms, traditions, commitments — derived from the past, modified to be sure, but very much alive. Presbyterians are no exception. The future of any ethnic evangelism program in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) will need to be closely tied to that denomination's contemporary self-understanding. Convictions and approaches such as those held by conservative evangelicals might empower other denominations. Most Presbyterians, however, are not comfortable with that perspective.

Whatever future there is for Presbyterians in ethnic evangelism in North America it will have to conform in large measure, for good or ill, to the current Presbyterian ethos.

The following suggestions, felt to be compatible with the Presbyterian situation today, are offered in the hope that they will provide stimulus to a renewal of Presbyterian efforts in evangelism among ethnic people.

Presbyterian Ethnic Evangelism will be done in Partnership with its Racial-Ethnic Constituency

Instead of separate ethnic judicatories, the Presbyterian Church now has a large number of racial-ethnic caucuses and councils. It is imperative that the General Assembly and the presbyteries find ways of working as partners with these groups in planning and carrying out racial-ethnic church development and evangelism. The denomination needs the best insight from within each ethnic group. For example, in new church development, racial-ethnic persons should participate in the process of planning, locating the site, selecting the leadership, overseeing the work, etc. Paternalism and Anglo ethnocentrism are perennial temptations for white Presbyterians. Close communication with the various racial-ethnic groups is one way of identifying this sin and avoiding the negative practices associated with earlier Presbyterian evangelistic work.

Presbyterian Ethnic Evangelism will build on the Denominational Commitment to Pluralism, Inclusiveness, Empowerment and Advocacy for Racial-Ethnic Persons in Church and Society

In the future, Presbyterian evangelistic efforts will not demand the conformity of racial-ethnic persons to a supposedly superior Anglo culture, nor will it perpetuate the subtle institutional racism that sometimes accompanies integration. Instead the invitation to become Presbyterian Christians will carry with it the acceptance of diverse cultures and the intent to stand with ethnic persons in their desire to become full participants in national and denominational life. Such efforts perhaps will themselves be an evangelistic witness by means of which racial-ethnic persons will see Presbyterian "good works," however imperfectly implemented, and decide to give glory to God within that fellowship.

Presbyterian Ethnic Evangelism will mobilize Congregations for the Contributions they can make to Ethnic Evangelism

Nearly every Presbyterian congregation, and especially those in urban

areas, are neighbors of ethnic persons, many of whom have come to the United States in recent years. A number of these congregations already have contact with ethnic persons through social service ministries. Churches throughout the denomination should be encouraged to function in accordance with the new Presbyterian *Book of Order* which states "The congregation shall welcome all persons . . . Each member must seek the grace of openness in extending the fellowship of Christ to all persons."[7]

Stronger congregations in cities can supplement this approach and in cooperation with their presbytery function as partners in the formation of fellowship groups, house churches, etc.

Presbyterian Ethnic Evangelism Will Be Coupled With Enlarged Effort to Develop Leaders for Presbyterian Racial Ethnic Work

A most difficult issue for Presbyterians has always been enlisting and educating racial ethnic persons for ordination to the ministry of the Word. Should there be alternative routes to ordination for racial ethnic persons? The constitution of the denomination does not provide such. In fact, however, alternative paths have been provided by giving presbyteries leeway in ordaining persons under exceptional circumstances. A Native American group has recently charged that Presbyterian educational standards are culturally biased and do not take into account their own or other ethnic realities. Presbyterians need to address this issue afresh in a context where cultural pluralism is professed. In this situation new solutions might be discovered.

Ethnic lay leaders are also needed. Already one seminary and synod have developed an extension program designed to equip ethnic lay persons. While Presbyterians need many, many more racial-ethnic persons as leaders, the church should not fail to challenge Anglos to commitment themselves to work with ethnic persons.

Presbyterian Ethnic Evangelism will be undergirded by Resources from the Synods and the General Assembly

The policies and programs of these higher governing bodies shape to a large extent the mission outreach of presbyteries and sessions of particular churches. First, they should adopt and continually reiterate a high priority for racial-ethnic evangelism and church development. Second, they should provide staff with special competence for this work. Third, they must supplement the present new church development guidelines with suggestions for church development appropriate to each ethnic group. Fourth, they should utilize all means at their disposal to help presbyteries and sessions understand North America

as a mission field which requires aggressive church development, not only among ethnics, but also among Anglos. Fifth, besides stressing evangelism and church development, they can keep the Presbyterian denomination sensitive to the ways in which societal and structural issues adversely affect racial ethnic persons and call all to build a common life in which liberty and justice prevail. Finally, they can prepare guidebooks for congregations and presbyteries which utilize the best resources available to assist those who intend to step forward in racial-ethnic evangelistic outreach.

Presbyterian Ethnic Evangelism will look to the Initiative of Presbyteries in Racial Ethnic Church Development

In the Presbyterian Church the authority to organize congregations resides in presbyteries. Because of increased immigration and population growth, urban presbyteries have unusual opportunities to start many new ethnic congregations. Despite lingering reluctance on the part of some older liberals, wide acceptance of cultural pluralism may free presbyteries to consider beginning congregations which are designed to serve one ethnic group.

Presbyteries which now tap synod and General Assembly monies to supplement their own finances can discover additional resources by establishing partnerships with interested congregations within their bounds. The role and initiative of congregations in establishing new churches, which has been intentionally stifled by denominational authorities, can be stimulated and harnessed so that churches and presbyteries pull together in this work to the advantage of all.

Presbyterian Ethnic Evangelism will be grounded in Theological Formulations which will motivate contemporary Presbyterians

As noted above there is no longer a theological consensus among Presbyterians concerning mission and evangelism. The new stress on the evangelistic calling of the church is helping. Much more work remains to be done. How to talk about Christ, salvation, the church, in ways that are compelling for today's Presbyterians is a task yet to be completed. It urgently needs attention. Unless Presbyterians can recover a core of theological conviction, it is doubtful that they will be able to mount serious ethnic or Anglo evangelistic efforts.

Conclusion

Between the Civil War and World War II Presbyterians were in the denominational forefront in ethnic evangelism. Since that time their

outreach has continued, though scaled down. Of course, Presbyterians remain committed to ethnic work, but now their energies are mainly devoted to social advocacy and efforts to build an ethnically inclusive church. Other denominations have now assumed the leadership role in ethnic evangelism and church development.

Is it possible that Presbyterians will again take a major role in evangelizing ethnic America? Some missiologists are skeptical. They hold that denominations without a consensus in regard to evangelical theology, without freedom for its congregation to take initiative in church planting and without diverse tracks for training ordained leaders will be unable to muster the intention or provide the human and financial resources necessary to carry out large scale ethnic evangelization. This, of course, is the situation in which the Presbyterians find themselves. Will they turn back to earlier theological, connectional and educational methods? It is doubtful.

Does this predict a bleak future? Not necessarily. As we have seen, Presbyterians seem to be developing some new motivational bases for ethnic evangelism and church development. If this comes to pass, new strategies and approaches for this work will follow. Time will tell whether or not Presbyterians will once again make ethnic evangelism and church development a major mission focus. Some of us are hopeful.

NOTES

[1]Milton M. Gordon, *Assimilation in American Life* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1964), p. 9.

[2]R. Douglas Brackenridge and Francisco O. Garcia-Treto, *A History of Presbyterians and Mexican Americans in the Southwest* (San Antonio: Trinity University Press, 1974).

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[3]"Racial Ethnic History and Content – Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)," mimeographed background paper for the General Assembly Council, 1985, pp. 1-2.

[4]Milton W. Gordon, *Assimilation in American Life* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1964), pp. 141-154.

[5]"Report of Presbyterian (U.S.A.) Ethnic Coalition," mimeographed and submitted to the General Assembly Council, 1985.

[6]"Of the Gospel," *Westminster Confession of Faith; The Book of Confessions* (Atlanta and New York: Office of the General Assembly, 1983).

[7]"The Constitution of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)," *The Book of Order* (Atlanta and New York: Office of the General Assembly, 1983).

THE NEW MEDIA ENVIRONMENT
Evangelism in a Visually-Oriented Society

Richard V. Peace

"Do the mass media impact our lives substantially?" Most of us would answer with little hesitation, "Yes, of course." In all of us there is an intuitive sense of the power of media. We know that we are daily bombarded by messages shouted out by radio, magazines, films, newspapers, billboards and signs, records and television — especially television. And we know that all this affects us. Yet, if we were asked to describe the nature of the impact the mass media have upon us — our value system, our aspirations, our very perceptions of reality — most of us would find it difficult to be specific. When it comes to media we have become, to borrow an illustration from Ben Logan of the Media Action Research Center, like the goldfish in a bowl, for whom water is so familiar that it forgets about its existence. We know that we exist in a media-oriented society, but our environment has become so familiar and so pervasive, that we forget it is even there, much less notice its impact on us. It is a given — unnoticed, unrecognized. And we are not aware of what kind of creatures we have become as a result of living in such an environment.

And yet it is my contention that the emergence of our present media environment, even though it is a relatively new phenomenon, has had marked consequences for us as individuals and as a nation. It is as if our goldfish gradually learned to breathe air. At the end of that metamorphosis, it would have become a different creature, and probably as oblivious to the air in its environment as it previously was to the water. In the same way, we are different creatures now from what we were 30 years ago, before TV.

All of this has serious consequences for Christians, both as individuals striving to grow up into the fullness of Jesus Christ, and as a community seeking to be faithful to the Great Commission. In this paper I want to explore some of the implications of this for our growth as Christians, and for our experience as witnesses in our new media environment.

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T.V. and our Time

It is obvious that Americans spend a great deal of time with media products. It is not uncommon for a person to spend thirty minutes each morning reading the newspaper over breakfast. Then he or she listens to the radio while driving to work. Coffee breaks and lunch might be spent with a book or a magazine. In the evenings and on weekends there is, of course, television.

Television consumes more of our time than any other communication medium. In the average American home, the TV set is on for 6¼ hours a day. Each person in that home will watch it nearly 4 hours a day for 7 days a week — that is over 1,400 hours a year of TV viewing. (The average person spends 2,000 hours a year at work.) In addition, it has been calculated that the average adult spends an additional 200 hours a year reading newspapers and another 200 hours reading magazines. That same average American, however, reads books only *10 hours* a year.

With children, it is worse. Over half our nation's 12-year-olds watch TV 6 or more hours each day. One quarter of each 24-hour day is spent passively in front of a TV set at an age when a child has a desperate need to learn relational skills. By the time the average student has graduated from high school, he or she will have spent 50% more time with TV than in the classroom. In the course of this TV watching, this student has witnessed 18,000 murders and seen 350,000 commercials. TV is no longer an alternative educational system. In terms of hours of input, it has become our *prime* educational vehicle.

Needless to say, by sheer virtue of all the hours they consume, mass media, and especially TV, have become dominant forces in our lives. With the length of a day still pinned at 24 hours, after 8 hours have been subtracted for sleep, 8 hours for work, and 2 hours for travel, eating and chores; and if 4 of the remaining 6 hours are then spent with TV, and an additional hour with newspapers and magazines, there is not much time left at all for involvement in church activities, much less evangelism and spiritual growth. *The media consume inordinate amounts of time in the life of the average American.*

And this does affect the choices we make in regard to our involvement in church. I can remember, as a teenager, the conflict I felt between knowing I should go to the Sunday evening service, and my desire to watch "The Wonderful World of Disney." I am sure it is not the only factor, but I wonder how much the high quality of Sunday evening programming — it is the best of the week — has contributed to the demise of the Sunday evening service. Not only has all this TV-watching reduced the number of people participating in activities other than the Sunday morning service, but it has limited what can be done by the church by way of outreach. Heaven help the visitation team that stops by when the CBS Evening News is being aired! And even on Sunday

morning, we must now contend with the competition offered by the so-called "Electronic Church."

Media and Reality

This immersion in media has had an even more serious impact on our culture. The mass media do not simply and innocently consume our time; they change, insidiously, the very way we perceive reality. This can be seen, for example, in the urban riots in 1966 and 1967. It has been hypothesized that one contributing factor to the rioting was the constant, unrelated display on TV of the "good life" which money could buy. The people in the ghettoes compared what they possessed to what they saw on TV, and they demanded a better break. But TV did not simply raise the level of expectation and hence the level of frustration; it also showed people how to get what they felt was their due. As Albert Brandura, professor of psychology at Stanford university, has said:

> It has been shown that if people are exposed to television aggression, they not only learn aggressive patterns of behavior, but they also retain them over a long period of time. There is no longer any need to equivocate about whether televised stimulation produces learning effects. It can serve as an effective tutor.

TV enters at a third point in any analysis of the 1966-67 riots. The Kerner Commission devoted an entire chapter to mass media in its report on civil disorder in American. They found that the very act of televising riots tended to generate similar upheavals elsewhere. TV modeled how to conduct a riot! Not only that, the Kerner report also pointed out the impact of denying blacks access to mass media. As Dr. Martin Luther King put it: "Lacking sufficient access to television, publications and broad forums, Negroes have had to write their most persuasive essays with the blunt pen of marching ranks."

It is naive to think that any of us is unchanged as a result of living in this new media environment. Our values, our expectations, our understanding of people, all have been influenced by the media. Take, for example, our values. By merely thumbing through a magazine and glancing at the advertisements, one can get a sense of what is considered desirable in our culture. Advertising executives know how to sell. They know what appeals to us, and so there it is, in crisp, living color — alluring cars, cigarettes, fur coats, gadgets, dream vacations, beautiful people, etc. The American dream, so it seems, is to *acquire* — things, power, popularity, and a "zest for living." Because after all, "we're only passing this way once."

This has implications for our evangelism. As we call men and women to repentance and faith, the media are calling them to self-assertion and materialism. Furthermore, since we the evangelists are not immune

to this same allure (have you visited the opulent headquarters of some evangelistic organizations?), we often sound an unsure and indistinct note in our proclamation. We even come to wonder if we should be proclaiming at all; or, even worse, our proclamation of the gospel gets mixed up with the proclamation of materialism.

Not only do the mass media teach us to value the wrong sorts of things; they also mislead us as to the worthwhile goals in life. As Christ calls us to a life of sacrifice, giving and caring, TV proclaims as ideal the young, single, self-centered, affluent, resonsibility-free life. For example only 15% of the females on television are more than 40 years old. Only one third of TV males are married men. TV's stereotypes of the "good life" are all wrong. We learn to value the wrong things, to strive in the wrong direction. While TV is not the sole culprit in this shift of values and aspirations, it is unquestioningly the single most pervasive and influential purveyor of these new perceptions.

Coping Strategies

What can we do about all this? Mass media are a fact of life in America. They are not going to go away. If anything, with the advent of inexpensive devices that will enable home TV sets to receive satellite transmissions directly, the impact of the media will expand. We cannot insulate ourselves from their direct, much less indirect, influence. Even if we could persuade all Christians to turn off their radios and TV sets, and put away their magazines, newspapers and records — a course I would never advocate — still the rest of America would go on tuning in and turning on to the media way of life. Our general culture is going to continue to bear the marks of the media. And this is important to realize, because it is all those people out there in media-land that we are trying to reach with the Gospel. We must first of all accept the reality and ubiquitous nature of the media; secondly, we must learn how to blunt its more deleterious impact; and thirdly, we must be willing to learn from it how better to present our own message. Let me make a series of suggestions which relate to these three aims.

1. Educate our Congregations in the Art of TV Viewing

Like the goldfish who has forgotten what water is like because it is so much a given in its life, so we have grown too accustomed to the media world in which we live. The first step in any coping strategy is to become sensitized to our media environment. Until we are conscious of the impact of TV in particular, and how it is made, we cannot initiate any kind of change.

There are various consciousness-raising programs available. From personal experience, one I know that really works, and is designed for church use, is called *Television Awareness Training (TAT).* It was developed by *MARC, The Media Action Research Center* in New York

City, a project of the United Methodist Church, the Church of the Brethren, and the American Lutheran Church. In this program, which can be run in an abbreviated form as a single session, or fully in 8 modules, topics such as stereotyping, violence, TV and children, and sexuality are discussed. Recently, MARC prepared Sunday School materials for use with various age groups. The program has a very pragmatic end in view. Not only does one begin to *understand* the issues involved, but one learns how to defuse the power of television. As we begin to distance ourselves from the impact of TV, we begin to develop the kind of perspective which allows us to use media rather than be used by them. As we begin to understand our environment and cope on a personal level with the impact of the media, so we also develop the kind of insights that help us in reaching out to the people around us.

2. *Develop Sensitivities to the Real Needs of People.*

As we start to get free from the grip of media sensibilities, we likewise begin to develop new perspectives on the real needs of the non-Christian population. We begin to see how agonizing the struggle is for a lot of people to acquire all of the possessions peddled in TV land. We see how warped our perspectives about sex and violence have become. We see how lonely it is when the only conversation in our family occurs during commercial breaks. We discover how dulling all that input becomes when a person has no way to *respond* to it. And especially we discover that deep down below that seeming commitment to materialism there is a spark which is still lit in most people, by which they know that there is more to living than they have yet experienced. In the average person, submerged though it may be, there is still a yearning for something more — something which looks suspiciously like a craving for spiritual reality.

In other words, we need to develop a new sensitivity to the real needs of real people. We must get beyond what our culture tells us about people's needs; and when we are in touch with such needs, we must let the Gospel speak to them. Then, and only then, have we identified a *point of contact* between a person and our message. This is foundational to any effective evangelism.

3. *Develop Authentic Fellowship Units*

The thing which TV lacks and culture craves is the warmth of human contact. TV is but a flickering cold fire around which a group of isolated individuals huddle. Moreover, since over half of the homes in America have two TV sets, and probably a quarter of the homes have as many as three, more and more TV viewing is done all alone. One of the needs that has emerged with new urgency in our media age is the longing for authentic fellowship. *If a church is fostering deep and meaningful fellowship, in which burdens can be shared with honesty and caring love, then it can compete with any TV show for the time and attention*

of people.

This is another key to evangelism. It is not enough simply to reach people for Jesus Christ, and then bid them "good luck." We have an obligation to nurture their growth. And this means introducing them to a congenial environment of caring Christian people. In fact, an introduction into that environment alone is often the most powerful means of evangelism. Where non-Christians experience for any length of time true Christian fellowship, they will almost always seek out the Source of that fellowship.

4. *Revise our Modes of Communication*

The mass media have irrevocably altered the way we receive information, and the church must pay attention to these changed modes of communication if it is to be heard.

Notice how TV operates. For one thing, it tells a lot of stories. TV programming is filled with situation comedies, dramas of various sorts, soap-operas, and feature films. And there is a reason for this. People like stories. They always have and they always will. Jesus knew this, so he told a lot of stories during his ministry. We, however, seem to have written off Jesus' style of teaching as mere husk in our eagerness to get at the kernel of truth contained in the story which we then present as didactic rhetoric. Therefore people tune us out, and will do so increasingly, as the pre-electronic-media generation passes away. We must learn once more how to tell stories if our message is to be heard.

Notice, too, how the stories are told on TV and in films — with humor, with lots of action, and with surprises. These characteristics have, of course, been the cause of a great deal of *bad* television and film. As each producer tries to outdo the other, the stories become more violent and more sensational. The settings move from the exotic to the bizarre, and the dialogue becomes more and more risque and titillating. We can, of course, resist these extremes and still learn the lesson — that the best stories are action-filled, full of suspense, and have a touch of good fun about them.

Notice, further, how on television the input is broken up into small palatable sections. TV news is a prime example. Ten news stories per half hour used to be the norm. Now the tendency is to discuss up to twenty stories each half hour, which means that we get our information in smaller discrete units. The same tendency is seen in sports coverage. While baseball games are still broadcast in toto, many sports events are shown in small segments intercut with other events. We see a little gymnastics, then a few rounds of a fight, and we end with a look at the World Mud Racing Championship. Variety shows continue to be popular, and they follow the same format — short, discrete units of entertainment. In fact, even the editing of TV shows bears this characteristic. The picture cuts to a new frame every 7 to 10 seconds.

All this stands in sharp contrast to the heavy, fairly didactic sermon delivered for 20 to 30 minutes in so many of our churches. I am convinced that our congregations are becoming less and less able to "hear" us anymore in this format. It is hard enough for those raised in a church to sit through most sermons (notice how attention picks up when a story is told). For a non-Christian, wandering into a church on Sunday, the sermon must be akin to culture shock, given our media conditioning. We must start experimenting with different time formats for our preaching and teaching. There is nothing sacred about a half-hour, continuous monologue, placed at the end of the service. If people are better able to absorb three connected, well-constructed ten-minute statements interspersed throughout the service, then perhaps it is time to alter our order of worship.

Another area in which TV has had an impact on churches is technical preparation. While not all TV is first-rate, much of it is beautifully and skillfully constructed. Even the "bad" shows are technically brilliant by comparison to TV even 15 years ago. The result of all this is that people have a high level of expectation when it comes to our teaching and preaching. They want it to be well done. They are used to solid content, carefully crafted phrases, and well timed delivery. Now of course TV looks and sounds good because numerous hours of highly paid talent have been directed towards it being that way. While we need not try to compete directly, still the burden is upon us to use words skillfully and colorfully, and to keep our insights in touch with the real needs of real people. The mass media have raised the level of expectation in churches.

TV has also made us more entertainment-oriented. I personally have a reaction to the kind of worship services that ring of "show-biz," even though they invariably seem to draw large congregations. Still, without succumbing to the glibness, flash and superficiality of the media, we ought to think long and hard about how we construct our worship experiences and teaching sessions. Are the hymns carefully planned, and not randomly chosen at the last moment? Do they serve to move the service forwards thematically and on a feeling level? Is all the music characterized by careful presentation, variety, and thoughtful choice? Is there a flow and rhythm to the service itself? Is there a pageantry to our worship? Most of the time, it seems, an "order of worship" is inherited and little attention is paid to it.

Our teaching ministries suffer even more. The easiest thing to do is to lecture people. They sit passively for 45 minutes while we talk. It is also the least effective way of making an impact. Reflect on how information is communicated on TV. Sit for a few hours with the children's shows that have an ostensible teaching purpose, and notice *how they do it* — the variety (cartoons, puppets, skits, music, characters), the repetition (but not in a boring way). the non-condemnatory attitudes of the characters (the "teachers" smile and exude a sense of "learning is fun"), the short, discrete but interconnected segments, the way the

teaching issues are discussed in the context of the needs and interests of the target audience, the rhythm and flow to the whole show. Then go to your study and try to design a series of seminars on "Sharing Your Faith," using these principles.

Finally, in discussing what we can learn from TV about how to communicate in this new environment, it must be noted that the new electronic media have shifted our orientation from the verbal to the visual. We have become a visually-oriented society. If you doubt this, you do not even have to turn on your TV. Just pick up a wide-circulation magazine. Notice the layout. Even in a heavy-print magazine, there is a serious attempt to appeal to the eye. There are ample spaces and margins, excellent photographs and line-drawings, and in general a pleasing "look" to the magazine. Examine the advertisements: beautiful color photographs, eye-catching captions, a minimum of words. When a manufacturer gives technical details, it is relegated to very small type, tucked away down at the bottom of the advertisement. A magazine, after all, appeals basically to the eye, not the ear. Yet we in the church, and especially in the non-liturgical tradition, still rely heavily on words. The focal point of our experience together is a verbally delivered sermon. To be sure, we use print. Our commitment to the Bible has made us a print-oriented people. Yet how often do we design our books and tracts to appeal to the eye? To communicate effectively, both to our people and to those outside the church, we must become more visually oriented.

Final Notes

Having said this much about the relationship between media and our evangelistic responsibility, one more note must be added. It must be obvious by now that nothing has been said about how the church can use mass media directly for evangelistic purposes. This omission has been intentional. I have become increasingly wary as to our ability to use media skillfully. Indeed, my impression is that the majority of direct use of media by Christians is counter-productive in an evangelistic sense. I suppose a case could be made that Christians have used media skillfully in nurturing their own community. Christian radio and TV provide church folk with useful spiritual insights. Yet my point remains. My feeling is that even these shows, *from an evangelistic point of view*, are counter-productive. Imagine the average non-Christian tuning across a Christian radio program. What would he or she hear? For one thing, the format would be totally foreign. Christian radio programs do not sound like any other programs. When music is played, it often has an antique ring to it. And then there are all those words, all those monologues. And what words they are — "washed in the blood," "sanctification," "sold out to God," etc. It is like a new language to the non-Christian listener; which, of course, it is.

And this is the problem. Our media efforts make public our Christian sub-culture, with its unique concerns, ways of doing things, and vocabulary. There is nothing wrong with that sub-culture. It is just that people outside of the church do not understand it. And the aim of all good evangelism is to foster understanding — to help a person grasp in a clear, unequivocal way, the incredible message of Jesus Christ. And to do so, not simply with their minds, but with their whole beings. The best response we can hope for from most non-Christians exposed to a Christian media production is that they will be mildly curious and ask questions. How often, however, are they bored, cynically amused, or even annoyed by what to them sounds and looks like condemnatory gobbledy gook?

Why don't Christians do a better job with media? That is a big question, and outside the scope of this paper. But briefly it has to do with at least four factors. First and foremost, there is the question of money. Good media productions are *very* expensive. All too often there has been unwillingness to provide the resources necessary to do an adequate job. Second, there is the question of talent. Too often Christians have tried to produce films or do TV with only prayer and a vision, without having spent the ten or fifteen years necessary to master a complex craft. Third, there is often a refusal to take seriously the unique parameters of the chosen medium. It seems as if we are always trying to make our media products look and sound like a church meeting. And so we misuse the medium. Finally, we seem to have a curious inability to see ourselves as others see us. Our evangelistic programs seem to be produced to ensure an enthusiastic response from our brothers and sisters in the faith, rather than to provide interest and insight for the non-Christian. And while there have, needless to say, been some very good Christian films, radio shows, records, and TV programs, as well as some fine Christian books and magazines, these, alas, have been the exception, not the rule.

It must be said in conclusion that the media are not inherently evil. Nor are all, nor even most, media products suspect in and of themselves. I love films. I watch a lot of them, and I even assist in making some. I have worked in TV and radio. The problem is that, taken together, the mass media do propagate a secular vision of reality in a most powerful and persuasive way. Not only that, the unique aspect of electronic media is not their values and vision, for the secular vision has long been with us. It is that they have totally altered our modes of learning and communicating. We are deluged with instant information, skillfully presented in discrete, entertaining packages, largely visual in orientation, which have made us very impatient with the turgid, the dull, the over-long, the didactic.

Whether this is good or bad must be decided on other grounds. All that matters now is that this is the way things are in America today. It is not going to do any good to launch an anti-media campaign. The mass media are here to stay — with their good and bad elements. It is up to us to learn to work in this new environment if we are going to

reach people with the Gospel.

It really amounts to a question of communication, which is of course what evangelism is all about — the communication of a very special, uniquely life-changing message. May we learn to communicate this message with power and clarity to our media generation.

CHRIST HAS DIED, CHRIST IS RISEN, CHRIST WILL COME AGAIN

Toward a Liturgical Evangelism

Joe G. Burnett

My first encounter with the word "Eucharist" was at a seminary chapel service at Southern Methodist University in Dallas. The service was right out of the back of the hymnal, the same one I knew so well from years of quarterly communion services attended while growing up in a Mississippi Methodist parsonage. Except that here, at Perkins Chapel, the service was *sung*. The presiding elder, the "celebrant," wore simple vestments; but still they were "vestments," garb I had never seen in any Mississippi Methodist church in memory. I had heard sermons before preached on the topic "the blood of Christ," but not with a connection extolled between that and the element used in communion.

We broke bread that day from a common loaf and communed with a common cup. And I shall never forget the hymn we sang as we approached the altar rail to receive:

> O the depth of love divine, Th' unfathomable grace!
> Who shall say how bread and wine God into man conveys!
> How the bread his flesh imparts,
> How the wine transmits his blood,
> Fills his faithful people's hearts with all the life of God![1]

This text, written by Charles Wesley, speaks of the mystery of Christ's "real presence" in the Eucharist. And that morning, for the first time in my life, I recognized it: the risen Christ present in fullness and in power "in the breaking of bread and in the prayers."

That profound moment generated a hunger for and initiated a pilgrimage in sacramental faith and life which continues to this day. What I experienced there but did not then have words to express was that "theology is worship remembered." *Lex orandi lex credendi*: The rule of prayer is the rule of belief. However articulated, it is widely recog-

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nized that one way of understanding the development of Christian doctrine is to look at the liturgy and worship of the Christian community. Liturgy predates even scripture, and the full extent to which the church's corporate prayer has molded Christian thought throughout the centuries has probably yet to be fully documented and appreciated.[2]

In recent years, however, a great deal has been made of the relationship between liturgy and Christian education, between liturgy and pastoral care, and between liturgy and ethics. John Westerhoff has been prolific in his examination of liturgy and learning, arguing that worship is a prime ingredient in the socialization process which is at the heart of human cultural, intellectual, and spiritual development.[3] William Willimon has been perhaps the most creative in uncovering the striking implications of liturgical life and practice for mutual ministries of Christian caring, as well as for the Christian's moral, social, and political life.[4] In many ways these persons and others have discovered that the ancient dictum concerning worship and Christian believing may also be appropriately applied to worship and the disciplines of practical theology; i.e., worship is formative not only for Christian self-understanding[5] but also for Christian *ministry*. Thus it can be maintained that not only the theology but also the ministry of the Christian community can be understood as "worship remembered." To adapt a phrase from Geoffrey Wainwright, practical theology is systematic reflection on the praise of God in action.

The purpose of this paper is to consider in some preliminary ways the link between worship and evangelism. It is no new undertaking. Some twenty years ago, James F. White suggested "that the roots for the evangelism of our time lie in a new understanding of liturgy."[6] His insight, in my opinion, still invites further serious reflections and exploration. In this brief context, I shall endeavor to outline the theological rationale for such a proposal, and on that basis to suggest several salient points of contact between liturgy and evangelism, and their possible implications.

I

The church at worship is the church gathered at the center of its life and power. It is the church "realizing" itself, the church taking form; or, rather, it is the experience of Jesus as the Christ taking form in the church in word and sacrament. Corporate worship is the community's re-presentation, in kerygmatic proclamation and sacramental celebration, of the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. Through participation in worship — in the word read and proclaimed, in intercession, in praise, thanksgiving, and communion — the church's members offer

themselves anew and are empowered anew for what Henri Nouwen has called "service and prayer in memory of Jesus Christ."[7] Hans Küng reminds us that "the word *ecclesia* means both the process of assembling together and the concrete assembly itself. The church exists as assembly because of the constantly renewed process of assembling."[8] As John Deschner puts it, "The church is not adequately understood simply in terms of mission, task, action . . . The church is even more basically the community of worship . . ." In other words, we cannot simply speak of the congregation's *life* — "a reciprocal movement of receiving and giving . . . of worship and service." Deschner adds "that this life of worship and service is not simply the individual Christian's life, but the life of the fellowship, the *koinonia*." Thus, the church is "quite simply...the fellowship of the worship and service of God."[9]

> And there is always about it this fundamental threefoldness: it receives, it is, it gives. And in all three together, it lives. It has its justification as it gathers receptively around the gift of God. It has its sanctification as it lets its fellowship be upbuilt by sharing the gift of God. It finds its vocation as it perceives and claims the power to act in its sending, in the mission of God.[10]

Liturgy is preeminently the "place" where the unique resources of the church's heritage of faith and life are brought to bear on the human situation in which and out of which the community gathers for prayer and praise. In the liturgy is re-presented the church's collective memory. In that sense worship is a kind of *anamnesis* of the Christian tradition, a recalling of foundational events and interpretations into present experience and awareness. It is the "lens" through which the historic witness of faith can be brought into focus, and reappropriated by the community, so that the *doxa* of the past has a bearing on the *praxis* of the present, and — vice versa — the *praxis* of the past informs the *doxa* of the present.

And what of the present — the present life in the world and in the human community? Worship both re-presents and finds expression in the church's total life and faith. I have noted the way in which the witness of the past is celebrated and "traditioned" in the liturgy, and how the experience of worship is remembered and reflected upon. So, too, is the whole life of the people of God re-presented, or reflected, not only their life in the strictest sense as *church*, but life understood as the totality of their participation in human existence, as members of the human community. James Fenhagen has said that "religious truth is normal experience understood at full depth."[11] All human experience lends itself to theological reflection of one kind or another. And the community gathered for worship is the community of those drawn *from*, or called *out of (ecclesia)*, the world, worshiping *in* the world, and being sent constantly back *into* the world. In worship we are dealing with whole persons, with minds and bodies, in their individual and cor-

porate identities, at once — as it were — spiritual and secular. We are dealing with persons who see themselves to some degree attempting to live out the gospel *in* human society, persons engaged by the witness in the midst of human existence. Such a community of persons assembled for worship need not, should not, indeed cannot really exclude the cultural *milieu* out of which and in which they live and work. The liturgy, then, is for the life of the world. It is also *from* the life of the world. In part worship depends for its integrity on its very own "worldliness." As James White has pointed out,

> It is when God is worshipped in accordance with [God's] nature that worship becomes truly worldly. This comes when we take seriously the worldliness of God, that all that is depends on [God's] constant creating and redeeming activity. Here then the world is granted the full seriousness — and the only seriousness that it deserves as the arena of God's action. At its very heart is history, both past and present.[12]

And, we might add, the *future*. The word "eschatological" is perhaps the most appropriate adjective to describe the significance of *leitourgia*, "the work of the people." Worship strains as much toward the future as it recalls the past and gathers up the present. In the eucharist, for instance, the sacramental signs of bread and wine are striking in their ambiguity: They are "already" the "first-fruits" of the coming New Age, the body and blood of the risen and coming Lord; but they are also "not yet" — for they remain bread and wine. And the presence of the Kingdom, however real, is not a *full* and *final* presence. As such the eucharist — indeed, worship in any sense — is an act *of and in hope*, a bold affirmation of "the divine *pronoia*."[13]

And what, or who, is being shown forth in that future? Is it not the evangel, Jesus Christ and his gospel, whose history and whose presence and whose "future" are being proclaimed and re-presented "until he comes?" The acclamation which is central to the Eucharistic prayer, "Christ has died, Christ has risen, Christ will come again," is also the "flaming center" of the Christian tradition. This the final ground and ultimate meaning and impelling force of a "liturgical" evangelism.

II

In the light of the foregoing discussion, it is now possible to lay out in a preliminary way the fundamental dimensions of an evangelism understood as springing from the church's worship. To put James White's thesis in the form of a question, "How *is* liturgy evangelism?" One thing White's article made clear is that in raising this subject we are not dealing with a culturally prevalent notion that worship, particularly in a revivalistic tradition, is evangelistic simply because it is in

such a "revival" setting that persons may respond to the preaching of the word. This is so not only because such a view of worship sees it primarily as an occasion or setting for a sermon, but also because the form of evangelism presupposed in such a setting is no longer very helpful in a well-churched context. Revivalistic evangelism has classically regarded the preacher as the evangelist and the congregation as those in need of his or her services. This whole approach easily degenerates into a closed circle, with the faithful addressing the faithful, and thus limits the witness of faith to those who happen already to be predisposed toward attending church services. A deeper, more "outreaching," form of evangelism is called for, and I would concur with White that the first great role of Christian worship in creating such an evangelism is that of "formation."[14]

In his book *Witness to the World* David J. Bosch recalls the "scope" of mission as articulated by the Willingen conference: witness, proclamation, fellowship, and service. But Bosch would add a fifth aspect — *leitourgia* — "the encounter of the Church with her Lord. This is, in the last analysis, the fountain of the entire mission of the Church and the guarantee of her distinctiveness."[15] Worship is the *fountain* of mission because worship *forms the people of mission.* A brief consideration of the meaning of liturgical formation, together with a review of some pertinent implications for the theology and practice of evangelism, will help make this point clearer.

James White has said that

> Becoming a Christian is not simply a matter of acquiring the necessary information, as might be the case in becoming a licensed electrician. It is a matter of formation in which one's stance on life, his style of living, becomes changed. Formation or nurture is the gradual and often imperceptible change of one's being . . . In the terms of Jonathan Edwards, one's "strongest motive" is changed. This means that worship ...changes one's future.[16]

White goes on to point out that this is not so much a deliberate and conscious purpose of worship as it is a subliminal and long-term effect. Worship enables us to appropriate and hold as our own the essentials of the Christian story, thus enabling it to become *our* story. White insists that one does not do evangelism; rather one becomes an evangelist:

> Evangelism is a matter of being, and it is worship that, to a large measure, forms this being. Worship assists in the formation of the new being in Christ, who alone can witness to the world . . . In constantly rehearsing and rediscovering what he already is, a recipient of God's loving action, one becomes equipped to live the life of an evangelist in the world.[17]

Wayne Meeks has recently shown how crucial ritual was for the Pauline churches. The coming together of those early believers was

certainly for the "building up" of the Body of Christ, but Meeks asserts that this "*oikodomé* is more than just social cohesion, however."[18] In it the community's ethos is formed, "attitudes and dispositions take form: the kinds of behavior 'worthy of the way you received Christ' are learned."[19] Hugh Riley, in his monumental work on *Christian Initiation*, examines the work of Cyril, Chrysostom, Theodore, and Ambrose, and shows how their use of the liturgy of Baptism made the liturgical symbols, actions, and words both life-transforming and world-engaging: "... the life, cross and death of Jesus, which once took place in the past, reveal themselves again in the encounter of the Christian with the radical challenges which the secular city provides. And [they show] this precisely by recourse to the meaning of the words and symbolic actions of the liturgy..."[20]

Not surprisingly, Riley and White are especially prone to see the formative character of Christian worship fundamentally manifested in the liturgy of initiation. Others, such as Theodore Eastman, also speak of Baptism as inaugurating and commissioning a "missionary exodus" into the world.[21] Certainly in this, the fundamental Christian sacrament, the liturgy leaves an indelible imprint of the missionary character of the gospel, as well as of the missionary tasks of those who are brought under its hegemony in and through baptism. An especially powerful example of this can be found in the baptismal service in *The Book of Common Prayer*. During the portion of the rite called "The Baptismal Covenant" the candidates and the people are together asked questions regarding the continuing shape of their lives as they seek to live out and appropriate their baptism in accountable discipleship:

Celebrant	Will you continue in the apostles' teaching and fellowship, in the breaking of bread, and in the prayers?
People	I will, with God's help.
Celebrant	Will you persevere in resisting evil, and, whenever you fall into sin, repent and return to the Lord?
People	I will, with God's help.
Celebrant	Will you seek and serve Christ in all persons, loving your neighbor as yourself?
People	I will, with God's help.
Celebrant	Will you strive for justice and peace among all people, and respect the dignity of every human being?
People	I will, with God's help.[22]

Later in a series of prayers one petition reads: "Send them into the world in witness to your love."[23] Following the baptism itself, as the new initiates are welcomed into the fellowship of the Body of Christ, they are at the same time charged once more with the profound agenda of Christian evangelism: "We receive you into the household of God.

Confess the faith of Christ crucified, proclaim his resurrection, and share with us in his eternal priesthood."[24]

Yet what Baptism does "once and for all" — albeit renewed in each profession of vows as the community witnesses the baptism of others — the Eucharist re-enacts and re-presents throughout the Christian life and pilgrimage. It, too, is a sacrament of formation par excellence:

> The formation of Christian worship with the Lord's Supper at its holy center sets forth who we are. It establishes *identity*. It reflects explicitly or implicitly Christ's work, the drama of the world's redemption and our salvation. There it is set forth over and over again: The Creation, the Alienation, the Restoration; and we experience it — Adoration, Confession, Forgiveness . . .
>
> Note that we are speaking of *public* worship, not private prayer: the setting forth of God's gracious costly action to public view. It declares who we are. It establishes our identity. It sets Christ forth again in the beauty of God's love like a magnificent work of art, a painting or a symphony, that others might be moved as we have been. So Wesley declared that the Eucharist is "the chief form of evangelism and conversion." It is the church's symphony — sharps and flats, measures and notes — symbols to tell the Story and to reenact its power.[25]

III

Thus far I have attempted to establish that the context for a liturgy-based evangelism is an understanding of the formative role of Christian worship, particularly with regard to the primary sacraments and services of baptism and the eucharist. I have tried to show how liturgy forms and shapes the "evangelistic" consciousness of the people of and in worship, rehearsing and renewing for them the essential aspects of the gospel which is at its heart a missionary one. What is necessary now is to spell out in more specific terms the unique points of convergence between the liturgy and the ministry of evangelism it engenders.

The first of these points has already been illustrated, namely that God is a "sending God," an "urgent God,"[26] and the liturgy echoes this movement in numerous ways. In addition to the sections from the baptismal service earlier noted, there are also explicit references in the eucharist to the outward thrust from liturgy to life, from worship to mission, from *anamnesis* to evangelization. In Eucharistic Prayer "A"

in the *Book of Common Prayer* we ask God to sanctify by the Holy Spirit our gifts of bread and wine, but also to "sanctify us . . . that we may faithfully receive this holy sacrament and serve you in unity, constancy, and peace..."[27] The Post-communion prayer asks God to "send us out to do the work you have given us to do, to love and serve you as faithful witnesses..."[28]

A second point of covergence has to do with the theological content of the liturgy as a vehicle for the gospel. In the eucharistic rite especially, the canon of the mass serves as a re-presentation of the fundamental Christian story — a "gospel in miniature." The following excerpts show how vividly and succinctly the essentials are communicated over and over again in the daily or weekly round of prayer:

> Holy and gracious Father: In your infinite love you made us for yourself; and, when we had fallen into sin and become subject to evil and death, you, in your mercy, sent Jesus Christ, your only and eternal Son, to share our human nature, to live and die as one of us, to reconcile us to you, the God and Father of all.
>
> He stretched out his arms upon the cross, and offered himself, in obedience to your will, a perfect sacrifice for the whole world.
>
> We give thanks to you, O God, for the goodness and love which you have made known to us in creation; in the calling of Israel to be your people; in your Word spoken through the prophets; and above all in the Word made flesh, Jesus, your Son. For in these last days you sent him to be incarnate from the Virgin Mary, to be the Savior and Redeemer of the world. In him, you have delivered us from evil, and made us worthy to stand before you. In him, you have brought us out of error into truth, out of sin into righteousness, out of death into life.[29]

A third link between liturgy and evangelism, and perhaps the most important, is seen in the common emphasis on the eschatological mystery and tension of human existence. As has already been stated, worship is a prime sign of the "betweenness" of our age. In living remembrance, the church shows forth the death of Christ "until he comes." In the eucharist is experienced a pledge of the coming Kingdom, a "foretaste" of the messianic banquet. In the Eucharist is re-presented the very dynamic of grace, i.e., that while the Kingdom's coming is not finally contingent upon our effort or merit, but is first and last the gracious gift of God in Christ, nevertheless it is one which must ever be received and reappropriated anew. For the time being we live in the painful and joyful tension between the "now" and the "novum," and out of that middle ground we are called in thanksgiving and in remem-

brance, in confidence and hope, in faith and in freedom, to announce the impending arrival of a new age and to invite others to be a part of the new order. The so-called "memorial acclamation" is therefore symbolic of the eschatological nerve of the liturgy: "Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come again."[30] In his *Eucharist and Eschatology*, Geoffrey Wainwright suggests that the "recovery of a healthy eschatological understanding of the eucharist" will have important "consequences for the church's *mission* as the messenger of the kingdom, and for the church's *unity* as the body of Christ."[31]

> Suffice it to recall that the eucharist *announces* and *initiates*, or (as we should rather say in the case of the eucharist) *furthers*, the coming of the kingdom of God. The eucharist proclaims God's will to bring all men and all nature into His service, and already He puts that will into practice in a representative way at the eucharist. The eucharist proclaims that for men the kingdom of God means righteousness, peace, and joy in openness to the divine presence, and already the Lord is establishing these things by His coming at the eucharist.
>
> Again we find that the eucharist, by its character as *sign*, forms a valuable expression for the relation between the "already" and the "not yet" of eschatology.[32]

As we have noted, this is precisely the center of the *evangel*.

A fourth significant element in this relationship between liturgy and evangelism can be seen in the way in which the celebration of baptism and the eucharist become forms of proclaiming the kingdom which involve us in the struggle for justice. James White argues that the eucharist is celebrated both as judgement and as promise, and that in it we have represented or promised "a much more radical vision for humanity than any social reformer has hoped to bring about . . ."[33] However, White, along with theologian Jürgen Moltmann, cautions that the sacraments must be constantly reinterpreted and reconsidered in the light of scripture — "Christianized" is Moltmann's term — in order that the power of signification is not compromised or made to appear magical.[34] When that is done we have a celebration that is in and of itself a proclamation of justice. Evangelism, if it is understood to be an announcement of this "new being," or "new world," or "new age,"[35] is thereby carried out in a sense in the act of making eucharist. "The Kingdom of God is not only announced and believed, but also eaten and drunk."[36] White affirms that

> The Church's contribution to social justice derives largely from its power of making God's love visible in the world through the sacraments. That visibility is a constant need for

any Christian's lifelong growth, shaped and transformed by God's acts.[37]

Two passages from Eucharistic Prayers in The Book of Common Prayer reflect this theme in explicit ways:

> Lord, God of our Fathers; God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ: Open our eyes to see your hand at work in the world about us. Deliver us from the presumption of coming to this Table for solace only, and not for strength; for pardon only, and not for renewal. Let the grace of this Holy Communion make us one body, one name. Risen Lord, be known to us in the breaking of the Bread.[38]

> Father, you loved the world so much that in the fullness of time you sent your only Son to be our Savior. Incarnate by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary, he lived as one of us, yet without sin. To the poor he proclaimed the good news of salvation; to prisoners, freedom; to the sorrowful, joy. To fulfill your purpose he gave himself up to death; and, rising from the grave, destroyed death; and rising from the grave, destroyed death and made the whole creation new.[39]

Finally, the relationship between liturgy and evangelism is made visible in the very act of gathering and celebrating. Much is made of the "four-fold shape" of liturgical action in the eucharist wherein we do as Jesus did: We take bread, we bless the bread (give thanks), we break the bread, and we give or share the bread. There is a sense in which one can see this sacramental pattern as describing the action/experience of the assembly itself: We are taken, blessed, broken, and given, and in so doing we are sent into the world to be and bear the gospel. Not only that; in the very act of coming together for such a purpose we are making a profound statement in a rapidly secularizing society.[40] Perhaps even more important than the spiritual benefit derived by each individual communicant in the reception of communion is the event of gathering itself — gathering in the name of Jesus as the community of Jesus to eat and drink with Jesus. What Aidan Kavanagh says about the baptismal and initiation process may also be applied to the worship of the eucharistic assembly: It "constitutes the Church's radical business for the good of the world itself."[41] Worship is a radical activity, and a radically corporate one at that. Rafael Avila has made one of the strongest statements in this regard:

> To discuss . . . whether the eucharistic "moment in which the church is more perfectly itself" is or is not a political act has no meaning. This "moment" has from the beginning been political. The real question is whether the church is exercising its critical political function or is legitimizing the existing political system . . .
>
> The Eucharist . . . is political *in itself* as a result of its own context . . . is political because it occurs necessarily *in a political* context . . . is political because, lest it betray its prophetic mission, it has to *confront* its own context with the faith.[42]

IV

I began with a personal story of what became for me a pivotal experience in worship. Not only was the seminary chapel service itself important, however, but also the years of Sunday services, the week-in and week-out routine of being in worship. That, above all else, enabled me to appreciate and appropriate the significance of what I described earlier as having happened "for the first time in my life." I was "formed" in worship; and, in worship, I was "re-formed."

Orlando Costas rightly suggests that

> There is no dichotomy between worship and mission. Worship is the gathering of the people sent into the world to celebrate what God has done in Christ and is doing through their participation in the Spirit's witnessing action. Mission is the culmination and anticipation of worship.[43]

I would agree, and would go even further. Paulo Freire has spoken of *praxis* as the unity of action and reflection, and of the point at which *praxis* unites with the mission of the church as the point of *conscientization*, or reformulation. The thrust of my argument has been that worship — or worship remembered — is a concrete "place" where such reformulation can occur. Here is a prime coincidence of person, witness, and existence. Here the self-understandings of the individual and the community , celebrating in response to God's self-giving love in Jesus Christ — and in the power of the Spirit — are uniquely open to conversion and transformation, uniquely equipped for action and re-action. Here, in this event or series of events, is a powerful process of formation which gathers, shapes, sends, and sustains us. In worship, we are evangelized, and in turn equipped for the ministry of evangelism.

NOTES

[1]Charles Wesley, "O the Depth of Love Divine," Hymn no. 332 in *The Methodist Hymnal* (Nashville: The Parthenon Press, 1964, 1966).

[2]One very important analysis of this is the systematic theology of Geoffrey Wainwright, in *Doxology: The Praise of God in Worship, Doctrine, and Life* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1980).

[3]See, for example, John Westerhoff, *Will Our Children Have Faith?* (New York: The Seabury Press, 1976).

[4]See William H. Willimon, *Worship as Pastoral Care* (Nashville: Abingdon, 1979); and *Worship and Work* (Nashville: Abingdon, 1984).

[5]See Schubert M. Ogden, "What is Theology?." *Perkins Journal*, XXVI.2 (Winter, 1973): 2.

[6]James F. White, "Liturgy is Evangelism," *The Christian Advocate* (Dec. 1964), p. 9.

[7]Henri Nouwen, *The Living Reminder: Service and Prayer in Memory of Jesus Christ* (New York: The Seabury Press, 1981).

[8]Cited in James D. Anderson and Ezra Earl Jones, *The Management of Ministry* (New York: Harper and Row, 1978), pp. 48-49.

[9]John Deschner, "What Does Practical Theology Study?" *Perkins Journal*, XXXV.3 (Summer, 1982): 11.

[10]Ibid., p. 12.

[11]James C. Fenhagen, *Mutual Ministry* (New York: The Seabury Press, 1977), p. 78.

[12]James F. White, *The Worldliness of Worship* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1967), p. 78.

[13]Ibid., P. 73.

[14]White, "Liturgy is Evangelism," p. 10.

[15]David J. Bosch, *Witness to the World: The Christian Mission in Theological Perspective* (Atlanta: John Knox Press, 1980), p. 227.

[16]White *The Worldliness of Worship*, p. 26.

[17]Ibid., pp. 103-104.

[18]Wayne A. Meeks, *The First Urban Christians: The Social World of the Apostle Paul* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1983), p. 145.

[19]Ibid., pp. 145-146.

[20]Hugh Riley, *Christian Initiation* (Washington, D.C.: The Catholic University Press/Consortium Press, 1974), p. 453.

[21]A. Theodore Eastman, *The Baptizing Community* (Minneapolis: The Seabury Press, 1982), pp. 51-52.

[22]*The Book of Common Prayer* (New York: The Church Hymnal Corporation, 1979), pp. 304-305.

[23]Ibid., p. 306.

[24]Ibid., p. 308.

[25]Browne Barr, *High-Flying Geese: Unexpected Reflections on the Church and its Ministry* (Minneapolis: The Seabury Press, 1983), p. 20.

[26]Ibid., p. 36, citing P.T. Forsyth's Lyman Beecher Lectures on "Positive Preaching and Modern Mind" (New York: Hodder & Stoughton, 1907), p. 44.

[27]*Book of Common Prayer*, p. 363.

[28]Ibid., p. 366.

[29]Ibid., pp. 362, 368.

[30]Ibid., p. 363.

[31]Geoffrey Wainwright, *Eucharist and Eschatology* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1981), p. 6.

[32]Ibid., p. 153.

[33]White, *Sacraments as God's Self Giving* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1983), pp. 110-111.

[34]Ibid., pp. 111-112. See also Jürgen Moltmann, "The Life Signs of the Spirit in the Fellowship Community of Christ," in *Hope for the Church: Moltmann in Dialogue With Practical Theology*, ed. Theodore Runyon (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1979), p. 52.

[35]See Alfred C. Krass, *Five Lanterns at Sundown: Evangelism in a Chastened Mood* (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1978).

[36]Moltmann, *Hope For the Church*, p. 54.

[37]White, *Sacraments as God's Self Giving*, p. 109.

[38]*The Book of Common Prayer*, p. 372.

[39]Ibid., p. 374.

[40]This whole argument assumes a distinction between evangelism and church growth (or membership recruitment) in a Christianized context.

[41]Aidan Kavanagh, *The Shape of Baptism: The Rite of Christian Initiation* (New York: Pueblo Publishing Company, 1978), p. 115.

[42]Rafael Avila, *Worship and Politics* (Maryknoll, New York: Orbis Books, 1981), pp. 89-90.

[45]Orlando E. Costas, *The Integrity of Mission: The Inner Life and Outer Reach of the Church* (New York: Harper & Row, 1979), p. 91.

PERSONAL PIETY AND SOCIAL WITNESS

A Case Study in Zimbabwe

Norman E. Thomas

Churches are tempted to be self-centered and self-preserving, but are called to be serving and sharing. Churches are tempted to be self-perpetuating, but are called to be totally committed to the promises and demands of the kingdom of God. . .

— the mission of the community in Christ is to prepare itself and all people for the coming reign of God by the proclamation of the Good News;

— the structures at the service of this community must be dynamic, flowing and flexible, allowing for the creativity of all members of the community and the emergence of all kinds of ministry;

— the ongoing process of formation has to be based on the daily living experience of the people for the full realization of their humanity;

— this necessarily requires that the church be politically and socially aware of the struggles of the oppressed and involved in them;

— consequently the Word of God must be read from the point of view of the oppressed. . .

Evangelism is true and credible only when it is both word and deed; proclamation and witness.[1]

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To those of us from a Wesleyan heritage attending the WCC's Melbourne Assembly, these words struck a respondent chord. The call to a holistic evangelism enunciated here is consistent with John Wesley's teachings and his guidance given to Methodist bands and classes.

Not all persons of Wesleyan heritage, however, have affirmed such a gospel. Fifteen years ago I served as Organizing Secretary for a national Year of Evangelism in Rhodesia, now Zimbabwe. Our materials emphasized personal witnessing in an approach called "New Life for All." Simultaneously I served as Urban Secretary of the National Christian Council in a program of joint action for mission that included numerous social justice concerns. In succession, two Methodist pastors came to my office. One eagerly sought for materials on personal witnessing, but chided me for getting involved in political matters. The other came for social action guides, but spurned the helps for faith sharing. To each I responded: "You are not true to your Wesleyan heritage!"

The genius of John Wesley was not merely in the creative organization of the people called Methodists into self-reliant "little congregations" under local leadership. The *ecclesiolae in ecclesia* (little churches within the church) remained vital insofar as they combined concerns for personal piety and social witness.

It is the thesis of this paper that such a balance, when combined with a theology of holistic evangelism and the dynamic of the "little congregations" under trained local leaders, provides a dynamic model for Methodist revitalization in our own day.

This study draws upon data from two continents and two historic periods — eighteenth-century England and twentieth-century Zimbabwe in Africa. Underlying the analysis is the concept of "elective affinity" developed by the famous German sociologist, Max Weber. For Weber, ideas, including religious ideas, often gain affinity with the interests of certain social groups, and thereby enter into the processes of social action and social change.[2] This theory may help to explain why Methodist class meetings in two distinct historic periods and cultures functioned not only in renewing the church as an institution, but also in the transformation of the larger society. Weber's argument is akin to that of Elie Halévy, the French historian, who argued that the Wesleyan revival saved England from a violent revolution like that of neighboring France.

In the analysis which follows, we shall consider three questions:

1. Does a close affinity exist between the Wesleyan marriage of personal piety and social witness, and the values of African cultures, in particular those of the people of Zimbabwe?
2. Was this linkage of personal piety and social witness strong in Methodist bands and class meetings during John Wesley's lifetime?
3. How is this linkage actualized among Methodists in Zimbabwe today?

A Fitting African Theology

In sharing our anxieties and our love,
Our poverty and our prosperity,
We partake of your divine presence.[3]

These words are but one of many affirmations by the Revd. Canaan Banana, first black President of Zimbabwe, that personal piety and social witness must be combined for Christians.

The elective affinity of biblical concepts of justice and traditional African values has been articulated clearly by President Kenneth Kaunda of Zambia. Writing on "Faith and Values" in his winsome *Letter to My Children*, Kaunda confesses:

> The *African-ness* which has its roots in the soil of our continent . . . is basically a religious phenomenon. . . For me, God is more a Presence than a philosophical concept. I am aware, even in solitude, that I am not alone; that my cries for help or comfort or strength are heard. Above all, my belief in God gives me a feeling of unlimited responsibility. What a terrifying thing that is! I am guardian rather an owner of such powers and talents as I possess, answerable for my use or abuse of them to the One who loaned them to me and will, one day, require a full reckoning.[4]

Throughout his writings Kaunda displays a rejection of every dualism that would separate the spiritual and the physical. African, like Hebrew, thought emphasizes the unity of personality.

Zimbabwe more than any other African state has clergy-politicians who have articulated the relationship between personal piety and social justice. Bishop Abel Muzorewa, like Revd. Banana a Methodist, and the first African Prime Minister of Zimbabwe, in reflecting on his conversion in his autobiography, writes:

> The basic commitment to seek for wholeness in life which I made at Old Umtali that day is, I believe, consistent with our traditional Shona philosophy of life. In it we centre on the belief that life is a whole, and that it can be lived to the fullest when every thought, action and human relationship, is in conformity with our spiritual values.[5]

When the Bishop entered politics and became both President of the United African National Council and honorary Commander-in-Chief of the liberation army, this linkage between prayer and action had deep existential significance. Like Elijah he found assurance of God's care in prayers answered in the midst of struggle. Out of the depths of virtual house arrest in Maputo, Mozambique, in 1975 he wrote of singing with his family this Shona hymn:

> In the past your people were persecuted, God;
> But you saved them with your power. . . .
> They were arrested and imprisoned;
> You released them and cared for them.
> They were evicted from their homes and accursed;
> But you comforted them and they continued to love you.
> Some were laughed at and beaten up;
> But you, God the Father, you strengthened them.
> GREAT GOD, GREAT GOD, FATHER OF US ALL.[6]

Twelve years earlier, the Revd. Ndabaningi Sithole, a Congregational pastor, had entered politics and become National Chairman of the Zimbabwe African Peoples Union. In his keynote address to the First Assembly of the All African Conference of Churches, Sithole wrote concerning the link between piety and politics:

> If a preacher, pastor or priest who had especially deepened his religious faith, was moved by the Holy Spirit to give himself to a truly sincere witness for truth, for justice among men and for love of neighbor, he was always considered as a dangerous man, as a revolutionary.[7]

In the years that followed, Sithole was to find this link between faith and political action put to the test as he spent more than ten years in jail as a political prisoner.

From Sithole to Muzorewa to Banana, we discern a direct and consistent line of thought that rejects any relegation of Christian concern to "spiritual affairs." In his major paper for the WCC's Melbourne Assembly, President Banana interpreted Christ's message of "good news to the poor" (Luke 4:18) as follows:

> The need of facing this issue in dualistic terms is typically western. . . . If western theologians are unable to see that the spiritual message of the Gospel is contained in the historical temporal realities by which Jesus was surrounded, that is their problem, not ours. The poor of the world know very well what Jesus is saying. That is why they find in him the plenitude they are looking for. They will never accept any longer the disincarnate "spirituality" of western Christianity, "scornfully superior to all earthly realities."[8]

Does a close affinity exist between the Wesleyan marriage of personal piety and social witness, and the values of African cultures, in particular those of the people of Zimbabwe? Space does not permit a detailed examination of traditional African values to determine their relationship to biblical concepts.[9] It is sufficient for the purpose of this analysis to note the consistent affirmation by leading Christians active in politics that there is for them a unity between personal piety and the struggle

of social justice. Later we shall consider how these norms relate to the developing concern for holistic evangelism in the "little congregations" of Zimbabwe Methodism.

Faith and Action in Wesley's Class Meetings

Is President Banana's indictment of Western spirituality accurate or a caricature? More specifically, did the early Wesleyan bands and class meetings promote a personal pietism that eschewed involvement in social justice concerns? Or was a linkage achieved between personal piety and social witness?

Wesley's own stance concerning "solitary religion" was clear and straightforward:

> Solitary religion is not to be found there (in the religion of Christ). 'Holy Solitaries' is a phrase no more consistent with the Gospel than Holy Adulterers. The Gospel of Christ knows of no Religion, but Social; no Holiness but Social Holiness.[10]

Although Wesley had participated in devout cells since his Oxford Holy Club days, he developed bands and classes in the Methodist societies to meet the practical need for Christian nurture among growing numbers of the people called Methodists. The bands were small cells with an average membership of six participants, either men or women, who gathered for confession, prayer, and encouragement as early as 1739. By 1742 the Bristol society, having reached 1,100 in number, needed new smaller groupings. Thus the class meeting evolved. At first merely a system of visitation by a class leader, they soon evolved into group meetings in homes.

The Wesley class meeting provided for many persons in the growing mining and industrial communities a place to feel at home. The basic structure resembled that of a family, with the class leader as the father figure. Henry Longden, an early class leader, described the role as follows:

> He ought to be a father in Christ; a man of sound and deep experience. . . . He ought to lead the people forward to find out their hindrances and besetting sins. . . . set before them their high calling, and continue his anxious labours till he delivers them up to the Great Shepherd.[11]

Gloster Udy, in a detailed analysis of the Wesley class meetings, concludes that four general personality needs were fulfilled for class members: new experiences, security, a response of empathy, sympathy and love from others, and recognition of one's own value.[12] Such personal fulfillment enabled the class to be a dynamic force in the lives of members.

Although the classes focused on intense personal interaction between group members, a stimulation of social concern took place. This may appear to be more of a by-product than a direct result of the class meetings. The fact is that most class members lived side by side with persons facing acute hardships — loss of life, health, housing, employment, of freedom if imprisoned, and above all of dignity and self-respect. The classes began to serve as channels for arousing social concern and for relief activities. This included mutual aid and loans to members. Later the larger autonomous welfare societies developed. Thus it was that class members first visited the sick in their homes, helped to found the first free dispensary in London. From visits to prisoners emerged movements for prison reform. Beginning with concern for children and their welfare, expressed in class meetings, Methodists moved to found both Sunday Schools and day schools. Even adult education was a class leader's concern.

Udy describes this dynamic as a "field power" in community life:

> Individuals personalizing the new values, began to create the awareness of an awakened conscience, which was impelling them to live and act according to new standards.[13]

This "field of power" began within the band or class meeting. The nucleus of vital interpersonal relationships created there enabled participants to bring the totality of their lives under the close scrutiny of loving friends. Wesley admonished the class participants to guide and strengthen every member through both the highs and the lows of life:

> You are taught of God not to forsake the assembly of yourselves together, as the manner of some is, but to *instruct, admonish, exhort, reprove, comfort, confirm,* and in every way build up one another.[14]

The resultant sharing, confession, discipline and participation had therapeutic value. Later products of this school of Christian living went on to form benevolent societies, trade unions, and political parties to express their concerns for social justice. Howard Snyder is accurate in his assessment:

> Wesley learned what radical Christians today are beginning to stress: a really effective struggle for social justice begins with building a biblically faithful community of Christian Disciples.[15]

Through Prayer to Action in Zimbabwe

rrrrrrrrrrning to Wesleyan influences in Africa it should be noted that

missionaries from Great Britain exported two forms of the "little congregations" that proved effective — the class meetings and the women's societies called *Manyanos* in South Africa and *Ruwadzanos* or *Rukwadzanos* in Zimbabwe, literally "the fellowship." Transplanted into African soil, they flourished at a time when their counterparts in Britain often had lost their earlier vitality.

Even more remarkable was the flourishing of such groups among churches founded by American Methodists, for the class meetings died out in much of America prior to the development of mission fields in Southern Africa in Angola, Mozambique, and Zimbabwe. Is this further support for the "elective affinity" thesis? I believe so.[16]

Vital class meetings and *Manyanos* developed first in South Africa among Methodists. B.A. Pauw noted in 1960 that about 25% of all African Christians claimed Methodist affiliation. Methodism appealed through important roles given to lay leaders and small intimate groups:

> These factors . . . are inherent in the typical Methodist pattern of church organizations with its 'class' system making for the forming of small regularly cooperating groups of church members, and its range of lay preachers . . . and Class Leaders offering extensive opportunities for leadership. The acceptability of the 'class' system, and the extensive mobilization of the lay element in spreading the Gospel combined with the Methodist ardour for 'winning souls', have probably contributed to the remarkable strength of Methodism.[17]

In fact, the Methodist models of "little congregations" under lay leadership appealed to many Africans frustrated by clerical domination within churches controlled by whites. Many broke away to form African independent churches. Bengt Sundkler, in his pioneer work on this remarkable phenomenon, asserts that the Methodist pattern of lay leadership and class organization has been imitated by many other churches.[18]

While men assumed major leadership as local preachers and class leaders, Methodist women found their needs fulfilled primarily through the *Manyanos*. Mia Brandel-Syrier found in South Africa that the *Manyanos* developed from a deep religious need for fellowship and sharing. They grew rapidly until "now they are certainly in the country, but also in town, the most powerful voluntary association cutting through traditional tribal groupings."[19] Her description of the organization of class meetings within the *Manyanos* replicates closely 18th century descriptions:

> The *Manyanos* are subdivided into different classes or groups, each under a special 'class-leader'. These class-leaders receive special training and are elected by the so-called 'Leaders meeting'. They must be persons who 'have spiritual feeling and sufficient Christian experience, they must know

> the scriptures and show fruitful life'. The classes, each under their own leader, meet weekly after the Sunday service, and receive instruction in prayer and Bible reading as well as 'admonishment'. The leaders, as we have seen, are also responsible for the collection of Church dues and other contributions. The system seems to work well, and the position of class leader is highly coveted amongst the women.[20]

In Zimbabwe these women's fellowships *(Rukwadzanos)* linked with British Methodism followed closely the patterns of the *Manyanos* of South Africa. Those of the sister Methodist church linked with the United Methodist Church in the USA, however, evolved differently. Among United Methodists, women participated separately in class meetings and women's fellowships, with the latter the more significant grouping.

The *Rukwadzano rweWadzimai* (RRW) of the United Methodists in Zimbabwe began as late as 1929 in a church founded in 1896. At first it was a worshiping fellowship of the wives of ministers, ministers in training, and pastor-teachers. Although outwardly a sister organization to the Women's Society of Christian Service of American Methodism, it developed its own character, responding to the felt needs of Zimbabwe women. In doing so it drew deeply from the well of revivalism introduced by American missionaries.

Farai David Muzorewa, in his perceptive study of the RRWs, notes that most leaders claimed that the Holy Spirit was the driving force behind the birth and early growth of the movement:

> Prayer for the guidance of the Holy Spirit became the central norm of the groups' worshiping life....Members constantly gave testimonies to the 'miraculous' power of healing, exorcism, and conversion, present as Rukwadzano women pray together.[21]

The climax of each year's program is the annual camp meeting — a five-day outdoor revival meeting attended by up to 10,000 persons (men and women, but under RRW leadership). The spirit of these gatherings has many parallels with American frontier camp meetings of the 19th century — spirited singing, forceful evangelistic preaching, and prolonged periods of prayer, testimonies, and counselling following the services. Gifts of the spirit and informal leadership emerge during all-night prayer sessions, seeking individual conversions, healings, or exorcisms.

Alongside praise and prayer the women emphasize instruction in the Christian faith and life. They intersperse prayer services at the camp meetings with periods of teaching, often on the Bible or on family relationships desired in the Christian home. Weekly meetings include interpretation and moral exhortation concerning the rules of the society

which are designed to build up a good Christian wife and mother.[22]

Visitors note strong charismatic and pietistic elements which have developed to meet felt needs among Zimbabwean women. Another powerful attraction is the ability of the RRW to fulfill important personality needs, closely paralleling those described by Udy for Wesley's class meetings — the needs for sociability, status, security and approval.

Investigating the RRW in Mutare (formerly Umtali), Zimbabwe's third largest city, I was struck by the number of women who sought Christian marriage after common-law marriage and the birth of children primarily in order to qualify for membership in the *Rukwadzano*. Why? On the level of personality and social analysis, the answer can be found in the way the RRW fulfills the following basic social needs:[23]

1. *Sociability*. For women migrants to town and for those lacking the support of extended family members while living there, the RRW functions like a kinship group providing friendship, affability, and companionship. Often members form deep personal friendships with daily interaction like that of kinswomen in a rural village.
2. *Status*. Dressed in their distinctive uniforms, church women in Zimbabwe present a striking appearance at weekly meetings and revivals. The common uniform is a social leveller in which differences of education, income or social class are immaterial. The prayer or testimony of the uneducated grandmother is judged to be as efficacious as that of a schoolteacher.
3. *Security*. Times of personal and family crisis can be lonely and difficult in town for persons separated from the support network in the rural home village. The RRW has provided for their women members the emotional and financial support at times of death, sickness, or economic privation traditionally given by kinfolk.
4. *Approval*. Amid the pluralism of values evidenced in an urban township, the RRW functions as an island of stability, setting and maintaining standards of behavior for its members.

The rules, in addition to prohibitions on beer brewing and use of tobacco, include others against "arguing, fighting, and the use of 'evil medicine'." As important as the formal rules, however, is the system of informal control over behavior that takes place as members interact frequently, sharing their frustrations and temptations and encouraging one another in love.

Thus far our analysis of the RRW has focused upon its dynamic in meeting the felt needs of individual members — needs which for a first generation of urban dwellers are parallel to those expressed by members of Wesley's first bands and class meetings. But the society as a national

organization for women has responded also to wider community needs. Muzorewa in 1975 wrote concerning them:

> Today there is a new dynamic in the United Methodist Rukwadzano. Without repudiating former emphases on spirituality, order and discipline, the group has accepted new responsibilites to meet needs arising in the changed social structures of the modern world.[24]

Concerned at limited opportunities for continuing education for young girls, the RRW in 1967 pledged $4,400 of their savings to help establish a girls' high school. When the government turned down their request, they used the money to establish a small domestic science program at Sunnyside, south of Mutare. Later it developed into a government-approved high school for girls. Seeking to develop human dignity and pride among school-leavers and unwed mothers, the RRW launched training programs at five church centers in 1971 in weaving, rug-making, sewing and pottery-making, and a more intensive residential course at Nyakatsapa, utilizing the unused buildings of a former language school for missionaries.

During the same period the RRW moved toward political activism. Camp meetings after 1964 added information sessions on current social issues facing the nation. Members in uniform risked arrest as they protested in 1964 the deportation of Bishop Ralph Dodge, and in 1970 the banning of Bishop Abel Muzorewa from most rural areas. During the years of the liberation war, RRW members gave covert assistance to guerrilla fighters, as well overt help to many victims of the conflict, especially those placed in "protected villages" by the white authorities, and refugees in towns.

Concerning this shift of emphasis, Muzorewa has written:

> Today the Rukwadzano women have moved away from that pietism in which Christians are enjoined to accept passively their lot in life as 'the Will of God'. The new social concern which has replaced it, however, unlike that of many African secular protest movements, is built upon a strong faith in the power of prayer to guide Christians into effective social action.[25]

A parallel "elective affinity", as yet undocumented, is taking place in class meetings in Zimbabwe. In the past they did not function as a primary reference group or as "little congregations." A change occurred, however, during the liberation struggle wherever church worship services and other meetings were suspended or banned due to the conflict. Then class meetings flourished as house churches. In one district a new ritual of foot-washing was introduced as a means of linking those separated by the conflict. Each village sent a representative to pray with the pastor in voluntary exile at the church center. The foot-washing

symbolized their caring for one another, and the 'sacrament' was later shared in each class meeting upon the representative's return.

Conclusion

In this paper I have endeavored to demonstrate a creative model for holistic evangelism combining concerns for personal piety and social justice. Recent trends in ecumenical Protestant and Roman Catholic thought, as well as that increasingly among evangelicals, stress the imperative of relating the Gospel message to social realities of poverty, injustice and powerlessness. This is not a new priority, as a study of Wesley's holistic approach suggests.

The temptation remains, however, to institutionalize the church's response. A fundamental character of the missionary enterprise has been to conceive of the Church as a highly organized institution with a specialized ministry, specialized buildings, church headquarters, hospitals, schools, etc. The strengthening of ecumenical and para-church organizations has not reduced dependance on this bureaucratic model. This has been characteristic of those concerned about world evangelization (e.g. The Billy Graham Association, Campus Crusade, World Vision, etc.) as much as for those concerned about social justice issues.

Meanwhile at the grassroots level significant "little congregations" are engaged actively in outreach and ministry to the felt needs, of their neighbors. At their best they combine concerns for personal piety and social justice at the local level. They are called by various names: house churches, basic Christian communities, and independent churches. Wesley's class meetings and their modern-day parallels, including the women's fellowships and class meetings of Methodists in Zimbabwe, are models worthy of study and emulation. Others also desire a holistic approach to evangelism, freedom of the Spirit, local autonomy, and lay leadership.

NOTES

[1]*Your Kingdom Come*. Report on the World Conference on Mission and Evangelism, Melbourne, Australia, 12-25 May 1980 (Geneva: WCC, 1980), pp. 217, 216-17, 218.

[2]See *From Max Weber: Essays in Sociology*, tr. and ed. H.H. Gerth and C. Wright Mills (New York: Oxford University Press, 1946), pp. 62-3.

[3]Canaan Banana, *The Gospel According to the Ghetto* (Geneva: WCC, 1977), p. 17.

[4]London: Longmans, 1973, pp. 17,18.

[5]*Rise Up and Walk: The Autobiography of Bishop Abel Tendekai Muzorewa*, ed. Norman E. Thomas (Nashville: Abingdon, 1978), p. 22.

[6]*Ibid.*, p. 191.

[7]*Drumbeats from Kampala*. Report of the First Assembly of the AACC.

[8]*Your Kingdom Come*, pp. 109, 110.

[9]For further study see J.S. Mbiti, *New Testament Eschatology in an African Background* (London: Oxford University Press, 1971), and *African Religions and Philosophy* (London: Heinemann, 1969).

[10]Preface to *Hymns and Sacred Poems*, published by John and Charles Wesley, 1739, pp. viii-ix. Quoted in E.R. Taylor, *Methodism and Politics, 1791-1851* (New York: Russell and Russell, 1935), p. 103.

[11]Henry Longden, *Life of Henry Longden*, 3rd. American Edition (Baltimore: Plascitt & Co., 1828), p. 47. Quoted in Gloster S. Udy, *Key to Change* (Sydney: Pettigrew, 1962), p. 37.

[12]*Ibid.*, pp. 46-52.

[13]*Ibid.*, p. 94.

[14]*The Poetical Works of John and Charles Wesley*. Collected and arranged by S. Osborn. 8 vols. (London: R. Needham, 1868-70), I:xxiii.

[15]Howard A. Snyder, *The Radical Wesley and Patterns for Church Renewal* (Downers Grove, Illinois; InterVarsity Press, 1980), p. 165.

[16]In his Boston Ph.D. dissertation entitled "The Role of the Methodist Class Meeting in the Growth of an African City Church: A Historio-Sociological Study" (Ann Arbor: University Microfilms, 1967), Jud Nordby describes in detail the process of adaptation by Methodists in Luanda by which class meetings became vital house churches. Organized like villages along tribal lines, they effectively nurtured both spiritual and social needs of migrants adjusting to life in a large city. During the war of liberation, 1961-75, the class meetings remained vigorous when public services and church building were severely restricted by the Portuguese. Today most of the class meetings described by Nordly in 1967 have evolved into self-supporting congregations.

[17]*Religion in a Tswana Chiefdom* (London: International African Institute, 1960), pp. 225-26.

[18]*Bantu Prophets in South Africa* (London: Lutterworth Press, 1948), p. 137.

[19]*Women in Search of God* (London: International African Institute, 1962), p. 16.

[20]*Ibid.*, p. 80.

[21]"Through Prayer to Action: The Rukwadzano Women of Rhodesia," in *Themes in the Christian History of Central Africa*, ed. T.O. Ranger & John Weller (London: Heinemann, 1975), p. 258.

[22]See Muzorewa, pp. 263-4 for details.

[23]Norman E. Thomas, "Functions of Religious Institutions in the Adjustment of African Women to Life in a Rhodesia Township," in *Focus on Cities*, ed. H.L. Watts (Durban: Institute for Social Research, University of Natal, 1970), pp. 282-90.

EVANGELISM EXPLOSION ON TRIAL AT FIRST CHURCH

A Case Study

Norman E. Thomas

"Will we be doing the Evangelism Explosion program at First Church again next Fall?," Kathy Jones asked Jack Norman, its teacher-trainer at the Church.

Jack felt his stomach knot. "Do we have to discuss it now, just when we've come to Arbys for lunch to relive the joys of our summer work-camp together in Mexico?," he felt like replying, but didn't. Yet the decision on whether or not to continue in Evangelism Explosion (E.E.) could not be delayed beyond next Sunday's meeting of the Evaluation Task Force.

For three years Jack had led the Evangelism Explosion training program at First Church of God in Somerville. Although now 39 years old and for 10 years a First Church member, he became really active in the Church through E.E. involvement. To each new group of trainees he testified: "E.E. is the most important thing that has happened to me. It turned my life around." Not everyone, however, shared Jack's enthusiasm. This month no one signed up to take the E.E. training. Clearly something had gone sour.

"You know, Kathy, I'm feeling of two minds over our E.E. Program," Jack replied.

"Yes, I saw that even Arby's Roast Beef didn't hold much interest once I switched the subject," Kathy added with a smile. "Perhaps it would help if you shared with me how we at First Church got into E.E. in the first place."

"Fine, if you've got the time," Jack responded.

Evangelism Explosion

"Dr. D. James Kennedy launched Evangelism Explosion in 1963 when pastor of the Coral Ridge Presbyterian Church in Ft. Lauderdale, Florida. He believed that Christ gave the Great Commission to the whole church to go into all the world to proclaim the Gospel. Under his leadership the Church trained up to 500 people to visit weekly and share the Good News of Christ with others. The results far exceeded their prayerful [illegible] The Church grew from 17 to more than 4,500 members. When

others wanted to know the secret, Dr. Kennedy launched Evangelism Explosion International.

"The E.E. method applies modern sales methods to faith witnessing. Dr. Kennedy believes that Jesus used the 'Five Laws of Selling' — attention, interest, desire, conviction, and close. Remember, Kathy, what he wrote in our E.E. textbook: 'It does not matter whether you are selling a refrigerator or persuading men to accept a new idea or philosophy, the same basic laws or persuasion hold true.' "

"How can you remember that so well?," Kathy exclaimed.

"Drill, drill, drill — that's the key to E.E.," Jack replied, tapping his finger on the booth for punctuation. "And E.E. did train me to memorize. In the fifteen-week course I mastered the E.E. way to give a brief but thorough Gospel presentation."

"So have I," Kathy added, warming to the subject. "At every call I'm to inquire about a person's secular life and church background, and tell something about our church. I've memorized E.E. two diagnostic questions:

1. 'Have you come to a place in your spiritual life where you know for certain that if you were to die today you would go to heaven?,' and
2. 'Suppose that you were to die tonight and stand before God and he were to say to you, 'Why should I let you into my heaven?' What would you say?' "

"Perfect memory!" Jack replied. "Now the gospel explanation which follows can vary. But certain beliefs should be included. We're to share our belief that grace is a free gift to us all since all are sinners. We're to tell about both God's mercy and justice. Then we are to go on to the belief in Christ as the 'infinite God-man,' as Dr. Kennedy puts it, who died for our sins. Finally we are to introduce our understanding of faith as trust in Jesus Christ alone for out salvation."

"Yes," Kathy replied, "but it's the next step that comes hard for me — the commitment. I've memorized the next two questions to ask: 'Does this make sense to you?' and 'Would you like to received the gift of eternal life?' Yes, I know that I should ask for a faith commitment, but I feel ill-equipped to respond if someone says 'Yes'. I know that I've been taught to give a prayer of commitment, an assurance of salvation, and to follow-up the next week. It's doing it that comes hard."

"I admit that's not easy," Jack responded. "The answer is in the E.E. method of on-the-job training. We are to go out in teams of three each week, trainers with trainees, and practice what we've been taught. That's an essential part of equipping us for witnessing."

First Church and E.E.

"I remember when we launched E.E. with such enthusiasm at First

Church," Kathy added. "Was it just four year's ago?"

"Yes," Jack replied. "It all began when Pastor Rick Strong arrived and called for an all-leader seminar. Remember our church attendance and giving had been in decline for three years before that. 'You've got to have a purpose or goal,' Rick said to us, and asked, 'What are you here for? What is your function as a church?'. That's when we drafted our congregation's Statement of Purpose. In it we agreed that 'as a congregation we believe we are to be God's agent to the world for the salvation and discipling of mankind.' We said that compliance with Christ's Great Commission means that 'the church is to 1) evangelize (be a witness) and 2) to nurture (or disciple).' "

"And I remember," Kathy added, "how the congregation voted unanimously to adopt that statement, for I was there. Did we begin E.E. after that?"

"Yes, that's when Rachel Klein's enthusiasm for E.E. won us over. She had attended the E.E. training at Freeway Church of God a year before Rick became our pastor. My wife and I were her prayer partners. That's how I came to attend the next seminar with Rachel and to become certified myself. We felt that First Church needed both a program visitation and training for visitors, and E.E. offered both. But first we needed a certified teacher. That's how Pastor Rick came to lead us. After he finished the week-long E.E. clinic at Faith Lutheran in Bigtown, he qualified as a teacher-trainer, just as Rachel and I did later.

"Remember our early enthusiasm, Kathy?," Jack continued. "That first year of our training seminars the Lord seemed to bless us all. We completed 135 calls during the training — 100 of them on folks who had visited our church. We even found 60 persons in 40 homes willing to hear the E.E. gospel presentation. Twelve of those persons made professions of faith during our visits.

"You know, Kathy, we of the Church of God of Anderson, Indiana are different from most denominations in not having a membership roll. We believe in the Scriptural injunction that 'the Lord added to their number day by day those who were being saved' (Acts 2:47). We believe that to add or take people out of the church is God's prerogative — not ours. As soon as a person's sins are forgiven, at that moment that person becomes a member of God's church. That's what we of the Church of God believe."

"Don't we keep any statistics?" Kathy asked.

"Yes," Jack replied, "but only of church and Sunday school attendance. That suffices for our membership count."

"Isn't our Church growing?," Kathy asked with surprise. "If not, why are we planning to relocate and build a new building?"

"Yes, by the third year of our E.E. training and visitation, our average attendance had grown from 143 to 162 at Sunday worship. But Kathy, that's only part of the story. Our Sunday school attendance had declined 9%, mostly among adults. Yes, we'd made 324 calls during E.E. training, and 17 persons made professions of faith. But Kathy, what concerns me is that hardly any of them are still active in our Church. They just

seemed to come in one door and go out the other, despite all our efforts to befriend them and to include them in our fellowship."

"Is that why you called for our E.E. Evaluation Task Force to meet next Sunday?," Kathy asked.

"Yes," Jack replied, "and I've invited a cross section of persons who have been involved in our E.E. program, beginning with you, Kathy."

The Evaluation Task Force

"Jack, you know already where I stand," Kathy replied, leaning forward on the now-littered table. "Call me a skeptic if you wish. The E.E. training is excellent with all that learning about how to present the Gospel, but I feel more comfortable just to visit and be friendly to others. That's why I came back to Church seven years ago at the age of seventeen after my wild Sr. High years. That's when two deaths in my family shook me to the core. It was the friendship of others that brought me back and helped me stay — not a memorized gospel presentation."

"I remember the worship meditation that you did on our Mexico work camp, Kathy, and your words, 'My goal each day is to show someone that I love them.' "

"Yes, Jack, that sums up well where I stand, but I know that Rachel and others feel differently."

"Yes, Rachel remains a true believer in E.E.," Jack nodded. "And no one can doubt her commitment to the Church — choir director, President of the Mission Board, teacher of the youth Sunday School class, and trainer for E.E.. Although she grew up in the Church, Rachel felt God's call seven year's ago to be trained to be a witness through the E.E. program. She feels a total commitment to it, Kathy. You know, for Rachel, friendly visitation is something different from an evangelism program. She is determined to make a Gospel presentation in every E.E. call, often to the annoyance of others on her team. It is her judgment that we failed to gain new E.E. trainees this year because we lowered our standards and did not pray hard enough for the Lord's guidance."

"Would Shirley Trigg agree with Rachel?," Kathy asked.

"Only in part," Jack responded. They would agree that church membership will increase if we are faithful to the E.E. program. Both may be in their early thirties, but there the similarity ends. Rachel is single, whereas Shirley is a mother with two small children. She was excited about the E.E. training when she took it, and was very much a caring person in the calls which we made together. But she complained that she didn't have time to study E.E. Becoming certified in that first course was her limit. Then she dropped out. But not from First Church, for you see her every Sunday playing the organ and teaching the Singles Class. Shirley pleads for flexibility, but can we provide it in E.E.?"

"I hear you've invited Jerry Gear also. Has he been involved in E.E.?," Kathy asked.

Jack grinned as he replied, "Yes, but before your time in the program I invited Jerry because he trained in the first E.E. course and the

dropped out. But you know that he's been a pillar of First Church for thirty years. If anything needs to be done, call on Jerry — Financial Secretary, former Chair of Trustees, and now head of the building program. He'll bring his precision as a nuclear physicist to whatever he undertakes.

"Can't we tap that for E.E.?" Kathy asked.

"Not as the program is now set up," Jack replied. "According to E.E. Jack is a "trainer". To participate he must attend all classes and on-the-job training sessions like the trainees. That doesn't fit persons like Jerry. He's willing to visit monthly, but not weekly. Yet I've heard him return from a call and say: 'You go out to help someone, but it's you who comes back blessed."

Kathy leaned forward and asked, "And what of Pastor Rick? Where does he not stand on E.E.?"

Jack hesitated before replying, wondering just how much to share. "Kathy, Pastor Rick places evangelism at the heart of the Church's ministry. He wants us to be a caring congregation. I remember clearly how he put it: 'One of the best ways to communicate that we care is through a personal visit. In an uncaring world, we need to communicate caring.' But Pastor Rick has found E.E. to be too pushy. Confidentially he remarked after the Evangelism Explosion Clinic: 'I hated the training. It went against the grain. I'm a friendly person who likes to build relationships.' He went to the E.E. clinic because we needed a certified trainer to launch the E.E. program in our church. He would prefer that we concentrate on friendly visitation.

"And you know, Kathy, Pastor Rick practices what he believes. You know old Jake Smith. He's now in his 90's. We visited him on E.E. three year's ago. He listens but did not want to be pushed. We gave up on him, but not Pastor Rick. He befriended him — even took him out to lunch. Rick tried to be a good listener and not put him down. I believe that's why Jake is active in Church today.

"I expect on Sunday that Pastor Rick will once again say: 'Let us stress evangelism through caring — not preaching to people on calls or putting them on the spot.' "

I could sense that something clicked with Kathy as she responded: "I've always had trouble with the E.E. method of handling objections. In the textbook we are instructed to respond to any objection concerning an 'essential aspect of the gospel' by answering it as quickly as possible and returning to our presentation. We are to keep control and stick to our agenda at all times."

Kathy looked at her watch and exclaimed: "Woops! I'm over my lunch break. Got to go. See you Sunday, Jack." And with a wave she was off.

A Time to Decide

pppppppppppent much of the next three days preparing for the Sunday ooooooooooon meeting. Were First Church's doubts about E.E. shared by

others? For answers he contacted leaders at the two large churches in nearby Bigtown where the E.E. clinics had been held.

To his surprise Freeway Church of God where he had trained had certified no new persons in E.E. during the past year. That church prospered during it's first five years in the Evangelism Explosion program. Average Sunday worship attendance grew from 1100 to 1500. They reported that 108 persons had made professions of faith during 921 calls. But during the sixth year the pattern changed. Attendance dropped back to 1100, and giving slumped when their popular pastor left. Does E.E. equip Christians sufficiently for witness regardless of who is pastor, Jack wondered, or only within the system?

Pastor Dick Blaney at Faith Lutheran was open to share his evaluation. A former national teacher with E.E. who had held clinics at his church, he now is launching and independent training program in evangelism. "E.E. has taught me the importance of thorough Bible-centered training," he said, "but we need a program that will train in how to lead people to maturity in the body of Christ. We want to stress friendship, service and follow-up. E.E.'s approach is too pushy, and commitments too short-term."

Sitting in his living room on Saturday evening, Jack recalled all the sharings of the week concerning E.E. Before him on the coffee table lay the church bulletin which had announced the next E.E. training program. In the margin he'd written the responses — none for E.E. training, but eight persons willing to just visit. Has First Church reached the saturation point on E.E.?, he wondered. Or is Rachel right that 'E.E. would be more effective in our church if we ALL would pray and earnestly seek God's will for our church'? Should we recruit E.E. trainees more actively instead of waiting for the leading of the Spirit? After all, Rachel recruited me to train at Freeway. Have we been faithful to the Evangelism Explosion program of visitation evangelism?

Jack closed the file. He knew on Sunday the Evaluation Task Force would expect to hear his own response as Chairperson. How like a jury trial, he thought. But on Sunday it will be Evangelism Explosion on trial at First Church, and we, the jury, will be expected to bring in our verdict.

TEACHING NOTE

"Evangelism Explosion on Trial at First Church"

A. TEACHING GOALS

1. To introduce the group to issues concerning goals and methods in visitation evangelism.
2. To evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of alternative approaches (e.g. presentational and friendship evangelism).
3. To encourage participants to adopt a style of faith sharing consistent with their faith commitments, theologies, church polities, and personalities.

B. CAST OF CHARACTERS

1. *Jack Norman*: 39, Chairperson, Evaluation Task Force and Teacher-Trainer for Evangelism Explosion, First Church of God, Somerville.
2. *Kathy Jones*: 39, single, E.E. trained, skeptic.
3. *Rachel Klein*: 30s, single, E.E. teacher-trainer, true believer.
4. *Shirley Trigg*: 30s, married, two small children, E.E. trained, dropout.
5. *Jerry Gear*: 48, married, E.E. trained, burnout, nuclear physicist, Chairperson, First Church building program.
6. *Rick Strong*: 34, pastor, 3 years, First Church, E.E. trainer.
7. *Jake Smith*: 80s, 3-year member, befriended by Pastor Rick.
8. *Dick Blaney*: Pastor, Faith Lutheran, former national E.E. teacher.

C. CASE PLAN

1. ***Opening***. One possible way to begin discussion might be to list the strengths and weaknesses of the Evangelism Explosion visitation program at First Church as given by characters in the case. Another would be to begin with the characters themselves, identifying the position of each concerning the issue to be faced by the Evaluation Committee.

2. ***Issues***. All of us have had personal experience with approaches to visitation evangelism. They vary from the vigorous door-to-door evangelism of Jehovah's Witnesses and Mormons, to visiting for a neighborhood religious survey without promoting any one church. Participants may relate their own experiences to the issues of this case. Issues include the following:

– What are the *strengths* of a propositional approach to visitation evangelism like **Evangelism Explosion**?
– What are its *weaknesses*?
– What are the *strengths* of a friendship evangelism approach?
– What are its *weaknesses*?
– What are the advantages/disadvantages of giving an invitation to personal faith commitment on a first home visit?
– What alternatives exist for First Church in visitation evangelism?
– What do you recommend? Why?
– Is the Church of God's approach to church membership a significant factor in this case? Why or why not?

3. ***Development***. You may also want to roleplay the meeting of the E.E. Evaluation Committee. Take 10-15 minutes for the roleplay, stopping it when the decision is reached. Then de-role participants. Addressing each person by their real name, ask each how they felt about their role in the case and the decision reached.
4. ***Closing***. Ask: What are your learnings today . . .
   a) From this case and our discussion of it?
   b) About approaches to visitation evangelism?
   c) About others' experience in visitation evangelism?
   d) About yourself and your understanding and commitment to faith sharing.

D. USE OF THE CASE

This case is designed to be used in training sessions on evangelism for seminarians, pastors, and congregational leaders.

E. RESOURCES

There are numerous resources which can be consulted regarding witnessing and visitation evangelism.

For the Evangelism Explosion method, materials are available from E.E. III International, P.O. Box 23820, Fort Lauderdale, Florida 33307. They include:

Kennedy, D. James. *Evangelism Explosion: Third Edition*. Wheaton, IL: Tyndale House Publishers, 1983. The textbook.

Evangelism Explosion III Learning Kit. Fort Lauderdale, E.E. III, 1983. The training notebook for leaders.

For other approaches the following books provide a range of viewpoints:
Aldrich, Joseph C. *Life-style Evangelism*. Portland, OR: Multnomah Press, 1981.

Armstrong, Richard S. *Service Evangelism*. Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1979.

Arn, Win & Arn, Charles. *The Master's Plan for Making Disciples*. Pasadena, CA: Church Growth Press, 1982.

Lischer, Richard. *Speaking of Jesus: Finding the Words for Witness*. Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1982.

Little, Paul. *How to Give Away Your Faith*. Downer's Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1966.

McPhea, Arthur G. *Friendship Evangelism: The Caring Way to Share Your Faith*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1978. With a study guide by the same title by Marilyn A. Lyon, published by Mennonite Broadcasts, Harrisonburg, Virginia.

Milos, Delos. *Overcoming Barriers to Witnessing*. Nashville: Broadman Press, 1984.

Neville, Joyce. *How to Share Your Faith Without Being Offensive*. New York: Seabury Press, 1979.

Pippert, Rebecca Manley. *Out of the Salt Shaker and Into the World: Evangelism as a Way of Life*. Downer's Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1979.

Schweer, G. William. *Personal Evangelism for Today*. Nashville: Broadman Press, 1984.

BOOK REVIEWS

Announcing the Reign of God: Evangelization and the Subversive Memory of Jesus

By Mortimer Arias. Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1984. Pp. xviii,155. Paperback $8.95.

Dr. Mortimer Arias has done a great service in the task of world evangelization. The theology of the Reign of God recovers a biblical theme which was absolutely central in the mission and message of Jesus. It is a theme which has its roots in the Old Testament and runs right through the Bible to its culmination in the final vision of the "Holy City, the New Jerusalem" of Revelation. Grounding his insights in the scriptures, Arias presents a powerful intergration of the personal and social dimensions of the gospel of the kingdom and the resultant integration of the pastoral and prophetic dimensions of ministry.

He begins with a review of Jesus' evangelization and traces Jesus' proclamation throughout the Gospels. He focuses on the kingdom as being present and fulfilled in and through Jesus Christ. The presence of the kingdom is known through experience, in grace, in the here-and-now, through forgiveness, in the affirmation of life and at the open table. He then turns to a scriptural exploration of the future dimension of the kingdom and concludes this section by exhorting the reader to evangelize by hope rather than fear or terror. Only the hope of the kingdom can sustain persons in the midst of present persecution and oppression and mobilize them towards the future.

The inbreaking kingdom conveys the issues of confrontational evangelization. Both the social and personal dimensions of sin (and conversion) are part of this confrontation, creating opposition and calling for total commitment. Arias points out how an eclipse of the kingdom has developed, particularly in terms of kingdom language and shift of perspective. He walks somewhat cautiously but helpfully through this thorny terrain and rightly maintains that Jesus Christ *himself* provides the vital linkage between Jesus' style of kingdom evangelization and the apostolic contextualization of the kingdom message.

The final three chapters answer questions raised in earlier chapters, namely, how do we announce the Kingdom as gift, hope, and challenge, and how do we accomplish this in our kind of world.

The hard task of discipleship evangelization is the substance of announcing the kingdom as challenge. This means not only inviting persons to participate in the blessings and hope of the kingdom but also

involvement in the tasks of the kingdom. The emergence of Base Christian Communities in Latin America is highlighted as a model for discipleship evangelization which holds together conversion to God and neighbor, the integration of personal faith and social action, the necessity for both nurture and outreach, the rhythm of verbal proclamation, and the incarnation of the gospel in the lives of the people and the world.

A primary value of Dr. Arias' book is that of bringing together in a systematic way the searchings and findings of those who have been struggling to recover the Kingdom of God perspective for contemporary evangelization. Using the essential message of the gospel, "the good news of the kingdom," as his hermeneutical key, Arias integrates many of the really important developments in theology in the last two decades. Holding tenaciously to the normative nature of the gospel of the kingdom liberates him to think creatively and holistically about the task of evangelization. It helps him overcome the temptation to make human experience, prevailing cultural moods, minitheologies, how-to-do-it manuals, silly dichotomies, sociological studies and the latest in media-technology the final arbiters of truth. By bringing the gospel of the kingdom of God to bear on the task of evangelization, the author involves the reader in a critical assessment which allows the light of that gospel to illumine, mold, assess, and where necessary, correct evangelism ministries.

The text is well written and documented. It contains 23 pages of excellent notes, as well as scripture, author and subject indices. My only disappointment with the book was the failure to include a bibliography.

George E. Morris

George E. Morris is Director of the Institute for World Evangelism of the World Methodist Council, located at Candler School of Theology, Emory University, Atlanta, Georgia, and is the Arthur S. Moore Professor of Evangelism at Candler.

The Pastor as Evangelist

By Richard Stoll Armstrong. Foreword by George E. Sweazey. Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1984. Pp. 192. Paperback $9.95.

"In what sense is the pastor an evangelist?" This is Armstrong's central question in this book. Although he believes that the ministry of evangelism belongs not just to gifted individuals, but to the whole church, he emphasizes the key role of the clergyperson as pastor-evangelist.

In his earlier *Service Evangelism* (revised edition, Westminster, 1983), Armstrong focused upon methods of equipping the laity for faith sharing. In this book he gives specific guidance for the pastor's own evangelistic ministry. As Professor of Ministry and Evangelism at Princeton Theological Seminary, he writes for a target audience often chary of evangelism. He found that 47.1% of pastors attending his seminars on evangelism were more concerned to clarify their understandings and attitudes toward evangelism than to acquire specific evangelistic skills.

Armstrong believes the key is in finding a meaningful *style* of evangelism. He describes it as "more incarnational than propositional, more dialogic than dogmatic, more relational than proclamational" (p. 164). It is a far cry both from the hard sell of James Kennedy's "evangelism explosion" and from Bill Bright's "four spiritual laws." Instead of giving one definition of evangelism, the author quotes twenty, and invites the reader to fashion his or her own.

Armstrong calls for a 24-hour, 7 day-a-week commitment to evangelism by the pastor, for which the key is a lived faith and a relational witness. Evangelism should be motivated by genuine compassion and love — not by self-interest of gaining new members or contributors — and gems of wisdom abound throughout the book with opportunities for the witness of the pastor-evangelist. They can be found when telling a children's story sermon, or visiting where people work, or sharing experiences around the family table. To reach youth, we must find the "plug-in points" in youth culture, and go where young people are. To reach transients is hard, but not impossible. We must recognize that those who wander into the church looking for a handout "almost never tell the truth," but have a need and may open up to the pastor who is a sensitive and perceptive listener. These are but a few of a helpful hints from one whose extended pastorates in Philadelphia and Indianapolis have served as effective models for United Presbyterians.

There are, however, some limitations to the volume. First, Armstrong is writing for a target audience of mainline Protestants, and readers of other theological and ecclesial traditions may find a number of their concerns unaddressed — evangelistic preaching, for example, or counselling with a new convert. Similarly, Roman Catholics interested in

reaching the lapsed through the Ritual for Initiation of Adult Catechumens will find no mention of helps for the priest-evangelist.

Second, even though George Sweazey properly lauds the book for "its solid connection with scripture" (Preface, p. 11), it lacks a clear exegesis of some important New Testament passages referring to the work of an evangelist. No treatment is given to Ephesians 4:11-12, for example, concerning the gifts that some should be "evangelists, some pastors and teachers, for the equipment of the saints for the work of ministry." Does this passage imply that functions of evangelists and pastors are distinct? Are they to be combined in one person, as Armstrong implies by the hyphenated title of *pastor-evangelist*? Are all pastors called to be *pastor-evangelists*, or only some? And what of the Pauline injunction to Timothy quoted by the author (p.57), "do the work of an evangelist, fulfill your ministry" (2 Tim. 4:5)? Is this a reference to evangelism as a specialized ministry, or a reminder of work assigned to every pastor?

A third question is whether the book might be interpreted as a reinforcement of the common stereotype among laity, that evangelism is the pastor's sole responsibility. Although Armstrong acknowledges that both laity and clergy should be involved in evangelism, he fears that undue emphasis on the pastor's role to equip others may dilute the pastor's own involvement, and writes accordingly. For balance, therefore, one should read this book together with his earlier *Service Evangelism*, where the evangelistic task is clearly identified for the church as a whole.

With its focus on the person of the local church pastor as evangelist, *The Pastor as Evangelist* is important reading for all mainline Protestant pastors, and of interest to those of other theological traditions. It will find valuable use as collateral reading in seminary courses which link evangelism to other disciplines of practical theology.

Norman E. Thomas

Norman E. Thomas teaches evangelism at United Theological Seminary in Dayton, Ohio, as the Vera B. Blinn Professor of World Christianity.

Speaking the Gospel Today: A Theology for Evangelism

By Robert Kolb. St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1984. Pp. 223. $16.95.

Theology of evangelism and the practice of evangelism sometimes seem to be two separate functions. There is a large literature on "how to do it" and another body of writing on "why" we evangelize. The challenge to both academician and practitioner is to unite the two in a synthesis of theological understanding and the wisdom of "what works" into a coherent unity. The Reformation scholar, Robert Kolb, has provided us with a mighty attempt at that synthesis. That he doesn't entirely succeed does not lessen the value of his effort and example.

Kolb's approach is from within the Lutheran perspective. Law and Gospel are given their full due as dichotomies. Luther is the weathervane for where the Spirit is blowing. Still, he has much to say to all Christians that is of serious merit. The plan of the book is to combine the author's experience of teaching a survey course on Christian doctrine and a course on evangelism theology. It is a successful marriage and happy union of looking at the breadth of basic Christian dogma from the perspective of evangelism. Taking the position that theology is primary to the witness of believer and that witness is primary to theology, Kolb brings about a significant contribution to both theology and evangelism. His purpose is to make the scriptures useful for the believer as a model for sharing the message in our contemporary culture. The book is a conversation between culture and the Christ of the Bible. However, the practical suggestions for the active witness (usually given at the conclusions of significant discussions) seem to be grafted on without the same thoroughness of analysis and historical/cultural investigation as the preceding theological discourse. The book would not be useful in the field, but is worthy of study in the seminary and the pastor's library.

The outline of the volume moves from the author's main premise of God as Creator against whom humanity has sinned by violation of the first commandment in the Decalogue. This is a lucid and enlightening study of our relationship to the Creator. It is a needed corrective to the neglect of this approach when our witness always begins with redemption! Kolb makes a persuasive case for the need to recover the first commandment's role in understanding ourselves, our society and our relationship to God. Our shalom is based on our right relationship with the creating Father. Only there is the security we need. Kolb moves on the picture of the human predicament in terms of security in our man-made idols instead of security in the Father's love and will. That security is what must be broken in order for us to receive God's gift of life. Here is a key to evangelistic conversation — we must always ask "Why do you want to know?" in order to respond to the inquiring person. If the question arises about the comfort with the false gods of this world then the response must be that of God's wrath. This wrath is the application

of God's law given to us as a conditional and unattainable promise which contains a threat to our false security as it evaluates, judges and condemns. If the inquiry arises out of brokeness, then it can be a new basis for life in God's mercy which can be seen and received only through Jesus as unconditional and undeserved rescue and restoration. The tension between both messages is essential to a complete and authentic Biblical witness.

This is a strong message — a dose of scriptural realism that accords with sound social observation. Kolb moves on to the antidote for idolatry as Jesus, and to describe the process of conversion with the headlines: "THE IMPACTS OF EVIL produce THE IMPACTS OF THE LAW to be met by EXPRESSIONS OF THE GOSPEL." This is a provocative but illuminating picture of our experience of lostness and grace. The author's presentation of the atonement is sharply delineated as he comes down upon the twin pillars of the "Christus Victor" and vicarious satifaction themes. While he does rehabilitate the latter in an effective way, his all too brief defence of a narrow understanding of election is inadequate and not up to the general standards of the book.

Sanctification is the final segment of the plan as Kolb presents the work of the Holy Spirit through sacraments, scripture and the church, resulting in the witness and service of the believer in the community of faith. The Trinitarian format of the book makes for a sense of completeness and satisfying solidity in traditional faith.

Some minor flaws must be mentioned. Many readers will take offense by the lack of any attempt to use inclusive language. The typographical organization of the text would have benefited greatly from more frequent organizational clues. Finally, the lack of an index is always irritating to the serious reader. Notwithstanding these negative points, anyone seeking to do theology of evangelism should struggle with Kolb and try to hear his plea. It is worth hearing, and it invites reflection.

Sudduth Rea Cummings

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Overcoming Barriers to Witnessing

By Delos Miles. Nashville: Broadman Press, 1984. Pp. 131. $5.50.

Much needed attention has been given in recent years to the communication of the gospel across the barriers of cultural distance. It is important to recognize, however, that many significant barriers to the dissemination of the gospel lie closer to home, in the organization and internal climate of a given local congregation. In addition, many individual Christians share a variety of misunderstandings and misapprehensions concerning personal witness which act as a strong deterrent to the extension of the gospel.

Delos Miles has written this book "to confront head-on those objections which Christians most often give for not actively and intentionally bearing witness to Jesus Christ. . ." (p. 9). Based on his long experience in training hundreds of ministers and laypersons to share their faith, he has identified twelve such objections. Chapter topics, such as "I'm afraid," "I'm not good enough," "I don't have the gift," and "I'm too close," will bring a smile of recognition to any practitioner who has labored to encourage others to become active witnesses. The book provides numerous anecdotes and practical suggestions in each chapter: it is a tool designed to give the kind of practical encouragement that will help even the most reluctant witnesses to see new possibilities.

Miles has his finger on some critical evangelistic issues. For instance, in chapter one, concerning the "fear" barrier, he wisely discerns that an "all or nothing" approach may stifle the seed-sowing dimension of evangelism by pressing for a premature harvest. He counsels a more long-term approach that recognizes a continuum of receptivity among hearers, and the need for sowing, watering and reaping as the Spirit directs. In chapter two, dealing with the "perfection" barrier, he points out the limitations of viewing personal witness only within a framework of success. Our own points of struggle can also be the places where our neighbors discover the meaning and power of the gospel. In fact, when we share a brokenness in common with a listener, we often have the best place to begin our testimony. These, and many other helpful insights, lead us in the direction of some fruitful paradigms for understanding the work of the Spirit of God in us and in our neighbors.

If there is a limitation to *Overcoming Barriers*, it is the lack of a larger framework within which to perceive the working of the gospel in our North American culture. Understanding the gospel in context is now a global exercise, and missionary studies, by documenting how the gospel has been disseminated and has taken root in the lives of people in a wide variety of other cultures, are making increasingly clear that North American Christians often lack a clear picture of their own context for evangelism. Such studies offer a range of new models and paradigms for understanding both the gospel and its proclamation in the North

American context: Paul Hiebert's valuable distinction between "bounded set" communities and "centered set" communities, for example; and the recognition, widespread in missionary circles, that the gospel is most effectively spread through the "web of human relationships" provided by family, clan, and other cultural affinities. That new converts should thereby be encouraged to remain within their natural social setting in order to be used of God in the further extension of the gospel is an important insight for North American evangelism.

Many of the barriers identified by Miles will, in the final analysis, only be removed as we give ourselves to the demanding task of constructing such new models and paradigms, and forging an evangelism which is sensitive to and appropriate for the wider missiological task of the church. Laypersons in the North American church need to know how their witness is related to life as it is really lived in the world today.

Much of this is implicit in *Overcoming Barriers*, and is bound to come into focus as the book is used in local congregations. And this is a volume which will be well used, by laity and clergy alike, in equipping church members to be more effective witnesses to their faith. Delos Miles has provided not only a very useful vehicle for stimulating fruitful discussion concerning the nature of Christian witness and the task of evangelism as a whole, but also a clear and concise handbook for putting the fruits of such discussion into practice.

Robin W. Wainwright

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Speaking the Gospel Through the Ages: A History of Evangelism

By Milton L. Rudnick. St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1984. Pp. 232. $24.95.

This new volume on the history of evangelism is a long-awaited work. Previous histories of evangelism have tended to be either slanted to denominational prejudices or are now out of print, or both. Nothing like this relatively ambitious presentation of the history of evangelism has been produced for many years. Thus it fills a much-needed gap.

The content of the book — 232 pages — is comprised of six chapters. Chapter one covers the period of the first through the sixth centuries. In the early years of the church, Rudnick makes clear, many external factors tremendously impacted the evangelistic ministry of the early believers. These he elucidates. Furthermore, he points out the pressures on the early church. Yet, in the face of all of these negative situations the church grew with explosive force. He also points out the essential kerygmatic content of the evangelistic proclamation of the early church. Here he follows Michael Green to some extent. But it is a good study of the kerygma and is a helpful theological presentation of early evangelism. The author then continues by outlining the basic strategies of the early church and evaluates these factors as the reasons why the church grew at the pace that it did in the first 500 years of its existence.

Chapter two presents the 1000 years commonly called the Middle Ages. Rudnick presents a fine theology on regeneration and sanctification. He makes it clear, and correctly so, that the church must be interested not in regeneration alone, but also in the developing and discipleship building of those who are evangelized. Furthermore, chapter two has a good section on medieval mysticism from which dynamic evangelism at times manifested itself. One of the most helpful sections of chapter two is on the evangelistic message of the Middle Ages, something which has never been approached in many histories of evangelism. This is most helpful.

Chapter three comprises the dynamic Reformation period. Professor Rudnick is himself a Lutheran; therefore, one could expect that there would be something of an emphasis upon the Lutheran phase of the Reformation. Nonetheless, a good summary is given of the Calvinistic view as well as that of Zwingli. One of the most helpful aspects of the third chapter is his emphasis upon the Puritan-Pietistic Movement. One would have wished that there perhaps could have been clearer lines drawn showing the connection between the English Puritans and the Continental Pietists. Still, there is a good presentation of the evangelistic impact of this movement. The author further presents a good section on Roman Catholic expansionism during the period. This

aspect of evangelization is often overlooked by Protestant writers.

Chapter four deals with the great eighteenth century revival. It is commendable that the author saw the significance of revivals for church growth and effective world-wide evangelization. He further explores the importance of the Pietistic movement on the continent and the impact of the Great Awakening in America. This is one of the most helpful chapters in the book.

Chapter five moves into "The Great Century," as the nineteenth century was called by Kenneth Scott Latourette. It is here that the conflict between rationalism and its impact on the church and evangelization is set forth. A good presentation is again forthcoming on the Roman Catholic evangelistic efforts during this "Great Century." Furthermore, there is a fine grasp of the second Great Awakening and its impact on American life and the birth of modern missionary movements. Especially helpful in chapter five is an excellent presentation of urban evangelization and the expansion of the gospel world-wide during these dynamic days.

The final chapter, chapter six, deals with the modern world; 1914 to the present time. Here various methods including media, church programs, etc. are discussed. The theologies that lie behind these movements are also taken up. There is also a fine section on the advent and impact of Pentecostalism. Chapter six brings a very fine book to conclusion.

This book is highly commended. It is a good general sweep of the whole movement of evangelization through the ages. Rudnick proves himself a fine church historian and has a fine and fair presentation of the various movements and various denominational efforts. He also stresses the importance of key individuals, e.g. Charles G. Finney, Charles Haddon Spurgeon, D. L. Moody, etc.

One or two criticisms should be lodged. It is a somewhat limited work. 232 pages seem relatively long, but when covering 2000 years there are going to be gaps. Further, one would have wished that he had not included renewal and discipleship development in his definition of evangelism, even though this is a very vital phase of church life. Moreover, this reviewer would have hoped in his chapter on revivalism in America that emphasis could have been placed on the Concert of Prayer. This prayer effort was extremely important. Furthermore, one could have wished for a little less emphasis upon the Lutheran aspect of the work, but Rudnick is a Lutheran and one could thus expect this to be the case.

All in all, we have a volume for which we can be grateful. I recommend it for any serious reader concerned in evangelization.

Lewis A. Drummond

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mmond, Past President of the Academy for Evangelism, is the Billy Graham Evangelism at The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, Ken-

The Academy for Evangelism in Theological Education

Thirteenth Annual Meeting

BANQUET ADDRESS

George E. Sweazey

I am deeply grateful for your invitation. Some of my finest friendships and most profitable experiences have come from the annual meetings of this Academy. My first thought of this came from George Hunter, who wrote to ask whether I thought an organization of seminary teachers of evangelism would be useful. I did, and so did others.

The inspirations, and what we have learned from each other, and the fellowship, have been human channels of more than human strength.

We all need to feel important. One day my daughter asked, "Dad, are you in *Who's Who*?" I had to admit that I was not in *Who's Who in America*, but I said that if they ever get out a book called, *Who's Who On Spencer Road*, I might make it. Her mother was listening, and she said, "You wouldn't make it if it was *Who's Who at 226 Spencer Road*." We all need to feel important and I believe that those who teach ministers to be evangelists are the most important people in the world. Here is why:

Christians know that bringing others to a saving faith in Jesus Christ and to His Church is the greatest of all accomplishments. There is only one commandment that Jesus repeated in all of His last recorded meetings with His disciples. That was the commandment to evangelize. *Matthew* reports that He said, "Go therefore and make disciples of all nations . . . teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you" (28:19-20). *Mark* quotes His words, "Go into all the world and preach the Gospel to the whole creation" (16:15). *Luke* recalls His saying "that repentence and forgiveness of sins should be preached in His name to all nations" (24:46-48). *John* remembers that He prayed, "As Thou didst send me into the world, so I have sent them into the world" (17:17-20). *Acts* gives the farewell words of Jesus to His disciples, "You shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria and to the end of the earth" (1:8).

Evangelism is the Christian's supreme responsibility. When someone asked the Duke of Wellington whether he believed in missions, the old

soldier replied, "Sir! What were your General's marching orders?" Those last words are the Lord's marching orders to all His disciples.

Bringing human beings to Christ, and to those blessings which God put His Church on earth to give, is the joyful responsibility of all the church members. Their ministers are charged to inspire, instruct, and lead them in this, and the seminaries are supposed to prepare the ministers for this most demanding and rewarding responsibility.

It used to be assumed that the spiritual atmosphere of a seminary and Bible and theology classes would prepare the students to be leaders of evangelism. Methods were disparaged as attempts to substitute techniques for the work of the Holy Spirit. But the Holy Spirit works through human skills. Paul said, we "work together with God." There are many expressions of this paradox:

> "Without God, we cannot; without us, God will not."
> "God made everything, but manufactures nothing."
> "You should have seen this garden when only God was working here."

When the disciples begged Jesus, "Lord, teach us to pray, as John taught his disciples," they got a how-to-do-it answer. He told them:

> "Go into your room"
> "Shut the door"
> "Pray to your Father who is in secret"
> "Do not heap up empty phrases"
>
> Then He gave them a model prayer (*Mt.* 6:6-13).

When Jesus sent the twelve and then the seventy to be evangelists, He gave them detailed instructions. He told them:

> Where to go
> Whom to approach
> What to say
> Where to lodge
> What to do about expenses
> How to deal with opposition (*Mt.* 10:5-14; *Lk.* 10:1-11).

The Epistles are full of instructions for evangelism.

I was a typical 1930's seminary graduate when I went to my first pastorate. I knew nothing about evangelism except that it is very important. So after two or three years I suggested to the church officers that we try it. They liked the idea and asked me to devise some plans. The next year I had to admit that I could not think of any ways that seemed right for our sort of church, but I said I would keep trying. The next year I came up with my plan. I proposed that the first Sunday of every month during the coming year be called, "Evangelism Sunday." On

that day the appeal for faith in Christ would be made specially clear and a way to respond would be offered.

On the first Sunday in January, the sermon and the whole worship service were centered in that purpose. Then I asked all who wished to acknowledge their faith to come forward during the next hymn. No one stirred. I saw people in the pews look at each other and grin or look up and smile at me. They knew there was no one in the room who was not a well established member of some church. In February it was the same. Our year of evangelism terminated in May.

That might have been the end of my career as an evangelist if I had not been called to a church in St. Louis. The Presbytery there had a strong Committee on evangelism. Its very strong Chairman was Dr. Theodore S. Smylie. He purposely put some of us ignorant younger ministers on the Committee and he set us to work helping churches with house calls, youth evangelism, church school enlargement, enquirer's groups and the rest of what we should have learned about in our seminaries. We also tried these in our own churches. If we missed a Committee meeting or neglected an assignment, Ted would be on the phone, demanding to know why. He opened up to us a whole new ministry.

Not everything in a seminary undergirds evangelism. There are library-centered scholars who think of evangelism only in terms of its perversions and, as Shakespeare said, "Lilies that fester smell far worse than weeds." One of our church magazines had a learned article which warned that demanding of strangers, "My dear brother, are you saved?" may do more harm than good. We Presbyterians have many besetting sins, but that sort of bumptiousness is not one of them. One of our bright young instructors told me, "I just have the gut feeling that evangelism is bad manners." Most of us are guilty of the far worse manners of not caring what happens to other people.

One day on a plane my seat-mate said to me, "Are you going to heaven?" He was a sophisticated looking man and I assumed he was joking, so I answered, "Well, not this trip I hope." But he wasn't joking. He was asking whether I was saved. I know he did not find it easy. He hesitated a little. No doubt he would rather have read his magazine or looked out the window. But he cared about me more than I had cared about him. The businessman's manners were better than the minister's.

Most of the students are expecting to preach, and the homiletics classes are big ones. Most of them are not thinking much about evangelism, and the evangelism courses are not crowded. But this is a reversal of priorities. If preaching is important, it is even more important to have hearers in the pews. If it is good for a sermon to help 100 people, it is twice as good for it to help 200. The teaching of evangelism supports all the other seminary courses. It gets people into the churches so they can benefit from what their minister was taught about Doctrine, Church History, Greek, Preaching, Pastoral Care, and the rest.

A seminary can have a sort of hothouse remoteness from the world outside. I once asked my students to bring in written accounts of con-

versations about religion they had had with someone who did not belong to a church. I was pleased with the papers. Some of the conversations were moving and deeply in earnest. But what struck me was that these were second and third year students, and every conversation came from before they entered the seminary. The reason, of course, is that before they were with all sorts of people, in clubs and dormitories and athletics. At the seminary they were behind a garden wall. Even on week-ends at their field-work churches they were still in a religious ghetto. Unless we provide against it, the first stage in giving up evangelism is to go to a theological seminary, and the final stage is to be ordained to the ministry.

You seminary teachers of evangelism have the best chance to prevent this tragedy. You can teach your students what to do and let them try to do it. Education requires laboratories. In cooperation with nearby churches your students can get experience by helping these churches do more evangelism.

That can do wonders for your school. Karl Barth said that when a church ceases to evangelize "it begins to smack of the sacred, to play the priest and to mumble. Anyone with a keen nose will smell it and find it dreadful." If you ever detect a musty odor around your seminary, that might be the reason.

I end as I began. You are the most important people in the world. There could be a touch of humor in that, but beyond the humor is some solid reasoning. What everyone on earth needs most of all is Jesus Christ. What this warring, frightened, suffering, frantic world most needs is to have more people in the world who look to Jesus Christ as Lord. Those who can best reach out and draw others to Him are the members of the churches. Those who are responsible for motivating, and teaching, and leading the church members in this are their ministers. And you are the ones who can best prepare the ministers for this sublime responsibility. You teachers of evangelism are the human beings on whom this saving sequence most depends.

When you look into your mirror and think of this you are bound to wonder, "Who, I?" Then remember Moses (*Ex.* 4:1,10), and Isaiah (*Is.* 6:5), and Jeremiah (*Jer.* 1:6), who, abashed at their incompetence, said to God, "Who, I?" And hear God say to you, as He said to them, "Yes, you!"

The Academy for Evangelism in Theological Education

Thirteenth Annual Meeting

MINUTES

The thirteenth annual meeting of the Academy for Evangelism in Theological Education was held on the campus of Princeton Theological Seminary October 10-12, 1985. The meeting was called to order Thursday evening by the outgoing president, Dr. William E. Pannell, who led in prayer. Welcomes were extended by Dr. Richard S. Armstrong our host at Princeton, before introducing Dr. James I. McCord, past President of the seminary and currently Chancellor of the Center for Theological Inquiry. Dr. McCord addressed the body on the theme "Evangelism in the Context of World Ecumenism." A lively discussion followed.

Special guests and new members of the Academy were introduced Friday morning before Dr. Miriam Murphy, colleague of George Gallup, Jr. and co-founder of the Princeton Religion Research Center, shared briefly the history of the PRRC. The remainder of the morning and much of the afternoon were spent with Mr. Gallup who shared with us statistics and trends, materials from the PRRC, and his concerns and recommendations for Christian evangelization in North America. The most needed evangelistic element in our churches today, in Mr. Gallup's opinion, is people who have experiential faith and a readiness to share it. And how is such faith obtained? George Gallup answers, "Faith grows in the presence of faith, and small groups where people explore the meaning of life and faith are the best means to this end."

In the business meeting which followed, the Academy: accepted the minutes and the treasurer's report; raised the annual individual and institutional dues to $25 and $50 respectively (retroactive to January 1, 1985); determined to move ahead immediately on the publication of our annual journal which would be sent free to members and available to libraries at $7.50 a volume or $25 for volumes I through IV; accepted the offer by MARC of World Vision International to publish a compendium of evangelism syllabi representative of the Academy; received reports on other publications of interest from David Lowes Watson *(The McKendree Pastoral Review)* and from Norman E. Thomas *(Missiology);* elected a new president (David Lowes Watson) and a new vice president (Raymond J. Bakke); and determined dates and locations for the next two annual meetings of the Academy — October 9-11, 1986 at Western Conservative Baptist Seminary in Portland, Oregon, and October 8-10, 1987 at Candler School of Theology in Atlanta, Georgia.

Friday evening the Academy was hosted for a delightful dinner by Dr. Thomas W. Gillespie, President of the seminary, and Mrs. Gillespie. Following dinner Dr. George E. Sweazey addressed the group, reflecting on the history of the Academy and the significance of our task. Dr. Sweazey was later honored as the first Life Member of the Academy for Evangelism. President Gillespie added his own reflections on evangelism out of his personal, pastoral and professional experience. It was an evening of encouragement, challenge and comradery.

Saturday morning the Academy reviewed three significant new texts written by members: *Announcing the Reign of God* by Mortimer Arias, *The Pastor As Evangelist* by Richard S. Armstrong, and *Speaking the Gospel Through the Ages* by Milton L. Rudnick. Appreciation was expressed to Richard Armstrong and his assistants for their fine work in preparing for and hosting the Academy. After closing prayer, the meeting was adjourned at 11:30 A.M.

Respectfully submitted,
Ronald K. Crandall
Secretary-Treasurer

The Academy for Evangelism in Theological Education

The Academy for Evangelism was founded in 1973 to facilitate the teaching of evangelism through the sharing of pedagogical ideas and methods, the introduction of new resources and trends in the discipline and ministry of evangelism, and the fostering of scholarly research in evangelism and related concerns.

Full membership in the Academy is open to those who teach evangelism in an accredited theological school. Associate membership is open to those who contribute to the field of evangelism through research or resource development. Enquiries should be directed to the Secretary-Treasurer.

The Fourteenth Annual Meeting

PRELIMINARY ANNOUNCEMENT

The Fourteenth Annual Meeting of the Academy will be held at Western Conservative Baptist Seminary, Portland, Oregon, on Thursday, Friday and Saturday, October 9th, 10th and 11th, 1986. Host member for the meeting is Robert C. Anderson.

There will be an address on the Thursday evening by Luis Palau, whose Evangelistic Team makes its International Headquarters in Portland.

The sessions on Friday will focus on the theme of Church Growth, with papers by George G. Hunter, Asbury Theological Seminary, William J. Abraham, Perkins School of Theology, William E. Pannell, Fuller Theological Seminary, and Eddie Gibbs, Fuller Theological Seminary. The Annual Banquet will be held on Friday evening, with the Presidential Address by David Lowes Watson.

On Saturday morning, recent books published by members of the Academy will be reviewed, with the authors responding.

The Fifteenth Annual Meeting of the Academy will be held at Candler School of Theology, Emory University, Atlanta, Georgia, on Thursday, Friday and Saturday, October 8th, 9th and 10th, 1987. Host member for the meeting is George E. Morris.