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EVANGELICAL REVIEW OF THEOLOGY VOLUME 34, NO 4, October 2010

Evangelical Review of Theology

*Articles and book reviews reflecting
global evangelical theology for the purpose
of discerning the obedience of faith*



Volume 34 No. 4 October 2010



0144-8153 (201010) 34 : 4 ; 1-4



Evangelical Review of Theology

GENERAL EDITOR: THOMAS SCHIRRMACHER

Volume 34 · Number 4 · October 2010

Articles and book reviews reflecting global evangelical
theology for the purpose of discerning the obedience of faith

Published by



for
WORLD EVANGELICAL
ALLIANCE
Theological Commission

ISSN: 0144-8153
Volume 34 No. 4 October 2010

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The Editors welcome recommendations of original or published articles or book reviews that relate to forthcoming issues for inclusion in the Review.

Please send clear copies of details to the above address.

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<http://www.worldevangelicalalliance.com/commissions/tc/>

Typeset by Toucan Design, 25 Southernhay East, Exeter EX1 1NS
and Printed in Great Britain for Paternoster Periodicals,
PO Box 300, Carlisle, Cumbria CA3 0QS
by AlphaGraphics, 6 Angel Row, Nottingham NG1 6HL

Editorial: Global Theology—issues, perspectives and opportunities

WE WOULD LIKE to announce some changes to the editorial team for this journal. This announcement has been delayed because our July 2010 issue featured papers from the Lausanne Theology Working Group (LTWG) consultation held in February 2010 at Beirut, Lebanon. Appropriately, its Editorial was written by Dr Chris Wright in his role as LTWG Convenor. It has been our privilege to be associated with the LTWG in this project since the initial consultation was held in Limuru, Kenya in February 2007.

I was appointed WEA Theological Commission Chairman and ERT Editor early in 2010. I wish to thank my predecessor, Dr Justin Thacker, for his work. During his short term he continued to bring the Theological Commission and LTWG closer together; these are the two most influential bodies representing evangelical theology worldwide. This spirit of cooperation and networking is a welcome development which both bodies will continue to discuss in the hope of even closer cooperation in the future.

My biography can be found at www.thomasschirrmacher.net, so here I want to introduce myself by mentioning just one matter. Evangelicals live in all countries, which means evangelical theology must be global and transnational. Therefore we should all learn to study theological insights from as many other cultures as possible. Personally, I owe my deepest understanding to Christians from Indonesia, India and Uganda, and from the persecuted

church—and from our cobbler, an elder in our church, as I sat in his workshop for many hours during my teen years! I want to convince others that working with a diverse range of people and discussing theology with the Bible in hand does not create division but unity in Christ.

I also wish to thank Dr David Parker from Australia, the former long-term editor of ERT and director of the Theological Commission, who is now acting as Executive Editor; we are pleased that we can still draw upon his contacts and editorial abilities.

There is also the sad news that we have lost a good friend and supporter, Jeremy Mudditt, who died on 21 April 2010 aged 71. Please see the generous tribute from our founding editor, Dr Bruce Nicholls, on the following page.

In this issue we publish several short papers from the historic consultation sponsored by the TC in Brazil in July 2009, representing diverse transnational perspectives as mentioned above. Another helpful article, which could not be included in our last issue, helps us understand more about the recent tragedy in Haiti. Then we reflect on the significance of the 1910 Edinburgh Missionary conference. Two other important topics are the 'Emerging Church' and missions in Europe; we conclude with an interesting Bible study on the cross in the Gospel of Mark.

Thomas Schirrmacher,

General Editor

David Parker, Executive Editor

Jeremy Mudditt 1938-2010

A Tribute

by Dr Bruce J. Nicholls

Founding Editor, *Evangelical Review of Theology*

THE WORLD EVANGELICAL Alliance (formerly Fellowship) (WEA/WEF) owes a great debt of gratitude to Jeremy Mudditt. As Director of Paternoster Press, he pioneered a partnership with us in the publishing of most of our many publications and negotiated an evangelical publisher for a North American edition.

When I launched the *Evangelical Review of Theology* as Editor in October 1977, Jeremy took on the responsibility for Paternoster Press to publish it on behalf of the World Evangelical Fellowship Theological Commission. It was a bold step to accept full financial responsibility for its subscriptions and sales. This relationship continues to the present. He then extended the partnership to include our monographs and most of our books. He also became the publisher for the WEF publications.

Jeremy devoted his whole life to evangelical publishing. In 1957 he joined the family business in London, Paternoster Press; he replaced his father as its Managing Director in 1975. I was privileged to work with him during the years when Paternoster was located in Exeter (1962-1992). Owing to ill health he sold the company to STL and moved with it to Carlisle (1992-2004) where he continued to work freelance with the company (which is now owned by Koorong Books, Australia) until recent months.

Jeremy died peacefully on April 21, 2010 after a long battle with cancer. He was only 71 years of age. As Dr Robin Parry wrote, 'He died, as he lived, in the hands of Pater Noster—"Our Father".' His passing marks the end of an era.

Jeremy was not only a colleague in publishing, but also a wonderful brother in Christ. When the memory of his publishing fades, the memory of him as a person will always remain. He was a man who loved and served his Lord with singleness of purpose; he was passionate to share the Good News of the Kingdom. In his profession, he was a detailed perfectionist and a man with a global missionary vision.

He will be remembered for the twinkle in his eye and his amazing knowledge of literature, art, music, history and theology. I remember him as an enchanting host at the restaurant whenever I was in England and visited Exeter. He was always courteous and gracious in all our business communications. Above all, he was a family man devoted to Meg, his wife (who died on Oct 12, 2009). It was a joy to receive their annual Christmas letter.

We will always thank the Lord for Jeremy and look forward to a wonderful reunion on the Day of the Resurrection.

Evangelical Theology in Africa: Ways, Perspectives, and Dilemmas

James Nkansah-Obrempong

KEYWORDS: *Association of Evangelicals in Africa, holistic ministry, political action, hermeneutics, poverty, ecumenism*

I Historical Background of Evangelical Movement in Africa

The evangelical movement as an organized institution in Africa started with the formation of the Association of Evangelicals in Africa (AEA), formerly known as AEAM (Association of Evangelicals in Africa and Madagascar). Until this time, there was no organized and vibrant evangelical movement on the continent. AEA was founded on February 26, 1966 at Limuru, Kenya. It brought to that meeting 102 evangelical leaders from 23 African nations and missionaries from other nations. Its vision and mission were to:

- Create, promote and build a united movement of the body of Christ to promote evangelical unity, fellowship, and Christian witness in Africa

- Unite evangelicals in Africa for holistic ministries that make a difference
- Mobilize and empower evangelical churches and mission agencies to do effective ministries on the continent, and
- Transform Africa through evangelism and effective discipleship

To achieve this holistic, transformational ministry, AEA created eleven Commissions to address the different needs of the church and society at large. The commissions included the following: communications, evangelism and missions, ethics, peace and justice, Pan Africa women alliance, relief and development, theological and Christian education, youth and sports, prayer and church renewal, stewardship and accountability, evangelical focus on children and information technology. These commissions have been decentralized and they are currently located in different parts of Africa. The reason behind this decentralization was to bring the work and presence of the commissions near to the evangelical fellowships in the

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regions where AEA serves. Some of the commissions are more active than others.

Today there are over seventy million evangelicals in Africa. These are made up of Christians from the mainline denominations—Anglicans, Presbyterians, Methodists, Baptists, Pentecostals, and others from some of the new mission founded churches. We must point out that there are many evangelicals in Africa who are not members of the AEA, but they hold the tenets of evangelical theology. Most of these Christians are in the mainline denominations in Africa and some of the charismatic and Pentecostal churches. Evangelical Christianity is growing very rapidly in Africa. There are 33 national Evangelical fellowships, 34 Associate Members—made up of para-church organizations, and 11 special members representing local churches in countries that have no evangelical fellowships. We will now look at evangelical theology, its ways, perspective, and dilemmas.

II Evangelical theology: Its Ways, Perspectives, and Dilemmas

1 Ways

The evangelical movement in Africa sees itself as the custodian of evangelical theology or orthodoxy, and upholds Christian values and ethos in the respective countries in Africa. There are certain characteristics or distinctives of evangelical theology. These includes the centrality of the gospel, faith in Christ as the means of salvation, faithfulness and obedience to God's Word

and acceptance of its authority for doctrine and practice, and the presence and power of the Holy Spirit in effecting transformation in peoples' lives. Evangelical theology simply is a trinitarian theology. John Stott in his book, *Evangelical Truth*, reiterates this notion of the evangelical faith.¹

- Evangelical theology upholds biblical revelation and the authority of Scripture for faith and practice
- Evangelical theology is commitment to the centrality of the cross of Christ for humanity's and creation's redemption
- Evangelical theology recognizes and accepts the ministry of the Holy Spirit in the church to effectively apply the blessings of God to his people.

In summary, evangelical Christianity upholds these three fundamental ideas—the word, the cross, and the Holy Spirit. Any person who calls him/herself evangelical will hold to these fundamental truths of the Christian faith. Evangelicals in Africa have upheld these basic tenets of the Christian faith and have defended them.

These tenets of the Christian faith, evangelicals insist, have social, political, and economic implications for Christian engagement in society. Currently, the evangelical community in Kenya is actively engaged with the government of Kenya and other stakeholders in the constitution of Kenya on issues to do with abortion and religious equality and freedom. They have

¹ John Stott, *Evangelical Truth: a personal plea for unity* (Leicester: Inter-Varsity Press, 1999), 28.

threatened to vote against the constitution in a referendum to be held in August 2010 if the rights for the unborn and religious liberty for all citizens are not protected in the constitution of Kenya.

However, some brands of African evangelicalism have not done so well on social, political, and economic issues that affect people's lives. Some of these groups tend to dichotomize the physical and the spiritual dimensions of human life. While there are good successes that can be celebrated by evangelicals in Africa, we are yet to see noticeable transformation in evangelical Christianity, especially its impact on the socio-political and economic life of many African societies.

On a positive note, since the early 1970s, African evangelicals have tried to develop an African evangelical theology that is truly biblical and truly African. This has been a rewarding but very difficult project. The growth of Christianity in recent years in Africa may be attributed to some of these initiatives by African evangelicals to make the faith relevant for the African Church. The challenge lies in being faithful to scripture while taking seriously the African cultural, religious, socio-economic and political contexts.

2 Perspectives

In Africa, different perspectives of the evangelical faith emerge in actual practice. Gabriel Fackre² gives six perspectives on evangelical faith:

- Fundamentalist—polemical and separatists

- Old evangelicals—emphasizing personal conversion and mass evangelism
- New evangelicals—acknowledging social responsibility and apologetics
- Justice and peace evangelical—socio-political activists
- Charismatic evangelicals—stressing the work of the Holy Spirit and speaking in tongues, healing and worship, and
- Ecumenical evangelicals—concerned with unity and cooperation.

Fackre's categories are true of the evangelical theological perspectives found on the continent of Africa. We must point out that some of his characterization overlaps in actual practices in individual evangelical Christians, institutions or even denominations. For example, you might find a charismatic believer who is also engaged in socio political issues in his country, and very much committed to personal conversion and mass evangelism.

These different perspectives in evangelical theology most often pose great challenges for evangelical Christianity. For example, such different perspectives on matters of faith have caused tensions, fighting, and competition within the evangelical community. Unfortunately, accusations, competition, and disunity within the evangelical community make cooperation with other evangelical bodies elusive.

More recently, with the new hermeneutics gaining grounds in Africa, new theological perspectives are being developed in Africa some of which are very questionable and need some critical response from the evan-

² Referred to in Stott, *Evangelical Truth*, 25f.

gical community. But some of the concerns raised by some disadvantaged and marginalized people in society are worth addressing. For example, African women theologians are raising some fundamental theological issues relating to women's experiences that they feel are not being addressed by the current theological discourse. These are causing concerns for evangelical theology, and require evangelical theologians to take gender issues seriously, as well as paying attention to the marginalized, such as the poor, children, and the destitute in society.

These concerns again could push evangelical theology in a direction that will develop a vibrant theology that addresses human needs as well as one that engages the intellectual realities of modern Africa.

3 Dilemmas

The dilemmas evangelicals in Africa face are diverse. Africa is a huge continent and it not easy to foster a common continental voice. In the same way, it becomes difficult to foster evangelical unity on the continent. In this case, a lot depends on national Evangelical Alliances dealing with specific issues and concerns affecting them. The help one can give in such situations depends on whether the particular nation in question will seek assistance from the continental body, AEA. Here are some specific issues that have heightened evangelical dilemma in Africa.

a) Human Sexuality

The evangelical Christian community's response to homosexuality in Africa is very critical. The current debate on

homosexuality and the answers being provided by human rights and civil society activists need a critical response from the evangelical fraternity. The cultural and sociological issues associated with HIV/AIDS pandemic in Africa and the resultant socio-economic impact on society is one of the challenges facing the evangelical church. Evangelical theology must address human sexuality in Africa. The church shies away from these issues any time they come up. To foster biblical moral values in a post-modern society can cause some tension. Often evangelicals have been accused of not being tolerant and sensitive to human plight; but this is not true.

b) Economic Challenges

Poverty and unemployment on the continent are critical issues for the church whose members are very poor because of some of the systemic evils in many African nations. For example, national statistics in Kenya shows the youth form 70% of the population. The majority of youth in Kenya are unemployed. This is true of many African nations. These concerns pose a challenge for the church. Does evangelical theology address these problems?

Questions of development and holistic mission are always a challenge for evangelical Christianity. The church in Africa speaks about holistic ministry, but in practice, they do not do holistic ministry. This can be frustrating for many, not only in the church but also outside of the church. Speaking prophetically to social, economic, political, and environmental concerns will always be a challenge to evangelical Christians in Africa. This is because

African evangelicals hold diverse views regarding social engagement. There are those who see social reforms as part of the mission of the church and there are those who do not see it that way.

c) Political Situation on the continent

The question of the church and its involvement with politics has come to the fore in recent years in many African nations. This was true in Kenya during the last general election. Many evangelical Christians got actively involved in politics by either seeking for an elected position or in campaigning for political parties. This caused uproar in the nation. For the first time Christian leaders, bishops, pastors, and others vied for political positions. The media followed the trend closely and held talk shows on the matter.

Evangelicals must give leadership in matters relating to social justice and economic emancipation for the poor and the marginalized and maintain its prophetic voice. The evangelical community knows they need to do this but they do not know how to do it.

Evangelical Christianity wants to engage civil society and advocate for good governance. What informs such engagement will always be a problem. Consequently, evangelical Christianity has not given clear direction in this area because of the diversity of opinions on this matter. This can be frustrating for many.

Another dilemma is dealing with dictators and national leaders who have lost their moral right to lead. What is happening in Zimbabwe and many other places in Africa is a big

challenge to evangelicals in Africa. We knew what we must do, but we do not speak candidly to the situation. Therefore evangelicals have lost their prophetic voice.

d) Spiritual Matters

The Christian population in Africa is fast growing, which means the evangelical movement must take seriously discipleship. Failure to disciple Christians can lead to lack of genuine Christian commitment on the part of the believer.

We lack good discipleship materials written from an African perspective. We need materials addressing some of the social, cultural, political, and economic issues that would help African Christians live as followers of Christ. The AEA commission for theological and Christian education was created to help meet this need.

Lack of trained personnel to pastor and disciple the growing numbers of people coming to faith in Jesus Christ continues to affect the spiritual maturity of Christians in Africa. This is because churches in Africa do not see the importance of training people for ministry. The cost involved in theological training is huge and many churches shy away from training. In order to meet these training needs that are relevant for the African church, theological institutions must see the need to develop curricula that address the pastoral concerns and needs of people. It must go beyond just giving basic theological training. Theological training must develop the intellectual life of the African Christian to be able to engage effectively the contextual issues facing Christians and the world.

Discipleship will always be a challenge for the evangelical church in Africa. This requires immediate attention. We must endeavour to help Christians integrate their faith into their day-to-day lives. There should be a public witness to evangelical Christianity. Theology and ethics must be held together.

e) Disunity among Evangelicals

There is great competition among the evangelical churches that is threatening the unity of the body of Christ in Africa. This has thwarted our efforts to work together and present one voice or a strong Christian witness on the continent. Despite this shortcoming, the evangelical movement is learning to engage with society in a way that has not been the case before.

However, there is tension between ecumenists and evangelicals. In many African states, this tension is real and it has fragmented the voice of the church. There is need to build bridges and mend fences to foster good working relationships with other Christian communities so that we can fulfill our God-given mandate to disciple the whole world.

f) Theology and Culture

Issues relating to theology and culture have moved to centre stage in evangelical theological reflection on the continent. African Christian theology developed as a means to deal with theologies which were imported into Africa.

The dilemma African evangelicals are facing is to develop an African Christianity that is authentically African and truly biblical. The concern to relate theology to culture without

accommodating or losing the essential core of evangelical theology can be a challenge. Unlike our Catholic counterparts who have given much reflection in this area, evangelical Christians in Africa are behind in this effort. It is important that we give theological direction on the complex issues culture raises for theology. It is encouraging to see the efforts made in this area by evangelical Christians in Africa who have published theological works on some theological issues.

g) Globalization

It is important for evangelical theology to foster, unity, integrity, and faithfulness to the evangelical faith in a pluralistic religious society so that the evangelical faith is not lost. In this case, evangelical theological institutions can play a critical role to ensure the purity of the evangelical tradition. This requires that care must be taken to employ professors who are committed to the essential tenets of the evangelical faith as we have outlined earlier on in this paper. Along with globalization comes the incipient materialism and the consumeristic culture that are creeping into the church. The evangelical community must respond to these cultural developments from the west which are rapidly gaining ground in the African church. Modern methods and technology must be used carefully so that we are aware of the dangers but also exploit the benefits.

h) Theological Responsibility

Christianity is declining in the west and the evangelical church in Africa has a role to play in preserving evangelical Christianity for future posterity.

Yet, there are not many institutions in Africa training Christian leaders and workers for the future church. Where such training is taking place, there are no adequate resources for the training to be credible. There should be cooperation between the west and African institutions to help them to be successful in this mission. African evangelicals and others from the 'south' must live up to this theological responsibility.

Religious pluralism, liberal secularism, the prosperity gospel, issues relating to post-modern philosophy and the new theological hermeneutics being developed on the continent are important challenges for evangelical Christians. We must reflect, think, and provide guidance for evangelical Christians to respond to the issues raised by these ideologies. We must contend for the faith that was once delivered to us by our ancestors.

Dilemmas in the Evangelical Movement and its Theology. Argentinean Perspective¹

David A. Roldán

KEYWORDS: *Neo-Pentecostalism, Pentecostalism, Liberation Theology, Prosperity Theology, mega-church, socialism, integral mission*

SOME HISTORIANS date the Protestant presence in Argentina to four hundred years ago.² But what happened then were really timid initiatives; the real beginning of Protestantism (in its 'immigration' and 'mission' models)³ occurred in the 19th century. So, the Protestant and evangelical movement in Argentina is still relatively young.⁴

There are several churches that can be identified with the evangelical movement, including the Baptists (from the south of the US), Plymouth Brethren ('Hermanos Libres'), Christian & Missionary Alliance, Mennonites, Presbyterians, the Evangelical Union of Argentina, the Church of the Nazarene and the Congregationalists. The remainder of Argentinean Protestantism (and similarly in other countries of Hispanic language) include the 'historical churches' rooted in the Reformation, such as the Lutherans, Methodists, Presbyterian and others.

These 'historical churches' which were not related to 'mission Protestantism' at the beginning of its presence in our context, slowly started to offer Sunday worship services in Spanish. They displayed a kind of 'elitism' related to their European origins which represented an obstacle to the development of an 'incarnational ecclesiology'. This type of church faces the bigger obstacle, viz., the risk of disappearance. Generally, in Argentina

most of the intellectual elite (and pastors) were absorbed by Liberation Theology and its predecessor movement, known as Iglesia y Sociedad en América Latina (Church and Society in Latin America, ISAL); it had Protestants roots and was associated with names like Richard Shaull, Julio de Santa Ana, Jose Míguez Bonino and Emilio Castro (so to speak, an Ecumenical Protestantism).⁵

All of the above mentioned churches including the Pentecostals are called 'evangelicals' in Argentina. This means that for Hispanic Latin America, the word 'evangelical' is quite inclusive.

As noted above, the main obstacle that 'historic Protestantism' has to confront is the risk of disappearance. Generally speaking, even the 'organic' growth of these churches is in crisis (i.e. growth through the birth of children). Furthermore, its polarization with the Pentecostal world is so critical that several 'historical Protestants' consider themselves to be more closely related to Catholics than to Pentecostals or even 'evangelical' movements, which to some extent is true.

The great challenge to the evangelical movement, strictly speaking, is represented by classical Pentecostalism, and even more, by Neo-Pente-

costalism. By Neo-Pentecostalism I mean the new forms of being 'charismatic' from the 1980s on to the present, including Prosperity Theology; the increasing growth in the size of the churches (very big churches or 'mega churches'); the strongly centralised authority of each 'mega church' in a single pastor or Apostle; the use of manipulative techniques in the religious services; emphasis on the doctrine of sanctification and the search for a true life in the Spirit; the focus on 'spiritual warfare' and the attacks by Satan on Christians. For me, the distinctive feature of Neo-Pentecostalism in contrast with 'classical Pentecostalism', is that it is a mass movement and it has such a wide presence across the whole country and in all social classes.

In Buenos Aires, we have three associations of Churches: Pentecostal, historical Protestantism (with some exceptions), and evangelical. Even though it is the oldest grouping, the historical churches have lost their hegemony; the Pentecostals have a minimum of social presence, but the evangelicals are bigger and more socially visible.

But even in this scene the evangelical perspective has to overcome a challenge—the 'pentecostalization' of its identity. This is a process that seems to be irreversible; we do not have to understand this, *prima facie*, as a betrayal or something to worry about or to regret. But this is a fact and at the heart of many of the evangelical churches.

Here I want to focus on a dilemma faced by the evangelical movement, viz., how to conduct a dialogue with Neo-Pentecostalism, what to learn from it, what to criticize in it, and what

¹ This is a small participation given at *Brazil Consultation of the TC-WEA* (Sao Paulo, July 2009). So, this explains its oral form.

² Arnoldo Canclini, *400 años de Protestantismo argentino* (Buenos Aires: FIET, 2003).

³ Waldo Villalpando, *Las iglesias del trasplante: Protestantismo de inmigración en la Argentina* (Buenos Aires: Centro de Estudios Cristianos, 1970).

⁴ See José Míguez Bonino, *Rostros del Protestantismo Latinoamericano* (Buenos Aires: Nueva Creación—ISEDET, 1995).

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⁵ For some of ISAL's theoretical products, see, for example: José Míguez Bonino, *Christians and Marxists* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Eerdmans, 1976); José Míguez Bonino, *Doing Theology in a Revolutionary Situation* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1975); Richard Shaull, *El cristianismo y la revolución social* (Buenos Aires: La Aurora, 1955).

to assimilate.⁶ I will summarize this by saying that the authority of the Bible (and its communitarian reading) seems to be de-centered in the Neo-Pentecostal model. This, I think, is related to several features:

- a. The strong role of its central leadership.
- b. 'Mega Churches' that equate the criterion of truth with the size of membership.
- c. The loss of the study of the Bible by the congregation (even in the classical form of the Sunday School).
- d. A hierarchical system of power and administration: God speaks to the pastor, the pastor speaks to the leaders, the leaders speak to the people.
- e. This results in a servile state of mind and a loss of autonomy and critical thought.
- f. Beside this, in the Neo-Pentecostal movement, especially in the mega-churches, there is a clear tendency not to recognize other Christians, even evangelicals as valid believers or churches, making them almost like a sect. Generally speaking,

the mega-churches are a denomination by themselves, but without the safeguards of an adequate institutional organization (for example, regulations and statutes, periodical changes of roles, democratic representation and administration of power, etc.).

- g. As an example (probably an exception, but also as a warning), some pastors say in their preaching that the Bible is the word of God from 'the past', but they have 'the fresh... word of God for today, given by the Holy Ghost'.
- h. In other cases, the gospel is offered as a 'product', as a version of Bonhoeffer's God as a 'patch to cover the holes'.
- i. The gospel is offered also as an 'alternative therapy' (for example, some female pastors guide their sisters in Christ to pray to God for a beautiful body shape!).
- j. Other brothers completely ignore other expressions of Christian faith, considering their own churches as the only authentic church of Christ. To use an expression from German Idealism, we could say that they have little 'evangelical self-consciousness'.

From Neo-Pentecostalism, the evangelical movement must learn better organizational skills (how to develop big projects and events), the charismatic fervour (that was present, of course, in classic Pentecostalism) and a high level of individual commitment. Of course, learning these new attitudes must be carried out critically, taking care to avoid, for example, the

⁶ Some sociological approaches are: Pablo Semán, 'Los filtros populares en la recepción de la Teología de la Prosperidad', in *XXII Reunión Anual de ANPOCS* (Caxambu: Mimeo, 1998); Hilario Wynarczyk et al., 'Héctor Aníbal Giménez y Carlos Annacondia', in *Nuevos movimientos religiosos y ciencias sociales* (Buenos Aires: CEAL, 1993), 49-96; Alejandro Frigerio, ed., *El Pentecostalismo en la Argentina* (Buenos Aires: CEAL, 1994); Daniel Míguez, 'To help you Find God': *The making of a Pentecostal identity in a Buenos Aires suburb* (Amsterdam: Vrije Universitat, 1997).

problem of manipulation. In other words, we cannot use just any method in order to enlarge our churches, or maintain the high commitment of our fellow members of the community.

I would like to make some comments to complement these observations at a higher level. I consider that we cannot isolate this regression in the quality of the religious life in the evangelical field (the increasing use of manipulation, for example), from another phenomenon in the entire Argentinean society (or even in the global western culture). The decade of the 1960s was a high point in social struggle and self-consciousness with concerns for freedom, human rights, and autonomy. It was also a time when higher cultural levels were reached. For example, in the area of literature, we had the 'Latin American boom', with writers and poets like Julio Cortázar, Octavio Paz, Gabriel García Márquez, Mario Vargas Llosas and Carlos Fuentes. While Argentinean society was enjoying this higher level, we had the same phenomenon in the churches, with a highly cultured membership. It was a time of critical thinking. Corruption and manipulation existed, of course, but in a lesser way.

But secular society itself then experienced a decline in its critical skills, its social mobilization and the struggle for emancipation of women and other social minorities. This process was intensified in the 1980s. In the same way, I think, a 'mass movement' took place in the evangelical and Pentecostal areas, resulting in a loss of any sense of institutional authority over the pastors or 'apostles' and the development of extremely polarised thinking about good and evil, sin and sancti-

fication and other matters; there was also the emergence of the role of the pastor as a 'chieftain'.⁷

The disappearance of 'Real Socialism', the so-called 'death of ideologies'—in other words, 'economic globalization' and 'postmodern culture'—had an impact on the evangelical movement too. This was manifested in part in the Neo-Pentecostal mega-churches. In philosophical terms, probably we could translate this as some kind of abstract neo-romanticism or a (bad) kierkegaardianism.⁸ This created an individualistic Christianity, which was non-historicist and without an eschatological Messianism or the *herygma* of the Kingdom of God. But authentic Christianity cannot offer 'easy solutions' and 'easy responses' and does not promise a 'triumphalistic end of our suffering', or a miraculous intervention of God in everyday life.

As the Belgian historian Jean-Pierre Bastian explains: at the beginning of Protestantism in Latin America in the early 20th century, the new movement represented an avant-garde approach to democratic practices (assemblies, records, periodical renewal of authorities, submission of the executive secretary to a board, etc.); however, by the end of the same century there is the ironic situation that outside of the

⁷ See 'charismatic leadership', in Max Weber, *Economy and Society: An Outline of Interpretive Sociology* (Berkeley and Los Angeles, CA: University of California Press, 1978).

⁸ For a conceptualization of some kind of 'kierkegaardianism' and the evangelical identity, see Harvey Cox, *La religión en la ciudad secular. Hacia una teología posmoderna*, trans. Jesús García Abril (Santander: Sal Terrae [orig. 1984], 1985), 225.

churches there is much more freedom and democracy than within.⁹

To conclude this approach, I would say that the Neo-Pentecostal movement has received great responsibility together with this great power in their hands. The question is whether they (primarily the leaders, pastors or apostles) will pass ‘the test of power’.

In terms of its own self-consciousness, the evangelical movement should carefully consider in what aspects the Neo-Pentecostal movement is an example to follow and what aspects should be avoided. The symbolic (and political?) pressure is so great that the phenomenon should not be ignored. Let me summarize some criteria that could be useful in this task:

- a. The centrality and authority of the Holy Scripture over all kind of leaders or ‘spiritual chieftains’, and the communitarian reading of Scripture.
- b. The personal experience of conversion and the fullness of the Holy Spirit are experiences that must be integrated within the community of believers that seeks to renew these experiences.
- c. The development of a sense of personal responsibility, with freedom and critical thinking, and the preaching of a prophetic *kerygma* for the society.
- d. A commitment to ‘Integral Mission’, which is a great legacy of

the Latin American Theological Fraternity.

- e. A Trinitarian view that, for today in our context, means to revisit the Father as the creator of heaven and earth, and his interest in a reality far beyond the ‘four walls of our churches’.
- f. The structuring and organising of institutions and processes that have previously developed in an ad-hoc and independent, autonomous manner; for example, the formal education of our leadership, the process of mutual learning, etc.
- g. An examination of non-formal learning—for example, public evangelical discourse, mass media, evangelical journalism, etc.
- h. Monitoring (and reduction) of manipulation; the fact that Christ wants ‘slaves’ (*doulos*) does not mean that we should be slaves of our pastors—probably we need to revisit the metaphor of becoming ‘friends of Jesus’.

In the strictly theological dimension, the evangelical movement is at present clearly without any focus or serious activity. The exception is the Latin American Theological Fraternity (FTL), which is, without doubt, the major movement of *Evangelical* Latin American theologians. But even this group of theologians is idle in the production of theological thinking; in the Spanish language it has a diminishing presence in the publication of new concepts, although fortunately, in Brazil, they are still publishing the classic *Boletín Teológico* that was discontinued several years ago in Spanish.

We can see some clear trends

towards reductionism in this movement: the reduction of theology to missiology, and from missiology to a non-political action—so to speak; the FTL always had to think of itself in relation to ‘political’ Latin American Liberation Theology.¹⁰

In this sense, the evangelical movement must think deeply about the process of secularization. It is true that for the people of Israel it was necessary that the same religious leaders were in charge of religious activities as well as national social and political activities. But we can see, in this juxtaposition, the abuse of the priestly caste, with no democratic dynamics. In the process of secularization, which began in Europe in the 17th and 18th centuries, the scene was significantly changed. So the question is whether we can still consider the churches as the *main* bodies responsible for ‘social justice’ in the world.

It is clear that we as evangelicals have an ‘integral mission’, but beyond this ‘evangelical self-consciousness’ (of an integral gospel), and ministry to care for the needy in society, what is our role in reclaiming ‘social justice’ in

relation to our governments? Are not those governments themselves the main agents who must take responsibility for these matters? If so, we probably have to make a distinction between a prophetic role in reclaiming social justice on the one hand, and creating theological foundations for this process on the other. At the same time, we must continue to share the full gospel of God and show God’s care for the poor and weak.

If we focus our theological reflection in a way that takes secularization seriously,¹¹ claims for human rights, and the value of the law (still very weak in our context), we can see our mission more clearly: to preach the gospel of God and repentance from sins. Looking at the strictly theological field, as evangelical Hispanic speakers of Latin America, we have a very great responsibility. If I am not wrong, we do not have even one ‘systematic theology’ developed in our context by an evangelical Hispanic speaking author (with relatively high status). What come closest to this are the *Teología Abierta*, of Juan Luis Segundo, and *Liberation Theology*, of Gustavo Gutiérrez, but both of these are Catholics.

To some extent, the classical evangelical movement which we expected

¹⁰ Some classical books are: Gustavo Gutiérrez, *Teología de la Liberación: perspectivas*, 15th ed. (Salamanca: Sígueme [orig. 1971], 1994); Juan Luis Segundo, *Liberación de la teología* (Buenos Aires: Carlos Lohlé, 1975); Juan Luis Segundo, *Teología abierta para el laico adulto*, 5 vols. (Buenos Aires: Carlos Lohlé, 1968); José Porfirio Miranda, *El ser y el Mesías* (Salamanca: Sígueme, 1973); Enrique Dussel, *Para una ética de la Liberación Latinoamericana*, 5 vols. (Buenos Aires: Siglo Veintiuno, 1973); Leonardo Boff, *Igreja: carisma e poder. Ensaio de Ecclesiologia militante* (San Pablo: Editora Ática, 1994).

¹¹ Jürgen Habermas, *Der philosophische Diskurs der Moderne* (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp Verlag, 1985); *El discurso filosófico de la modernidad*, trans. Manuel Jiménez Redondo (Buenos Aires: Katz Editores [orig. 1985], 2008); Harvey Cox, *The Secular City. Secularization and Urbanization in a Theological Perspective* (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1965); Hans Blumenberg, *La legitimación de la Edad Moderna* (Valencia: Pre-textos, 2008).

⁹ Jean Pierre Bastian, *Historia del protestantismo en América Latina*, 2^o ed. (México: Ediciones CUPSA, 1990); Jean Pierre Bastian, *La Mutación Religiosa en América Latina* (México: Fondo de Cultura Económica, 1997).

to fill this need (the Latin American Theological Fraternity) passed over this task, with its reduction of theology to missiology. Some Latin American theologians must say, 'Excuse me, I want to do "theoretical theology"' or 'I'm interested in *academia*'. But in saying this, we have to be aware that this is not a 'privative' issue of Latin American theology, or theology itself in our time. Other theoretical fields are suffering parallel movements in the legacy of North-American Pragmatism:¹² the legacy of Existentialism,¹³ the postmodernist¹⁴ mood, post-struct-

turalism,¹⁵ and even some kind of Marxism.¹⁶ In all these manifestations we can find 'anti-theoretical' forces.

The idea of 'notion' (*Begriff* in Hegelian philosophy), is not a 'dead thought' or merely ideal reality that can be confronted with material reality: 'notion' is really living and has its own activity in history and reality. This approach seems to be obsolete, and today the 'important things' have nothing to do with 'thought': instead the focus is on action or praxis. Now I may be an 'idealist' or retrogressive, but I consider that thought does really matter; as a Christian evangelical, and a 'friend of Jesus Christ', theology is vitally important to me and has value in itself. So I am pleased to be a member of the Theological Commission of the World Evangelical Alliance.

¹² Related to names like Charles Peirce, William James, and recently, Richard Rorty.

¹³ Jean-Paul Sartre, *Critique de la raison dialectique (précédé de Question de méthode)*. Tome I *Théorie des ensembles pratiques* (Paris: Gallimard, 1960); Jean-Paul Sartre, *El existencialismo es un humanismo* (Buenos Aires: Ediciones del 80, 1992); Jean-Paul Sartre, *Le Être et le Néant* (Paris: Gallimard, 1943); *El ser y la nada*, trans. Juan Valmar (Buenos Aires: Losada, 2004); Maurice Merleau-Ponty, 'El marxismo occidental', in *Las aventuras de la dialéctica*, trans. León Rozitchner (Buenos Aires: La Pléyade, 1974), 37-69; Maurice Merleau-Ponty, *Existencialismo y marxismo*, trans. Bernardo Guillén (Buenos Aires: Deucalión, 1954).

¹⁴ Jean-François Lyotard, *La condition post-moderne: rapport sur le savoir* (Paris: Minuit 1979); Marshall Berman, 'Brindis por la modernidad', in *El debate modernidad posmodernidad: edición ampliada y actualizada*, ed. Nicolás Casullo (Buenos Aires: Retórica Ediciones, 2004), 87-105.

¹⁵ Michel Foucault, *Les Mots et les Choses* (Paris: Gallimard, 1966); Jaques Derrida, *L'Écriture et la Différence* (Paris: Seuil, 1967).

¹⁶ Against this, see Alain Badiou, *Manifeste pour la philosophie* (Paris: Éditions du Seuil, 1989); trans. *Manifiesto por la filosofía*, trans. Victoriano Alcantud Serrano (Buenos Aires: Nueva Visión [orig. 1989], 2007); Alain Badiou, *San Pablo. La fundación del universalismo* (Madrid: Anthropos, 1999); Hannah Arendt, *The life of Mind* (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1978); trans. *La vida del espíritu*, trans. Carmen Corral y Fina Birulés (Buenos Aires: Paidós, 2002).

The In-Roads of Evangelical Theology and the Evangelical Movement in Latin American Spanish-Speaking Countries

J. Daniel Salinas

KEYWORDS: *Latin American church, Pentecostalism, Latin American evangelical theology.*

I HAD THE PRIVILEGE of being born in an evangelical home. My father became an evangelical in his mid-twenties. He is now eighty-one, so he has been an evangelical for over half a century. Let me tell you what he has seen in his lifetime in the evangelical church. My father's conversion took place while he worked as a truck driver. A mechanic in his company shared the evangelical faith with him and then through Bible reading and conversations with other evangelicals, the Lord changed his heart.

At that time the evangelical church in Colombia was quite small (0.34%)¹

and depended heavily on foreign missionaries. During the mid 1950s, Colombia, my native land, was recovering from a period of extreme political violence that turned into a religious persecution by Catholic priests. Evangelicals were expelled from their farmlands and forced to flee to the cities without any recourse to reclaim their properties. My mother's side of the family had this experience, losing all their farming land and having to flee to the city. Furthermore, there was an official propaganda campaign where the military government accused evangelicals of having an alliance with communism in order to destroy national unity.²

² William Beltrán, 'El Evangelicalismo y el Movimiento Pentecostal en Colombia en el Siglo XX,' in *Historia del Cristianismo en Colombia: Corrientes y Diversidad*, ed. Ana María Bidegán, 451-480, (Bogotá: Taurus, 2004), 462.

¹ P. S. J. Damboriena, *El Protestantismo en América Latina: La Situación del Protestantismo en los países latino-americanos* (Friburg, Switzerland: FERES, 1963), Vol.2, 25.

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Therefore, when my dad became an evangelical he was taking a huge risk. He was becoming part of a very small minority without any civil rights in the midst of a culturally homogeneous Catholic society.

French sociologist Jean Pierre Bastian described evangelicals in Latin America as 'religious dissidents, adopting an exogenous religious worldview'. For Bastian, evangelicalism constitutes a minority and marginal 'continental subculture', a 'complex and plural religious movement... constituted by various types and characteristics'.³ Following this idea of religious dissidence, Peruvian Samuel Escobar explained that, 'evangelical churches occupied in Latin America society the role of contestant groups to the official church, critical minorities, which together with other social groups wanted to open to the future a close and medieval society, marked still by feudalism'.⁴

I do not think my father would have used these exact words to describe his experience but for him the official church offered no spiritual life. We need to remember that the Catholicism that came to Latin America was a pre-Reformation, pre-Trent Catholicism. All the vices and problems of European medieval popular religion were exported to these lands.

Soon after conversion, my father, encouraged by a missionary, went to a

Bible institute for a year, with the idea of becoming a minister. There he met and married my mother. Things did not work out as planned in order to become a pastor. After starting a family and returning to his former job, Dad together with a couple of other believers opened up a congregation in his neighborhood of lower class working people. He became a bi-vocational pastor, working during the day and preaching nights and weekends. He worked non-stop. A few years later, my father was part of a key movement. This was the movement from foreign to native leadership that took several years and a tug-of-war with the missionaries who thought the nationals were not ready to take over.

The experience that my father had starting a local congregation was extending all over the country, of course under the watchful eye of the missionaries. When the differences of methodologies, vision and probably some human pride became impossible to overcome, most of the churches of the denomination with which my father was associated decided to form a national denomination, cutting all ties with foreign organizations and funds. For better or worse my father was in the forefront of a new development of indigenous churches. I remember well when he told us the new name for our church. Initially things were done the 'old way' but not for long. Nationals proved to be aggressive evangelists and able administrators, even amidst continuous divisions and power struggles.

The new denomination grew swiftly and growth brought new challenges. There were not enough prepared people to lead the many new congrega-

tions; consequently the standards for pastors were lowered with the subsequent loss in depth. Teaching, in general, became superficial, emphasizing external behavior over doctrinal understanding. Some strong and charismatic pastors wanted to impose their personal agendas and branched out on their own, forming their private ecclesiastical empires. Many of these events were table talk at home and the subject for much prayer at the church.

Another aspect that was lost with the change in leadership from foreigners to nationals was the social work of the church. The congregation my father helped start also had an elementary school and a small clinic. My sisters and I attended the school and received medical attention at the clinic. Both the school and the clinic disappeared when the denomination split and the congregation went local. My sisters and I, together with 80 other children, were forced to find schools somewhere else. I guess finances were part of it. Most of the believers, including my father, were just trying to survive with meagre incomes and growing families. The school and the clinic were a big help to the church. Legal hurdles, lack of teachers and personnel were probably the main reasons. Also, it was not easy to break with financial dependency.

Over the years my father has also been instrumental in starting churches in some rural areas, as well as other urban congregations in the fast growing city. He travelled quite a bit during weekends to preach and teach in other places where groups of believers needed encouragement. This is a practice he continues today even in his advanced age. Not long ago and due to

a combination of factors, my father left the denomination to which he had belonged for over four decades to support a group started by a self-appointed 'apostle', a new breed of leaders that is stirring the ecclesiastical waters. I was surprised by his strong support of this person even against his wife's advice.

Lately I heard he changed churches again. This time the reason was more logistical, a long walk to take public transportation and the time of the buses and late services. He now goes to a church a few blocks from home and when possible visits other congregations in the area. As one of my sisters says, it's good he keeps busy and has lots of friends. He has never suffered retirement depression. A life well lived!

I would say that my father's spiritual journey reflects in some ways the story of Latin American evangelicals. Churches with a strong missionary presence and support were generally the norm until the 1960s—including even the Pentecostal denominations. With few exceptions, like the Methodist Pentecostal Church in Chile, churches were a reflection of the dominant missionary presence. But soon native leaders started to come up and thus began a new chapter of the history of the church, the chapter of indigenous churches.

These churches were in constant search of their own identity. Some continued with the traditions of the missionaries, while others trod new paths and developed different understandings of their faith. Pentecostalism became the predominant expression of these native churches. But even among Pentecostals there has been room for

3 J.P. Bastian, *Historia del Protestantismo en América Latina* (México: Casa Unida de Publicaciones, 1990), 9.

4 Samuel Escobar, '¿Qué significa ser evangélico hoy?' *Misión* 1 (1982), 17.

lots of manipulation and creativity. As I mentioned earlier, personal agendas and leadership styles have atomized the churches into myriads of local congregations and denominations each one with historical amnesia and a sense of being better than its ancestors.

According to researcher Paul Freston,

With variations, one can say that Latin American Protestantism is characterized by being highly practicing and fast-growing, predominantly lower class, and organized in a plethora of nationally run and even nationally created denominations. Perhaps two-thirds of Latin America's fifty million or so Protestants are Pentecostals... and this percentage is increasing. Protestantism is most pentecostalized in Chile (perhaps 80 percent) and least in the Andean countries (fewer than half).⁵

Divisions brought not only variety but also innovation. Somewhere in the process a stronger break gave birth to the so-called Neo-Pentecostals even though this name is not quite accurate. Pentecostals say they did not parent this baby and deny any connections. Neo-Pentecostalism has mixed popular beliefs, native spiritualities, some witchcraft, and a little bit of biblical teaching with the latest managerial theories and models to produce an

explosive combo of religious empires.⁶ Access to media and political connections have added to this latest ecclesiastical fashion, which enjoys a popularity seldom experienced before by any evangelical denomination or church.

Still the question remains if these movements could be considered evangelical at all. According to William Beltrán, a Colombian researcher associated with the National University, Neo-Pentecostals do not call themselves evangelical mainly because such a term 'is highly stigmatized' as a synonym of a 'religious fanatical'. Neither have they liked the name Pentecostal since they consider traditional Pentecostalism 'fundamentalist' and highly 'legalistic'.⁷

Another recent study of Colombian Pentecostals describes them as,

- Explosive and dynamic in the cities particularly among the more popular and impoverished population.
- Inarticulate, anarchical, and conflictive among themselves and with the Catholic Church.
- Potentially able to mobilize for electoral purposes, socially passive, and an atomizer of the reli-

⁶ See, Segura Osías, 'El evangelicalismo popular: ¡Una cosmovisión sincrética!', Paper presented at the FTL consultation 'Por una iglesia renovada y siempre renovándose', San José, Costa Rica, October 21st, 2005.

⁷ Cely Beltrán, William Mauricio, *Fragmentación y recomposición del campo religioso en Bogotá: un acercamiento a la descripción del pluralismo religioso de la ciudad* (Universidad Nacional de Colombia, 2009), 180.

gious field and spirituality.⁸

Furthermore, even with a completely Latin American leadership, churches in general have not become doctrinally and theologically independent. With a few exceptions, even today theological trends from the north are accepted and assimilated without questioning. 'Church Growth', 'Spiritual Warfare', 'Spiritual Mapping', 'New Apostles' together with the accompanying methodologies have inundated these lands.

I remember a conversation with a missionary among Quechuas in Bolivia. He explained that for a Quechua person it usually takes close to five years to change the animistic worldview with spirits (good and evil) in nature. My missionary friend explained that it is a huge change when a Quechua person says that the God of the Bible is the only God and the whole earth is his. But when the 'Spiritual Warfare' doctrine came with its teaching of regional and local spiritual beings and several spiritual hierarchies, it gave the people the idea that their animistic beliefs were right and they did not need to change them. According to my friend, the 'Spiritual Warfare' theory pushed back many years the evangelistic effort among Quechuas and made it a hundred times more difficult.⁹

⁸ Pablo P. Moreno, *Escenarios de la presencia evangélica en Colombia 1991-2001*, Ponencia presentada en la primera consulta nacional sobre la paz, 49ª asamblea nacional de CEDECOL, Cali, Colombia, Mayo 27-31, 2002, 3.

⁹ Personal conversation with D. Delzer, missionary with the Brethren in Sucre, Bolivia.

When I was able to visit the United States in my early thirties, I realized that the liturgy I grew up with was a direct translation from the Anglo-Saxon tradition. The music, the organization of religious ceremonies, the Sunday school materials, age separations, etc. were all a copy of how things were done in the missionaries' home countries. Rene Padilla explains that this is a clear sign of theological dependency.

The Latin American church is a church without its own theological reflection. Does anyone doubt it? Let them check out how much of our Christian literature is translated from English and how little we have written. Let them see how much of our preaching is reduced to a mere repetition of badly assimilated doctrinal formulas, without any insertion in our historical reality. They should look at how many of our churches keep the theological colouring of the founding missions and understand theological studies basically as the study of the doctrinal distinctiveness of the churches to which they owe their origin. They should examine the faculty and the programs of most of our seminaries and Bible institutes. Let them review our hymns and songs. The analysis of all these aspects of our ecclesiastical reality will show them that our 'theological dependency' is as real and urgent as the dependency that characterizes Third World countries. It is true that here and there some Latin Americans have started to stammer out their 'own' theology but their efforts are still incipi-

⁵ Paul Freston, ed., *Evangelical Christianity and Democracy in Latin America* (Oxford: OUP, 2008), 15.

ent and do not affect by any means the total picture the church in Latin America presents, that is, a church without a theology, without conscientious reflection that serves the Word of God.¹⁰

What Padilla wrote in the early seventies is still relevant today. There is a need to work out a Latin American evangelical theology. Today if we visit a church, a seminary, or a Bible institute in any country of Latin America we will probably find mostly translated textbooks and curricula. For example, as of today, there is no systematic theology text written by Latin Americans. What we see in the majority of churches is a flood of books by the evangelical gurus from the North without any criteria to filter them. You can find books by Don Carson or Wayne Grudem alongside books written by Benny Hinn and Jerry Falwell. The predominant tendency today is the so called 'prosperity gospel' even among some traditional denominations. Only a handful of churches know the theological proposal that the Latin American Theological Fraternity-FTL has

developed in four decades of work. By and large, theological dependency still characterizes the evangelical church in Latin America.

Thus, evangelicals in Latin America are still searching for their identity. In spite of decades of indigenous leadership and national denominations we have not yet answered in unison the question of what it means to be the people of God in this continent. Most have their eyes fixed on the North Atlantic theological and methodological latest trends. Maybe we are experiencing a prolonged adolescence, procrastinating as long as possible being responsible adults. We need to be centred in the Scriptures and totally dependent on the Holy Spirit to take the challenge of becoming an instrument of transformation in God's hands.

But so far we have remained at the fringes of history. A university student told me once that if one day evangelicals completely disappear nobody will miss them. They contribute almost nothing to civil society in a macro-level. Since this conversation I have tried to show otherwise, but the more I research the more difficult it is to find hard evidence to prove that is not the case. Perhaps I should revisit more often my father's journey and see what his conversion has meant not only for him but mainly for me.

10 C. René Padilla, 'La Teología en Latinoamérica', *Pensamiento Cristiano* 19, no. 75 (1972): 206.

Poverty and the Gospel: The Case of Haiti

Dieumeme Noelliste (USA)

KEYWORDS: *Theodicy, colonialism, nationalism, missions, evangelism justice, health*

POVERTY IS PERHAPS the most stubborn and troubling ill of our world. It is a plague that affects a very large portion of the human race and keeps billions from reaching the potential that God intends for them. Because it interferes with the fulfillment of God's purpose for human life, it is an ill that must be combated by the gospel wherever it is found—its stubbornness notwithstanding.

Perhaps in no other part of the world has this enemy of human flourishing been more voracious and brutal than the Caribbean nation of Haiti—my homeland. Although situated in a region of the world classified as middle income, Haiti has never moved remotely close to that status during its life as a nation. Once recognized as the most productive of France's many colonies, the country, which has earned the distinction of being the first independent black republic of the world and a beacon of freedom in the

Americas, has been reputed as the poorest country in the western hemisphere.

For Haitians, this label which has become a leading descriptor for the country has always been a cause of great angst. It pains us because it virtually overshadows all the positive features of the country's culture, its proud achievements, and the positive traits of the character of its people. It grieves us even more intensely when we realize that, though pejorative, the description is nonetheless accurate.

The evidence in support of the unfavourable assessment is irrefutable and apparent to the naked eye. The statistics establishing the country's appalling condition are common knowledge: eighty percent of the population of 9,000,000 live under the poverty line. Fifty percent of these live in abject poverty, surviving on a pittance of \$1 per day. Well over fifty percent of the population is illiterate. Two-thirds of its workforce is unemployed. Thousands are working in near slavery conditions in the sugar cane plantations of the Dominican Republic.

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Eighty percent of the land, which was once called the Pearl of the Antilles on account of its natural beauty and wealth is denuded and suffers from severe deforestation. Hundreds of thousands of children are orphans. One in eight suffers from malnutrition, and untold thousands live in virtual slavery in a condition called 'restavek'.¹ Little wonder that the country ranks 146 of 177 when measured by the U.N. Human Development Index.

As if this situation were not dismal enough, the country has just been visited by the worst disaster in its history. The 7.0 earthquake that shook the island on January 12 has ravaged Port-au-Prince, reducing the capital city of 2 million to rubble. Mercilessly, it destroyed what little infrastructure the country had, demolished thousands of homes and public buildings, and claimed some two hundred and thirty thousand lives. The disaster will certainly result in a further lowering of the country's already poor ranking. Perhaps now it will be known as the poorest country in the world. Preliminary estimates put the cost of the devastation at ten billion U.S. dollars. The country's GDP is only 7.0 billion U.S. dollars!

Most of the victims of the tragedy are the poor. They were those who lived in the flimsy huts and were pulverized in the wake of the mighty shakeup. Others perished needlessly

¹ 'Restavek' is Creole for 'living with'. It is a conflation of the French verb 'rester' and the French preposition 'avec'. A 'restavek' is a child whose condition of deprivation forces him or her to live with a family other than his/her own for food and shelter in exchange for the performance of unpaid manual labour.

because of the inability of a bankrupt government to provide the barest of help to the citizens when they needed it most. Poverty was their lot in life and it continued to haunt them in death. The treatment they received in death clearly showed that their predicament was that of poverty of being and personhood.

But this land which for two centuries now has been the bastion of misery and suffering is not foreign to Christianity. It is not one of those 'pagan' places where the name of God is unknown, where Christ is rejected, the Bible questioned, and the church persecuted. Indeed, in the midst of their tragic and horrible travail Haitians prayed and sang to God. They did not heed Mrs. Job's advice to 'curse God and die', rather they turned to him urging their fellow sufferers to 'accept Jesus'. There is, of course, a theodicy question that could detain us long, but I will not allow it. My concern is a different one. It is a query to the Christian faith about its failure to allow the gospel to exert its transforming influence in the Haitian landscape.

Since the sixteenth century, the Christian presence on the island has been strong. Introduced first in the form of Roman Catholicism by the European colonizers, the Christian religion was received with open arms by both the Indians who inhabited the island at the time of the 'discovery' and the blacks who were brought in from Africa to replace them as slave labourers following the decimation of the original population. Even in the face of the inhumanity of slavery perpetrated against the Africans by the 'evangelizers' themselves, the slaves continued to embrace Christianity warmly. If it is

argued that theirs was a hybrid religion which reflected more their ancestral beliefs than biblical faith, one must remember that the Christianity to which they were introduced was by no means virgin. It was itself far from being faithful to biblical teaching.

For its part, immediately following emancipation and the proclamation of a hard-won independence in 1804, Protestantism made its entry into the country with missionaries coming from the United Kingdom and the United States. While Catholicism continued to remain the dominant and official faith of the new nation, Protestantism gradually earned a substantial share of the country's population, with explosive growth occurring during the second half of the last century. Already by the mid-1980s Protestantism claimed some twenty-five percent of the country's population. This means that when the shares of the two religious sectors are added up, we have a Christian presence of over eighty percent! Even when allowance is made for the phenomenon of syncretism, which is reportedly more prevalent within Catholicism than Protestantism, the Christian presence is still considerable. The obvious question to Christianity then is: how can so much of it and so much poverty coexist so comfortably and for so long?

There are many claimants to the tragic predicament that plagues this corner of God's creation. Because there are too many to unpack in this brief paper, I will focus on the two causes which bear more directly, on the theme of poverty and justice and the challenge they pose for the authentic gospel proclamation. Any objective exploration into the Haitian situation cannot fail to focus on the total isola-

tion of the country by the colonial powers in response to the success of the Haitian revolution and the subsequent proclamation of its independence from France. Construed as a 'bad' example and a dangerous threat to the prevailing global colonial system, the powers that held sway on the global scene were determined to kill that chicken in the egg. They did so by denying the country its rightful place in the concert of nations, arguing that such an admission would be detrimental to their economic interest and would deal a devastating blow to the reigning racist ideology. With its back against the wall, Haiti was forced to pay a whopping 150,000,000 golden francs to France in exchange for its recognition of the country's hard won independence. France's imprimatur was considered by its colonial counterparts a prerequisite for their own recognition and the subsequent ending of the global economic and political embargo that was slapped against the fledgling and embattled new nation.

It is well established practice that, in wars, the winners get the spoils. In Haiti's case, however, the reverse obtained! The victor was required to reward the vanquished for the 'insolence' of winning and the audacity of cutting himself from the shackles of oppression. Hence, instead of concentrating on building itself as a nation, for the next hundred years, Haiti would be forced to use its very meagre resources to pay its 'debt' to France. At today's rate, the crushing indemnity amounts to \$21 billion—three times the size of the country's present GDP!

This was an injustice from which the country would be hard pressed to recover. Any question about its impact

on the future of the fledgling new nation should be settled by the recognition that even today, short of war, economic and political isolation is the most effective weapon that is resorted to when efforts are made to bring a country on its knees and force it to fall in line. Yet, as has often been the case throughout the history of the church, global Christianity was silent in the face of the crushing injustice that was meted out to Haiti. In both of its expressions, it will make valiant efforts to spread the faith by deploying a constant flow of missionaries in the country, but by and large it will keep aloof from justice issues such as the one highlighted above. Indeed, such commitment has been viewed as a necessary trade off for what was deemed more valuable: the 'freedom' to preach the 'gospel'. Are there burning justice issues in our world today that the church is willing to overlook in exchange for the freedom to preach a truncated gospel?

Besides this external factor, there is an internal culprit for the situation of wretchedness that we are bemoaning. My acquaintance with the Haitian landscape, and my life experience in that land of deprivation, leaves no doubt in my mind that the kind of gospel that Haitian Christianity has propounded in the country over the years has a great deal to do with the condition that prevailed in the land. I don't want to be misunderstood here. It is beyond question that Christian faith has contributed to the salvation and social uplift of countless thousands of individual Haitians—myself included. But what should be clear is that Christian faith has not been allowed to have a commensurate impact on the

nation's corporate landscape.

The reason for this is to be found in the fact that, through the years, Haitian Christianity, in both of its expressions, has left untouched a crucially important sector of public life: the political sphere. As many thinkers have shown, Catholicism did so by its close alliance with the temporal power. Recently Laennec Hurbon, for instance, has demonstrated in his book, *Religions et Lien Social*, that from the colonial period well into the late 1900s, the Catholic church in Haiti has served as an arm of the state, obediently executing the bidding of the political directorate. By virtue of its closeness to the powers that be, the church lacked all ability to engage the political sphere critically.² Laennec took pains to show that because Francois Duvalier (the Father) knew this well, early on in his regime, he made the subjugation of the church a top priority.

For its part, Protestantism contributed to the same phenomenon but by adopting the opposite stance: total disengagement. For Haitian Protestantism, when it comes to the relationship between the church and the state, the watchword and bedrock principle is a-politicalism. In an exhaustive study entitled *Le Protestantisme Dans la Societe Haitienne*, sociologist theologian, Charles Poisset Romain has shown that for Protestants of all colours, the church should have no say in things political except praying for those in authority.

² Laennec Hurbon, *Religions et Lien Social* (Paris: Les Editions du Cerf, 2004), 217, 224-229.

Through meticulous empirical research, Poisset has demonstrated that this Protestant desertion of the political domain is due to the erection of a rigid dichotomy between the spiritual and the temporal, the hereafter and the now, the church and the world. For Haitian Protestants, the gospel is believed to hold sway in the first set of realities, but is said to be *persona non grata* in the second.³ The net consequence of this stance is the abandonment of the political domain to its own devices. It contributed to the emergence of a public square bereft of evangelical witness and prophetic challenge.

In places where rigorous systems of checks and balances exist, this withdrawal from the political arena might not be catastrophic. But in a country such as Haiti where these things are virtually nonexistent, the absence of a rigorous gospel critique meant absolute power and total lack of accountability on the part of the powers that be.⁴ This absence of accountability, not the country's economic status, is what explains the nonexistence of the most basic structure of services for the society in general and the poor

in particular. All suffer from such reprehensible neglect, but the poor suffer even more dearly.

Here again, I don't want to be misunderstood. The church and the numerous social service agencies that are working in the country have done a lot to alleviate poverty and provide a whole gamut of social services to assist the poor. As bad as the Haitian predicament is, it would have been worse without their effort. But though helpful and necessary, such action has its limits. It cannot result in the establishment of the kind of structures and institutions which are capable of transforming the centuries-old culture of poverty. These can come only from the political powers which have control over all of the country's resources. To deliver these basic goods for the welfare of the society in general and the poor in particular, they must be challenged, since it is not in their DNA to do so unprompted.

In a context such as Haiti, to meaningfully serve the poor, the church can no longer afford to preach a gospel devoid of a political edge. To blunt that edge is to nullify its transforming potential and make it into an accomplice of the status quo. The political directorate knows this well. That is why it never tires of reminding the church that its role is confined to the 'spiritual' and that it must not trespass on the political. The church must reject such reductionism and rigid dualism. It needs to realize that because the gospel aims at the enjoyment of the fullness of life, of necessity, it carries serious political implications. The political sphere bears enormously on the kind of life that people live. Indeed, its very reason for being is to promote

³ Charles Poisset Romain, *Le Protestantisme Dans la Societe Haitienne* (Port-au-Prince: Henri Deschamps, 1985), 234-279.

⁴ There are certainly good reasons for this absence of evangelical critique. The climate of political repression and the denial of basic human rights throughout the country's history and particularly during the Duvalierian dynasty made such witness extremely dangerous. My point here, however, is not to explain the reasons for the absence of that witness, but to underscore the *consequence* of that absence.

and enhance the experience of life. Its purpose is to serve the common good. To remove that sphere from the purview of the gospel and exempt it from its critique is to castrate the gospel itself and render it impotent in a society that desperately needs its transforming ferment.

It is beyond question that these days of suffering, disgrace, and shame are the darkest in the history of the country. But they will not be its final moments. In fact, I see in them a critical juncture, a turning point for a better tomorrow. I see in these calamities the unprecedented opportunity for the church to resolve to proclaim, live, and demonstrate the full gospel in the Haitian context. Three factors combine to make this moment opportune.

First, if anyone ever thought that it was a benign matter for a society to have a completely unaccountable government, the tragedy of January 12 should disabuse them of such a misguided view. In the aftermath of the earthquake, it is evident to all that thousands of lives would have been saved if the country were equipped with the most basic disaster preparedness and response system, and if it had a government that felt the obligation to provide a modicum of leadership in that moment of crisis. Feeling completely unanswerable, the government was missing in action. And that irresponsiveness proved fatal not only to the poor, but the rich as well. Until help arrived from the international community, the people were their own first responders, performing rescue operations with bare hands.

Second, while in the past, the

church could cite repression and the fear of reprisals as existential reasons for its posture of disengagement from the political domain, the recent loosening of the political knot with the advent of multi-party politics and the recognition of some freedom of expression undoubtedly render such explanation no longer compelling. The risks of retaliation and recrimination still exist. But the opportunity for the church to assert itself and reclaim its right to speak prophetically has never been greater. The church must not let that opportunity slip away. It must seize it, and resolve to no longer allow the political power to take it away.

Third, in recent times, various bodies within global evangelism have been awakened to the truth that if the evangelical witness is to have a chance of transforming society in any meaningful way, and in so doing improve the plight of the poor, such a witness must go beyond poverty alleviation and the provision of social services. It must include social action and social advocacy. At this time, if the Haitian church musters the courage to embrace the challenge of political engagement,⁵ it will find much encouragement and support from the broader evangelical world. Let us hope that it will do so.

⁵ By political engagement, I am not talking about involvement in partisan politics. I am convinced that the church, as a corporate body, should stay out of this in order to maintain the integrity of its prophetic witness. It is essentially this prophetic witness, this advocacy and push for the creation of an environment conducive to the flourishing of human life, that I call political engagement.

Edinburgh 2010 and the Evangelicals

Klaus Fiedler

Keywords: Ecumenical movement, unity, revivals, missionary societies, faith missions, classical missions, conversion, ecclesiology

I Edinburgh 1910 in Context

Edinburgh 1910 was a huge success, and success always has many fathers, including some who only claim to be such. As the Christian world (or much of it) celebrates this event after 100 years, there are several heirs, all claiming that they continue with the spirit, or the achievements, or the structures of that conference.

I was first alerted to this syndrome when the World Student Christian Federation in 1985 seized the opportunity of the 75th anniversary of Edinburgh 1910 to celebrate it with its own conference.¹ Was not Edinburgh 1910

organized by John Mott of the Student Volunteer Movement (SVM), the forerunner of the World Student Christian Federation (WSCF)? John Mott was indeed influenced by the SVM, and the WSCF was indeed its successor, but Edinburgh 1910 was not a students' conference. When finally Edinburgh 1985 took place, what happened there seemed to bear little resemblance to what had excited the Christian (or at least the Protestant) world so much 75 years before. The main speakers were: Emilio Castro (then WCC General Secretary), Kosuke Koyama, Annathai Abayasekera, Enrique Dussel, Orlando Costas, Mercy Amba Oduyoye and Leonardo Appies. They mostly looked for the 'Greater Christ' of whom John Mott had spoken at the end of the Conference. The 'Greater Christ' was seen as the liberator from economic and political oppression, leaving little room for the 'smaller' Christ as saviour and liberator from sin, or for the mission

¹ In the invitation also shared the World Council of Churches, the British Council of Churches, and 15 churches and missions.

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society as a means to spread that message.²

In this article I do not want to give an overall account of Edinburgh 1910,³ nor do I want to lodge another claim to paternity; but I want to look at it narrowly from the evangelical angle, trying to assess their (limited) share in the conference and their (less limited) place in the developments of the next one hundred years.⁴

Grown up and converted in the Baptist (revival) tradition, I was brought into ecumenical surroundings by a WCC scholarship to study at Makerere University in Kampala, Uganda; I have worked as a Christian Brethren missionary in Southern Tanzania, as a pastor and school teacher sixteen years in Germany, and came in 1991 to Malawi

to teach at the University. Trained as a missiologist, I follow Kenneth Scott Latourette in my understanding of church history; Latourette bases his monumental work on the premise that the Holy Spirit moves forward church (and mission) history by bringing in ever new revivals that produce ever new organizations.⁵

During my research into the history and ecclesiology of the [Interdenominational] Faith Missions movement,⁶ I developed my understanding of missions as children of revivals. When I had started in the 1950s to read the journals of the German missions, I saw repeatedly that the missions are the children of the Revival, meaning the Great Awakening, which became important in Germany around 1815. Thirty years later I realized how true that was, but I had to add a plural 's', because the missions by then were children of five different revivals, though the Classical Missions (as I call them), coming from the Great Awakening, at that time still strongly dominated. Indeed, the Holy Spirit moves forward church history by bringing in ever new revivals which produce ever

² Klaus W. Müller, 'Auf der Suche nach einem größeren Christus—In Search of a Larger Christ. Studenten-Missions-Konferenz Edinburgh/Schottland, 24.-28. Juni 1985. 75 Jahre nach der ersten Weltmissionskonferenz in Edinburgh 1910', *Evangelikale Missiologie* 1/1986, 7-13.

³ For the full record of the Conference see: *World Missionary Conference, 1910* (Edinburgh & London: Oliphant, Anderson & Ferrier; New York, Chicago and Toronto: Fleming H. Revell, 1910). (These are the reports of the eight commissions published before the Conference.) After the Conference, the proceedings were published as *World Missionary Conference, 1910. The History and Records of the Conference* (Edinburgh & London: Oliphant, Anderson & Ferrier; New York, Chicago and Toronto: Fleming H. Revell, 1910). All nine volumes are now available on the Edinburgh 2010 website, www.edinburgh2010.org.

⁴ For a deep searching and far reaching interpretation of the Conference and its relevance read, David A. Kerr and Kenneth R. Ross (eds), *Edinburgh 2010: Mission then and now* (Oxford: Regnum, 2009).

⁵ For a good overview of Christian history under these premises see the chapter, 'A Brief Summary of the Course thus far Traversed' in Kenneth Scott Latourette, *A History of the Expansion of Christianity*, vol. 7, *Advance through Storm* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, ⁵1976, 1945), 416-465.

⁶ Klaus Fiedler, *Ganz auf Vertrauen. Geschichte und Kirchenverständnis der Glaubensmissionen* (Giessen/Basel: Brunnen, 1992). The English version, reduced by one third, rearranged and with an additional chapter, is Klaus Fiedler, *The Story of Faith Missions. From Hudson Taylor to Present Day Africa* (Oxford et al: Regnum, ²1994).

new organizations, and missions are most prominent among these. Indeed, the mission society was born at the beginning of what Latourette calls the 'Great Century',⁷ and it is worth quoting William Carey for that:

Suppose a company of serious Christians, ministers and private persons, were to form themselves into a society, and make a number of rules respecting the regulation of the plan, and the persons who are to be employed as missionaries, the means of defraying the expence, etc., etc. This society must consist of persons whose hearts are in the work, men of serious religion, and possessing a spirit of perseverance; there must be a determination not to admit any person who is not of this description, or to retain him longer than he answers to it.⁸

We notice that in 1792, after the *mission societies* (not the churches) took upon themselves the evangelization of the world, as Andrew Walls points out, the Holy Spirit had made gentle fun of the churches (so well organized and so busy with their own concerns) by setting them aside and pursuing his own course with those who were willing and interested.⁹ It was the revival (and its

mission societies) that changed the religious map of the world. It was the mission societies (and not the churches) that constituted the membership of the big Edinburgh conference, 176 of them, 59 from North America, 58 from the European Continent, 47 from Britain, 3 from South Africa and 9 from Australasia.¹⁰ So I see Edinburgh 1910 as the culmination of the 'Great Century', dominated by the classical Missions that were the children of the Great Awakening.

I write this article as an evangelical, and I owe my readers my definition of 'Evangelical', which may not be uncontested. The evangelicals are a distinct group among the Protestants, but their identity, distinct as it is, is *non-demarcated*. Evangelicals, in their many groups and many forms, share five emphases: personal faith, conversion, love for the Bible, evangelism/missions and the translation of such faith in social engagement. Such evangelicals ('in the wider sense') are found in virtually all the Protestant denominations and, at least since the Charismatic Revival, even in the Roman Catholic Church. The other definition is historical, in that it includes (only) those Protestant groups and denominations whose spirituality goes back to the Holiness Revival of 1858 as I call it or, as others call it, to the Second Evangelical Awakening.¹¹ In this arti-

⁷ Kenneth Scott Latourette, *A History of the Expansion of Christianity*, vol. 7, 445, and vols 5 and 6 of his *Mission History*.

⁸ William Carey, *An Enquiry into the Obligations of Christians to Use Means for the Conversion of the Heathen* (Leicester: 1792), 82-83.

⁹ Andrew Walls, 'Vom Ursprung der Missionsgesellschaften—oder: Die glückliche Subversion der Kirchen', *Evangelikale Missiologie* (1987), 35-40; 56-60; English version, *Evangelical Quarterly* 88:2 (1988), 141-155.

¹⁰ Listed in volume 9 of the conference report, and summarized in David A. Kerr and Kenneth R. Ross, 'Introduction', in Kerr and Ross, *Edinburgh 2010*, 3-20.

¹¹ This 'historical' definition also includes groups from earlier revivals that were influenced by the piety of the Second Evangelical Awakening.

cle I use both definitions, but since it is a historical study, the latter (evangelicals in the narrower sense) is the dominant one.

II The Revivals and Edinburgh 1910

With Latourette I therefore see mission history as based on revival history. Every great advance in missions is based on a new revival movement, and I have heard of hardly any mission movement that was not born in revival. The picture is a bit uneven, but the overall pattern is clear.

The revival of the Reformation produced virtually no missions on the Protestant side, but plenty on the Catholic, with the Jesuits as the leading missionary order.¹² During the time of Orthodoxy, some leading Lutheran theologians even saw foreign missions as sinful, since the Great Commission had been given to the apostles alone (*ad personam*) who had indeed fulfilled it, preaching even in those parts of the world which had not yet entered into the view of either Western or Arab geography. Since the office of apostle was an extraordinary office of the church, to start missionary work after their death was seen as the sin of usurpation of divine office.¹³

While the official churches were secure in their rejection of missions, the Puritan and Pietist revival took up the missionary task on the Protestant side, with the small Moravian Church taking the lead.¹⁴ The next revival was the Great Awakening; its beginnings are usually dated to Jonathan Edwards (1734), while the Wesley brothers and George Whitefield are usually mentioned as the great evangelists.¹⁵ Against theological opposition from the churches of the Reformation, William Carey had made it clear that the Great Commission was still valid and binding, and to fulfil it he proposed the mission society as the *means* to reach the heathen. He was innovative, as revivalists usually are, and his ideas were taken up enthusiastically by many in the Great Awakening revival tradition. In kind disregard of the established churches' authorities, they took up the task of reaching the unreached parts of the world, which were many in those days.

When the fervour of the Great Awakening had quietened down somewhat, another revival came, often hardly recognized as such, the Restorationist Revival that endeavoured to restore the primitive church

non-Christian populations were allowed (even encouraged) to provide churches for them, too.

14 Of the Puritan/Pietist missions the Danish Halle Mission in India succumbed to the Enlightenment, the Puritan missions among the Native Americans succumbed to the vicissitudes of the American expansion; only the Moravian Mission survived.

15 Note should be taken that the Calvinist George Whitefield was as great an evangelist as the Arminian John Wesley.

12 Besides the Jesuits, born in the Reformation Revival, there were other orders like the Franciscans and the Dominicans who came from the earlier monastic revival (Kenneth Scott Latourette, *A History of Christianity. Beginnings to 1500* (Peabody: Prince Press, 72007), 416-446.

13 The only exception of a kind was that Christian princes who happened to rule over

once more before the end.¹⁶ This Restorationist Revival provided the subsequent revival, the Second Evangelical Awakening (Holiness Revival) of 1858 with its innovative premillennial eschatology, replacing the post-millennial eschatology of the Great Awakening.¹⁷

In Edinburgh the Reformation Revival was not represented by any mission, since the Catholic missions had not been invited and the few Protestant attempts at missions had not lasted. (But the Reformation Revival was present at the conference in the many church leaders and dignitaries who had been invited.) Of the Puritan/Pietist Revival only the Moravian Mission survived and was represented by a dozen delegates; however, its distinctives had merged with those of the classical missions, the many missions that the Great Awakening had brought into existence. These classical missions were the dominant group in Edinburgh, sending about 95 per cent of the delegates.

Of the missions from the Restorationist Revival, the Brethren and the Churches of Christ could not be represented because only mission societies

were invited, which they refused to organize, for theological reasons based on their ecclesologies.¹⁸ The only 'Restorationist' representation at the conference was by three Seventh-day Adventist delegates¹⁹ and sixteen delegates from the Disciples of Christ.²⁰

Though the Second Evangelical Awakening, different from the Restorationist Revival, had largely remained within the existing churches, it did produce a distinctive group of missions, the interdenominational Faith Missions. These were in no way opposed to the classical Missions; neither did they intend to compete with them. Their aim was to continue the advance into unreached areas where the advance of the classical missions had stopped.²¹ Due to their innovative principles the Faith Missions attracted many candidates which the classical missions would not have wanted; much of their support came from the groups created or influenced by the Holiness Revival. Though they cooperated happily with the classical missions, they were a distinct group right from the beginning, a fact blissfully ignored by the organizers of Edinburgh 1910. The Faith Missions grew slowly, and in

16 Klaus Fiedler, "A Revival Disregarded and Disliked" or What do Seventh-day Adventists, Churches of Christ, Jehovah's Witnesses and the New Apostolic Church have in Common?, *Religion in Malawi* 15 (2009), 10-19.

17 Klaus Fiedler, 'Shifts in Eschatology—Shifts in Missiology', in Jochen Eber (ed), *Hope does not Disappoint. Studies in Eschatology. Essays from Different Contexts* (Wheaton: World Evangelical Fellowship Theological Commission; Bangalore: Theological Book Trust, 2001).

18 The Churches of Christ foreign missionary effort was limited, but the 'Open' Brethren were very strong in foreign missions.

19 Most evangelicals present would have preferred not to be associated closely with them, suspecting them of sectarianism, in spite of their common roots.

20 The Disciples have the same revival roots as the Churches of Christ, but had developed by 1910 a quite liberal theology.

21 See map for Africa in Klaus Fiedler, *The Story of Faith Missions*, 85.

Edinburgh, when the classical missions had about reached their peak, they were still generations away from theirs.

The next revival, born in Asuza Street in Los Angeles, that was to change the face of world Christianity, was only a baby then, four years old when Edinburgh 1910 convened, and about two when the research for the reports finished. By 1910 the Pentecostal mission had started, but there were no properly organized mission societies yet, and since they could not anticipate the future tremendous growth of Pentecostal missions, the Edinburgh organizers may be excused for overlooking it. And of course, none of them could foresee that in 1960 yet another revival would erupt that again would challenge many accepted theories.²²

III Evangelical Missions and Edinburgh 1910

For this section I employ the narrow definition of evangelical, since the conference was a conference of mission societies. Though in other areas the demarcation of evangelical is fuzzy, as far as mission societies are concerned, the definition is clear: it was the 1858/59 Second Evangelical Revival that produced its own distinct class of missions, the Faith Missions, not

opposed to but clearly different from the classical missions. How did they react to the invitation and how did they participate?

1. The Evangelical Participation

Like all the other Protestant missions, the Faith Missions were invited to participate, and participate they did. 30 of the over 500 British delegates came from the Faith Missions. North America, with a similar number of delegates, only brought 13. Of the 98 German delegates, eight were evangelicals, as were four among the Swedish delegates. At the Conference the Faith Mission delegates were a minority, below 5 per cent. The strongest Faith Mission was the China Inland Mission with 17 of the 55 Faith Mission delegates.

Their number was small, so was their role at the Conference, and so was then their role in the worldwide Protestant missionary movement. The oldest Faith Mission was only 45 years old,²³ not just one more mission, but a mission of a new type. It took thirteen years for Fanny Guinness to found the Livingstone Inland Mission (1878) as the second Faith Mission.²⁴ Most of the major Faith Missions were less than 20 years old, and many of them had had to struggle over years just to get established and to survive. So maybe the conference leadership can be excused

for not recognizing that the Faith Missions represented a new missionary movement, having its own history and spirituality.

Among the main speakers there was no member of a Faith Missions. Three Faith Mission members gave short presentations. Rev. B. Fuller (Christian Missionary Alliance, India) spoke on 'The Work in the Mission Field' as one of eight presenters; Mr. D. E. Hoste (China Inland Mission) spoke on 'Education of Christian Community, Adult and Juvenile' and 'Should the missionary devote chief attention in raising up and helping to develop a Native Evangelistic Agency, or to doing direct Evangelistic Work himself?'. The latter topic was dear to the heart of the CIM missionaries, as was Mr. W. B. Sloan's presentation on 'The Rights of Native Christians'.

I also found two Faith Mission contributions to the discussions: Dr Karl Kumm (Sudan United Mission) spoke during the discussion on Africa, and Dr Lepsius of the Deutsche Orient Mission contributed to the discussion on the 'Missionary Message in Relation to Islam'. One special recognition was accorded to them during the Conference. When, on 30 June 1910, the news was received that Grattan Guinness, the Faith Mission pioneer in Britain after Hudson Taylor, had died, the Conference rose to honour him and sang a hymn. In Edinburgh the evangelicals played their (limited) role well, but it was not their conference.

2. The Neglect of Inner Africa

Edinburgh 1910 was organized to promote the evangelization of the non-Christian world. In the preparations for

the conference, at its core, conflicts arose. The Sudan United Mission minuted on 30 December 1909:

World Mission Conference—donation—: that before we consider the voting of any such donation a strong statement should be laid before the authorities of the conference, of the very unsatisfactory position of the whole Sudan question as presented to their constituency.

The Conference organizers took the point and gave Karl Kumm the opportunity to present the plea of the Sudan in a side meeting during the conference, and on 13 June 1910, a day before the Conference opened, £30 was voted as the SUM's contribution, and two delegates attended the conference.

The report of Commission One recorded not only that one third of Africa was unreached, but also claimed that none of the mission agencies had any plans to reach that remaining third, which must have included the Maghreb (Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia), the Sudan Belt and the Congo Basin as its main components.

The heart of Africa constitutes a vast unoccupied field... more than a third of the entire continent without any existing agency having plans actually projected for their evangelization.²⁵

²² Over the last years the World Council of Churches has strongly taken note of the Pentecostals, pushed by the successes of the Charismatic Movement and is trying to organize a partnership that does not require WCC membership under the theme of the World Christian Forum.

²³ Klaus Fiedler, 'The Principles of the China Inland Mission', *Story of Faith Missions*, 33, and chapter 2, 'A New Missionary Movement: The Early Faith Missions', 32-69.

²⁴ Fanny Guinness, *The New World of Central Africa. With a History of the First Christian Mission in the Congo* (London: 1890).

²⁵ World Missionary Conference, 1910, 'Carrying the Gospel to all the Non-Christian World, Report of Commission I' (Edinburgh and London: Oliphant, Anderson and Ferrier; New York, Chicago and Toronto: Fleming H. Revell, 1910), 281/282. For more see Andrew F. Walls, 'Commission One and the Church's Century', in Kerr and Ross, *Edinburgh 2010*, 27-40.

In making this statement, they overlooked the several evangelical missions that not only had plans to enter the remaining third of Africa but who had been doing that for a good number of years.²⁶ They had overlooked the evangelical missions in the Maghreb (North Africa Mission (1881), Algiers Mission Band (1888), Southern Morocco (Medical) Mission (1888), and they had overlooked the fact that the Sudan Interior Mission had started to approach the Sudan Belt in 1902, through Central Nigeria, with the Sudan United Mission joining them four years later after the attempts to reach the Sudan from Aswan in 1900 had not succeeded.²⁷

In the decade before the Africa Inland Mission had started the work in Inner Kenya in 1895 with the aim of advancing to Lake Chad. The Commission had equally overlooked the fact that the Gospel Missionary Union (later Christian Missionary Alliance) had started in 1889 to reach the Sudan Belt from Sierra Leone and that missionaries related to the East London Training Institute had since 1878 been on their way into the interior of the Congo Basin.

Edinburgh 1910 did not discriminate against the Evangelicals, neither

did John Mott, the chairman of Commission I (Carrying the Gospel to all the Non-Christian World). But the Commission simply was not in touch with what the evangelical missions were doing and planning; the missionary advance into the unreached areas of Africa had started to slip into Evangelical hands.

3. Not South America

The more fundamental conflict erupted on the issue of missionary work in Latin America. Here the Conference organizers decided plainly against all that was crucial for evangelicals. The minutes of the Regions Beyond Missionary Union of 13 October 1909 read.

A communication was also read from the Secretary of the World Missionary Conference in answer to the protest of the Directors at the exclusion from the deliberations of the conference of work in Roman Catholic lands.

On 13 January 1910 the issue was discussed further:

After some discussion it was unanimously resolved to arrange a meeting to consider the advisability of calling a Conference with reference to work in Roman Catholic countries, and as to whether the Roman Catholic Church is to be looked upon as a sister church or not.

Such a conference did not take place, at least not soon, and the RBMU did participate in Edinburgh 1910 with five delegates. They made no fuss about the issue, but all evangelicals were agreed that faith makes you a member of the church, not any sacrament. They did not only see Latin America as a mis-

sionary land,²⁸ but equally so Russia, Belgium, Guinea Bissau and the Cape Verde Islands. They did not see the Roman Catholic Church as a true Christian church, though they accepted the possibility of Roman Catholic individuals being true Christians.²⁹ The evangelicals did not accept the sacramental definition of being a Christian; for them it was not baptism that made the difference, but the new birth, which had always been the central point in the revival tradition.

4. Personal Faith versus Baptism

The decision not to look for personal faith but for sacramental treatment is crucial for the understanding of Edinburgh 1910, as it marks a major turning point in the history of the classical missions. The report, in its terse language, expresses it like this: It was agreed 'to confine the purview of the Conference to work of the kind in which we are all united'.³⁰ The Faith Missions had to accept that if they were to participate; they accepted for the Conference, but did not change their ecclesiology.

The new departure in ecclesiology was clearly expressed by Lord Balfour, the chairman of the Conference, in his inaugural address:

No expression of opinion should be sought from the Conference on any matter involving any ecclesiastical or doctrinal question on which those taking part in the Conference differ among themselves.³¹

This statement, no doubt honest, overlooks the fact that the decision not to include any missionary work in Catholic or Orthodox countries was a serious doctrinal question which raised deep differences in ecclesiology. At stake was the definition of what the church is. In the revival tradition, even in the majority section that remained within the traditional denominations, to be a Christian (and thereby a member of the church) was defined as having a personal faith, not as having received the sacrament of baptism. Edinburgh 1910 changed this position, and that changed the whole development of the missionary movement that had emanated from the Great Awakening. The emphasis, gradually, shifted from converting the unconverted to keeping the converted (plus many unconverted) together. This switch in ecclesiology made it possible that a conference, convened 'to consider missionary problems in relation to the non-Christian world' became the starting point of a movement for the unity of churches.

5. 'Unitedly working to denominationalize men and means'

Another entry in the minute book of the Sudan United Mission, written three months after Edinburgh 1910, reveals

²⁶ They also overlooked the [classical] Church Missionary Society, which was then making serious attempts to reach the Sudan through Nigeria's Middle Belt.

²⁷ On these attempts they could have read Karl Kumm, *The Sudan* (London, 1907). For a scholarly study see Christof Sauer, 'Reaching the Unreached Sudan Belt. Guinness, Kumm, and the Sudan-Pionier-Mission', DTh University of South Africa, 2001.

²⁸ Lucy Guinness and E.C. Millard, *South America. The Neglected Continent* (London, 1894).

²⁹ *Evangelical Alliance. Report of the Proceedings of the Conference, held at Freemasons' Hall, London, from August 19th to September 2nd inclusive, 1846* (London, 1867), 263-270.

³⁰ *World Missionary Conference, 1910*, 8; cf Kerr and Ross, *Edinburgh 2010*, 7.

³¹ *World Missionary Conference, 1910*, 8.

another far reaching criticism of the Conference and the trends it represented.

[Karl Kumm] expressed the view that 'the Layman's Foreign Mission Movement, the Student Volunteer Movement, the Edinburgh World Missionary Conference are all unitedly working to denominationalize men and means'.³² The minutes give no evidence for his assumptions, but Karl Kumm seems to have captured an important trend: away from the society as a voluntary association (which after all was the key to the beginnings of the classical missions) right into the wide open arms of the (organized) churches. The interesting touch to his opinion is that the agents of denominationalization were voluntary associations themselves who seem to have lost touch with their origins.

The Conference did much to give the denominations prominence. Earlier conferences had been dominated by mission leaders and missionaries; in Edinburgh denominational leaders were included as much as possible and were given leading roles. Their inclusion, as far as the (in England then still dominant) Anglican Church was concerned, was achieved successfully, but at a price, too high for the evangelicals to pay. The Anglican Church had three 'branches' then: Low, Broad and High. The Low Church had produced the Church Mission Society as the second mission society of the Great Awakening (1795), and, as the Evangelical (in the wider sense) branch of Anglican-

ism, it cooperated closely with the Faith Missions;³³ however, conflicts arose about the demands of the High Church (Anglo-Catholic) branch. The Faith Missions saw the Anglo-Catholic understanding of baptism as highly sacramentalistic, and they were in no way willing to accept that any territory which had been Christianized must be excluded from missionary work. The Broad Church presented lesser problems when it came to participation, but its broadly anti-conversionist theologies opened the way for increasing theological liberalism and the replacement of evangelism by social improvement.³⁴

So this denominationalization of the missionary movement (others would call it 'integration of mission and church') in Edinburgh 1910 paved the way for turning the missionary movement of the Great Awakening into a movement for church unity. And since this church unity was understood to be *corporate*, the evangelicals with their concept of individual unity were bound, over time, to lose interest or to come into conflict with the idea. It was the logical (and detrimental) consequence of the developments which were reflected in Edinburgh 1910 that in 1961 resulted in the termination of the existence of the International Council of Missions in New Delhi and its con-

³³ The China Inland Mission, the first of the Faith Missions, not only had a distinct Anglican section, but even produced an Anglican bishop.

³⁴ Cf. Rose Dowsett, 'Cooperation and the Promotion of Unity: An Evangelical Perspective', in Kerr and Ross, *Edinburgh 2010*, 250-262 [254].

³² SUM minutes, 4 October 1910.

version to a Department of the World Council of Churches.

6. Unity does not Promote Missions

For another major conflict the Evangelicals had around Edinburgh 1910 I have found no entry in the minute books, but I find the conflict in their assumptions and in the actions based on them. One of the big catchwords of Edinburgh 1910 was 'Christian unity'. The assumption that greater organizational unity would promote greater efficiency in fulfilling the worldwide missionary task seems to have gone unchallenged. When John Mott, the chairman of Commission One, emphasized the need and the chance to enter 'the so-called unoccupied fields' of the non-Christian world in the present time, he also emphasized that a divided Christendom was no match for the challenge.³⁵

If such a quest for unity could find its expression in missionary cooperation, evangelicals were happy to go along. Usually they were willing to agree on comity of missions, an agreement that divided the mission field into spheres of work and influence. This kind of agreement also obliged each mission to accept members in good standing of another mission, who moved into their 'territory', as equal to their own members, with the participation in the sacraments included. With the mainstream of Edinburgh, evangel-

icals were able to see such 'comity' as a means to work more effectively, though they neither realized nor anticipated that the 'native' Christians were anything but glowing adherents of the comity system.³⁶

Another concept was to build a 'united native church',³⁷ at which futile attempts were made soon after Edinburgh in Kenya, Malawi and Nigeria, and probably in other countries.³⁸ Though the Faith Missions usually went along a certain distance on the path to unification, finally their different ecclesiology, affirming not the sacraments but personal faith, could not be accommodated, nor could they be convinced to see the 'threefold office' as the precondition for a church to be a true church.³⁹

Another assumption that went unchallenged in Edinburgh but was quietly disregarded by the evangelicals was that greater unity would bring greater efficiency in missions. In Germany, before and after the big Conference, the complaints of the classical missiologists, led by Gustav Warneck, the 'Father' of German missiology, that

³⁶ For details and perceptions see Fieldler, *The Story of Faith Missions*, 188-193.

³⁷ 'to plant in each non-Christian nation one undivided Church of Christ' (World Missionary Conference, *Cooperation and the Promotion of Unity*, 83).

³⁸ In Kenya the crucial event was the Kikuyu 1913 conference. In Malawi the Church of Central Africa (CCA) was envisaged, but only Presbyterian missions joined, making the CCA to be the CCAP (Church of Central Africa, Presbyterian).

³⁹ An attempt to go again in this direction was more recently made by the Lima Document

³⁵ World Missionary Conference, 1910, *Carrying the Gospel to all the Non-Christian World*, 403.

the evangelical missions were just too many, too small and usually working in the wrong places (as among Muslims,) never fell silent. They were members of the German Mission Council (Missionstrat), but quite junior members. When Julius Richter, in Edinburgh honoured with an honorary doctorate,⁴⁰ published a compendium on the German [Protestant] Missions, he gave every classical mission a chapter of its own, but the Faith Missions were bundled into one, with the misleading heading 'Gemeinschaftsmissionen' (Missions of the Fellowship Movement). In spite of all these complaints the evangelical missions continued to remain on their own, do their own thing, and multiplied, if not so much before the Second World War, but then indeed after it.

Though the claim that unity promotes mission is repeated again and again, I do not see the evidence for that in history. In the last half century it has become obvious that the churches which emphasize (organic) unity are usually churches in decline, and that new advances in mission are usually made by those that are not united, at least not united organizationally. I am convinced that the evangelical concept of 'individual unity' comes closer to fulfilling Christ's prayer that all be one than the concept of 'organic unity'.

A cautious look at economics may support this idea. Communism tried to improve the economic well being of the poor by eliminating competition and duplication of effort. The result was exactly the opposite, but unfortunately

it took a long time to find this out, with great losses for the poor.

IV Evangelicals in the 'Broader Sense'

In my article I have concentrated on the Faith Missions as the 'organized' evangelicals. I think this is justified because it was a conference of the representatives of mission societies. Still, evangelicals in the broader sense must also be considered. Many of them were there, with a piety that comes from the Great Awakening (and sometimes with added Holiness aspects). It is impossible to count them, even to estimate, as evangelicals have a non-demarcated identity, so they can equally support the Faith Missions or the classical missions. But since the Conference was an organized event that proposed and took new organizational steps, what counts is not personal piety, but structural developments.

V Edinburgh 1910 and After

Latourette argues that ever new revivals give birth to ever new organizations. The classical missions, which had organized the Conference, all came from the Great Awakening, and they had made a tremendous contribution to the evangelization of the world, freeing Protestant Christianity from its European/American captivity. The evangelicals came from a different revival, the Second Great Awakening of 1858.⁴¹ In

⁴¹ Some of the missionaries (and more of the concepts) came from the Christian Brethren, who have their origin in the Restorationist Revival.

⁴⁰ *World Missionary Conference, 1910. The History and Records of the Conference*, 22.

Edinburgh the two children of revivals met. They recognized the same father, but it seems to me that the elder brother did not recognize that the little sister had a different mother.

In his opening speech at the Lausanne Congress on World Evangelization in 1974, Billy Graham, its organizer and moving spirit, called Edinburgh 1910 'the most historic conference on evangelism and missions' and identified two streams that came out of Edinburgh, due mainly to the shift from mission society to church.⁴² With due respect to Billy Graham, I see only one stream. Ten years before, the leadership of the New York World Missionary Conference had explicitly rejected the idea of establishing a Continuation Committee.

In Edinburgh, with its denominational bias, it was logical for Commission VIII to propose 'to perpetuate the idea and spirit of the Conference and embody it in such further practical action as should be found advisable'.⁴³ The Continuation Committee was not proposed by Commission I (Carrying the Gospel to all the Non-Christian World), but by Commission VIII (Coop-

eration and the Promotion of Unity). Thus Edinburgh 1910 was a major milestone in the transition from the Great Awakening to the World Council of Churches, pointing rather forward than backwards.

Of the 35 places on the Continuation Committee, the China Inland Mission was offered one. They did not accept the offer, and that virtually finished the participation of the evangelical missions in the stream that flowed from Edinburgh 1910 through the International Missionary Council to the World Council of Churches. The Evangelical [Faith] missions had been a new missionary movement, with its own (and separate) revival roots, its own spirituality and missionary concepts. Their central tenet was (individual) conversion, and their ecclesiology was based on that principle. Their concept of unity was individual, not sacramental. Right from the beginning they had their own separate identity, but this separate identity was, unlike that of the Fundamentalists, a *non demarcated* one.⁴⁴

The little sister from the later revival was there and played her role, fairly well in my opinion, but she had not come to stay, neither was she inclined to move into the same house with her big brother. She continued on her own way, without enmity and without separation. But her own way she continued to go.

The Faith Missions first organized their cooperative effort in America by

⁴² James Dixon Douglas, *Let the Earth Hear His Voice: Official Reference Volume, Papers and Responses* (Minneapolis: World Wide Publications, 1975), 26-27. For more details see Anne-Marie Kool, 'Changing Images in the Formation for Mission: Commission Five in Light of Current Challenges. A World Perspective', in Kerr and Ross, *Edinburgh 2010*, 158-177 [162].

⁴³ 'It was felt that it would stamp an aspect of unreality upon the conference if it simply dissolved without an act of patent obedience to the heavenly vision it had seen' (*Report*, vol. 9, 26).

⁴⁴ This made it possible, to use later terminology, for one person to be evangelical and ecumenical at the same time, and that also made possible the participation in Edinburgh.

forming in 1917 the Interdenominational Foreign Mission Association of North America (IFMA), followed by the founding of the Evangelical Fellowship of Mission Agencies (EFMA) in 1945. In Europe the process was slower. The Evangelical Missionary Alliance in UK was founded in 1958 and the Arbeitsgemeinschaft Evangelikaler Missionen [Fellowship of Evangelical Missions] in Germany in 1968. The Evangelicals in Europe had been going their own way(s) anyhow, and the decision of New Delhi 1961 to abandon the concept of the mission society and to leave the mission responsibility to churches that had other priorities than missions, seems to me to be the consequence of Edinburgh's turning away from its revival roots.

VI The Evangelical Turn

At Edinburgh 1910 there was (limited) cooperation between the mission movement that emanated from the Great Awakening and the Evangelical Movement that came two generations later. The unity that had become Edinburgh's aim excluded the Evangelicals.⁴⁵ I could not trace any evangelical mission represented in the process leading to the International Missionary Council in 1921. Equally I could not find a representative of any evangelical mission at the next world mission conference

⁴⁵ 'What is beyond doubt is that while Edinburgh 1910 has come to be regarded as a milestone in the development of unity in mission, it in fact led to a far more significant parting of ways in global mission.' (Rose Dowsett, 'Cooperation and the Promotion of Unity: An Evangelical Perspective', 255).

Jerusalem 1928. In the delegates' list of Tambaram 1938 I identified three delegates from a Swedish mission in Inner Asia that may have been evangelicals. Evangelical non-participation was not a sign of protest; the evangelical missions were simply not there.

Between the two wars, the evangelical missions remained the minority, struggling to hold their own. This changed dramatically, starting from the 1950s. The classical missions, having overcome the setbacks of the war, continued to grow for a time. But their growth was soon eclipsed by the growth of the evangelical missions of various descriptions.⁴⁶

In the same period of the 1950s, the decline of the main-line denominations started in both Western Europe and North America. These churches talked much about mission, even 'Mission in Six Continents' (Mexico City, 1963). but they could rarely reach the ever increasing number of heathen in Europe or America. This decline was accompanied by a rise in 'liberal' theologies, and if it is difficult to prove that such theologies emptied the churches, it is easy to show that they did not fill them.⁴⁷ Post-Christian

⁴⁶ For statistics on the USA see Ralph D. Winter, 'The Twenty-Five Unbelievable Years, 1945-1969' in Kenneth Scott Latourette, *Advance through Storm. A.D. 1914 and After with Concluding Generalizations* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1976), 507-533 [527].

⁴⁷ Rudolf Bultmann designed his theology of demythologization as a missionary theology to attract 'modern man' to the Christian faith. But modern man rarely came. The same seems to be true of current 'inclusive' theologies of the Episcopal Church in the USA with regular negative growth rates.

Europe is quite resistant to evangelization, but what little progress is made in evangelizing heathen Europe must usually be credited to Evangelicals, Pentecostals and Charismatics.

That Edinburgh 1910 (gradually) abandoned the mission societies in favour of the churches, was accompanied by a (gradual) abandonment of the concept of missions (plural), replacing it by a concept of mission (singular).⁴⁸ The issue at stake was no longer the missions to the non-Christian world, but the 'mission of the church' and, as Stephen Neill once said, 'when everything is mission, nothing is mission.'⁴⁹

Edinburgh's aim was to promote the evangelization of the whole non-Christian world. The discussions at the Conference made many contributions to that. But the organizational energies of the Conference were scheduled not primarily to the task of missions (Commission One), but to the task of unity (Commission Eight). The argument was, of course, that unity promotes mission. While I can see that cooperation (of those willing and capable) promotes mission, unity (when used as a means of domination) does not. Unity at Edinburgh 1910 meant that, in order

⁴⁸ This is nicely expressed in one of the headings in Samuel Kobia's contribution to the Edinburgh 2010 volume: 'From the "Evangelization of the World in this Generation" to "This Generation's Mission in a Globalized World"', in Samuel Kobia, 'Cooperation and the Promotion of Unity: A World Council of Churches Perspective', in Kerr and Ross, *Edinburgh 2010*, 237-249 [248].

⁴⁹ Stephen Neill, *Creative Tension: The Duff Lectures, 1958* (Edinburgh House Press, 1959), 81.

to get the whole Church of England in, the Evangelical Faith Missions had to abandon their ecclesiology.

This meant that the goal of missions was no longer to save the lost (including those with a Christian name and a baptismal certificate), but to spread Christianity to those lost in non-Christian religions. By pushing the Evangelicals (gently) out, the missionary movement after 1910 (and later the Ecumenical Movement) cut itself off from probably the most forward moving missionary elements;⁵⁰ by rejecting the concept of the mission society, which had made the movement great, it blunted the prayed for advance.

Many of the great expectations of the Conference were not fulfilled. As the world plunged itself into two world wars in quick succession and Christianity plunged into the fourth recession, the missionary advance of the classical missions largely came to a halt. Classical missiologists often provided the rationale for the recession; one way was to replace 'missions' (in the plural: specific efforts to win non-Christians) by 'mission' (in the singular: 'the mission of the church'). The mission of the church (singular) is far more comprehensive but far less exciting.

It has been argued that over the next hundred years Christianity did not grow.⁵¹ The statistics are true, but the

⁵⁰ Edinburgh 1910 had not even realized that the Faith Missions were doing exactly that for the totally unreached third of (Inner) Africa.

⁵¹ Samuel Kobia, 'Cooperation and the Promotion of Unity: A World Council of Churches Perspective', in Kerr and Ross, *Edinburgh 2010*, 237-249 [245].

concept is wrong. Christianity grew tremendously, most strikingly in Africa. It was the spiritual darkness that engulfed much of the Global North that brought the numbers down to blot out the advances in the Global South.⁵² And the advances made in Africa were in the interior mostly the results of the work of the evangelical missions, and in the other two thirds of Africa, where the advance was mostly made by the classical missions, their character was more evangelical than in the Global North.

Edinburgh 1910 expected great advances in Eastern Asia. Advances were made there, but far less than hoped for, at least initially. And when finally the great advance was born during the Chinese Cultural Revolution, the baby looked much more evangelical than ecumenical. Not that the united Three Self Church did not grow, but its growth was eclipsed by that of the dis-united House Churches. Without overlooking the work of the Holy Spirit, I argue that diversity and evangelical piety promoted the expansion of the Christian faith in China far more than

unity and the concept of God's activity in the secular world.

At that time some classical missiologists even found themselves on the wrong side of the equation, arguing that God has set aside the churches in China (hopefully only for a time) so that he could work (more effectively) through the Cultural Revolution for the liberation of China's millions. A hundred years before Hudson Taylor had been convinced that China's millions should be liberated by faith in Jesus Christ.

VIII Conclusion

At Edinburgh 1910, elder brother and little sister met, recognized the same Father, but did not start living in the same house, and I am convinced that that was right. Big brother has grown older since, little sister has become a mature woman, and while growing they have met and should meet more often. Since then, two more sisters have been born, to the elder siblings' surprise. Let them all recognize each other, and together fulfil that great vision to reach the non-Christian world with the gospel of Jesus Christ. The geography has changed since 1910,⁵³ the task has not, and (too) much of it still needs to be done.

⁵³ For an excellent study of these changes, including all the numbers, see: Todd M. Johnson and Kenneth R. Ross (eds), *Atlas of Global Christianity 1910-2010* (Edinburgh University Press, 2009).

A Theological Critique of the Emerging, Postmodern Missional Church/movement

Eleonora L. Scott

KEYWORDS: *Contextualization, culture, evangelism, spirituality, paradox, praxis, consumerism, spiritual warfare*

'church and mission' to 'missional church' will be considered. After reflecting on EM's relevance and application for ministry, it will be concluded that the movement's contribution to ecclesiology outweighs the concerns presented. Thus, the movement should be encouraged.

I. Introduction

This paper presents a theological critique of the emerging movement (EM), which is understood as a conversation about how to contextualize the gospel for the emerging postmodern and post-colonial culture, and a call to action in this regard. It will be argued that EM makes important contributions to our ecclesiology, but that it is not without some concerns.

After defining EM, this critique focuses on three main issues. The first issue raised is EM's desire for cultural relevancy, with an evaluation of its approach to spirituality and engagement with culture. The second issue is the contention that our lives are the main medium through which the emerging culture will understand the message. Thirdly, the shift from

II. Defining the Emerging Movement

There is scholarly consensus that the western church is undergoing a massive paradigm shift in response to similar changes in culture. Discussions regarding the effects of postmodernity or postcolonialism¹ on the church have

¹ McLaren suggests 'postcolonialism' is a more helpful term than 'postmodernism'. B. McLaren, 'Church Emerging: Or Why I Still Use the Word Postmodern but with Mixed Feelings', in *An Emergent Manifesto of Hope*, eds. D. Pagitt and T. Jones (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2007), 143 and 146.

⁵² In the 'Edinburgh' part of the Global North (the Protestant countries dominated by the churches of the Reformation), the darkness grew faster and remained deeper than in the Roman Catholic sections of it. In the USA many mainline churches lost half of their members in half a century while evangelical churches frequently grew and the new Charismatic denominations flourished.

become commonplace.² Consequently, it seems that God has ignited concern for the generations emerging from postmodernist and postcolonialist contexts, exemplified in the following example of a church's vision,

Our Dream—To bring together Christians from all walks of life, including pastors, church planters and leaders across denominational and national borders, who want to reach out to people in postmodern culture, and who understand that, in order to do so, significant changes need to be made in the way we run and organize our churches.³

Some see an ecclesiological shift as essential if the church is going to be able to reach the emerging generation,⁴ and EM is the result.

In contrast with Sayers who contends that EM has begun, 'to fracture and...now has broken up into a number

of mini movements',⁵ I contend that the extent to which it is permeating and transforming the existing church is evidenced by the many groups identifying with it. In this sense, EM can be compared to the charismatic movement: it is bigger than one group can claim, although some groups may be more committed to it and are transformed more fully by it.

While the emerging church resists being 'boxed-in',⁶ we can identify three core characteristics: 'identifying with the life of Jesus, transforming secular space, and commitment to community as a way of life'.⁷ Foundational to this understanding are congregations who are deliberately engaging with the outside culture.⁸ The term 'Emerging churches' is thus used for those congregations who are positively responding to the EM conversation, and for those churches associated with the movement.

III. Three Issues in the Emerging Movement

1. Cultural Relevancy

EM's desire to contextualize the gospel for the emerging generation is neces-

sary and commendable. Indeed the gospel is relevant for all cultural contexts as it 'transforms and sanctifies traditions, speaks to specific worldviews, and employs vernacular expressions and modes of argumentation'.⁹ Although there are some concerns to be noted, EM has great potential to reach a generation that is growing up not knowing the Lord (Judg. 2:10).¹⁰

One of the strengths of EM is its view of the gospel as being about community and creating community (Eph. 2:14-19; Rev. 21:1-5).¹¹ This development challenges the existing church to examine the ways in which it has been too accommodating to modernism regarding individualism.¹² The importance of community is easily defensible biblically, so EM's drive is a good corrective to the existing church, which can often reduce 'fellowship' to a greeting and small talk.¹³

By creating space for others to explore their spirituality,¹⁴ EM has built bridges with emerging generations; and this is obviously a positive contribution as it affirms that natural human instinct speaks to a sense of divinity.¹⁵ Certainly welcoming whoever will come (Is. 55:1-7; Mt. 22:1-14), even unbelievers, and furthering interest in Jesus are to be encouraged (Acts 17).¹⁶ Christians authentically and passionately worshipping God, recognizing the mystery and paradox in the Bible as it is studied, enjoying creativity and art, and connecting to Christianity's ancient traditions can indeed convey an experience of God to the spiritually hungry.¹⁷

However, issue must be taken with any attitude that spirituality can be

² See for example, D. Kimball, *The Emerging Church* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2003), 44, 63-64; E. Gibbs and R. K. Bolger, *Emerging Churches: Creating Christian Community in Postmodern Cultures* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2005), 17-18; D. Tomlinson, *The Post-Evangelical* (London: Triangle, 1997), 140-141; D. A. Carson, *Becoming Conversant with the Emerging Church: Understanding a Movement and Its Implications* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2005), 49; T. Conder, *The Church in Transition: The Journey of Existing Churches into the Emerging Culture* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2006), 32, 43.

³ Next Wave, 'About Next Wave' <<http://www.the-next-wave.org/about>> (2009, cited 20 April 2009).

⁴ T. Conder, 'The Existing Church/Emerging Church Matrix: Collision, Credibility, Missional Collaboration, and Generative Fellowship' in *An Emergent Manifesto of Hope*, 103.

⁵ M. Sayers, 'The Emerging Missional Church Fractures into Mini Movements' <<http://mark-sayers.wordpress.com/2009/03/25/the-emerging-missional-church-fractures-into-mini-movements/>> (2009, cited 21 April 2009).

⁶ Kimball, *The Emerging Church*, 14.

⁷ Gibbs and Bolger, *Emerging Churches*, 235, also 45.

⁸ Gibbs and Bolger, *Emerging Churches*, 330; J. Long, *Emerging Hope: a Strategy for Reaching Postmodern Generations* (Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 2004), 186. 'Outside' here refers to being outside of the church.

⁹ C. Ott and H. Netland, *Globalizing Theology: Belief and Practice in an Era of World Christianity* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2006), 212.

¹⁰ Kimball, *The Emerging Church*, 58. See also Barna Group, 'Christianity is no Longer America's Default Faith' <<http://www.barna.org/barna-update/article/12-faithspirituality/15-christianity-is-no-longer-americans-default-faith>> (2009, cited 20 April 2009).

¹¹ Grenz, *Theology*, 481; Long, *Emerging Hope*, 220-221; Kimball, *The Emerging Church*, 95; Gibbs and Bolger, *Emerging Churches*, 94.

¹² M. Horton, 'Better Homes & Gardens', in *The Church in Emerging Culture: Five Perspectives*, 112-113; F. Mathewes-Green, 'Under the Heaventree' in *The Church in Emerging Culture: Five Perspectives*, 158; Conder, *The Church*, 163.

¹³ Ex. 12:3, 6, 47; 16:9; Lev. 4:13; Num. 1:2; Jn. 15:5; 17:11-23; Acts 4:32; Rom. 15:5; Eph. 2:14-20; Phil. 2:1-2; Col. 3:11-15; 1 Tim. 3:15.

¹⁴ T. Perry, 'Young People Consider Themselves Spiritual' <<http://www.bpnews.net/bpnews.asp?id=30274>> (15 April 2009, cited 20 April 2009).

¹⁵ See J. Calvin, 'John Calvin on the Natural Knowledge of God' in *The Christian Theology Reader*, ed. A. McGrath (Oxford: Blackwell, 1995), 57.

¹⁶ D. Kimball, *They Like Jesus but not the Church: Insights from Emerging Generations* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2007), 94; cf. Is. 66:19; Num. 15:14; Jn. 10:16; Acts 2:12-13, 41; cf. Acts 2:1; 1 Cor. 14:23-25).

¹⁷ T. Bronsink, 'The Art of Emergence: Being God's Handiwork' in *An Emergent Manifesto of Hope*, ed. D. Pagitt, and T. Jones (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2007), 70, 73. Also, Kimball, *The Emerging Church*, 26, 36, 115. Also, Conder, *The Church*, 84. See also, Emergent Village, 'About Emergent Village', <<http://www.emergentvillage.com/about/>> (2009, cited 03 April 2009); and Emergent Village, 'Values and Practices', <<http://www.emergentvillage.com/about-information/values-and-practices>> (2009, accessed 03 April 2009).

self-generated or found within (Jn. 1:18; Rom. 1:21),¹⁸ for God chooses to be known only in Christ;¹⁹ there is no ability to hear or understand God on our own part unless God first reveals.²⁰ This is something that EM leaders must address. Because spiritual experiences are unverifiable, they must be interpreted in the light of theology rather than vice versa.²¹ It is absolutely essential that good teaching and theology accompany experience.

While trying to avoid becoming a 'consumer-driven church',²² the emerging church must recognize that attempts to create a spiritual experience may actually be encouraging a new kind of self-centredness and consumer-driven church.²³ Care must be taken that our 'future hope' does not become associated primarily with a spiritual experience of the 'now' instead of with the 'not yet' of Christ's return.²⁴ Additionally, it is a by-product

of our consumer-driven culture to accept 'pure interest' as enough to gain access into a spiritual community. EM is right to be critical of consumerism infiltrating the church, but it must also realise how immersed our society is in consumerism, and how difficult it is to break free from culture.

Nonetheless, the commitment to include others in authentic community and the reticence to speak against other belief systems²⁵ are necessary components in contextualizing the gospel for a generation that associates exclusion with ethnic cleansing.²⁶ As Kimball says,

I hope we will consider how to believe that Jesus is the only way and yet show the utmost respect for those who practice other faiths, changing the perception that we think that everything about all other religions is wrong and that we arrogantly slam other faiths.²⁷

Some see EM as being too culturally accommodating in this regard,²⁸ especially as this paradox-accepting gener-

ation may well place Jesus alongside other religions' beliefs, even if there is an apparent contradiction between them.²⁹ This is an obvious danger that emerging leaders themselves seem to be holding in tension.³⁰ For example, McLaren recognises that, 'The gospel must be translated into postmodern culture, just as it has been in modern culture. In that translation there is danger, of course: of being neutered or domesticated by the culture.'³¹ Additionally, Kimball affirms that, 'All the emerging churches I know believe in the inspiration of the Bible, the Trinity, the atonement, the bodily resurrection, and salvation in Jesus alone.'³²

Furthermore, Gibbs and Bolger clarify:

Emerging churches hold to Christian orthodoxy, affirming the uniqueness of Christ. This understanding, however, rather than being a reason to exclude, empowers them to include those of other faiths, cultures, and traditions.

Because of their confidence in Jesus, members of emerging churches venture out and truly listen to those of other faiths and even seek to be evangelized by them. They no longer feel that they need to argue for the faith. Instead, they believe their lives speak much louder than their words.³³

Thus many EM leaders recognize the idolatrous danger³⁴ inherent in dialoguing with those of other faiths³⁵ and they also are concerned about maintaining the uniqueness of Christ.³⁶ EM highlights the need to empathise with the high value the current generation places on tolerance in order to contextualise the gospel for emerging culture.

However, the movement is in danger of neutralizing spirituality. In our attempts to be holistic, tolerant, and accommodating, we must never lose the distinction between light and dark (1 Pet. 2:9).³⁷ For example, Carson predicted that emerging church leaders would address concern about evil in

¹⁸ Wells, *The Courage*, 69, 237; Grenz, *Theology*, 240-241.

¹⁹ M. Luther, 'Martin Luther on Revelation in Christ', in *The Christian Theology Reader*, ed. McGrath, 55-57.

²⁰ K. Barth, 'Karl Barth on Revelation as God's Self-Disclosure' in *The Christian Theology Reader*, ed. McGrath, 69.

²¹ A. E. McGrath, *Christian Theology: An Introduction*, second edition (Oxford: Blackwell, 1997), 226-227; Bloesch, *The Church*, 34.

²² Kimball, *The Emerging Church*, 95.

²³ Kärkkäinen, *An Introduction*, 228; Wells, *The Courage*, 107, 111, 123, 229; Carson, *Becoming Conversant*, 140-141.

²⁴ A. Crouch and also response by E. R. McManus in A. Crouch, 'Life After Postmodernity', in *The Church in Emerging Culture: Five Perspectives*, 88; Grenz, *Theology*, 611-612, 647-649; Rom. 8:19-20; 2 Thes. 1:7-10; Tit. 2:11-13.

²⁵ See, for example, Emergent Village, 'Values and Practices'.

²⁶ See M. Volf, *Exclusion & Embrace: A Theological Exploration of Identity, Otherness, and Reconciliation* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1996), 57.

²⁷ Kimball, *They Like Jesus*, 184.

²⁸ D. Wells, *The Courage to be Protestant: Truth-lovers, Marketers, and Emergents in the Postmodern World* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2008), 92; D. Wells, *Above All Earthly Powers: Christ in a Postmodern World* (Leicester: InterVarsity Press, 2005), 313, 316; D. G. Bloesch, *The Church: Sacraments, Worship, Ministry, Mission* (Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 2002), 110, 246.

²⁹ Veli-Matti Kärkkäinen, *An Introduction to Ecclesiology: Ecumenical, Historical & Global Perspectives* (Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 2002), 159; Kimball, *The Emerging Church*, 73; S. J. Grenz, *Theology for the Community of God* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2000), 13.

³⁰ Conder, *The Church*, 21. For a good example, see B. McLaren, 'Seeking to Do One Thing Well: A Response to Three Helpful Reviews', *Reformation and Revival Journal* 14 (3) (2005): 124.

³¹ McLaren, 'Seeking', 124.

³² D. Kimball, 'Please Don't Stereotype the Emerging Church'. Blog Post. <http://www.dankimball.com/vintage_faith/2006/12/saddened_by_joh.html> (05 December 2006, cited 20 April 2009).

³³ Gibbs and Bolger, *Emerging Churches*, 133.

³⁴ For an accusation that such accommodation is idolatry, see R. S. Smith, *Truth and the New Kind of Christian: the Emerging Effects of Postmodernism in the Church* (Wheaton: Crossway Books, 2005), 189.

³⁵ See the comment made by E. R. McManus to B. McLaren in B. McLaren, 'The Method, the Message, and the Ongoing Story', in *The Church in Emerging Culture: Five Perspectives*, ed. L. Sweet (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2003), 206.

³⁶ On maintaining the uniqueness of Christ, see J. Moltmann, *The Church in the Power of the Spirit* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1993), 5.

³⁷ Volf, *Exclusion*, 52.

other religions by pointing out the evil in our religion too.³⁸ However, emerging church leaders do not seem to have addressed the issue at all.

While people may no longer be motivated to faith by hell and God's wrath,³⁹ we must not altogether ignore that we are under God's wrath and judgment outside of his covenant with us. Encounters with the holy God in the Bible cause fear, trembling, confession, and awareness of our sin and weakness (Is. 6; Hos. 1:9-10).

Thus EM must recognize the tension and maintain the awareness that some things are not of God. Things are not intrinsically sacred, and spiritual experiences are 'holy' only if God declares them thus and accepts our worship (Mt. 21:43-44). EM desires to see the church more affected 'by the transforming presence of the living God' through spiritual experiences.⁴⁰ However, EM must take care not to confuse experience with genuineness, nor to elevate tolerance above discernment, nor to substitute acceptance for love. Spiritual experiences and inter-faith dialogues ought to be tested against God's Word.

Additionally, EM must acknowledge and fight against the spiritual attack that will work against the movement's good, especially in a culture which no longer believes that Satan

and his minions are real.⁴¹ If EM succeeds in drawing people to Christ, then Satan will seek to devour EM leaders and new believers (Eph. 6:11-13). It is essential to remember that Satan disguises himself as an angel of light and is a deceiver.⁴² So it is a matter of concern that in his criticism of McLaren, Frame twice mentions the fact that he does not address spiritual warfare, yet in his response McLaren fails to acknowledge or address this point.⁴³ If EM avoids discussion of spiritual warfare, it will be restricted inevitably in extending its influence beyond the western church, regardless of the global effects of a postcolonial worldview.

The movement must also take care that its revolutionary mindset is not a defence against being 'open to authentic scrutiny'.⁴⁴ For example, some accuse those with reservations about the 'new' insights as being immovable or wanting certainty,⁴⁵ but this could perhaps be seen merely as a tactic to

41 Barna Group, 'Most Americans Do Not Believe that Satan or the Holy Spirit Exists', <<http://www.barna.org/barna-update/article/12-faithspirituality/260-most-american-christians-do-not-believe-that-satan-or-the-holy-spirit-exis>> (2009, cited 20 April 2009).

42 See G. E. Ladd, *A Theology of the New Testament*, revised edition (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1993), 47-48; Erickson, *Christian Theology*, 472-473; Jn. 8:44; 2 Cor. 4:4; 11:14; Eph. 2:2.

43 J. M. Frame, 'The Road to Generous Orthodoxy', *Reformation and Revival Journal* 14 (3) (2005): 100, 102; B. McLaren, 'Seeking', 121-140.

44 Conder, 'The Existing', 107.

45 D. Pagitt, 'Communities of Hope' in *An Emergent Manifesto of Hope*, 75.

38 Carson, *Becoming Conversant*, 134.

39 B. McLaren, and also response by M. Horton in the same article, McLaren, 'The Method, the Message, and the Ongoing Story', 213-214.

40 E. R. McManus, 'The Global Intersection' in *The Church in Emerging Culture: Five Perspectives*, 247.

avoid criticism. All things must be tested, and just because something is 'new' or 'dynamic' this does not mean we should accept it on equal terms with our traditional expressions of faith; the 'new' is by nature under scrutiny until it proves itself to be authentic. This does not invalidate EM anymore than we would invalidate children as humans; but children are children, not adults, and only time and rigorous testing will reveal their true character.

Conder helpfully suggests that the existing church needs to analyse critically its culture from within, thus challenging the fallacy of a pure church which is 'unadulterated by external cultural threats'. However, the emerging church also needs to apply the same cultural critical analysis to avoid becoming 'so enamored with our engagement of culture that essential distinctives and practices of the Christian community vanish or become indiscernible'.⁴⁶ It is thus essential that the movement be self-critical.⁴⁷

While there are some concerns regarding engagement with culture, EM's commitment to the contextualization of the gospel for the current generation certainly remains a strength the movement has to offer the existing church. Thus, it is agreed with Kimball,

As long as we are not conforming to the world (Rom. 12:1-2) and not failing to pay attention to sound

46 Conder, 'The Existing', 104. Carson also expresses this concern. Carson, *Becoming Conversant*, 125.

47 See Moltmann, *The Church*, 6.

doctrine (1 Tim. 4:16), and as long as we are producing disciples (Mt. 28:19), we should press ahead in seeking to reach others for Christ. But our modern categories and values just might need to be rearranged if we want to reach emerging generations.⁴⁸

2. The medium IS the message⁴⁹

The emerging church rightly insists that orthodoxy is meaningless without orthopraxy.⁵⁰ Of course, this is the view of faith found in the Bible, whose authors arguably never conceived that belief might become so abstracted as to be elevated above praxis.⁵¹ Many existing churches also call for practice to flow from belief. But EM differs in seeing our authentic witness in practice as the primary message to reach our culture, thus reallocating the evangelistic message from written media to concrete living and relating.⁵² So experience and action become the way of

48 Kimball, *The Emerging Church*, 64-65.

49 Long, *Emerging Hope*, 206.

50 Kimball, *The Emerging Church*, 215. S. McKnight, 'Five Streams of the Emerging Church', *Christianity Today* 51 (2) (February 2007): 36-37.

51 See N.L. von Zinzendorf, 'Nicolas Ludwig von Zinzendorf on Reason and Experience' in *The Christian Theology Reader*, ed. McGrath, 62; Job 28:28; Ps. 19:13; 24:3-6; 37:27-28; 97:10; 119:1-3; Ezek. 33:30-32; Mt. 7:16-27; 12:33; 13:19-23; Lk. 3:8-9; 6:43-45, 49; 8:11-15; 11:28; Rom. 2:11-16; 3:30-31; Gal. 5:22; Eph. 5:8-9; Phil. 2:13; Tit. 3:8, 14; Heb. 6:9-12; 13:20-21; Jas. 1:22-25; 2:14-26; 1 Pet. 2:20-21; 2 Pet. 1:3-5; 1 Jn. 3:18; Rev. 22:12-14.

52 Gibbs and Bolger, *Emerging Churches*, 70. Also, Long, *Emerging Hope*, 206.

translating the gospel into the emerging culture's local language.⁵³ This has significant merit in providing context and understanding to a world that is no longer familiar with Christian ethics and terms (cf. Mt. 5:13-16; Jn. 3:21; 13:34-35).⁵⁴

EM consequently de-focuses the written word and doctrinal statements in favour of relationships and actions. For example, consider The Emergent Village 'Statement of Faith', which says,

We believe in God, beauty, future, and hope—but you won't find a traditional statement of faith here. We don't have a problem with faith, but with statements. Whereas statements of faith and doctrine have a tendency to stifle friendships, we hope to further conversation and action around the things of God.⁵⁵

This leads some to question whether absolute truth and authority are being rejected, or whether the Bible is somehow seen as insufficient for the church's life.⁵⁶ However, it is unfair to

associate hesitancy and distaste for reductionist propositions with a rejection of authority and outright denial of any absolutes. Ericson points out that believing there are many perspectives to consider inherently means that there is something 'objective' to consider from varying viewpoints.⁵⁷

EM's defocusing of dogma is perhaps necessary for contextualising the gospel for the emerging generation. For example, if the emerging generation learns in school that 'always' and 'never' statements on tests can be assumed to be false, then using absolute statements in evangelism undermines its reception. If the emerging generation is trained to disregard generalised claims, then a generalised or simplified message will be disregarded. Furthermore, television shows focusing on forensic investigation have indoctrinated the emerging generation with a 'burden of proof' that must extend beyond 'circumstantial evidence' (arguments, reason, and propositions) to concrete evidence, such as fingerprints and DNA. So using arguments and reason in evangelism is unlikely to meet the 'burden of proof' required by this generation—there must be concrete evidence of transformed lives, spiritual experience, and loving action in community too. Thus, EM is absolutely right to offer such living 'DNA proof' of the gospel through relationship and action. As Kimball explains, 'We can no longer with integrity merely quote a few isolated verses and say "case closed" with the sometimes heartless and naive confi-

dence we used to.'⁵⁸ Surely it is commendable that EM is seeking to personalize the objective truth about Jesus in relationships rather than in propositions about Jesus.⁵⁹

Still it must be recognized that organising a set of beliefs and systematizing theology is not just about following propositions and rational logic—there is a beauty in this when it is done well, an order that shows our Creator's character; it also attempts to understand and embody the whole of Scripture as it relates to current issues. The emerging culture may appreciate the tensions with which theology wrestles—for example the idea that God is transcendent and imminent. The emerging generation may agree with the suggestion that, 'The more irreconcilable various theological positions appear to be, the closer we are to experiencing truth'; and that by practising such an 'orthoparadox theology' we can better hold, 'competing truth claims in right tension.'⁶⁰ If the emerging culture indeed accepts paradox, then we should be giving a higher place to theological evidence and logic in the current climate.

Unfortunately, some within EM are guilty of provoking those within the evangelical tradition by using potentially inflammatory phrases like 'the message itself changes'⁶¹ (cf. Ps. 119:89-91; Is. 40:6-8; Lk. 21:33; Rom. 14:1, 13). It difficult to see what is actually meant or intended by this idea, and evangelicals are likely to be disturbed by it. Evangelicals rightly strive to, 'preserve the gospel at all costs. When the gospel is modified, the vitality of the church is lost.'⁶² Yet McLaren acknowledges that if the gospel, 'changes to the point that it stops being about Jesus...it has stopped being the gospel'.⁶³ If that is what is intended, then it would be less provocative to say, for example, that the message translates into new situations, or that what is highlighted varies according to context. This might avoid putting the evangelical church on the defence.

Likewise, some who consider themselves 'emergent' must also guard against a reductionist view of the Reformation⁶⁴ and a misrepresentation of *sola Scriptura*⁶⁵ in ways that suggest the exclusion of the Holy Spirit's work,

53 McLaren, 'Seeking', 124. Mathewes-Green, 'Under the Heaventree', 159.

54 Crouch, 'Life', 88.

55 Emergent Village, 'About Emergent Village'.

56 Wells, *The Courage*, 4, 8, 16, 227, 230. D. Groothuis, 'Truth Defined and Defended', in *Reclaiming the Center: Confronting Evangelical Accommodation in Postmodern Times*, eds. M. J. Erickson, P. K. Helseth, and J. Taylor (Wheaton: Crossway Books, 2004), 78-79. C. O. Brand, 'Defining Evangelicalism' in *Reclaiming the Center*, 304. Carson, *Becoming Conversant*, 131, 145-146, 188-200, 216-219. See also T. N. Smith, 'A Generous Orthodoxy or the Garden Path?', *Reformation and Revival Journal* 14 (3) (2005): 89.

57 Ericson, *Christian Theology*, 171.

58 Kimball, *They Like Jesus*, 137. See also Conder, *The Church*, 75.

59 See, for example, Crouch, 'Life', 91; Kimball, *The Emerging Church*, 76; McLaren, 'The Method', 200-201, 205; Mathewes-Green, 'Under the Heaventree', 155; McManus, 'The Global', 248, 256; Gibbs and Bolger, *Emerging Churches*, 63, 70; R. S. Smith, *Truth*, 133; Kimball, *They Like Jesus*, 208.

60 D. J. Friesen, 'Orthoparadoxy: Emerging Hope for Embracing Difference', in *An Emergent Manifesto of Hope*, 208-209.

61 McLaren, 'The Method', 210, 215.

62 Erickson, *Christian Theology*, 1075.

63 McLaren, 'The Method', 218; See also Michael Horton's response to B. McLaren in this same article, 224.

64 Some take issue with their treatment of history in general. See Carson, *Becoming Conversant*, 64.

65 For the historical understanding of *sola Scriptura*, see McGrath, *Christian Theology*, 71-72, 219-220; and Bloesch, *The Church*, 289-290.

ignoring human fallibility⁶⁶ or ‘the creation of a paper pope in place of a flesh and blood one.’⁶⁷ If provocative language can be avoided on both sides (Eph. 4:1-3), EM stands to offer the existing church an approach to reaching a generation that requires substantial proof.

While it is commendable to call Christians to be living testimonies of biblical truth, we must confess that we are highly insufficient as messages. Michael Horton reminds us ‘the gospel is never anything that we do. To identify out struggles for justice, our compassion, our sacrifices, as the gospel is a confusion of law and gospel.’⁶⁸ But if orthodoxy and orthopraxy do indeed become inseparable in the movement, it will undoubtedly show its superiority to existing ecclesiology.

3. Everything is mission

Van Gelder recognizes EM’s reframing of ‘church and mission’ in declaring itself a ‘missional church’—for the church is thus ‘missionary in its very nature’.⁶⁹ Moltmann sees that this

focus makes a valuable contribution to theology:

What we have to learn from them is not that the church ‘has’ a mission, but the very reverse: that the mission of Christ creates its own church. Mission does not come from the church; it is from mission and in the light of mission that the church has to be understood. The preaching of the gospel does not merely serve to instruct Christians and strengthen their faith; it always serves to call non-Christians at the same time....Mission embraces all activities that serve to liberate man from his slavery in the presence of Godforsakenness.⁷⁰

So we are no longer waiting for unbelievers to come into the church;⁷¹ rather, we join God in his mission. There is much here to applaud. This attitude recognizes the patience required in evangelism, seeing it as a process and relationship.⁷² This correctly de-focuses our programs, our strategies, our buildings, and ourselves as religious specialists and emphasizes that everything ultimately

belongs to God⁷³ who is filling all things:

There is no outside. There is no place where God is not, even now. Even those who do not know the truth of Christ are also created, beloved, and known by Him. He is closer to them than their own breath, though they do not know Him.⁷⁴

However, EM can have merit only if the whole world is kept at the forefront of our understanding of ‘missional’. It is good to encourage cooperation with local initiatives and avoid being ‘an extension of colonialism’,⁷⁵ but we must not forget that there are still places in the world with little or no Christian witness and insufficient resources for evangelism. If by ‘missional’ we neglect the church’s responsibility to other nations, then we introduce a new kind of cultural imperialism—deciding that our culture’s spiritual needs are more important (or just as important) than that of other nations. While everything is mission and everyone should be a missionary, this must not marginalise the needs in other countries, or the needs of those

who join God’s mission to those in other countries (Mt. 28:19). Our missional ecclesiology must develop a strong theology of intervention for social justice and Kingdom reasons.

IV. Relevance and Application

EM challenges the existing church to question the ways it has adapted to modernity, and calls the church to transform its practices so it can better reach the emerging generation. By practising ‘cultural exegesis’, the gospel can thus be contextualized for any place and for any generation.⁷⁶ This is relevant for any ministry. As we contextualize the gospel, we benefit from deepening our understanding of God and the cultures he has called into being:

As the gospel engages new cultures within various contexts, and as the translation of the gospel takes place in these new cultures, missional congregations anticipate new insights into the fuller meaning of the gospel. The very act of translating the gospel into new vernacular languages often opens up fresh understandings regarding its meaning.⁷⁷

It is also extremely helpful to remember that how we engage in ministry now may not be appropriate in twenty or thirty years’ time. As culture is always changing, so we must remain flexible in our methods in order to reach all people with the gospel (1 Cor. 9:19-23). EM prompts us to provide

66 W. Samson, ‘The End of Reinvention: Mission Beyond Market Adoption Cycles’, in *An Emergent Manifesto of Hope*, eds D. Pagitt and T. Jones (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2007), 155-156;

67 P. Tickle, *The Great Emergence: How Christianity is Changing and Why* (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2008), 46. For a contrary view of *sola Scriptura*, see Wells, *The Courage*, 21.

68 M. Horton as a response to B. McLaren in McLaren, ‘The Method’, 214.

69 C. Van Gelder, ‘How Missiology Can Help Inform the Conversation about the Missional Church in Context’, in *The Missional Church in Context: Helping Congregations Develop Context-*

tual Ministry, ed. C. Van Gelder (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2007), 27. For an example of the emerging church calling itself missional, see Emergent Village, ‘Values and Practices’. Also, Kimball, *They Like Jesus*, 20.

70 Moltmann, *The Church*, 10.

71 Origen, ‘Origen on the Church and Salvation’ in *The Christian Theology Reader*, ed. McGrath, 260.

72 Long, *Emerging Hope*, 220. Also, Kimball, *The Emerging Church*, 201.

73 F. Mathewes-Green’s comment to M. Horton within Horton, ‘Better’, 105-138; H. Kirk-Davidoff, ‘Meeting Jesus at the Bar: Or How I Learned to Stop Worrying and Love Evangelism’, in *An Emergent Manifesto of Hope*, 36; Horton, ‘Better’, 119; Van Gelder, ‘How Missiology’, 30; Gibbs and Bolger, *Emerging Churches*, 152-153.

74 Mathewes-Green, ‘Under the Heavens-tree’, 178; M. Scandrette, ‘Growing Pains: The Messy and Fertile Process of Becoming’ in *An Emergent Manifesto of Hope*, 28.

75 Conder, *The Church*, 173.

76 Conder, *The Church*, 54.

77 Van Gelder, ‘How Missiology’, 39.

more context for the 'unChristianized' emerging generation. Practically, this means that we must provide more background as we teach from Scripture. For example, we cannot assume understanding of phrases like 'doubting Thomas' without first supplying context. In any ministry, we should seek to be living examples of the gospel and join in God's mission. Existing churches and ministries would no doubt benefit from entering into the EM dialogue. Let us pray that God will use this movement for his glory.

V. Conclusion

There are issues that EM must consider. Experience should not be elevated above theology, although they may sit side by side. Spirituality must not be seen as self-centred or as neutral, and spiritual conflict must be expected and addressed. The movement must remain self-critical, critical of current culture, and open to the criticisms of others. Phrases that unnecessarily incite the existing church and reductionist views of church history must be avoided. And God's mission to the wider world must not be marginalized.

However, the contributions that the EM has to make to ecclesiology and the existing church outweigh these issues. Tapping into the current culture's desire for spiritual experience is

remarkable. Embracing those who are different and including them in authentic community is extremely important in redeeming the church's image as elitist and irrelevant. As Ian Mobsby says,

The elitism that is so prevalent in the church has created a chasm between the church and popular culture...The gap between traditional church and contemporary culture reveals the sin of the church in failing to be incarnational and requires repentance an innovation that the emerging church seeks to live and create.⁷⁸

Contextualizing the gospel with our very lives is a crucial marrying of orthodoxy and orthopraxy. Realizing that mission is not something we do but is who we are meant to be is noteworthy.

Time will tell whether EM is as significant as it appears; EM could very well be another Reformation of sorts. Kimball suggests that we measure EM's success 'by looking at what our practices produce in the called people of God as they are sent out on a mission to live as light and salt in their communities (Mt. 5:13-16)'.⁷⁹ This is certainly reasonable.

⁷⁸ Quoted in Gibbs and Bolger, *Emerging Churches*, 71.

⁷⁹ Kimball, *The Emerging Church*, 15.

Mission, Missionaries and the Evangelization of Europe: Towards an Integrating Missiology from a Latin American Perspective

Samuel Cueva

KEYWORDS: *Encounters, reciprocal encounter, spontaneous evangelization, reciprocal integration, amalgamation.*

I Introduction

The purpose of this essay is to promote reflection on the missionary task which will help foster an integrating missiology between missions, missionaries and the need for evangelization in Europe. The spiritual need of Europe is no longer simply the subject of missiological reflection, but rather a reality which requires new models through which the redemptive mission can be accomplished. We shall therefore assume the integrating model which we find in the initial missiological encounter between Peter and the Gentiles as related in Acts chapter 10.

The question which we would like to

ask has to do with diachronic mission and synchronic mission for the present millennium. What legitimizes the missionary presence of Latin Americans in Europe? To attempt an answer, we shall focus on three topics: missions and their present reality in Latin America; missionaries and their present reality in Europe, and evangelization and its present reality in Europe. Our methodology involves an analysis of both the past and the present; we shall explain the reason for certain encounters as well as disencounters (related to missiological dislocation or fragmentation, which produces a lack of mission reciprocity; i.e., failures of people and groups to encounter each other authentically and reciprocally). In so doing we shall propose a practice which is motivated by an alternative missiology which promotes more encounters and fewer disencounters.

Through its mission activity, the evangelical movement produces differ-

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ent realities. Here, with encounters as well as disencounters in mind, we analyse three of these in the light of the movement's history that can help us to understand the challenge of an integrating missiology. We shall suggest the integration of conventional and non-conventional missionaries, and an alternative which is aimed at fostering a twofold integrating missionary endeavour based on *flexible reciprocal integration and an intentional strengthening of bridges of reciprocal missionary encounter*. Also, we have attempted to formulate a credo for an integrating reciprocal missiology.

II Missions and their present reality in Latin America

1. Present Reality

In his book *The Missionary Movement in Christian History*, Scottish missiologist Andrew Walls¹ described a shift in the centre of gravity in Christianity from North to South, accompanied by a decline of Christianity in Europe and massive growth in Latin America, Africa and Asia. This interpretation leads us to consider the following three aspects of a new reality for mission.

a) Analysis of change. Both Andrew Walls and Samuel Escobar warned the church of coming changes during the 1980s and 1990s. Today, many of us are privileged to experience in person these changes in God's redemptive mission which are being felt through-

out the world. These changes provide us with new prospects for mission, which must be discerned in the light of God's *kairos* and of an interpretation of the biblical message guided by the contextual lens of a God who makes himself known to his church and who acts in history. This is called the *missio Dei*, in which the church serves a God who is creator, redeemer and owner of mission.²

b) New prospects for mission in Europe. We acknowledge with humility the fact that the *missio Dei* is not static, but rather dynamic, tension-laden, opening up new mission fields. It is dynamic because the Holy Spirit blows where he wills (Jn. 3:8), and tension-laden because redemptive action through the church is always in tension, whether positive or negative.

c) The creation of new models of mission. We have been able to identify at least ten models of mission throughout the history of evangelization in Latin America, including Bible distribution, church planting, faith missions, and mission through migration.³ In 1916 there were 170,000 Protestants, and it is calculated that by 1990 there were 48 million.⁴ At present, the optimistic figure is at about 80 million,

² See further Chris Wright, *The Mission of God* (Illinois: IVP Academic, 2006).

³ For the Latin American model see further Miguel A. Palomino 'Latino Immigration in Europe: Challenge and Opportunity for Mission', Issue 28:2 (April 2004), 54-58.

⁴ Samuel Escobar, in James M. Phillips and Robert T. Coote (Editors), *Toward the 21st Century in Christian Mission* (Grand Rapids Michigan: Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1993), 127.

¹ Andrew Walls, *The Missionary Movement in Christian History* (Maryknoll, New York: Orbis Books, 2004), p. 41.

while a conservative figure is at 60 million.⁵ These figures are related to various change factors which are religious, missiological and economic.

When it comes to the religious factor, it is important to note that Latin America produced the kind of cultural Catholicism in which it was assumed that to be a *Latino* one had to be Catholic. Missiologically, following the Panama Congress of 1916 there was a flow of foreign missionaries, primarily from the United States and Great Britain, but also from Sweden and Germany, such that by 1990 there were 12,000 Protestant missionaries working in Latin America.⁶ In contrast, it was predicted that by the 1990s 100,000 missionaries from the 'North' and 85,000 from the 'South' would be working on the field, and by 2000 the number of missionaries from the North was estimated at 120,000, while the number from the Southern hemisphere 160,000.⁷ However, *Operation World* lists 91,837 non-Western missionaries⁸ and the *World Christian Encyclopedia* gave a figure of 336,070 Western missionaries (Europe: 192,346; Northern America: 135,222, and Oceania: 8,502), and 83,454 non-Western missionaries (Africa: 17,406, Asia:

24,504, and Latin America: 41,544) by the year 2001.⁹

These figures provide evidence that the mission enterprise has been developed under the influence of the western models. Accordingly, Michael Jaffarian argued in 2004 that it is not true that there are more non-western missionaries than western missionaries.¹⁰ Thus new statistics for 2010 will reveal if this figure has changed. However, the fact is that in the case of Latin America the number of missionaries has grown considerably in recent years.

On the third front, economic changes have led to unimaginable social transformation which has produced a great migration from South to North. Preferred nations for immigration are the United States, Spain, Sweden, Great Britain and France. This factor has caused a movement of the evangelical community as a massive but unexpected missionary movement to the North, especially Europe.

2. Point of Encounter

There have been various congresses which have helped to create points of missionary encounter in Latin America. Among those of great historical

⁵ Emilio A. Nuñez and William Taylor, *Crisis and Hope in Latin America* (Pasadena, C.A.: William Carey Library, 1996), 161.

⁶ Escobar, *Toward the 21st Century*, 28.

⁷ Larry D. Pate, *From Every People: A Handbook of Two-Third World Missions with Directory/Histories/Analysis* (Monrovia, California: MARC 1989), 51-52.

⁸ Patrick Johnstone and Jason Mandryk, *Operation World: When we Pray God Works*, 6th ed. (Carlisle: Paternoster, 2001), 747.

⁹ David B. Barret, George Thomas Kurian and Todd M. Johnson (editors), *World Christian Encyclopedia: A Comparative Survey of Churches and Religions in the Modern World Volume I: The World by Countries, Religions, Churches, Ministries*, 2d ed. (Oxford: Oxford University Press 2001), 1:843.

¹⁰ Michael Jaffarian, 'Are There More non-Western Missionaries than Western Missionaries?', *International Bulletin of Missionary Research*, 28:3 (July 2004), 131-132.

and theological importance we can mention first of all CLADE (s) I (1969), II (1979), III (1992), IV (2000), together with the formation of the Latin American Theological Fraternity in 1970, which emerges as a vital movement of critical theological and missiological reflection and of new mission proposals from within a Latin American context. Then there was the July 1976 Curitiba Congress in Brazil, which brought together more than 500 Latin American university students, and which concluded with the 'Curitiba Declaration' and a dedication to promoting mission within and beyond Latin America in the spirit of the Lausanne Covenant of 1974. The Curitiba Covenant affirms the historic evangelical Latin American mission, the church's missionary vocation and the church's new missionary situation in the world. It likewise recognizes the need to cross geographical boundaries, but also those of inequality, injustice and idolatry.¹¹

Another congress which set a new course in Latin American mission was the first Latin American Missionary Congress, known more commonly as COMIBAM, which took place in Sao Paulo, Brazil, in 1987, with the participation of 3,000 delegates. Of special note was the enthusiasm with which Latin America was declared as a missionary force instead of mission field.

With this brief description of these congresses our aim has been to explain the process whereby God has been changing the missionary axis point so that it will become an alternative or complementary missionary force in the

present millennium. With a wider mission consultation among the evangelicals in mind, it is worth mentioning the 'Iguassu Dialogue', organized by the WEA-Missions Commission held in Brazil in October 1999,¹² which brought reflective practitioners to analyse their missiological foundations, commitments, and practices and to propose new prospects for mission in the new millennium.

Similar congresses were planned for 2010 such as the 'Edinburgh 2010' with an ecumenical view,¹³ and 'Tokyo 2010',¹⁴ which was more related to the Third World Mission Associations (TWMA) under the influence of Ralph Winter's missiology of 'unreached people'. However, it now seems that there is a new emphasis on 'Discipling all Peoples' because the missiology of the 'unreached' is tending to disappear, or at least to have less impact among the evangelicals due to the fact that it has been challenged by a wider mission theology such as holistic mission or mission as transformation.¹⁵ Finally,

¹² William Taylor, *Global Missiology for the 21st Century* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic 2000), 1-13.

¹³ Metropolitan Coorilos Geevarghese, 'Towards and Beyond Edinburgh 2010: A Historical Survey of Ecumenical Missiological Developments since 1910', *International Review of Mission*, 99. 1 (390), (April 2010), 14.

¹⁴ Ralph Winter and David Taylor, 'The Story of a Movement from William Carey to Tokyo 2010', *Mission Frontiers* (September—October 2009), 19-23.

¹⁵ See the new emphasis in David Taylor, 'Discipling All Peoples: Today's Imperative and the Vision of Tokyo 2010', *Mission Frontiers* (September—October 2009), 6-13.

¹¹ Escobar, *Toward the 21st Century*, 131.

we may mention 'Cape Town 2010', an evangelical congress in the spirit of the Lausanne movement, scheduled to gather 4,000 mission leaders from around the world in October 2010.

3. Point of Disencounter

One of the distinctions within Latin American groups that promote holistic mission is their rejection of the influence of a managerial missiology; this approach lays stress on the verbal proclamation of the message and the church's numerical growth as the most significant elements in Christian mission. One of the factors giving rise to this distinction is the imperialistic nature and the sense of triumphalism in regard to statistics and the control of church growth data which are found in Latin America.¹⁶ This situation has created an atmosphere in which Latin American missiologists have felt the need to issue a call for integrity in motivation for mission and a challenge to live out a gospel of integral mission not only in word but also in deed.

From this historic angle we might say that any theology of missiology which is put into practice generates a meeting of minds as well as conflicts in the life and mission of the church. Therefore, in relation to the present mission in Europe, the new reality that is before us should be understood, analysed and directed in the power of the Holy Spirit.

¹⁶ Escobar, *Toward the 21st Century*, 131.

III Missionaries and their present reality in Europe

1. Present reality

The new presence of Latin American, Asian and African missionaries in Europe is in keeping with a missional process which emerges not from human action, but from the divine, from the owner and Lord of redemptive mission. Therefore, we assume that the new fact of missionaries of the South presently in Europe is a mission of the Triune God in which the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit are mobilizing new missionary forces on two fronts: conventional missionaries (those who go through the traditional route, i.e. established mission agencies), and non-conventional missionaries (who are sent through social, political and global economic forces, such as immigration, 'business as mission', new tentmakers, etc.). The basic questions to address in this new mission context are: what sort of missionaries is Europe receiving at present? And what sort of missionaries does Europe really need? In particular, does Europe need conventional highly-professionalized missionaries?

2. Point of Encounter

If we stop in for a coffee break at Starbucks to analyse the type of missionary that Europe is receiving we shall realize that the majority belongs to the non-conventional category. One reason for this is that nearly the entire conventional missionary force has been directed toward the 10/40 window. It seems to me that the U.S. Centre for World Mission, under the leadership of

Ralph Winter, since the 1970s, has been one of the most influential tools in the mobilization of conventional missionaries towards specific targets, fundamentally the 'unreached people'. This can be seen through its *Mission Frontiers*' bulletin.¹⁷ This mission theology has profoundly impacted the Latin American evangelical movement, which is evident in Latin America's conventional missionary force.

In the case of Europe, in one sense, perhaps, Latin American missionaries can develop their ministry and mission service with fewer financial resources than other models. This can be seen in the hundreds already in Europe. We are under the impression that in these circumstances it is not necessary to create more exotic forms of missionary sending/receiving structures, but rather to improve existing ones.

One task of a *reciprocal encounter* would be to make an effort to recognize that Latin American missionaries are guided by a worldview whose spirituality is based on spontaneous evangelization. For this reason I call them 'wartime missionaries', since they are inclined to withstand considerable spiritual and economic hardship until they achieve their goals.

We observe that Latin Americans who work in Europe must make the effort to become integrated into the culture of the country in which they do mission. Latin Americans enjoy the

enthusiasm of spontaneous preaching because it is part of their evangelical culture; an understanding of this on the part of the European church can help to create *bridges of reciprocal missionary encounter*.

On the other side, learning the language and becoming familiar with the ecclesiology at work in one's adopted land become opportunities to develop what I call a *reciprocal missionary amalgamation*. As amalgam is made of silver and mercury and serves to treat dental cavities, so a reciprocal missionary amalgamation is a fusion of resources and missiological interpretations which serves to heal those things which weaken the church's mission.

3. Point of Disencounter

If the mixture in a reciprocal missionary amalgamation is inadequate it is, in my view, because the dialogue between the Latin American and European missionary forces is still in embryo or infancy stage. The basic reason for this view is that we observe that European leaders appear to be searching for Latin American missionaries whose perspective is the conventional one. This can lead to frustration in both mission contexts, for while one group tries to assume that God has brought them, the other group tries to submit this to the scrutiny of conventional missiology. To this we add the tension of the apparent triumphalism of those described as non-conventional missionaries, which can create an atmosphere of disencounter with regard to the national leadership of the established churches in Europe.

Another key element worth considering in this process of new changes in

IV Evangelization and its present reality in Europe

1. Present reality

In order to better understand why a missiological trend aimed at the evangelization of Europe exists today, we must answer two questions: What is evangelization and what is God doing presently? We assume that we must remember that in the first instance what we need is to recover an understanding of what evangelization means for the European continent. In this sense the Lausanne Covenant offers a good definition:

To evangelize is to spread the Good News that Jesus Christ died for our sins and was raised from the dead according to the Scriptures, and that as the reigning Lord he now offers the forgiveness of sins and the liberating gifts of the Spirit to all who repent and believe. *Our Christian presence in the world* is indispensable to evangelism, and so is that kind of dialogue whose purpose is to listen sensitively in order to understand. But evangelism itself is the proclamation of the historical, biblical Christ as Saviour and Lord, with a view to persuading people to come to him personally and to be reconciled to God (*italics mine*)¹⁹

Regarding evangelization, the Lausanne Covenant ends with a categori-

mission is the fact that a weakness in the Latin American missionary force is its lack of a worldview which would allow it to be integrated with the culture of its adopted country; something which requires sustained study is its failure to participate more fully in the life of established national churches in Europe. In the case of Spain, for example, the language helps, but this is insufficient for cultural integration. In the case of Germany, Sweden or the United Kingdom, the language is a great barrier to integration, given the Latin American missionary force's missiological pragmatism, whereby intentional language study is not taken into consideration. So we might ask how many of those from the South have become integrated into the European church.

Another issue is the lack of the kind of national leadership which is willing to take the risk relating to a *flexible reciprocal integration*, i.e. one which will provide forms of cultural and social integration, as well as integration into the life of the European church, whose flavour differs from that of Latin America. Integration also involves finding theological common ground which will forge a society characterized by more justice and less discrimination, more harmony and less social conflict in the midst of the church's mission.¹⁸ A *flexible reciprocal integration* would assist in introducing and strengthening mission forces, whether conventional or non-conventional.

¹⁷ *Mission Frontiers* is the bulletin of the U.S. Centre for World Mission founded by Ralph Winter in 1979. See Rick Wood, 'Join Mission Frontiers in Celebrating our 30th Year', *Mission Frontiers* (January-February 30:1, 2008), 24.

¹⁸ John Stott, *Issues Facing Christians Today* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Zondervan, 1984), 270.

¹⁹ John Stott (Editor) *Making Christ Known: Historic Mission Documents from the Lausanne Movement 1974 -1989* (Carlisle, Cumbria: Paternoster Press, 1996), 20.

cal reminder that we are not at liberty to dilute the cost of discipleship, nor to avoid identifying with the new community, which is the church. For this reason biblical evangelism 'includes obedience to Christ, incorporation into his church, and responsible service in the world'.²⁰ In this sense, the church of both South and North needs to analyse more profoundly, in the light of this definition, the way in which it is carrying out the church's task of evangelization. By nature the church should experience an evangelizing mission which proclaims in word and deed the redemptive and transformative message which Christ has given to his church.

What God is doing at present can be summarized in the words of Mennonite missiologist Wilbert Shenk regarding new strategies for mission. Shenk explains first that the ideal held forth in the new forms of mission involves interdependence with a recognized system in which decision-making is shared; then that the Asian, African and Latin American missionary forces at present demonstrate great vitality and dedication to mission, but with few resources and finally, that the presence of the suffering church demonstrates the role of the Holy Spirit in present mission.²¹

To these three strategic processes we would add two more that are impacting the new forms of mission. First, there is a need for a parallel strengthening of missionary ecclesiol-

ogy in Latin America and Europe. This assumption implies that missions as organizations are losing their ability to obtain human and material resources for mission. Second, there is a need to redistribute mission resources according to a contextual mission perspective. That is, spiritual resources need to be applied to areas of spiritual need, and material resources to areas of material need. In some cases a parallel application of both will be necessary. Nevertheless, integral mission is fundamental in either case.

The current stress on multidirectional missiology does not mean that the global church must practise a 'mutinational' philosophy in which resources are transferred from one place to the other while decision-making power is retained. An alternative model involves a democratic missionary theology in which there is greater participation in fundamental (not only secondary) decision-making on the part of all those involved in mission. We propose that we need to foster what we call a 'from countryside to city' missiology, in which strategic cities are converted into sources of nourishment for those places with fewer resources, both in terms of people as well as opportunities for evangelistic efforts.

2. Point of Encounter

More than seventy years ago, Dutch theologian Hendrick Kraemer²² proposed a mission theology of contact

between similarities and differences within the Christian faith and other religions.

For Kraemer, the key point of contact among all subsequent ones is the missionary. This focal point helps us to understand that the missionary is the key channel or messenger in Christian mission, but that the missionary represents the community of believers. It is not an individualized mission, but more properly a corporate one, since the church or community of believers is the focal point of all mission activity, the source from which the missionary and mission structures are continually fed. The missionary as instrument, however, is not a disinfected or antiseptic tool which is not completely involved in the process of evangelization.²³

We see this in John 15 with the metaphor of the vineyard; it is also used by the apostle Paul in the metaphor of the ambassador (1 Cor. 5:20). Both metaphors demonstrate total involvement on the part of the messenger in evangelization which carries with it the task of representing the kingdom of God.

Consequently, it is necessary to promote a type of missiological training in order to carry out that representative work in a way that is appropriate, worthy and consistent. Mission training models, whether conventional or otherwise, must become a fundamental activity and, on that basis, be taken as a point of encounter through which we might become worthy representatives of the *missio Dei*. I assume that Europe can become a channel of reciprocal aid for the better training of missionaries,

both conventional and non-conventional.

Something which can be rescued from traditional mission is precisely the effort which goes into training people before sending them out in cross-cultural mission. This prospect of careful training (which must be improved) for evangelization in a post-Christian world may help minimize the number of casualties in the new atmosphere of globalized missiology. In this sense, *Worth Keeping*²⁴ offers an exhaustive proposal for better long-term missionary practice in global perspective. The point of encounter which we propose emerges from a Trinitarian mission theology which is grounded in a relational and communitarian mission in which the church is the focal agent for mission rather than simply certain individuals. In this regard we agree with Lesslie Newbigin, the missionary in India, who spoke of the local church as the hermeneutic of the gospel, rather than the individual.

3. Point of Disencounter

Since the 1990s the evangelization of Europe has become an unfinished task in which the church of the South must take part. It is not a recent phenomenon, as some assume, but rather a move of the Holy Spirit which has manifested itself slowly and quietly, but also firmly and steadily. Providing evidence for this process are missionary movements which have emerged, such

²⁰ Stott, *Making Christ Known*, 20.

²¹ Wilbert Shenk in *Toward the 21st Century*, 231.

²² David Bosch, *A Spirituality of the Road* (Eugene, Oregon: Wipf and Stock Publishers, 1979), 42.

²³ Bosch, *A Spirituality of the Road*, 42.

²⁴ Rob Hay, Valerie Lim, Detlef Blocher, et al. *Worth Keeping: Global Perspectives on Best Practice in Missionary Retention* (Pasadena, California: William Carey Library, 2007).

as the Latin American Theological Fraternity, Mission for the Third Millennium, COMIBAM, SEPAL, BACK to EUROPE, and others. The need, we suggest, is for greater dialogue, as well as familiarity on the part of the North with the growth of the missionary force from the South.

Who is making this new global mission reality known? Clearly, information comes from mission leaders who have the means to disseminate information systematically, 'from above'. The other source of information in integral mission is 'from below'; this creates a new mission consciousness regarding the presence of a new mission force. For some, this new reality is still the source of headaches, even though they have already taken the required dose of tranquilizers so as to deal with the missiological pain of imminent changes. Others, however, have already managed to forge a new missiology of reciprocal collaboration.

These are the new processes with which we must be acquainted in order to be encouraged as we face changes in the missionary task. The reality is that new ethnic churches are opening in Europe as the missionary force of the South continues to grow with its contagious evangelistic enthusiasm, just as the trend toward the evangelization of Europe grows from day to day.

Here is an illustration of what is taking place: We arrived in Barcelona in 1991. We were, perhaps, the first semi-conventional missionaries sent by a local church in Peru to plant a church among Latin Americans. At that time there were few Latin American missionaries in Spain. Today the situation is quite different, as there are at present more than seventy regis-

tered Latin American churches in Barcelona alone. Without exaggeration, some say that that number could easily double.

Thus, we have an idea of the changes that mission groups, missionaries and the evangelization of Europe are experiencing in our day. Therefore we must accept the great responsibility of fostering an integrating missiology which is characterized as unifying, diverse, flexible, and whose theology is a missionary one. An appropriate missionary theological understanding is that missional integration does not do away with diversity in mission. On the contrary, it makes it dynamic in the context of the missionary life of the church.

V Conclusion

To conclude, we understand that the trend of missiological change will continue to grow and that the involvement of the missionary force from the South will gradually increase until it becomes integrated with the life of the European churches. These changes, however, will take time, and will require a revitalization of missionary ecclesiology for two reasons: first, the church of the South will need to become more aware of the need to train and send qualified missionaries to the European context, and second, it is essential that European churches become more open to helping the missionary force which is present in Europe, and indeed new missionaries who are already on their way from Africa, Asia and Latin America, in a more integral way.

This must not be interpreted as a missiological avalanche, nor as some sort of post-imperial conquest, but

rather as a work of the Holy Spirit, who wills to establish new ambassadors of the kingdom in a continent in which the church is in need of new spiritual vitality, not because it has lost it completely, but because the vitality of the past is gradually weakening, perhaps not because of the church alone, but because of the post-Christian environment which Europe is experiencing at present.

What follows is an attempt to formulate a credo for an integrating reciprocal missiology, which might serve to foster a new missionary theological thinking and missionary reflection:²⁵

I believe that an integrating work between the missionary forces of the North and the South is possible, I believe that to find more points of encounter than disencounter in God's mission through the church is feasible,

I believe that it is possible to forge more positive tensions than negative ones in the midst of a missionary endeavour which is at one and

the same time united and diverse, I believe in the need to learn from the missional encounters and disencounters of history with an approach which is biblical, motivating, encouraging and challenging for today's church, and

I believe in practising a Trinitarian integrating missiology with the presence of the love of God the Father, the grace of God the Son, and the power of God the Holy Spirit, acting in the church which seeks to integrate models between missionaries and mission organizations.

Finally, what we propose as an alternative is aimed at fostering a twofold integrating missionary endeavour that bears two factors in mind: first that *flexible reciprocal integration* is to be fostered intentionally, bearing in mind the socio-cultural context, as well as the life of the church; second, that *bridges of reciprocal missionary encounter* are to be strengthened intentionally, bearing in mind the context of evangelical cultural mission.

We end with the following question: Might it be possible to replace the concept of North and South with a more integrating approach such as 'North-south', or perhaps integrating global mission?

²⁵ For a critical analysis of the Apostolic Creed and its influence in church's mission see Nicholas Lash, *Believing Three Ways in One God: A Reading of the Apostles' Creed* (London: SCM Press, 1992).

The Meaning of the Cross in Mark

Richard A. Pruitt

KEYWORDS: *Gospel of Mark, cross, identity, passion predictions, Son of God.*

I Introduction

What is the meaning of the Cross in the Gospel of Mark? For some, any historic meaning emerging from Jesus' passion is difficult to determine and, as a result, may be lost to the modern reader altogether.¹ Granted, the process of looking to antiquity for meaning, while not simultaneously projecting contemporary meaning into the narrative, remains a challenged if not impossible task. Attempts to ascertain meaning from ancient contexts ultimately require a lens—that is, an angle of observation through which meaning emerges.

By the term Cross, I intend all that encompasses the prediction and passion of Jesus. Consequently, 'Cross,' with a capital 'C,' serves as a metaphor for the efficacious nature of Jesus' suffering while 'cross,' with a lower case 'c,' serves to identify the specific mode or occasion of Jesus' death. In this paper, I will argue that the Cross (as a motif) serves as an overarching theme in Mark's story.² As a story, the second Gospel reveals the narrator's beliefs and values.³ But more specifically, as a proclamation, Mark arranges sayings and events from the life of Jesus to draw specific theological conclusions and calls his readers to embrace the meaning of the Cross. Mark combines the passion predictions, issues of identity, and the cross event into one overarching motif—the Cross—to proclaim Jesus as the Son of God.

In this paper,⁴ I will demonstrate (1)

¹ See R. W. Funk, R. W. Hoover and the Jesus Seminar, *The Five Gospels: The Search for the Authentic Words of Jesus* (Sonoma: Polebridge, 1993), 24; David Friedrich Strauss, *The Life of Jesus Critically Examined* (trans. George Eliot; New York: MacMillan, 1892), 563-74, esp., 566. Strauss states, "[T]he minute predictions which the Evangelists put into [Jesus'] mouth must be regarded as a *vaticinium post eventum*' (prediction after the event).

² It is beyond the scope of this essay to discuss the question of criteria in searching for authentic sayings of Jesus.

³ See David Rhoads, Joanna Dewey, and Donald Michie, *Mark as Story: An Introduction to the Narrative of a Gospel* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1999), 7.

⁴ All Scripture citations are from the NRSV.

that the meaning of the Cross in Mark serves as a central concern of and climax to the narrative and (2) that the Cross serves as evidence of Jesus' identity. I propose to do this by analysing the narrative of Mark as a literary whole, through a brief survey of various academics who have contemplated the subject, and by focusing attention on how the passion predictions, namely Mark 8:31, 9:30-32, and 10:32-34, are used within the context of Mark's gospel.⁵

Furthermore, this paper approaches Mark's presentation of the passion predictions as authentic sayings of Jesus even if recollected from traditions contained within the early 'pre-Gospel' church. The arrangement of the predictions indicates that Mark believed Jesus anticipated his death in Jerusalem and that meaning was to be gained from Jesus' experience on the cross.⁶ From this position, it is reasonable to assume that Mark was not attempting to explain what the disciples believed about Jesus' predictions of death or their understanding of the meaning of the Cross. To the contrary, he is attempting to explain what his readers should understand about the

significance of Jesus' suffering and death.⁷

Mark's prologue (1:1) indeed sets the stage for his Gospel and it is his particular claim of Sonship that finds resolution at the foot of the cross.⁸ Even if one maintains that the phrase 'Son of God' is not original to the text, as many have, the subsequent addition may reasonably indicate that an early copyist recognized the same plot resolution suggested in this paper and added the phrase for clarity.⁹ Thus, this paper argues that Mark uses the episode of the cross as proof for the thesis of his narrative, namely that Jesus Christ is the Son of God.

II Mark as a Literary Whole

1 Genre

'Gospel' is the most frequent post-Apostolic designation assigned to the first four books of the New Testament to distinguish them from other types of

⁷ See Martin Hengel, *Studies in the Gospel of Mark* (trans. John Bowden; Philadelphia: Fortress, 1985), 33 and R. T. France, *The Gospel of Mark: A Commentary on the Greek Text* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2002), 23.

⁸ Cf., Rikki E. Watts, *Isaiah's New Exodus in Mark* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2000), 53-57, especially 54, n. 13 and Robert H. Gundry, *Mark: A Commentary on His Apology for the Cross* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1993), 30-32.

⁹ On textual issues regarding 'Son of God' in Mark 1:1 see France, *The Gospel of Mark*, 49 and Alexander Globe, "The Caesarean Omission of the Phrase 'Son of God' in Mark 1:1", *HTR* 75:2 (Apr 1982): 209-218. Cf., Jan Slomp, 'Are the Words "Son of God" in Mark 1.1 Original?', *BT* 28 (1977) 143-50. Slomp argues that the phrase, 'Son of God', is secondary and should be omitted.

⁵ Although Mark 9:12 is a saying about the suffering of the Son of Man, it does not include a reference to his death. Since the context seems directly related to John the Baptist, and does not include a prediction of Jesus' death, this passage is not included in the passion predictions under review in this paper.

⁶ Peter Balla, 'What did Jesus think about his approaching death?' in *Jesus, Mark and Q: The Teaching of Jesus and its Earliest Records* (ed. Michael Labahn and Andreas Schmidt; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 2001), 249.

biblical literature, such as Epistle or Apocalyptic. Furthermore, the classification of 'Synoptic' Gospel identifies the similarities found between Matthew, Mark, and Luke—with Mark serving as the primary source for the others. However, as Willi Marxsen has noted, the use of the term gospel is unique to Mark's writing and its use is substantially different from how it is generally applied to the writings of Matthew or Luke.¹⁰ Here, *euangélion* reveals the content rather than the form of the book.¹¹

Hengel supports this notion when he states, 'At the beginning of his Gospel the [*euangéliou Iesou Christou*] as an objective genitive means the gospel about Jesus Christ, i.e. the saving events of the ministry and death of Jesus in the "biographical" work that is now beginning.'¹² This does not suggest that Matthew and Luke are not Gospels, rather Marxsen and Hengel accentuate Mark's use of *euangélion* (gospel, 1:1) in a manner similar to that in Paul—as the core of the kerygma. In contrast to Paul, however, Mark's proclamation (kerygma) of the gospel draws upon the earthly life and teaching of Jesus to demonstrate the essentiality of the Cross.¹³

Efforts to categorize Mark largely as historical or biographical in nature are difficult because they require establishing historicity and determining what meaning the central character attached to his/her actions. From this perspective, the goal for understanding the meaning of the Cross in Mark would be to determine what the historical Jesus believed his suffering or death might mean either for himself or for his followers. However, Mark may only incidentally address that concern. In other words, Mark's goal was not necessarily to reveal what Jesus was thinking about the cross so much as what he (Mark) or the post-resurrection apostolic witness believed it meant, not only for himself but also for his readers.

Perhaps a more accurate way to regard Mark's genre would be that of a theological biography.¹⁴ As a theological biography, the inclusion and arrangement of selected information is specific to the theological emphasis intended by the author. Although Mark may have arranged the story with specific interests in mind, it is not the intention of this paper to suggest that he invented the tradition on which the story was based. Some might suggest that arranging material in a narrative for specific purposes may constitute, in the strictest sense, an invention of the story. As noted earlier, some scholars maintain that the passion predictions

were not authentic to Jesus but were post-Easter creations later attributed to him. Others, such as Raymond Brown, however, conclude that the passion predictions were probably not the invention of the writer. Brown most forcefully concludes,

I judge very unlikely the thesis that none of these sayings anticipating a violent death stems from Jesus. Clearly early Christian preachers enlarged and intensified the motif of Jesus' foreknowledge of the divine plan, but such massive creativity without some basis in Jesus himself is implausible.¹⁵

2 Manner and Style

Writing as a theologian, Mark arranges and interprets the tradition to meet the needs of his audience.¹⁶ As a gospel (kerygmatic proclamation) or theological biography, the meaning of the Cross takes on new and possibly greater implications than whatever Jesus may or may not have indicated, with neither perspective necessarily contradictory or antithetical. As has already been noted, the primary concerns of this paper are not questions of validity or accuracy of oral or written accounts; rather at issue is how those preaching the gospel understood the

events of Jesus' suffering and death and what significance they attached to it in light of their own experience.¹⁷ So, in what way does his manner or style address the community's concerns?

It is possible that Mark's community or audience was suffering persecution and could neither understand the role suffering might fulfil in the community's experience or, for that matter, what role it fulfilled in the life of Jesus. Thomas Boomershine argues that Mark is addressing the believer's fear in the early church as they faced persecution in proclaiming the gospel of Christ.¹⁸ Ellen Bradshaw Aitken elaborates on how the early church found comfort in the life of Jesus when she states,

Stories were told, songs were sung, and rituals were performed in such a way that Jesus' death became the central point in the reenactment of the cultic life of the community. Moreover, the performance of the memory of Jesus' death... was closely related to the self-definition and constitution of the community. To tell a story about Jesus' death was also to tell a story about the identity of the community.¹⁹

Aitken's approach is unique in that she does not look at the passion narratives themselves, but rather at texts

10 Willi Marxsen, *Mark the Evangelist: Studies in the Redaction History of the Gospel* (trans. James Boyce, Donald Juel, William Poehlmann, and Roy A. Harrisville; Nashville: Abingdon, 1969), 207-16.

11 See France, *The Gospel of Mark*, 53.

12 Hengel, *Studies in the Gospel of Mark*, 53. Cf., France, *The Gospel of Mark*, 53.

13 See Marxsen, *Mark the Evangelist*, 214, n. 14 and Paula Fredrikson, *Jesus of Nazareth: King of the Jews* (New York: Random House, 1999), 35.

14 See Craig L. Blomberg, 'The Diversity of Literary Genres in the New Testament', in *Interpreting the New Testament: Essays on Methods and Issues* (ed. David A. Black and David S. Dockery; Nashville: Broadman and Holman, 2001), 275.

15 Raymond Brown, *The Death of the Messiah: From Gethsemane to the Grave* (New York: Doubleday, 1994), 1487. Also Balla, 'What did Jesus think?', 244-45 and Joachim Gnilka, *Jesus of Nazareth: Message and History* (trans. Siegfried S. Schatzmann; Peabody: Hendrickson, 1997), 245, n. 20.

16 See Watts, *Isaiah's New Exodus in Mark*, 2-3.

17 Consider Marxsen, *Mark the Evangelist*, 183, esp., n. 126.

18 Thomas E. Boomershine, 'Mark 16:8 and the Apostolic Commission', *JBL* 100:2 (June 1981): 237.

19 Ellen Bradshaw Aitken, *Jesus' Death in Early Christian Memory: The Poetics of the Passion* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2004), 16.

that provide indications of the process of telling of Jesus' suffering and death.²⁰

Building on the work of Gregory Nagy,²¹ Aitken suggests that there is a 'linguistic phenomena of memory in community and that "recollection" of the "there and then" is a matter of retelling the story and redoing the rituals in the "here and now".²² Although Nagy's focus is on Homer and archaic Greek lyric poetry, he demonstrates how each time a story or description (epithet) is repeated or performed, 'it is both [the] same and different in meaning...with each of its countless returns (recountings) the epithet refers [not only] to the same thing, but to a new instance of the same old thing'.²³

What Nagy refers to as 'recollecting forward', Aitken describes as 'reactualization' entailing the 'identification of the "there and then" of scripture and the "here and now" of the present situation of the community'.²⁴ In other words, a deeper meaning inherent

within a story may develop while remaining consistent with, but not exaggerating, the original context. In this sense, Nagy states, 'Meaning is thus "inherent" in the context, not "conferred" exclusively by the context.'²⁵ Mark's proclamation endeavours to describe the role suffering plays not only in the life of Jesus but also in the life of the believer.

3 Plot and Resolution

In 4:41, the disciples ask, 'Who then is this?' The answer to the disciples' quest for Jesus' identity looms large in Mark's plot. In the narrative, the passion predictions function as the dominate and recurring theme. In the scheme of Mark's writing, Jesus does not offer his death as a proof of anything. However, Mark offers the Cross as evidence of Jesus' divine Sonship.

An element of irony occurs when the first to 'see' is not one of the apostles but the Roman centurion (15:39)—a particular twist that would have possessed poignant meaning if Mark's initial audience were in fact Roman nationals who did not possess a Jewish heritage. Here, the centurion's declarative claim of Jesus as 'Son of God' serves as the climax of the narrative, at least in so far as evidence for Mark's claim in 1:1 is concerned.²⁶

Granted, a 'voice from heaven' declares, 'You are my Son' in 1:11 and

²⁵ Nagy, *Poetry as Performance*, 52, n 39.

²⁶ See George Nickelsburg, 'The Genre and Function of the Markan Passion Narrative', *HTR* 73 (Jan-Apr 1980): 175. Cf., France, *The Gospel of Mark*, 610 and 659 and Fredrikson, *Jesus of Nazareth*, 32.

²⁰ E.g., 1 Cor. 11:23-26 and 15:3-5; 1 Pet. 2:22-25; select passages from the Epistle of Barnabas; and Hebrews 5:7-10, 6:4-8, and 13:10-16.

²¹ See Gregory Nagy, *Poetry as Performance: Homer and Beyond* (New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 52.

²² Aitken, *Jesus' Death in Early Christian Memory*, 15. See also Shmuel Feuerstein, *Biblical and Talmudic Antecedents of Mediated Learning Experience Theory: Educational and Didactic Implications for Inter-Generational Cultural Transmission* (Israel: ICLEP, 2002), 135-138.

²³ Nagy, *Poetry as Performance*, 52.

²⁴ Aitken, *Jesus' Death in Early Christian Memory*, 22-23.

a human voice declares Jesus to be 'the Holy One of God' in 1:24 and 'Son of the Most High God' in 5:7. However, Mark attributes the knowledge of the latter human assertions to an evil spirit. Furthermore, Mark's version of Peter's confession in 8:29 does not include the title, 'Son of the living God', as in Matthew 16:16. And, although the High Priest (by way of accusation) comes very close to using the expression, 'Son of God,' Mark is careful to avoid the phrase and recounts the High Priest's words as, 'Son of the Blessed One?' in 14:61.

Thus, Mark informs the reader at the onset that Jesus is the Son of God but reserves any human witness of this claim until Jesus' death on the cross. Within Mark's structure, the plot is able to resolve only by way of the cross.²⁷

Similarly, it is Jesus' death on the cross, rather than the resurrection, that serves as the pivotal action and is the hinge-pin, so to say, on which the story swings. Once it is clear that it is only after Jesus' death that the revelation of Jesus as the Son of God can be grasped, then it is possible to see the manner by which Mark weaves the Cross through the book.

As Roy Harrisville demonstrates, when one reads the Gospel of Mark from end to beginning, 'that is, from Jesus' cry of dereliction on the cross in 15:34 to the report of John the Baptist's arrest in 1:14, the death motif is

²⁷ Gnilka, *Jesus of Nazareth*, 264. Also, Christopher Bryan, *A Preface to Mark: Notes on the Gospel in its Literary and Cultural Settings* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1993), 119.

easily recognizable as a constant'.²⁸ Irrespective of how Mark's centurion may have conceived the title, 'Son of God', such a title is the one Mark highlights for Jesus and one that may be properly understood only in light of and after Jesus' death on the cross.²⁹

III The Cross and Jesus' Identity at a Glance

Numerous scholars have contemplated the role of the Cross in Mark. In 1983, Craig Evans suggested a growing consensus among scholars that Mark's Gospel 'should be understood as developing a *theologia crucis*' and that this theology of the Cross is understandable in Mark in 'terms of suffering and the cross rather than in terms of miracle, vision, and apparition'.³⁰ Ten years later Robert Gundry published perhaps the most extensive work to date on Mark's use of the Cross. For Gundry, Mark does not use a 'theology of suffering' to correct an overemphasis on a 'theology of glory'. To the contrary, he

²⁸ Roy A. Harrisville, *Fracture: The Cross as Irreconcilable in the Language and Thought of the Biblical Writers* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2006), 125-26. For a detailed description of this reverse reading, see 126-27.

²⁹ See Nickelsburg, 'The Genre and Function of the Markan Passion Narrative', 175. 'The anarthrous [without the article] form of the noun (hyios) may not express Mark's view of the uniqueness of Jesus' sonship. However, even if it does not, the language is appropriate to a pagan soldier;' For a more extensive treatment, see France, *The Gospel of Mark*, 660 and Watts, *The Gospel of Mark*, 24.

³⁰ Craig A. Evans, 'The Function of Isaiah 6:9-10 in Mark and John', *NovT* 24:2 (April 1982): 137-8.

suggests that Mark has glorified the passion.³¹ As an unabashed apology for the Cross, he insists that Mark contains 'no ciphers, no hidden meanings, [and] no sleight of hand'.³²

Gundry confirms Mark's gospel as a proclamation but maintains that Mark's intention was evangelistic in nature (i.e., for the unconverted) and not for a supposed-suffering community of believers.³³ He argues that the phrase 'Son of God' is original to the prologue but maintains that 1:1 does not function as the overarching theme of the book. Here, Gundry joins others who link 1:1-8 as the opening of Mark's gospel.³⁴ Furthermore, even though he highlights Jesus' experience on the cross as a critical moment in revealing his divine identity as the Son of God, he suggests that the tearing of the temple curtain (15:38)—and not the cross or manner of death—provides the occasion for the centurion's 'son of god' claim (15:39).³⁵

Michael Bird traces two prominent themes in Mark: Jesus' inauguration of the kingdom of God and Jesus' pending crucifixion. He indicates that the Cross signifies the coming of the kingdom of God in power. Bird suggests that the connection between Jesus' death and the coming kingdom is not explicit but only indirectly linked in Mark 2:18-22, 14:22-25, 14:62, and 15:1-40. He states, 'Jesus speaks of his death as establishing a new order and fulfilling the hope of Israel by redeeming their

sins and in doing so, *he demonstrates the link between his death and the kingdom* (emphasis original).'³⁶

For Bird, suffering is not the antecedent to glory but, so to say, two sides of the same coin. He argues that the centurion's confession serves as the climax of Mark's Christology and demonstrates how it points to Jesus kingship. He states, 'As sonship engenders a commission, it is likely that Jesus' sonship entails going to the cross...it is only at the cross that Jesus' sonship is properly recognized and acclaimed.'³⁷ Bird maintains that Mark connects divine issues of Sonship and kingship, with Jesus' mission of redemption, at the cross.

For Donald Juel, the themes of Messiah and temple are so closely related to Jesus' death that the story of Jesus the crucified Messiah is the 'second level [underlying theme] of the story...even if Jesus never made such a statement.'³⁸ Building on Juel's work, Nickelsburg presses the issue of Messiah and Temple further by suggesting that 'the death and resurrection of Jesus means the end of the old order and the Messiah's building of a new, spiritual temple—the church'.³⁹

Juel links all three passion predic-

tions with Jesus' identity and highlights the combination of 'Christ, the Son of God' (1:1) and 'Christ, the Son of the Blessed One' (14:61). Furthermore, he argues that Mark uses Son of God as a messianic title and that he intends it as such in 15:39, even if the centurion did not understand it on that level.⁴⁰ For Juel, the Cross reveals the Messiah as the Son of God. Others have offered similar conclusions.⁴¹ From this perspective, Mark's Jesus does not reject the title of Messiah, even if he favours the title 'son of man'. Rather, Mark seeks to demonstrate how Jesus reinterprets the concept. In opposition to first-century notions about the coming Messiah, Mark presents Jesus as the Messiah who is the Son who must die and rise again.⁴²

James Bailey demonstrates how Mark used the so-called 'secrecy motif' to show his audience how the cross reveals the identity of Jesus.⁴³ For Bai-

ley, and as noted earlier in this paper, the reader is informed early in the story that Jesus is the Son of God, first by the narrator and then through the witness of a heavenly voice (1:1, 11; also 9:7). He highlights how the reader must have been amazed as Jesus silenced the evil spirits that recognized him (1:25, 34) and later calls his own disciples to silence (8:30).

Taking a different perspective, John Keenan contemplates the Cross motif from a Mahayana perspective as the sign of true abandonment.⁴⁴ Upon viewing the abandonment of Jesus on the cross, Keenan suggests that the centurion makes his confession of Jesus as 'son of God'. He argues that Mark consistently suppressed the human confession of this title because of its 'linkage with miracles' and proffers instead that the title ascribed by the centurion must be linked with Jesus' death on the cross. He states, 'Here, where no miracles happen, the centurion, not a disciple, sees the truth that Jesus, dying in abandonment of all self-support, is the son of God.'⁴⁵ From Keenan's perspective, the centurion witnessed Jesus' abandonment and emptying of self—acts that genuinely displayed divine-like qualities in ways the religious practice of the day never had. In regards to abandonment, I suggest that Keenan is referring to Jesus relinquishing all attachments and desires of self and that it is in this moment of

40 See Juel, *Messiah and Temple*, 83. Also William Wrede, *The Messianic Secret*, trans. J. C. G. Greig; (UK: James Clarke, 1971), 76-77.

41 See William Campbell, 'Engagement, Disengagement and Obstruction: Jesus' Defense Strategies in Mark's Trial and Execution Scenes', *JSNT* 26:3 (Mar 2004): 289, Gnilka, *Jesus of Nazareth*, 252, and Wrede, *The Messianic Secret*, 73-81, esp., 76-77.

42 For issues related to first-century perceptions of the Messiah, see Nickelsburg, 'The Genre and Function of the Markan Passion Narrative', 168. Also consider Campbell, 'Engagement, Disengagement and Obstruction', 290, n. 24 where he states, 'Mark's gospel devotes considerable energy to correcting this [Messianic] misconception (e.g., 8:29-37; 10:33-11:10; 12:13-17, 35-37; 14:61-62).'

43 James L. Bailey, 'Perspectives on the Gospel of Mark', *CuTM* 12:1 (Feb 1985): 18. Cf., Wrede, *The Messianic Secret*.

44 John P. Keenan, *The Gospel of Mark: A Mahayana Reading* (Maryknoll: Orbis, 1995), 384. In regards to abandonment, I suggest that Keenan is referring to Jesus relinquishing all attachments and desires of self.

45 Keenan, *The Gospel of Mark*, 384.

31 Gundry, *Mark*, 1-15, 1022-26.

32 Gundry, *Mark*, 1.

33 Gundry, *Mark*, 1022-26.

34 Gundry, *Mark*, 29-33.

35 Gundry, *Mark*, 950-951.

36 Michael Bird, 'The Crucifixion of Jesus as the Fulfillment of Mark 9:1', *TJ* 24:1 (2003): 27, 29.

37 Bird, 'The Crucifixion of Jesus', 29-30.

38 Donald Juel, *Messiah and Temple: A Study of Jesus' Trial before the Sanhedrin in the Gospel of Mark* (Dissertation series—Society of Biblical Literature; no. 31; Missoula: Scholars, 1977), 57.

39 Nickelsburg, 'The Genre and Function of the Markan Passion Narrative', 177. Compare with Juel, *Messiah and Temple*, 208-9.

abandonment that Jesus' divine nature is publically revealed for all to see.

In light of this cursory review, I affirm Gundry's analysis that Mark essentially glorifies the passion and Bird's assertion that it is only at the cross that Jesus' Sonship is properly recognized. However, I would argue that Mark constructs his story in this manner in order to demonstrate the connection between Jesus' suffering and the suffering of his audience rather than primarily for evangelistic purposes.

In contrast to Juel, I do not think that Mark is endeavouring to highlight directly the Jewish conception of Messiah but I do agree with him that the passion predictions and cross event are intended to highlight the identity of Jesus. The confession of the centurion does not point to Jesus' work of redemption but as a revelation of his identity and affirms Mark's claim in 1:1.

As noted at the beginning, Mark combines the passion predictions, issues of identity, and the cross event into one overarching motif in order to demonstrate to his audience that the revelation of Jesus' identity is truly made known through the Cross. The question to explore now is how Mark's point correlates to the experience of his audience.

IV The Passion Narratives in Perspective

As an author, Mark uses the cross event, which was a source of confusion for the Twelve, as a lens to give meaning to Jesus' lessons on suffering (passion predictions) and identity. The co-

alescing of these three components—the Cross motif in the story—becomes Mark's proof for the opening claim in 1:1. In order to consider Mark's three-sided or triangular argument, it may prove helpful to identify similar characteristics in each passion prediction (Mk. 8:31, 9:30-32, and 10:32-34). Each passage contains (1) an element of misunderstanding or secrecy, (2) a prediction of suffering, death, and resurrection, and (3) an element involving the identity of either Jesus or his followers.⁴⁶

First, elements of secrecy exacerbate issues of misunderstanding or confusion. When speaking to the disciples about his mission or purpose, Jesus either calls them to silence or speaks to them in private (away from the crowds). From the disciples' point of view, Jesus does not explicitly address the source of their confusion. To the contrary, lessons on identity or predictions of suffering only worsen the situation. I suggest Mark used issues of confusion or matters of secrecy in the passion predictions in order to demonstrate that the believer's confusion over matters of identity and suffering could be explained only when contemplated retrospectively through the lens of the Cross. In other words, the disciples must 'see' Jesus die on the cross before they can understand the significance of either his or their own suffering or identity.

Second, Peter's resistance to Jesus' mention of dying in 8:31ff is followed by a pericope of what a true disciple 'looks' like. For Mark, a follower of

⁴⁶ See also Watts, *Isaiah's New Exodus in Mark*, 269-70, for a similar construction.

Jesus suffers. His use of the word *dei* (must), in 8:31, demonstrates Mark's intent in the story. Jesus must (*dei*) go the cross before his identity can be fully known. Bryan suggests Mark's use of *dei* as a 'veiled reference to God's purpose,'⁴⁷ which is then answered in 10:45, while Brooks indicates that this verb implies divine necessity and connects its use to Isaiah 52 and 53.⁴⁸ In similar fashion, Juel translates *dei* as 'necessary' indicating that Jesus' death 'occurs according to the will of God'.⁴⁹

In light of this emphasis, one might conclude that Jesus' death in and of itself was the will of God. However, Balla nuances the use of *dei* in a slightly different manner by suggesting that Jesus' obedience to God's will would result in his death.⁵⁰ The important distinction in Balla's translation indicates that Jesus did not seek death *per se*, but that he sought to do God's will even if God's will meant dying in the process. Furthermore, Mark not only includes the notion that Jesus must suffer and die but that he must also rise again. If Jesus anticipated that his obedience to God would result in his death, he could likewise expect that God would vindicate him as well.⁵¹

⁴⁷ Bryan, *A Preface to Mark*, 104.

⁴⁸ James A. Brooks, *Mark*, (Nashville: Broadman, 1991), 136. 'The most obvious Scripture is Isa 52:13-53:12, which also avoids the title "Messiah"'. See also France, *The Gospel of Mark*, 335 and Watts, *Isaiah's New Exodus in Mark*, 257-65, 270-84.

⁴⁹ Juel, *Messiah and Temple*, 98.

⁵⁰ Balla, 'What did Jesus think about his approaching death?', 249, esp., n. 41.

⁵¹ See Balla, 'What did Jesus think about his approaching death?', 249.

Thus, the goal for Jesus was not suffering, death, or resurrection; rather it was obedience to God and serving one another.⁵²

Finally, issues of identity-or status-are of critical importance in the passion predictions. For Mark, identity is revealed through suffering. Obedience and servanthood define the status or identity of Christ and his followers. Juel notes how Jesus' words seem to call for martyrdom with talk of denying self, taking up the cross, and losing one's own life but concludes, 'It is not so much the prospect of death that is the focus. The issue seems more a matter of status [identity].'⁵³ The disciples ask, 'Who is this man?' But Jesus' response is in regard to who they must be.

After hearing Jesus' prediction for the second time (9:31), the disciples exhibit their lack of understanding by arguing over 'who was the greatest' (9:33-34). Mark follows this episode with the pericope of 'the first being last and servant of all' and with a lesson on the position of children in the kingdom of God (9:35-37). Here Mark emphasizes his point—that identity and status among Jesus' followers will not be measured in terms of human greatness but in matters of submission and humility.

The issue of status is most clearly developed following Jesus' final prediction of death in 10:35-45. Here James and John request, 'Grant us to sit, one at your right hand and one at your left, in your glory' (10:37). Mark does not

⁵² See Bryan, *A Preface to Mark*, 100-01

⁵³ Donald Juel, *The Gospel of Mark* (Nashville: Abingdon, 1999), 129-31.

explain what the sons of Zebedee meant by the term 'glory'. However, Jesus' response indicates the brothers' failure to understand what Christ's glory entailed or even how to obtain such positions. Jesus rather cryptically answers by telling them that they will indeed suffer and be identified with him (10:39)—although it is unlikely that they understood his answer at the time. Furthermore, he indicates that the 'right and left-hand' positions are not for him to bequeath. Ironically, of course, the positions James and John covet end up being occupied by two thieves at the crucifixion—one on the right and one on the left—an honour they earned by breaking the law!

Nevertheless, Mark constructs his story in such a way to demonstrate that the chief seats next to Jesus in his glory are not positions of exaltation or respect, rather they are positions of suffering and rejection. By ending the discussion with a lesson on servanthood, Jesus explains that identification, rather than position, with him comes by obedience to God and through service to one another. The declaration in 10:45 effectively summarizes the lessons on status and identity, both for Jesus and for his followers, and provides substance and meaning, not only to the impending cross event, but also to the present sufferings of Mark's audience.

V Conclusion

The argument in this paper maintains that Mark used the passion predictions consistently within an established tradition. Sufficient scholarship exists to indicate that Mark was building on a well-known tradition traceable not

only to the apostles but, in some manner or another, to Jesus himself. Furthermore, the value Mark places on the Cross as a theological concept was also consistent with an early tradition. For even the writings of the apostle Paul, generally accepted as pre-dating the writing of Mark, provide numerous examples of the Cross motif, commonly known as 'Paul's gospel', demonstrating its central importance within the early church.⁵⁴ The manner in which Mark unites the passion predictions, lessons on identity, and the cross event (the Cross motif in the story) serves as a lens enabling the recipients to see Jesus the Son of God and to hear the proclamation of 'Mark's gospel'.

Using a narrative critical approach, I have attempted to explain what role the Cross motif plays in the story of Mark's Gospel. The arrangement of the passion predictions in Mark indicates that Jesus anticipated that his obedience to God would result in his death in Jerusalem. Lessons involving status and identity—for Jesus and of his followers—are of primary importance. Here, the horizons of Christ and his followers become fused. As Aitken remarks, 'the fate of the individual and the constitution of the community are inextricably woven together.'⁵⁵ Within the construct of Mark's proclamation, the goal for Jesus was not suffering,

⁵⁴ Consider Rom 6:6; 1 Cor 1:13, 17-18, 23-24; 2:2; 2 Cor 13:4; Gal 2:20, 3:1, 5:11, 24, 6:12-14; Phil 2:8, and 3:18. Also, the central nature of the Cross motif consistent with Paul's gospel is evident in Eph 2:16, Col 1:20, and 2:14-15.

⁵⁵ Aitken, *Jesus' Death in Early Christian Memory*, 26.

rather it was obedience to God and serving one another. Obedience and servanthood are what define the status or identity of Christ and what must identify his followers.

Finally, Mark uses the episode of the cross as evidence that Jesus Christ is the Son of God. The cross event serves as the pivotal action in Mark's plot and provides what I have described as the third side to Mark's triangular presentation (lessons of identity, predictions of suffering, and the cross event). Each element depends upon the other, forming the

guiding principle in his gospel. Even if one maintains that the phrase 'Son of God' is not original to the text (1:1), the subsequent addition may reasonably indicate that an early copyist recognized the same plot resolution maintained in this paper and added the phrase for clarity. Consequently, the narrative of Mark challenges the reader to 'see' who Jesus is in light of the Cross and then to understand who they are in light of their own sufferings. Mark invites the reader to see as the centurion saw and proclaim Jesus as the Son of God.

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Reviewed by David Parker

Richard Harvey

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Reviewed by Carlos Bovell

Craig Allert

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ERT (2010) 34:4, 370-372

Mapping Messianic Jewish Theology: a constructive approach

Richard Harvey

Milton Keynes: Paternoster, 2009

ISBN 978-1-84227-644-0

Pb., pp 316, Glossary, Indices

Reviewed by David Parker, Executive Editor, Evangelical Review of Theology

Richard Harvey, tutor and Director of Training at allnations, a Bible college in Ware, UK, has produced a pioneering study of the theology of the new movement of Jewish believers in Jesus (or Yeshua), known as Messianic Judaism. Conservatively estimated to number in excess of 150,000, this movement which emerged in its present form in the 1970s, straddles both Judaism and Christianity,

in contrast with similar movements in the past which have mainly lost their Jewish characteristics (although it is interesting to note that some groups of Messianic Jews are made up of significant numbers of non-Jews!). The current movement, with its main strengths in USA and Israel but also found around the world, wants to retain and express its Jewish heritage while holding to the messiahship of Yeshua; this is often a controversial position and one that is frequently misunderstood by both Christians and Jews.

Being a new movement, there is ample scope for research, and the author provides an outline of some of the major approaches in disciplines such as anthropology, social psychology and historical theology (chapter 2). However, his concern is with the theology of the movement which has not been tackled before. His

approach is a mainly descriptive one, 'mapping' the various examples of theology to be found in the movement, but also 'constructive' in making suggestions about where more work needs to be done. He usefully adopts Byron L. Sherwin's criteria for a 'valid Jewish theology'—authenticity, coherence, contemporaneity and communal acceptance.

The major part of the book (chapters 4 to 8) covers the three major topics for Messianic Judaism—the doctrine of God (including Jeshua as Messiah), the Torah (in theory and in practice) and the future of Israel (including eschatology and the land). As an exercise in 'mapping', the viewpoints of a wide range of theologians are described with helpful summaries at the end of each section. Often the treatment is terse (especially in the earlier part), making it both easy and hard to read—it is possible to make rapid progress scanning the catalogue of views, but the range of material, the number of theologians to be considered and the lack of in-depth explanation sometimes proves problematic. It should be noted that, because the prime aim of the book is to produce an understanding of the various theologies, it is a definite drawback not to have more personal and other relevant background of the theologians discussed.

Because the central theological topics treated in this book (Theology proper, Torah, and eschatology) are of such crucial importance to Jewish believers in Jeshua, Harvey has made a vitally important contribution to the movement in which he personally is an integral part. His suggestions about the limitations and gaps in current theological understanding and further aspects which need to be developed should provide his Messianic Jewish readers with plenty of ideas to strengthen their movement in the future. However, his work is also of importance

to non-Jewish believers and theologians. Messianic Judaism is a movement that is both new and one that is simply the modern expression of something that has been in existence from the beginning. So it is of great interest for outsiders to see how it goes about developing its own thinking as it wrestles with the particular issues that it faces. It is also of value as a case study in how to deal with the particular context in which any form of Christian faith finds itself; this is especially so in dealing with 'Torah in practice' where the details of daily life and worship are discussed: that is, to what extent are the traditional ways of their past faith and culture to be maintained by people with a new faith. Of course, it is a more pressing issue for Messianic Jews because their cultural background is drawn in large from the Old Testament.

This is also a valuable study for Christians who themselves must take account of the Old Testament background of their faith, and decide what is the impact on this heritage of believing in Jesus as Messiah. Of special importance is the extent to which the 'orthodoxy' which they have inherited (whether it be the confessional statements of the early church in its Hellenistic period as seen in the ecumenical creeds, some later form of evangelicalism, or a local culture in a 'missionary' context) has been conditioned by the prevailing culture rather than by the inherent truth of the biblical story. Historically, this study is of importance in understanding more about the development of doctrine (and practice) in the early church period as Messianic Jews consider the role of Rabbinic Judaism in the formation of their traditional Jewish culture. This is also a matter which is relevant to Islamic views on developments in the early Christian church and its emergence at the end of that period.

The author treats the wide range of topics and authors with fairness and equality, making quite clear his own point of view and offering recommendations for further theological reflection. The final chapter consists of a comprehensive summary of the various positions on the three main topics, together with an eight-fold typology of Messianic Jewish Theology, ranging from a conservative approach right through to a more radical one.

The 'constructive' part of the project is mainly confined to the last few pages discussing the characteristics of the current theological positions, and mentioning several additional topics for future treatment, including revelation and tradition, ecclesiology and Israelology, Christology and election, Holocaust theology, and pneumatology. The work is concluded with some particular questions for future research such as theological models and methodology and detailed studies of particular theologians.

Harvey has succeeded in his aim of providing the 'first account of MJT [Messianic Jewish Theology] from a theological perspective by an engaged practitioner'. His work is understandably largely descriptive rather than prescriptive, and as such, leaves the reader desirous of much more. This work draws on US and Israeli theologians only, so there is scope for considering a wider geographical map. There is frequent emphasis on the wide variety of points of view and perspectives amongst Messianic Judaism, so its future as a coherent movement should be watched with interest.

ERT (2010) 34:4, 372-374

**A High View of Scripture?
The Authority of the Bible and
the Formation of the New
Testament Canon**

Craig Allert

Grand Rapids: Baker Academic,
2007

ISBN 978-08010-2778-9

Pb, pp 203, bibliog., indices

Reviewed by Carlos Bovell, NJ, USA

Craig Allert confronts the evangelical claim that the only 'high' view of scripture in contemporary bibliography is the verbal plenary view of inspiration. In his experience as an evangelical scholar and teacher, he has observed how proponents of verbal plenary inspiration insist their position represents 'the only possible high view of scripture. And since evangelicals traditionally hold a high view of Scripture, *all evangelicals are virtually locked into this view for fear of espousing the dreaded low view of Scripture*' (emphasis added). Allert will have none of this. In his mind, 'what the Bible is has much importance for what the Bible says, and a high view needs to take this into consideration'. Specifically, 'a high view of Scripture demands an understanding and integration of the Bible's very formation', which is precisely what the book helps set in motion.

A High View of Scripture? is offered to readers as the third volume of Baker's *Evangelical Resourcement* series, edited by D. H. Williams. The series aims to help contemporary churches retrieve the resources of the early church for theological appropriation today.

Underlying the book's proposal is a growing concern that some evangelicals have fallen into a dead traditionalism, a con-

servative traditionalism that has believers instinctively defending 'fundamentals' without regard for historical perspective. Although one would expect evangelical scholars to be more historically sensitive when they theorize about the authority of scripture, key pivotal thinkers (e.g., B. B. Warfield) have influenced posterity in ways that have proven all but oblivious to a proper understanding of history. Hence Allert's grave concerns for specious misconceptions regarding scripture that have managed over time to form a central part of the popular church's self-understanding and, especially within the North American churches, the perceptions of ministers and lay persons, Allert's target audience.

Far from encouraging a naturalistic understanding of the Bible's formation, Allert sees God's providential hand always at work in the lengthy, historical process that gradually produced the Bible. The treatment of canonical formation is not intended as exhaustive, but rather extensive enough to give readers a taste for the canonical process. As such, the book strategically sets out to accomplish two main goals: indicating the unlikelihood of a second century canon and illustrating the crucial role of the church in the canon's four-century-long formation. The implications of these developments are then explored for contemplating an evangelical doctrine of scripture, not least its inerrancy and inspiration.

The subject of canon formation remains contentious in scholarly circles. McDonald's and Sander's *The Canon Debate* (Hendrickson, 2002) is a prime example. To expect *A High View of Scripture?* to further this debate would be to misunderstand it. Rather, what Allert so effectively does is help account for the uncanny monopoly verbal plenary inspira-

tion presently enjoys over a wide segment of North American conservative evangelicalism. Indeed, the work goes to great lengths to *expose* such a monopoly and help readers who find themselves subject to it escape its ideological clutches. Allert concedes, candidly enough, that '[m]uch is at stake for me in this study, for as an evangelical I have been taught and still maintain that the Bible is central in the Christian life; this has not been a merely academic study...Before I began my serious study of the formation of the New Testament canon, I subscribed wholeheartedly to the creed (!) 'No creed but the Bible.' But I soon came to the realization that the Bible grew in the cradle of the church.'

Why would an obvious historical point like this have such a profound impact on an evangelical scholar? What spiritual ramifications are there for someone like the author who was taught to approach his faith in such a way as to have 'No creed but the Bible'? 'The assumption is', he explains, 'that one group or person can be closer to true Christianity solely by studying the New Testament documents.' This remains a widespread belief. Yet for Allert, it was his very efforts to carry out this spiritual mandate that caused him to face the fact that 'not only [did] the Bible [grow] in the cradle of the church, but also that the leaders of the institutional church had a significant hand in forming our New Testament canon'. The predicament can be variously expressed: How can there possibly be no creed save the Bible when creeds were fundamental to the Bible's own formation? How can one possibly get closer to 'real' Christianity than the early church by going directly to the New Testament if it was *within* the early church that the New Testament was actively formed?

An evangelical view of scripture that

claims to be 'high' would presumably take these considerations to heart, doing all that it possibly can to understand scripture on its own terms. Surely a theological account that owns up to the active involvement of the church in New Testament formation would rank among the 'highest' available to evangelicals today. Yet it is precisely here that the verbal plenary monopoly rears its ugly head. Unfortunately and without some irony (as evinced by at least one commentator's judgment), Allert's high view of scripture is 'far too low' for the likes of those who are in greatest need of reckoning with it. Notwithstanding, *A High View of Scripture?* is a credible and edifying presentation of New Testament formation and how it should inform views of scripture worthy of evangelicalism.

ERT (2010) 34:4, 374-376

The Emergence of Evangelicalism: Exploring Historical Continuities

Edited by Michael A. G. Haykin and Kenneth J. Stewart

Nottingham: Inter-Varsity Press, 2008

ISBN 978-1-84474-254-7
Pb, pp 432, Index

Reviewed by Richard V. Pierard,
Hendersonville, NC, USA

David W. Bebbington's *Evangelicalism in Modern Britain: A History from the 1730s to the 1980s* (1989; originally Unwin Hyman, now Routledge) is an extraordinary book that I devoured almost as soon as I got my hands on a copy. It was memorable for three reasons: it provided a definition of evangelicalism that now has become virtually standard among writers on the topic, it offered a chronological starting point for the movement, and it

explored the links between evangelicalism and the most significant intellectual movement of its time, the Enlightenment.

For years I have sought to provide a workable definition of evangelicalism in my own works, and I found the 'Bebbington Quadrilateral'—conversionism, activism, biblicism, and crucicentrism—to be quite useful. The second point—positing the 1730s as the beginning of the movement was more problematic, as I had seen evangelical characteristic in Puritanism and Pietism, almost a century earlier. The third—the connection with the Enlightenment especially intrigued me. I have been very suspicious of the efforts of so many evangelical writers to blame all the things in the modern era that they did not like upon the Enlightenment, from the use of reason and empiricism to the separation of church and state, and Bebbington gave us the opportunity to reflect more carefully and sympathetically on this crucial period.

The book under discussion is a multi-author response to *Evangelicalism in Britain*. The editors are strong confessionals, one a Baptist and the other a Presbyterian, and they are sympathetic to the enterprise as well as critical of it in some points. They assembled a team of eighteen writers, many of whom share their concerns. Like all collective works, the quality of the contributions ranges widely, from the brilliant to the average, and it is easy to fault the editors for not always having the best scholars on board. As one who has edited volumes like this, I know how difficult it is to enlist the people you want and to then to extract manuscripts from them, and Haykin and Stewart have done remarkably well in this regard.

It opens with a 'review of the reviews' by that indefatigable scholar of Victorian

religion, Timothy Larsen. As one whose books are usually ignored, I had a twinge of envy as Larsen worked through the forty-four reviews that he had located of *Evangelicalism in Britain*. But it was remarkable to reflect on the diversity of opinions that the book evoked and the high respect even the critics held of Bebbington's work. The symposium then includes a critique of the Enlightenment connection, five regional perspectives—Wales, Scotland, Calvinist Methodism in England proper, New England prior to the Great Awakening, and a Dutch proto-evangelical movement; six 'era' perspectives—Martin Luther, John Calvin and A. M. Toplady, Cranmer and Tudor evangelicalism, Puritanism, Jonathan Edwards, and nineteenth-century perceptions of evangelicalism; and a treatment of four specific questions—conversion autobiographies, epistemology and assurance, eschatology, and doctrines of Scripture. The main bone of contention was the issue of continuity—when did evangelicalism begin? Several writers were unwilling to exclude the Reformers or Puritans from the model. Others raised questions about specific items in the quadrilateral.

In a concluding essay Bebbington responds to his critics and he does not back down from his position. He shows that the activism of the earlier figures was not the same as that of the eighteenth-century evangelicals, particularly when it came to overseas missions. Then he exposes the greatest weakness in *The Emergence of Evangelicalism*, namely, how thin it is on English Methodism. There were no contributors from that tradition and a failure to address the novelty of Methodism skews the evidence favouring continuity between the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. He stands by his argument that the cultural and intellectu-

al movement that was the Enlightenment was the catalyst for the creation of the orthodox Christian movement known as evangelicalism.

Strikingly absent in a symposium of this magnitude, especially in the twenty-first century, is the involvement of any women scholars and the unique perspectives they would bring to the table. There are plenty of them out there who are producing noteworthy and even ground-breaking works in the history of evangelicalism. Could that be a reflection of the conservative denominational backgrounds of the editors, where women are denied any meaningful place in theological education and scholarship? The same is true of Pietism. As a member of the Pietism Study Group of the American Society of Church History, I can assure readers that numerous people are labouring in this vineyard. To be sure, the leading English-language scholar of German Pietism, Professor W. R. Ward, Emeritus of the University of Durham (and a Methodist no less!), is cited now and then, and I get the feeling that some contributors are aware of the absence of this perspective.

This brings up a larger problem. For years I have encouraged the scholars of trans-Atlantic evangelicalism to pay more attention to the important connections with European continental evangelicals and the cross-fertilization that resulted from them. I have mentioned this again in reviews of a couple books in the current IVP series on the history of evangelicalism. Actually, one writer does focus on an obscure Dutch group and Stewart almost gets there in his comments on Robert Haldane and F. S. L. Gaussen. But without a full-orbed treatment of the *Erweckung* in German-speaking and the *Reveil* in French-speaking Europe, the rich and stimulating discussions of trans-Atlantic evangelicalism are somewhat impoverished.

The Haykin and Stewart volume is a noteworthy contribution to the ongoing definition discussion of evangelicalism. It has raised points and provided insights that will enrich our conversations in the years to come. We can be grateful for their endeavour.

ERT (2010) 34:4, 376-377

**Just War as Christian
Discipleship:
Recentering the Tradition in the
Church rather than the State**

Daniel M. Bell Jr.

Grand Rapids: Brazos Press, 2009
ISBN: 978-1-58743-225-5
Pb, pp 267, Index.

*Reviewed by Terrance L. Tiessen,
Providence Theological Seminary, MB,
Canada*

Daniel Bell interprets the just war tradition 'in terms of concrete practices that might contribute to the church's ability to make faithful moral judgments regarding justice in war and then to live out those judgments' (15). To that end, he concludes each chapter with a reflection on the challenges that a particular dimension of the tradition presents to the church. Unlike books that defend a theory concerning the use of violence in comparison with other Christian alternatives, Bell focuses on the ways in which Just War theory and practice, when worked out as a form of Christian discipleship (CD), differs from Just War theory that approaches the issue with a public policy checklist (PPC). Whereas the latter approach often views war as a necessary evil, Bell explains why, when and how the use of military force can be an act of Christian love in pursuit of justice.

Bell reviews the historical development of Just War theory and practice before con-

structing his account of Just War (CD). He finds Just War (PPC) to be separated from Christian faith and practice, even when its sources are explicitly Christian writers. Whereas the purpose of Just War (PPC) is to guide national states, Just War (CD) aims to guide the church (including Christian politicians). Just War (PPC) is law centred but Just War (CD) focuses on character because it can be lived out only by those who are spiritually formed within a Christian community that instructs, sustains, supports, corrects and forgives. Only people who are mature in the virtues of temperance, prudence, patience, love, courage, and fidelity, and who find their strength in God, can follow Jesus faithfully in the use of force for the common good, seeking peace through justice for both friends and enemies.

Accordingly, Bell considers questions such as who has the authority to decide that a nation should go to war, what cause justifies military action, with what intent soldiers must fight to do so justly, how last resort and the reasonable chance of success, and how they should be understood as criteria for the initiation or termination of military action, and how the means of just fighting are determined by the principles of discrimination and proportionality.

I am unaware of another book that so astutely details the challenges faced by the church as a people committed to living in love that seeks the common good of all its neighbours, striving for peace through justice for everyone. Bell knows well that this is a very difficult way of life. The commitment to justice for all, even when its pursuit entails costly sacrifice on the part of those who oppose injustice, can be lived only in community by the strength of God. Living in a community that forms its people like this affects the way Christians live in times of

peace as much as it does in war.

Bell's book makes a very fine contribution to the life of the church in the world but it raised two primary questions for me. As an heir of the radical reformation tradition, I found myself sometimes uncomfortable with the role defined for the church in society. Bell's perception of this role best suits a church-state or Christendom framework. Though his proposal will challenge separatists in a healthy way, many of us will envision the church as living out the principles that Bell defines well in a somewhat different manner than he proposes.

The second question has been more unsettling. I have long been convinced that Christians should participate in wars fought justly for the common good, but I have been helped by Bell's exposition of the distinct ways in which just war is pursued as a Christian discipleship. I now see, however, that those differences narrow considerably the situations in which Christians can faithfully serve in the armed forces of their nations. Ironically, this fine argument for discriminate Christian participation in military action may serve to decrease significantly the gap between Christian pacifists and Christian just war theorists. This is not a bad result but it has far reaching implications that churches and their members will not enter into easily.

Bell is associate professor of theological ethics at Lutheran Theological Southern Seminary in Columbia, South Carolina and is an ordained elder in the United Methodist Church.

ERT (2010) 34:4, 377-379

**Pastoral Care in African
Christianity**
Edited by Douglas Waruta and
Hannah Kinoti

Acton Publishers, Nairobi, Kenya,
2005.

ISBN 9966-888-12-8
Pb, pp 276, Bibliog., Index

Reviewed by Martin Olando

Pastoral care in African Christianity is a book that consists of challenging essays about this important topic, written by top African theologians such as Mary N. Getui, Associate Professor of Religious Studies, Kenyatta University, Dr. Laurent Magesa from Tanzania, Dr. Peter Kanyandago Director of African Research Documentation Centre, Uganda, et al; it is edited by Douglas Waruta and Hannah Kinoti.

Key issues tackled in this book range from the meaning of pastoral and general theology, healing as a pastoral concern, pastoral response to violence in Africa, domestic violence against the vulnerable groups such as women and children and marriage and family in contemporary African societies.

General counsel is important in Africa because it touches physical, emotion and spiritual nurturing. It is also useful for the support of family and society. The society can thrive well if the unit of the family is stable. Human beings need the support of each other, which at times is not forthcoming. Counselling helps individuals and groups understand themselves better and relate to fellow humans in an accepted manner.

In contemporary Africa, professional counselling has not been well established, though informal counselling goes on

through family relationships, elders and neighbours. This contrasts with pastoral counselling whose approach is theologically based. It assumes that human life is sacred and must be preserved since the basis of human life is on the basis of Imago Dei (Image of God). The image of God is reflected in humankind through creativity, companionship, immortality, dominion of the human kind over creation and the fellowship between the humankind and God.

Violence to women in Africa has become a common occurrence, especially through civil wars in many African countries. One of the contributors in this book, Teresia Hinga, from De Paul University, USA, discusses violence against women from the wider perspective of the society and church. She gives illustrations from biblical and traditional cultures which influence Christianity in Africa. She calls on women to be pastors amongst themselves and the church too. She challenges the church to show appropriate pastoral response to violence against women. This could be achieved by appreciating women's woes being actively involved in the process of raising social consciousness on the issues.

Africa needs healing as a result of many factors that have caused problems. Chapter four emphasises that healing should be a pastoral concern in the church in Africa today. Though the church is aware of the importance of healing, more efforts ought to be shown. This should be a combined, integrated or holistic approach to health care instead of a piecemeal one that caters for only one aspect of an individual's personality. Already, Africa is witnessing healing ministries in Pentecostal churches, Charismatic renewal movement, African independent Churches and traditional African healing practices. The mission of

the church has been set by Christ in these words: 'to heal, the sick, cleanse the lepers, raise the dead, cast out demons' (Mt. 10:8). This means that healing offered by the church in Africa is very relevant and valuable. An holistic understanding should determine the African understanding of health and diseases because the African worldview includes spiritual, mystical and physical aspects. The church in Africa should bring salvation to the whole person through healing ministry.

The pastoral counselling is not the responsibility of bishops and clergy alone, but the whole body of Christ. The maxim of the 'priesthood of all believers' serves to illustrate that it is the Christian family commitment to care for one another. When there is a sick person who needs pastoral care, it would be unfair to travel thousand miles to get the clergy or wait for their presence as the sick desperately look for help. Pastoral care given to the sick should inspire hope, faith and encourage the sick. The church has an obligation to continue with the healing ministry of Jesus Christ.

The impact of the new influences from the west, growth of cities, and the introduction of monetary economies have had a drastic negative impact on the traditional African institution of marriage and family, resulting in weakness and decay. This confusion has led to unstable individuals and social disorder. Marriage was considered a lifelong union, but with adequate justification, it could be dissolved. Divorce in African societies was not common, but possible. Major grounds for divorce were cruelty, laziness, adultery and in some cases childlessness. Marriage could be monogamous or polygamous. Due to cultural value of children in traditional African society, polygamy was probably the ideal form of marriage particularly for those who could afford it.

There has been a breakdown of traditional values. Churches, hospitals, schools, courts and other social agencies have gained predominance, replacing traditional institutions of the African society. The role of elders and parents with regards to marriage is becoming less important as the marrying couple and their 'young friends' assume responsibility for marriages. Parenting is being replaced by house helps, nannies, nursery schools, primary schools and the entire educational process. The African society is bringing up a generation which does not understand what their values ought to be.

Because of these emerging trends, it is important that pastoral care and counselling should be available to the African families. Credible and strong families have their roots in the types of marriages contracts and customs observed. The weakening of the family in Africa is a matter of concern for Christian theologians, social analysts, leaders and pastors. The African church undertakes discussion and research on marriage-related issues and offers direction, since the church is the light of the world in this crooked universe.

Pastoral ministry should be to both young and old. The church in Africa owes the aged as much pastoral care as it does other sectors of society. Some old people are longing to be useful if only they would be recognized for what they can give. The church should be in the forefront in promoting forums between the young and the old. The younger generations have much to learn from the old people about family life, social and morality. This would go a long way to improve care for each other and the young would be living according to the biblical teaching that the young should respect the old.

It is important that pastoral counselling in Africa should be conversant with both

the spiritual and cultural factors that create or compound human suffering. It should use God-given knowledge of human nature, psychology and scientific tools available in dealing with the human suffering. There should be an engagement between faith, science and culture, which are gifts from God. The role of pastoral counsellor does not need to be restricted to pastors or a church ministers, but it is a role that can be fulfilled by any person within the church who is engaged in tasks of restoring fellow human beings to physical, emotional and spiritual well-being.

ERT (2010) 34:4, 379-380

**Think God, Think Science:
conversations on Life, the
Universe, and Faith**

Michael Pfundner

Milton Keynes: Paternoster, 2008

ISBN 978-1-84227-609-9

Pb., pp 112

*Reviewed by Jim Harries, Kima
International School of Theology, Kenya*

This small book is written as if it is a discussion between Pfundner (as a well informed student) and Ernest Lucas his mentor. The question-and-answer style assists readability and divides the book into small sections as well as chapters. After a survey of 'the issue', the book attends in turn to the sky (the origin of the universe), the cell (the origin of life) and faith (an apologetic for Christianity). It seems to be aimed at the thinking person whose faith is being challenged by 'science', or the non-believer evaluating the claims of Christianity in the light of science's sometimes hegemonic pretensions.

The first section that considers 'the

issue' is in my view the most helpful and most profound. It suggests that Christian evangelism's ineffectiveness may at times arise because those being 'reached' consider the gospel to be illegitimate in the light of science's discoveries about the world. The book does not claim to be a proof for Christianity, but points out that the Christian gospel had a key role to play in the development of rationality itself. It gives an outline course of the history of western civilisation that shows that the Christian faith has at times been misrepresented when portrayed either as the 'enemy of' or 'victim of' science.

Science's limitations and its need for an underlying 'philosophy' are well articulated. Science, according to Lucas, is 'expectation' rather than 'truth' because it must assume, without certainty, that what is observed today will continue to happen tomorrow. As Lucas observes, science 'hangs in the air' in the absence of a 'theological framework'.

The bridge between 'big bang theories' and the Christian faith, according to Lucas, is 'the area of interpreting the Bible'. The book of Genesis should be read properly, and we do not have to support narrow creationist lobbies. Lucas

makes it clear that Darwin never claimed to have proven evolution, although in Lucas' own view, evidence continues to mount up in the theory's favour. In the arena of faith, we are told that Fundamentalism's efforts at countering liberal theology have at times been counter-productive as they have been forced to play by the rules of the latter. The terms of the debate are, for Lucas, as critical as its object. Despite all the attacks on the New Testament account, however, Lucas finds overwhelming evidence in favour of the truth of the historical claims of the Christian faith.

A lot of the ground covered by Lucas is not new, especially in the last three chapters. This makes this book suitable for the undergraduate or as an introduction to 'apologetics' in relation to science. It is oriented to a western audience, so makes no mention of any objections to Christianity outside of those of science in the English speaking world. This is not untrue to its title, but makes it in my view slightly narrow, given today's globalising post-modern age. It is a good book to give to someone asking the questions that it addresses, where it stakes out the lay of the land in contemporary debate.

Evangelical Review of Theology

EDITOR: DAVID PARKER

Volume 34

2010

Articles and book reviews reflecting global evangelical theology for the purpose of discerning the obedience of faith

Published by



for
WORLD EVANGELICAL
ALLIANCE
Theological Commission

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ABSTRACTS/INDEXING

This journal is abstracted in Religious and Theological Abstracts, 121 South College Street (P.O. Box 215), Myerstown, PA 17067, USA, and in the Christian Periodical Index, P.O. Box 4, Cedarville, OH 45314, USA.

It is also indexed in the ATLA Religion Database, published by the American Theological Library Association, 300 S. Wacker Dr., Suite 2100, Chicago, IL 60606 USA, E-mail: atla@atla.com, Web: www.atla.com/

MICROFORM

This journal is available on Microform from UMI, 300 North Zeeb Road, P.O. Box 1346, Ann Arbor, MI 48106-1346, USA. Phone: (313)761-4700

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STUDIES IN CHRISTIAN HISTORY AND THOUGHT

Healing in the Early Church

The Church's Ministry of Healing and Exorcism from the First to the Fifth Century

Andrew Daunton-Fear

This is the most comprehensive investigation yet made into the healing activity of the Early Church.

The author shows that there was a vigorous healing and exorcism ministry in the centuries that followed the apostles, though it fluctuated somewhat and changed its mode. The pre-Nicene Fathers recognized its great apologetic value as a dramatic demonstration of the superiority of the Christian God over pagan rivals. The place of anointing with oil, baptismal healing, the growing role of the shrines of martyrs in the post-Nicene church, and the positive view of the medical profession are amongst the issues explored.

Andrew Daunton-Fear is a Lecturer in Church History and Pastoral Studies at St Andrew's Theological Seminary, Manila, Philippines

978-1-84227-623-5 / 229 x 152mm / 350pp (est.) / £24.99 (est.)

Missionary Imperialists?

Missionaries, Government and the Growth of the British Empire in the Tropics, 1860-1885

John Darch

This study examines whether British Protestant missionaries really did seek to build the British Empire alongside the kingdom of God.

The author concludes that where missionaries did aid imperial development it was largely incidental, an 'imperialism of result' rather than an 'imperialism of intent'.

John Darch lectured in Church History at St John's College, Nottingham.

978-1-84227-560-3 / 229 x 152mm / 300pp (est.) / £24.99 (est.)

Religious Dissent in the Local Community

The Covenanter Movement in Fife

Alison G. Muir

This work examines the covenanter movement in Fife.

Beginning with an analysis of protestant dissent in Fife between c.1610 and 1637/38 consideration is given to the period of covenanter rule before tracing the continuation of protestant dissent during the Restoration period. Finally, by focusing closely on four areas of Fife the impact of the events of the period on local institutions and behaviours is analysed.

Alison Muir works with Historic Scotland.

978-1-84227-438-5 / 229 x 152mm / 300pp (est.) / £24.99 (est.)

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