EVANGELICAL REVIEW OF THEOLOGY

VOLUME 5

Evangelical Review of Theology

Articles and book reviews selected from publications worldwide for an international readership, interpreting the Christian faith for contemporary living.

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Editorial

Social justice without salvation justice is a mirage in a sea of sands. The attempts of many people in the world today to reconcile warring nations, to stem the decline of social morality and to sponsor development programmes to alleviate poverty and injustice and create responsible communities are failing against the steady drift to lawlessness and violence, economic and political anarchy and the frantic preparation against a nuclear holocaust. But justice that is not grounded in moral individual and social change is an illusory goal. It cannot be divorced from salvation.

Evangelical Christians are increasingly recognizing the priority of spiritual and moral renewal in the life of the Church for sustained world evangelization and the restraint of evil in society. God desires that His people be salt and light pointing beyond their own existence to the reign of Jesus Christ as Saviour and Lord and to His Kingdom which is present in the world but yet is still to come in His glory and power.

It is not the size of the Church that determines its influence but rather the quality of its spiritual life and moral power. Servanthood in the world begins with sonship in God's family. Through suffering God is refining His people for faithful proclamation and service. In spite of the persecution of Christian communities, restriction of religious freedom, jails overflowing with prisoners of conscience, Christ is fulfilling His promise, "I will build my Church, and the gates of hell will not overcome it." But it is on the rock of the truth of the Gospel and the open confession of His "Peters" that the Church becomes both the sign and the agent of the Kingdom. Recent developments in China and Uganda give testimony to the fulfilment of this promise.

The World Evangelical Fellowship consultation at Amerongen, Holland 21st–25th April 1981 called for an intensive study on the nature and mission of the Church in the local setting and in new frontiers for missions and it endorsed the study programme already under way on the Christian response to human need. A working conference on a broad basis of evangelical sponsorship in June 1983 will be but one event in the ongoing planning towards the year 2000.

The articles in this issue of ERT, drawn from east and west, north and south, reflect this emerging renewal of emphasis on the centrality of the Church in the work of the Kingdom in the world.

Justification by Faith in 1 & 2 Corinthians

Ronald Y.-K. Fung

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Faithful exegesis of the biblical text and valid principles of interpretation are essential to any discussion on the evangelical understanding of the authority of the Bible as sola scriptura. *In the first article in this section Professor Ronald Fung gives us a classical model of the grammatico-historical approach to the exegesis of Paul's understanding of justification by faith in the Corinthian letters. In an age of allegorizing, demythologizing and proof texting apart from context, Dr. Fung's exact textual scholarship is a challenge to all of us to accept the discipline of careful exegesis. In this study of four passages, the author concludes that for Paul justification is a fundamental aspect of the believer's union with Christ, is logically prior to reconciliation and is inseparable from sanctification.*

In the second article on the concept of truth in the inerrancy debate, Professor Norman Geisler discusses the implication of two different theories of truth for our understanding of the nature and extent of the Bible's authority. While the recent debate on inerrancy has been an issue among North American evangelicals, it has important implications in the Third

World where the wider issues of hermeneutics in determining the boundary between valid contextualisation and false syncretism is the most critical factor in the theological debate.

*   In the previous issue of* ERT*, Dr. Carson assessed recent trends in hermeneutics; in the next issue Dr. Gerhard Meier of Tübingen offers his alternative to the historical-critical method.*
(Editor)

Justification by faith has, traditionally, been held to be the centre of Paul's theology. In modern times, however, the view has been gaining ground which regards this doctrine as being of merely subsidiary significance to Paul. The most notable exponents of this new appraisal of its status in the apostle's thought include Carl von Weizsäcker,[1] William Wrede,[2] Wilhelm Heitmüller[3] and Albert Schweitzer.[4] In their down-grading of the doctrine these scholars have been followed in more recent years by H. J. Schoeps[5] and, in the English-speaking world, by C. H. Buck, Jr.,[6] Krister Stendahl,[7] W. D. Davies[8] and E. P. Sanders.[9]

    On the other side, the fundamental significance and centrality of justification by faith in Paul's thought has been maintained by scholars like J. Gresham Machen,[10] H. D. Wendland,[11]

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[1] Weizsäcker, *The Apostolic Age of the Christian Church* (2 vols.; E.T., London, Williams & Norgate, 1894–95), 1.141, 165–166, 373–374.

[2] Wrede, *Paul* (E.T., London, Philip Green, 1907), 123, 147, 177–178.

[3] Heitmüller, *Luthers Stellung in der Religionsgeschichte des Christentums* (Marburg, N. G. Elwert, 1917), 19.

[4] Schweitzer, *The Mysticism of Paul the Apostle* (E.T., 1931; reprinted, London, Adam & Charles Black, 1967), 220–226.

[5] H. J. Schoeps, *Paul: The Theology of the Apostle in the Light of Jewish Religious History* (E.T., Philadelphia, Westminster, 1961), 123, 196, 206.

[6] Charles Henry Buck, Jr., "The Date of Galatians," *JBL* 70 (1951), 113–122, esp. 121–122.

[7] Stendahl, "The Apostle Paul and the Introspective Conscience of the West," *HTR* 56 (1963), 199–215, esp. 204 (= *Paul among Jews and Gentiles* (London, SCM, 1977), 78–96 (84)).

[8] W. D. Davies, *Paul and Rabbinic Judaism* (2nd ed.; London, SPCK, 1955), 221–223.

[9] E. P. Sanders, *Paul and Palestinian Judaism* (London, SCM, 1977), 438–441, 490–495, 502–508 (cf. 452–463).
    Particularly reminiscent in some ways of the theory of W. Wrede is the view of Georg Strecker as expressed in his recent essay, "Befreiung und Rechtfertigung: Zur Stellung der Rechtfertigungslehre in der Theologie des Paulus," in *Rechtfertigung. Festschrift für Ernst Käsemann zum 70. Geburtstag*, eds. Johannes Friedrich, Wolfgang Pöhlmann and Peter Stuhlmacher (Tübingen, J. C. B. Mohr (Paul Siebeck) and Göttingen, Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1976), 479–508.

[10] Machen, *The Origin of Paul's Religion* (London, Hodder & Stoughton, 1921), 278–279.

[11] H. D. Wendland, *Die Mitre der paulinischen Botschaft* (Göttingen, Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1935), esp. 6, 48.

J. I. Packer,[12] Karl Kertelge,[13] Hans Conzelmann,[14] Günther Bornkamm,[15] Ernst Käsemann[16] and, last but not least, F. F. Bruce. Professor Bruce regards as properly given the emphasis which Bornkamm and Käsemann place on the centrality of Paul's doctrine of justification to his whole concept of the gospel, not only in polemical situations; against the view of Buck and Wrede, Bruce maintains that "the essence of justification by faith was probably implicit in the logic of his (i.e. Paul's) conversion."[17] At the same time, Professor Bruce holds that crucial as the doctrine of justification by faith is to Paul's understanding of the gospel, it does not exhaust that gospel:

> Paul sets his doctrine of justification, together with his other doctrines, in the context of the new creation that has come into being with Christ. That the acquittal of the day of judgment is pronounced here and now on those who put their faith in Jesus is part and parcel of the truth that for them "the old order has gone, and a new order has already begun" (2 Cor. 5, 17, NEB).[18]

This estimate of the status of justification in Paul is similar to the view of Herman N. Ridderbos, who, whilst affirming that the doctrine "unmistakably belongs to the very heart of Paul's preaching," judges that it nevertheless is but one aspect, although a very central aspect, of the great redemption accomplished by Christ, and that the perspective of *Heilsgeschichte* "alone can illuminate the many facets and interrelations of his preaching."[19]

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[12] J. I. Packer, *NBD* (1962), 684a–685a, s.v. "Justification".

[13] Kertelge, *"Rechtfertigung" bei Paulus* (2d. ed.; Münster, Aschendorff, 1971), 286, 295–304, 306.

[14] Conzelmann, "Current Problems in Pauline Research," *Int* 22 (1968), 171–186, esp. 175–178, 186; idem, "Die Rechtfertigungslehre des Paulus. Theologie oder Anthropologie?" *EvT* 28 (1968), 389–404, esp. 394–397, 404.

[15] Bornkamm, *Paul* (E.T., London, Hodder & Stoughton, 1971), 115–117, 152, 249.

[16] Käsemann, *Perspectives on Paul* (E.T., London, SCM, 1971), 70 n. 27, 71–73, 76, 80, 164.

[17] F. F. Bruce, "Galatian Problems. 4. The Date of the Epistle," *BJRL* 54 (1971–72), 250–267, esp. 261–264 (quotation from 262). See also his *The Epistle of Paul to the Romans* (TNTC; London, Tyndale, 1963), 35–37; and "Some Thoughts on Paul and Paulinism," *Vox Evangelica* 7 (1971), 5–16, esp. 10. In John Reumann, "The Gospel of the Righteousness of God. Pauline Interpretation in Rom. 3:21–31, " *Int* 20 (1966), 432–452, Bruce (*Romans*, 35–36) is erroneously cited (446 n. 45) as having stated that justification was merely a polemical doctrine deriving from disputes with the Judaizers.

[18] Bruce, *Romans*, 40. Cf. idem, "The Epistles of Paul," in *PCB*, 927–939, esp. 934a (§810c).

[19] See Ridderbos, *Paul and Jesus* (E.T., Philadelphia, Presbyterian & Reformed, 1958), 63–65; cf. idem, *Paul: An Outline of His Theology* (E.T., Grand Rapids, William B. Eerdmans, 1975), 161–162, 166–167, 173–174. See also Richard B. Gaffin, Jr., *Resurrection and Redemption* (Th. D. thesis, Westminster Theological Seminary, 1969; printed by Westminster Student Service, 1971), 143, cf. 1–15. On the subject of *Heilsgeschichte* in Paul, cf. F. F. Bruce, "Salvation History in the New Testament," in *Man and His Salvation. Studies in Memory of S. G. F. Brandon*, eds. E. J. Sharpe and J. R. Hinnells (Manchester, University Press, 1973), 75–90, esp. 82–85.

With this all-too-brief introduction to the modern debate on the status of justification by faith in Paul's thought[20] as background, we offer in the following pages a study of the doctrine as it finds expression in 1 and 2 Corinthians. Since the fact that the doctrine is set forth in detail only in Galatians and Romans might seem to lend support to the claim that the doctrine is of merely polemical significance, it is important not to overlook Paul's teaching on the subject in his other epistles. Here we shall confine our attention to the other two *Haupt-briefe*, where four passages are to be considered.

I. 1 CORINTHIANS 1:18–31

In dealing with the report received from Chloe's people that there were quarrels among the Corinthians, Paul exposes the root cause of the divisions as basically twofold: the Corinthian converts had a wrong conception both of wisdom (1:18–2:16) and of the Christian ministry (3:1–4:13). The passage before us sets forth the contrast between God's wisdom and the wisdom of the world, first in terms of the message of the cross (1:18–25) and then in terms of God's choice of the Corinthian community (1:26–31).

The word of the cross is described from two points of view: to those who are on the way to ruin, it is folly; but to those who are on the way to salvation, it is the power of God (verse 18, cf. NEB). By implication, it is also weakness to the former category of people and wisdom to the latter. This word of the cross, which proclaims Christ crucified, is a stumbling block (because it speaks of apparent weakness) to Jews in their demand for signs, and folly to Greeks in their quest for wisdom; but to those whom God has called, both Jew and Greek, Christ as proclaimed by the apostles is God's power and God's wisdom (verses 23–24). What the former category of people regard as "wisdom" is of no avail in the matter of salvation, as Scripture attests (verses 19–20a); for secular wisdom cannot attain to the knowledge of God, while salvation is attained through faith in the preached word, and it is exactly by thus accomplishing through the gospel what secular wisdom had been unable to accomplish that God has exposed the latter as folly (verses 20b–21). The ultimate explanation of all this paradox lies in the fact that the cross is God's act: what to human wisdom is unintelligible (τὸ) and to human notions of power bespeaks weakness (τὸ ἀσθενές, cf. 2 Cor. 13:4) is wiser and stronger than men with all their wisdom and might (verse 25).

Clinching the argument of the preceding verses, and especially the comprehensive principle of verse 25, Paul now appeals to the Corinthians' own experience of God's call (verses 26–28). The threefold ἐξελέξατο ὁ θεός emphasizes that the community in its outwardly feeble condition has been the object of God's election, while the καταισχύνῃ-καταργήσῃ emphasis underlines the fact that God has set aside human wisdom, power and distinction as totally ineffective and inoperative as means of salvation. God's ultimate purpose in this mode of operation is that all flesh should be prevented from boasting before him (verse 29), and it is in accordance with this that the Corinthian Christians on their part (ὑμεῖς) have been chosen by God, from whom they have their being (i.e. as God's children) by virtue of their incorporation in Christ Jesus (verse 30, cf. RSV).

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[20] For a fuller account reference may perhaps be allowed to the author's unpublished Ph.D. thesis, "The Relationship between Righteousness and Faith in the Thought of Paul, as expressed in the Letters to the Galatians and the Romans" (2 vols.; Manchester University, 1975), 1.1–18, with corresponding notes in 2.1–6. Cf. idem, "The Status of Justification by Faith in Paul's Thought: A Brief Survey of a Modern Debate" (forthcoming).

To believers, God has made Christ to be true wisdom which embraces three aspects: both δικαιοσύνη and ἁγιασμός, and also ἀπολύτρωσις. While the fact that ἡγιασμένοις in 1:2 refers not to the Corinthians' holiness in character or conduct but to their having been set apart to be God's holy people (cf. κλητοῖς ἁγίοις) might seem to create a presumption in favour of ἁγιασμός having in 1:30 a relational, not ethical, meaning, it has been observed that "the term ἁγιασμός is always distinguished from ἅγιος and ἁγιάζειν by the emphasis on the moral element,"[21] and there seems to be no compelling reason why we should deviate from this sense here. Perhaps we shall not go far astray if we take ἁγιασμός here to denote the process of sanctification, but with primary emphasis on its commencement. But ἁγιασμός would be repeating the same idea as δικαιοσύνη if the latter were understood in the sense of ethical righteousness; hence it is preferable to take δικαιοσύνη in the sense of forensic righteousness, i.e. the status of being in the right with God. As for ἀπολύτρωσις, which has been variously interpreted, it is probably best (in view of ἐγενήθη, which clearly points to the historic act of Christ, and of the fact that in Romans 3:24 believers are said to be justified διὰ τῆς ἀπολυτρώσεως which is in Christ Jesus) to understand the term here of the believers' deliverance through the death of Christ on the cross, which thus furnishes the ground both for justification and sanctification and sets the other terms "in the only context in which they can be rightly understood."[22] On this interpretation, we have in justification (an act) and sanctification (considered as the commencement of a process) not so much two successive stages of Christian experience as two coincident facets or aspects of the one act of redemption accomplished by Christ and, correspondingly, of the believer's one experience of incorporation in and union with Christ.

Finally, picking up the ὅπως of verse 29, Paul states that the divine purpose in Christ's becoming the believers' wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and redemption is the same as the ultimate goal of God's dealing as he does with the world and with the church, viz. the destruction of all καύχησις and his own glorification (verse 31).

Scholars have correctly observed that there is a parallel between Paul's polemic against secular wisdom in this passage and his polemic against justification by works elsewhere in his epistles: both secular wisdom and justification by works are characteristic of man in

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[21] O. Procksch, *TDNT* 1 (1964), 113, s.v. ἁγιασμός.

[22] C. K. Barrett, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians* (HNTC; New York, Harper & Row, 1968), 61. Cf. P. Stuhlmacher, "Achtzehn Thesen zur paulinischen Kreuzestheologie," in *Rechtfertigung. Festschrift für Ernst Käsemann* (see n. 9 above), 509–523, esp. 512–513. For redemption as the basis of sanctification, cf. O. Procksch, *TDNT* 1 (1964), 113, s.v. ἁγιασμός. For ἀπολύτρωσις in the sense of initial redemption, cf. F. Büchsel, *TDNT* 4 (1967), 353, s.v. ἀπολύτρωσις.

One may note with F. Hahn, "Taufe und Rechtfertigung: Ein Beitrag zur paulinischen Theologle in ihrer Vor- und Nachgeschichte," in *Rechtfertigung. Festschrift für Ernst Käsemann*, 95–124, that the three concepts (δικαιοσύνη, ἁγιασμός, ἀπολύτρωσις) in "umgekehrter Reihenfolge so auffällig den Taufaussagen in 1 Kor 6,11b entsprechen," without entirely subscribing to his conclusion that 1 Cor. 1:30b has "die Funktion einer christologischen Korrespondenzformel zu der Tauftradition, die in 1 Kor 6,11 zitiert wird" (107, 108).

independence of God, and both have been done away in Christ.[23] It should be noted that Paul actually defines true wisdom *in terms of* justification as well as sanctification and redemption (verse 30). Since even in polemicizing against the Corinthians' false estimate of secular wisdom Paul thus uses the juridical category of justification to clarify his meaning, it is impossible to maintain that justification by faith is something merely occasional and secondary for Paul, something which he employs only when engaged in argument with Jewish legalists; certainly our passage tends rather to support the conclusion that "however much Paul's doctrine of the law is polemic in character, it … contains his central thoughts."[24]

To this we may add two other conclusions to be drawn from our study of the passage: (1) Righteousness (or justification) is attainable by faith: it is to those who believe (verse 21b), i.e. respond positively to the proclamation of Christ crucified (verse 23) in the word of the cross (verse 18), to those whom God has called and chosen (verses 26–28), that Christ became true wisdom which embraces justification, sanctification and redemption. And the twofold emphasis (a) on the exclusion of boasting on the basis of secular wisdom, power or distinction and (b) on the Lord as the sole ground of boasting implies that righteousness is by faith alone, apart from any merit on man's part. (2) Justification and sanctification (the latter viewed as the commencement of a process) appear to be alike based on redemption, and are closely connected as two coincident aspects of this redemption (verse 30b) and, correspondingly, of the believer's incorporation in Christ (verse 30a).

II. 1 CORINTHIANS 6:11

One of the matters Paul had to deal with in 1 Corinthians was that some Christians were bringing their disputes before heathen judges (6:1–11). Against such a practice of law-suits, one of the arguments Paul employs is that they should live as those who have been redeemed, with their past put behind them (verses 9–11). In the verse before us, Paul flatly declares that some among the Corinthian believers had been such as could never inherit the kingdom of God, but he immediately follows this with a triple ἀλλά, which sharply contrasts their present state and their seamy past.

In ἀπελούσασθε we probably have not the middle used for the passive so that the sense is "you were washed," but a genuine middle with some such sense as "you got (or allowed) yourselves (to be) washed." It suggests that baptism is in mind; but, as C. K. Barrett observes, the use of the non-technical word instead of the more technical ἐβαπτίσθητε shows that Paul attaches importance to the inward meaning rather than the outward circumstances of the rite.[25] The reference, it would seem, is to a spiritual cleansing from sin which is "sacramentally signified in baptism."[26] The two succeeding aorist verbs probably refer to the same event of baptism as is reflected in ἀπελούσασθε. Ἡγιάσθητε represents the Corinthians' sanctification as a definite act; in contrast to 1:30, here "sanctification is not

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[23] Cf. G. Bornkamm, *Early Christian Experience* (E.T., London, SCM, 1969), 29; A. Schlatter, *Der Glaube im Neuen Testament* (Sth ed.; Stuttgart, Calwer, 1963), 388.

[24] R. Bultmann, *Existence and Faith. Shorter Writings of Rudolph Bultmann* (E.T., London, Hodder & Stoughton, 1961), 137.

[25] Barrett, *First Corinthians*, 141.

[26] F. F. Bruce, *1 & 2 Corinthians* (NCB; London, Oliphants, 1971), 62.

moral action on the part of man, but a divinely effected state."[27] But if the word ἀγιάζειν itself does not here signify practical holiness on the part of the Corinthians, yet in view of the paraenetic nature of the context we may believe that Paul thinks at the same time of the ethical consequences which result from their state of being consecrated to God.[28] And since, in point of fact, being relationally consecrated to God means being separated to holiness of life, consecration (in the relational sense) may be regarded as but the commencement of sanctification (considered as a process of ethical transformation).

To the acts of cleansing and sanctification Paul adds ἐδικαιώθητε. It has been suggested that 1 Corinthians 6:11 is to be regarded as a statement of early Christian baptismal instruction, which understood justification, not yet in the Pauline sense of justification by faith, but as forgiveness of sins on the ground of Christ's atoning death.[29] But it is hard to think that Paul could speak of justification in a sense that is unrelated to its characteristic meaning. It has also been maintained, in view of the position of ἐδικαιώθητε (coming after the other two verbs), that it has a causative sense,[30] but this is not a necessary conclusion. We are probably not intended to take the three verbs in any chronological order at all (cf. the order in 1:30), since the aorists are best taken as denoting coincidental action; and the order of the verbs is perhaps best explained in terms of the apostle's sequence of thought, as O. Pfleiderer suggested: in contrast to the Corinthians' sinful past, the sanctifying effect of their conversion is described first in negative and then in positive terms (ἀπελούσασθε, ἡγιάσθητε), and ἐδικαιώθητε is added "because it was a necessary part of the full statement of the effects of God's favour."[31]

The two prepositional phrases which follow are naturally (especially in view of the threefold ἀλλά) to be taken as qualifying all three verbs, and are thus related to the baptismal event as a whole. If here Paul apparently presents the three coincident actions as occurring at baptism, this may be due to the fact that since "baptism is the visible sign of visible incorporation into the visible church"[32] it can be more effectively appealed to than faith as marking the believers' decisive break with the past. Hence, although formally Paul's statement is a reference to baptism, yet substantially it is really a description of what, in strict analysis, lies behind baptism, viz. the believers' (in this case, the Corinthians') conversion-experience.[33] On this showing, ἐν τῷ ὀνόματι κτλ. indicates the work of God in Jesus Christ which is the basis of the work of grace experienced by the Corinthian Christians,

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[27] O. Procksch, *TDNT* 1 (1964), 112, s.v. ἀγιάζω.

[28] Cf. Kertelge, *Rechtfertigung*, 243–244.

[29] So Kertelge, *Rechtfertigung*, 244; Rudolf Bultmann, *Theology of the New Testament* (2 vols.; E.T., London, SCM, 1971), 1.136; F. Hahn, "Taufe und Rechtfertigung", 105–107 with n. 47. Cf. also Sanders, *Paul and Palestinian Judaism*, 471–472, where the verb in 1 Corinthians 6:11 (as also in Romans 5:9 and 8:30) is considered as referring to "being cleansed of or forgiven for past transgressions" and thus being equivalent to "sanctified".

[30] H. Braun, *Gerichtsgedanke und Rechtfertigungslehre bei Paulus* (Leipzig, J. C. Hinrichs, 1930), 83. Cf. BAG 197a, s.v. δικαιόω 3c.

[31] O. Pfleiderer, *Paulinism* (2 vols.; E.T., London, Williams & Norgate, 1891), 1.180.

[32] Hans Küng, *Justification* (E.T., London, Thomas Nelson & Sons, 1964), 245.

[33] Cf. Barrett, *First Corinthians*, 142.

while ἐν τῷ πνεύματι κτλ. reflects the work of the Spirit who brings the believer into relation with Christ (cf. 1 Cor. 12:3, 13) and both separates him to God (cf. 2 Thess. 2:13) and leads him in the life of progressive sanctification (cf. 2 Cor. 3:18; Rom. 8:13–14; Gal. 5:17–18, 22–25). If this be the case, then we have in the three verbs of our text not three steps or stages of Christian experience, but different aspects of the Spirit's action or, to state it from the recipient's standpoint, of the believer's union with Christ.

Thus we find presented here in juxtaposition cleansing, sanctification and justification as different aspects of a single act of grace at the outset of the Christian life, as coincident facts of the believer's one experience of union with Christ. Since faith is implied both in ἀπελούσασθε and in the confession of the name of the Lord in baptism (cf. Rom. 10:10), it is implied that justification is by faith. The phrase ἐν τῷ ὀνόματι κτλ. also implies that justification is based on the work of Christ. On all these points, there is complete consistency between this passage and what we have found in 1:18–31.

III. 2 CORINTHIANS 3:4–11

Following on the introduction (1:1–11) and an explanation of Paul's recent conduct towards the Corinthians (1:12–2:13), the third main section of 2 Corinthians is in large part a sustained exposition of the ministry as exercised by Paul and his colleagues (2:14–7:4). In the verses before us, Paul describes himself and his colleagues as ministers of the new covenant and begins to contrast the ministry of this new covenant with that of the old, the contrast being carried further and completed in the following verses (3:12–18), which stress the openness of the new ministry over against the veiledhess of the old.

At the beginning of our passage, Paul explains that the confidence which he and his colleagues have before God (3:1–3) comes through the enabling of Christ (verse 4). This thought is expanded in both its negative and its positive aspect (verses 5–6): self-competence on the part of the workers is ruled out; their adequacy is from God—it is he who has made them adequate to be ministers of a new covenant. The reference is to Jeremiah's prophecy of a new covenant (Jer. 31:31–34) which is now fulfilled in Christ; that Paul here "but not in Romans refers to a new covenant is due to the fact that he is dealing with Judaizers."[34] Paul brings out the essential difference between the new covenant and the old by the phrase οὐ γράμματος ἀλλὰ πνεύματος, which contrasts not the letter of the law and the spirit of the law, but the law of God and the Spirit of God:[35] the law as γράμμα, i.e. a written code "carved in letters on stone" (verse 7a), only exacts obedience to its demands without imparting the power to fulfil them and pronounces the death-sentence on all transgressors (cf. Deut. 27:26; 30:17–18; Gal. 3:10; Rom. 7:5, 9–11); it is the Spirit—not the law (cf. Gal. 3:21)—who imparts life. The crucial difference that Paul brings out in verse

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[34] Barrett, *The Second Epistle to the Corinthians* (BNTC; London, Adam & Charles Black, 1973), 112. On this identification of Paul's opponents cf. ibid., 28–30; idem, "Cephas and Corinth," in *Abraham unser Vater. Festschrift für Otto Michel*, eds. Otto Betz, Martin Hengel and Peter Schmidt (Leiden, E. J. Brill, 1963), 1–12, esp. 11–12; idem, "Paul's Opponents in 2 Corinthians," *NTS* 17 (1970–71), 233–254. Cf. also F. F. Bruce, "Paul and Jerusalem," *Tyndale Bulletin* 19 (1968), 3–25, esp. 12–13; *1 & 2 Corinthians*, 174.

[35] So, correctly, e.g. G. Schrenk, *TDNT* 1 (1964), 766–767, s.v. γράμμα. On πνεῦμα as a reference to the Holy Spirit, cf. Karl Prümm, "Röm 1–11 und 2 Kor 3," *Biblica* 31 (1950), 164–203, esp. 184.

[6](#), then, is this: under the old order of legal observance, an extenal code dispenses death; under the new order of divine grace, the Spirit gives life.

The contrast stated in the simple terms of verse [6](#) is expounded (verses [7–18](#)) in a midrash on [Exodus 34:29–35](#). In the first part of this Christian midrash (verses [7–11](#)) Paul shows the superiority of the new ministry to the old by reference to its greater glory, and this for three reasons, the second of which is explanatory of the first. (a) If even the old ministry, which, based as it was on a covenant "engraved letter by letter upon stone" (NEB), is a ministry (or service) of death as dispensing death (τὸ γὰρ γράμμα ἀποκτείνει), had a glorious inauguration (ἐγενήθη ἐν δόξῃ), so much so that the Israelites could not gaze steadily on Moses' face because of its brightness, fading as this was (verse [7](#)),[36] much more must the ministry that is marked by the Spirit be invested with glory (verse [8](#)). (b) That the old ministry is a ministry of death is due to the fact that it is a ministry of condemnation—the law being both the criterion of judgment (cf. [Rom. 2:12–13](#)) and the instrument of condemnation (cf. [Rom. 3:19–20](#)); but if even the ministry of condemnation was glorious, much more will the ministry of δικαιοσύνη abound in glory (verse [9](#)).

The Greek term here is most commonly understood to mean forensic righteousness, i.e. the righteous status conferred in justification; and the antithesis between δικαιοσύνη and κατάκρισις puts it beyond reasonable doubt that the former term at least includes the idea of justification. Two considerations, however, suggest that something more is here involved. First, the strict counterpart of κατάκρισις is not δικαιοσύνη but δικαίωσις, as in [Romans 5:18](#); and while δικαιοσύνη certainly could mean the righteousness conferred in justification (cf. [Gal. 2:21](#)), yet the fact that Paul uses δικαιοσύνη instead of δικαίωσις when the latter would have been the obvious word to use to convey the idea of justification in opposition to condemnation, at least opens the possibility that he intends to convey more than the idea of justification here. Second, the "ministry of death" and the "ministry of the Spirit" in verses [7a](#) and [8a](#) become in verse [9](#) the "ministry of condemnation" and the "ministry of δικαιοσύνη" respectively. Since not only are the two statements parallel to each other but there is a logical connection between verses [7a](#) and [9a](#) (the "ministry of death" is lethal in its effect because it is a "ministry of condemnation"; condemnation leads to death), it is reasonable to assume that some logical connection similarly exists between verses [8](#) and [9b](#), i.e. between the "ministry of the Spirit" and the "ministry of δικαιοσύνη". Now if by analogy we may say that the new ministry is a ministry of δικαιοσύνη because it is a "ministry of the Spirit," then, since the Spirit is life-giving (ζωοποιεῖ, verse [6b](#)), δικαιοσύνη will assume the meaning of righteousness of life. For these two reasons, we submit that δικαιοσύνη in verse [9](#) is to be understood as embracing both forensic and ethical righteousness: as antithetical to κατάκρισις it has the meaning of justification; at the same time, being logically connected with the Spirit it acquires the sense of righteousness of life, for the Spirit is not only the source of life (cf. [Gal. 5:25a](#)) but also the regulative principle of the believer's conduct (cf. [Gal. 5:25b](#), [17–18](#), [22–23](#); [Rom. 8:13–14](#)) and the power by which the believer is enabled to fulfil the righteous requirement of the law ([Rom. 8:4](#)).

A third reason for the greater splendour of the new ministry is its permanence, over against the transitoriness of the old (verses [10–11](#)): the old ministry has, as it were, been paled into non-glory (καὶ· … οὐ δεδόξασται), as something which only once had glory (τὸ δεδοξασμένον), by the far superior glory of the new ministry. Now if that which was being

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[36] In speaking of the δόξα of Moses' face Paul follows the Septuagint ([Exod. 34:29–30](#)), but the thought of the glory as fading from Moses' face seems to have been an inference from [Exod. 34:33–34](#). Cf. F. F. Bruce, *1 & 2 Corinthians*, 191; Barrett, *Second Corinthians*, 114–116.

done away (τὸ καταργούμενον)—viz. the entire order which had its basis in, and was characterized by, the law, and thus the old covenant and the old ministry together[37]—was accompanied by glory (διὰ δόξης), much more must the new order, the order which remains (τὸ μένον), continue in a state of glory (ἐν δόξῃ).

Without following Paul into the second half of his midrash (3:12–18), we may make two observations by way of conclusion. (1) If the old ministry is said to be a ministry of condemnation and death because it is based on a covenant epitomized by the law as a written code, the logical inference to be drawn is that there can be no justification on the basis of the law. In the words τὸ γὰρ γράμμα ἀποκτείνει (verse 6b) alone we have a clear and succinct statement of the impossibility of justification by works of the law. The very choice of γράμμα to refer to the law is well calculated to emphasize the negative value of the law. (2) The contrast between the old order and the new is the contrast between the old covenant and the new, which in turn means the contrast between the ministry of condemnation and death and the ministry of righteousness and the Spirit; in other words, if the old order is characterized by condemnation and death the new order is marked by righteousness and the life-giving Spirit. Whether δικαιοσύνη be taken to mean forensic righteousness alone or, as we suggest, both forensic and ethical righteousness, it is clear that the idea of justification occupies an essential place in Paul's understanding of the gospel. Even when due allowance has been made for the polemical orientation in what Paul says here, the very fact that he can characterize the entire gospel dispensation as a dispensation of righteousness must mean that justification, as an aspect of that righteousness, is of crucial importance to the gospel as Paul conceived it. If our interpretation of the term δικαιοσύνη here is correct, then we see that justification and sanctification are firmly linked together as the most essential blessings of the new order.

IV. 2 CORINTHIANS 5:18–21

This paragraph (cf. NEB) is part of Paul's sustained exposition of the apostolic ministry (2:14–7:4). In its narrower context, it concludes a section (5:11–21) in which Paul enunciates the love of God as a motivating principle of all Christian conduct and therefore of apostolic service as well (verses 11–15), announces the new creation that has come in Christ (verses 16–17), and speaks of the ministry of reconciliation that has been committed to him and his colleagues (verses 18–21).

All that is involved in the new order (τὰ πάντα, verse 18)[38] is, like the original creation, God's handiwork. That a man can become a new creation in Christ is due to the fact that God

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[37] *Pace* C. E. B. Cranfield, "St. Paul and the Law," in *New Testament Issues*, ed. Richard Batey (London, SCM, 1970), 148–172, who refers τὸ καταργούμενον exclusively "to the ministry of Moses at the giving of the law" (160). It is true that in verses 7–9 the explicit contrast is between the two ministries, but having spoken of "ministers of a new covenant" (verse 6), Paul immediately passes on to contrast the two ministries of the old and new covenants respectively; and the old ministry itself is said to be "carved in letters on stone" (verse 7a)—words more suitable as a description of the bid covenant. Since ministry is based on covenant, the two stand or fall together. Cf. J. Behm, *TDNT* 2 (1964), 130, s.v. διαθήκη; G. Delling, *TDNT* 1 (1964), 454, s.v. καταργέω.

[38] The existence of the new order is implied in verse 17, though its primary reference is to the individual man in Christ.

has, on his own initiative, completed the work of reconciling men to himself through Christ. On the basis of this finished work God has also given to Paul and his colleagues (ἡμῖν), as recipients of the benefits of his reconciling work (ἡμᾶς), the ministry of reconciliation. In verses 19–21 Paul further explains what he has said in verse 18. The salient features may be noted as follows.

(1) In Christ God was engaged in reconciling (ἦν … καταλλάσσων) the world to himself (verse 19a). Though Paul's primary concern is doubtless with the world of men (as the next phrase shows), God's work of reconciliation in Christ is represented as cosmic in its effect (cf. Col. 1:20). Here "the very universality of the expression … is consistent only with an objective reconciliation … it means that God is putting away His own condemnation and wrath."[39]

(2) God was reconciling a world to himself by not counting men's (αὐτῶν) trespasses against them. This already points to the thought of verse 21. What is suggested by Paul's words here is the idea of an objective general justification of mankind on the ground of Christ's atoning death.[40] From the juxtaposition of justification and reconciliation here (and again in verses 20–21) some have concluded that the two are one and the same thing.[41] Reconciliation is not, however, really described as justification; rather, justification is conceived of as providing the logical foundation for reconciliation. As Barrett explains, "since transgressions no longer counted against men (cf. Exod. 29:10) the way was open for reconciliation."[42]

(3) Since the "saving facts must be proclaimed in order that they may become saving reality for individuals,"[43] God also deposited in Paul and his colleagues (θέμενος ἐν ἡμῖν) the word or message of reconciliation (verse 19c), which is "not the conciliatory and reconciling word but the proclamation of the already accomplished reconciliation."[44] It follows (οὖν, verse 20a) from this divine commissioning that Paul and his colleagues are ambassadors ὑπὲρ Χριστοῦ—Christ's representatives acting in his place:[45] as they proclaim the message of reconciliation, God is in fact exhorting through them.[46] There is thus a complete unity of action and purpose between God and Christ (cf. verse 20b).

(4) The apostolic messenger's entreaty is an invitation to be reconciled to God (verse 20b), i.e. to accept the reconciliation which he offers, which is objectively complete but has

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[39] J. Denney, *The Second Epistle to the Corinthians* (London, Hodder & Stoughton, 1894), 215.

[40] A. B. Bruce, *St. Paul's Conception of Christianity* (New York, Charles Scribner's Sons, 1894), 159.

[41] Cf. e.g. Victor Paul Furnish, *Theology and Ethics in Paul* (Nashville, Abingdon, 1968), 149; Bultmann, *Theology*, 1.285–286.

[42] Barrett, *Second Corinthians*, 177.

[43] G. Friedrich, *TDNT* 3 (1965), 710, s.v. κηρύσσω.

[44] Bultmann, *Theology*, 1.287.

[45] Cf. G. Bornkamm, *TDNT* 6 (1968), 683, s.v. πρεσβεύω; H. Riesenfeld, *TDNT* 8 (1972), 513, s.v. ὑπέρ.

[46] On the rendering "exhort" as preferable to "appeal" (RSV, NEB) and "entreat" (NASB), see O. Schmitz, *TDNT* 5 (1967), 795, s.v. παρακαλέω.

to be appropriated by personal response to become subjectively true for the individual. This invitation to faith is not, however, the entire content of the message of reconciliation: the latter contains also a declaration of the ground on which the appeal can be made. That ground is supplied in (the asyndetic) verse 21. The main clause (verse 21a) states that God made Christ, who came to no personal, practical acquaintance with sin either inwardly in conscience (cf. 1 John 3:5) or outwardly in action (cf. 1 Pet. 2:22),[47] to be sin for our sake. Although a sacrificial allusion cannot be ruled out as impossible, ἁμαρτίαν ἐποίησεν probably means that God made Christ the object of his wrath and condemnation as he bore our sins and submitted to death;[48] this is the most natural interpretation, especially in view of the close similarity between the present verse and Galatians 3:13, where Christ is said to have redeemed us from the curse of the law by becoming a curse for us. God's intention in making Christ our sin-bearer—ὑπὲρ ἡμῶν probably includes both the idea of "for our sake" (RSV, NEB) and that of "on our behalf" (RV, NASB)[49]—is that we might become the righteousness of God in Christ (verse 21b). It is by analogy with the preceding statement that God made Christ ἁμαρτίαν, and for the sake of parallelism in construction, that believers are now said to become δικαιοσύνη; "Paul has chosen this exceptional wording in order to emphasize the 'sweet exchange' whereby sinners are given a righteous status before God through the righteous one who absorbed their sin (and its judgment) in himself."[50] The last phrase, ἐν αὐτῷ, indicates that justification takes place in the sphere of Christ, i.e. through identification with Christ in his death and resurrection.

Thus we have in verse 21b a positive statement (of which verse 19b is a negative counterpart and anticipation) of justification in Christ.[51] Since (as noted earlier) verse 21 provides the ground for the appeal of verse 20 to be reconciled to God, it is clear that Christ's death as sinbearer is the objective basis for reconciliation; but it is also the objective basis for our justification (verse 21b). This raises again (cf. verse 19b) the question of the

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[47] Cf. F. F. Bruce, *1 & 2 Corinthians*, 210–211.

[48] So e.g. H. Braun, *TDNT* 6 (1968), 464, s.v. ποιέω; H. Reisenfeld, *TDNT* 8 (1972), 510, s.v. ὑπέρ; Bultmann, *Theology*, 1.277.

[49] So, correctly, Otto Kuss, *Der Römerbrief* (2 vols.; Regensburg, Friedrich Pustet, 1963), 125. Cf. H. Riesenfeld, *TDNT* 8 (1972), 510, s.v. ὑπέρ.

[50] F. F. Bruce, *1 & 2 Corinthians*, 211.

[51] This is how most interpreters see it. For other interpretations, cf. e.g. (1) G. Schrenk, *TDNT* 2 (1964), 208–209, s.v. δικαιοσύνη; (2) Charles Archibald Anderson Scott, *Christianity According to St. Paul* (1927; reprinted, Cambridge, The University Press, 1966), 60 n. 1; Edgar Johnson Goodspeed, "Some Greek Notes," *JBL* 73 (1954), 84–92, esp. 88; (3) Ernst Käsemann, *New Testament Questions of Today* (E.T., London, SCM, 1969), 169; (4) Karl Kertelge, *Rechtfertigung*, 104–106; (5) J. A. Ziesler, *The Meaning of Righteousness in Paul* (Cambridge, The University Press, 1972), 159–161. A criticism which applies to each of these views, all of which agree in giving δικαιοσύνη a sense other than that of forensic righteousness, is that they take insufficient account of the fact that the language of verse 21b is largely conditioned by that of the preceding clause: since Christ's being made sin cannot be understood except in a forensic sense, our becoming God's righteousness in him is (in view of the parallel structure) most reasonably interpreted in a forensic sense, or in terms of a relationship.

exact relationship between justification and reconciliation implied here. Barrett seems to suggest that the two are synonymous: "Reconciliation," he writes, "if located within God's court and expressed in forensic terms, becomes justification."[52] The two are doubtless parallel to each other to the extent that both are based on Christ's death, but they are not exactly identical in content: the conferment of a righteous status on the believer and restoration to God's favour are as a matter of fact indissolubly linked together but are nevertheless conceptually distinct. The logical relationship between the two has been correctly stated by Barrett himself when (in commenting on verse 19b) he saw the not-counting of transgressions as opening the way for justification. Justification, in other words, is the logical basis for reconciliation. Since justification takes place "in Christ," faith is implied as the means of identification with him; it is also implied in the response to the call to "be reconciled with God," which is an invitation to faith. When by faith a man appropriates the reconciliation proffered in the word of reconciliation, he is at the same time justified. As F. Büchsel puts it, "The God who reconciles us to Himself is always at the same time the God who judges us. For this reason reconciliation *includes* justification both in 2 Cor. 5:21 … and in v.19."[53]

Justification and reconciliation are thus inseparably linked together as different but coincident aspects of faith in Christ, though logically justification is the foundation for, and therefore prior to, reconciliation. Since reconciliation is itself that which makes the "new creation" of verse 17 possible, it follows that justification is the logical basis for the new creation as well, and thus the ἐν αὐτῷ of verse 21b links up with the ἐν Χριστῷ of verse 17a: by faith-union with Christ the believer is justified, he is reconciled to God, and he becomes a new creation. These do not happen in successive stages, but as coincident aspects of the single experience of faith-union with Christ. Nevertheless, the logical relationships between them are such that justification appears to be the most fundamental aspect of this union.

We may sum up by saying that, according to this passage, (1) justification is by faith in Christ and on the basis of his death; (2) it is coincident with, but logically prior to, reconciliation; (3) it is the most fundamental aspect of the beliver's union with Christ and appears to be Paul's first step in analyzing its meaning.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

On the basis of the foregoing study of the four Corinthians passages (I) 1 Corinthians 1:18–31, (II) 1 Corinthians 6:11, (III) 2 Corinthians 3:4–11, (IV) 2 Corinthians 5:18–21, we offer the following observations by way of summary and conclusion:

(1) Justification can never be attained on the basis of the law (III).

(2) Justification is by faith in Christ alone and on the basis of his atoning death (I, II, IV). This is not expressly stated but clearly implied.

(3) Justification stands at the beginning of the Christian life coincidentally with sanctification (and cleansing) as an aspect of the believer's incorporation in Christ (I, II); it is also coincident with reconciliation, but logically precedes it as its basis, and thus appears to be the most fundamental aspect of union with Christ and Paul's first step in analysing its meaning (IV).

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[52] Barrett, *Second Corinthians*, 176.

[53] F. Büchsel, *TDNT* 1 (1964), 257, s.v. καταλλάσσω (italics supplied).

(4) Justification and sanctification are conjoined as coincident aspects of redemption in Christ (I) and as the fundamental blessings of the new order (III). Justification is an essential aspect of that true wisdom which Christ has become for believers (I); it is also an essential aspect of that δικαιοσύνη which characterizes the entire new dispensation (III).

(5) The fact that Paul freely employs the concept of justification even in contexts where the legalistic point of view is not discussed at all (I, II, IV; the first passage is particularly important in this regard) strongly argues that it cannot fairly be regarded as a purely polemical doctrine born of, and intended for use in, debate with Jews and Jewish Christian legalists only. In the light of the previous two observations ((3), (4)), it is much rather to be considered as of central significance to Paul.

(6) Justification by faith does not exhaust the content of Paul's gospel: like reconciliation and sanctification, and coincident with these, justification is one aspect of redemption in Christ. At the same time, it is not just one aspect like any other, but rather stands out as the most fundamental aspect of that redemption and of the believer's incorporation in Christ; it is the first step in Paul's analysis of the meaning of union with Christ, which in fact is the central motif and probably the best summarizing concept of Pauline soteriology.[54]

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The Concept of Truth in the Inerrancy Debate

Norman L. Geisler

How is it that evangelicals on both sides of the inerrancy debate can claim the Bible is wholly true and yet one side believes that there can be minor mistakes of history or science affirmed by the biblical authors,[1] while the other side denies that there are any mistakes

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[54] The teaching of justification by faith as expressed in the Corinthian letters will be found to be endorsed and more fully and systematically developed in Galatians and (especially) Romans.

[1] LaSor admits that "those portions where one passage is clearly in disagreement with another (such as the thousands in Kings compared to the ten thousands in Chronicles) cannot be explained as 'textual corruptions' " because otherwise "we could never again use the canons of criticism to support any text against the conjectural reading of liberal critics" (William S. LaSor, "Life under Tension," *Theological News and Notes* (Pasadena, CA: Fuller Theological Seminary, 1976), p.7) This means, according to LaSor, that clear contradictions (such as four thousand stalls in 2 Chron. 9:25 and forty thousand stalls in 1 Kings 4:26) should be accepted as part of the autographs.

whatsoever? Some even claim to believe in inerrancy to the point that every word of the Bible is true,[2] and yet they hold that Jesus' statement that the mustard seed is the "smallest of all seeds" is scientifically incorrect.[3] Some claim that the Bible is "the only infallible rule of faith and practice"[4] but hold that Paul was wrong when he affirmed that the husband is the "head" of the wife.[5] One errantist put it bluntly when he wrote, "We can speak of the Bible as being inspired from cover to cover, human mistakes and all."[6]

Is this duplicity? Are those who believe the Bible contains errors intentionally deceiving their constituency? Do they hold a double standard of truth? As a matter of fact, it is not necessary to come to any of these conclusions. Errantists do not hold a double *standard* but rather a different *theory* of truth.

Could it be, then, that the real problem is that a fundamental issue that occasions the difference between the two major camps of evangelicals on biblical inerrancy is that they are presupposing different theories of truth? This writer proposes that this is indeed the case. One thing is certain: Different theories of truth will make a significant difference in what one considers to be an "error," or deviation from the truth. In fact, what counts as an error on one definition of truth is not an error on another definition of truth.[7]

TWO THEORIES OF TRUTH

A Noncorrespondence Theory of Truth

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[2] In a letter to a radio listener Daniel E. Fuller wrote, "*I believe that every statement in the Bible is totally without error* and every word is equally inspired" (April 28, 1978, italics added).

[3] Fuller claims that "although the mustard seed (see Matt. 13:32) is not the smallest of all seeds, yet Jesus referred to it as such" because "to have gone contrary to their mind on what was the smallest seed would have so diverted their attention from the knowledge that would bring salvation to their souls that they might well have failed to hear these all-important revelational truths" (Daniel E. Fuller, "Benjamin B. Warfield's View of Faith and History," *Bulletin of the Evangelical Theological Society* 11 (Spring 1968): 8–82).

[4] From Fuller Theological Seminary's "Statement of Faith," Article III.

[5] See Paul K. Jewett, *Man as Male and Female* (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1975), p.139.

[6] Dewey Beegle, *The Inspiration of Scripture* (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1963), p.138.

[7] It is clear from the writings of the errantists that this is their belief. Hubbard wrote, "The nub of Lindsell's quarrel with many of us who have been his colleagues is the interpretation of the word 'error' … Many of us signed, and still could sign, Fuller's earlier Statement without buying Lindsell's definition of error" (David A. Hubbard, "A Conflict in Interpretation," *Theological News and Notes*, p.8). Rogers approvingly quotes Bavinck that "the purpose, goal, or 'designation' of Scripture was 'none other than that it should make us wise to salvation.' According to Bavinck, Scripture was not meant to give us technically correct scientific information" (Jack Rogers, "The Church Doctrine of Biblical Authority", in *Biblical Authority*, ed. Jack Rogers (Waco, TX: Word Books, 1977), p.43). In other words, since the Bible accomplishes this soteriological intention, then it is true.

For the sake of simplicity of discussion, only one of several noncorrespondence views of truth will be discussed. One that is used by errantists may be called an intentionality view of truth.[8] According to this view a statement is true if "it accomplishes what the author intended it to accomplish,"[9] and conversely, a statement is false if it does not. Several corollaries of this view of truth may be stated.

1. The first corollary is that a statement is true, even if some of its factual assertions do not correspond with reality, so long as the statement accomplishes its intended purpose.[10] This means that factually incorrect statements can be true, provided they accomplish their intended results. For instance, the parental exhortation to a young child, "If you are good, Santa Claus will bring you presents," is factually incorrect but, according to this view of truth, it could actually be true if it helps produce the intended good behaviour in children before Christmas.

2. A second implication of this point is that factually correct statements can be false if they do not accomplish their intended goals. Some parents are driven to negative psychology in saying, "That is bad; do not do that," because their factual correct statement "That is good" was not accomplishing its intended result.[11]

3. A third corollary of the noncorrespondence view of truth is that persons, not merely propositions, can be properly characterized as true.[12] A person is true if he accomplishes or

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[8] This view could also be called a "functional" view of truth since it centres in the saving function of the Bible. Rogers and McKim write, "The authority of Scripture in these (Reformed) confessions resided in its saving function, not in the form of words used" (*The Authority and Interpretation of the Bible* (New York: Harper & Row, 1979), p.125). Again they state, "It is significant to note … that for the Reformation concept of the 'reliability' of Scripture in achieving its function of salvation, Terretin substituted a discussion of the formal 'necessity' of Scripture" (ibid., p.175).

[9] Fuller (Fuller to Geisler, March 29, 1978) and Hubbard hold this same functional view of truth, namely, that the Bible is true in that it is "able to make us wise unto salvation." Hubbard contends that "error" in the Bible means "that which *leads astray* from the truth God is teaching" ("A Conflict in Interpretation," p.8).

[10] Berkouwer makes it clear he holds this same intentionalist or functional view of truth. He wrote approvingly of Kuyper that "he was not at all troubled by the absence of accuracy and exactness precisely because of the God-breathed character of Scripture: the reliability of the Gospels was guaranteed by this *purpose* of the Spirit" (G. C. Berkouwer, *Holy Spirit*, Studies in Dogmatics, comp. and ed. Jack B. Rogers (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1975) p.250, italics added). Berkouwer also stated "The authority of Scripture is in no way diminished because an ancient world view occurs in it; for it was not the *purpose* of Scripture to offer revealing information on that level" (ibid., p.181, italics added).

[11] Rogers claims that the redemptive function of the Bible is the locus of truth rather than the verbal form (*The Authority and Interpretation of the Bible*, p.125). Broadly speaking, the intentional (functional) view is a species of the "pragmatic" theory of truth, along with its sister "personalistic" and "existential" theories of truth.

[12] Of course neo-orthodox theologians such as Emil Brunner contend that revelation is personal, not propositional (see, e.g., Brunner's *Revelation and Reason* (Philadelphia:

lives up to someone's intentions for him, and persons are not true if they fail to measure up to someone's expectations (whether the intentions are their own or another's).

A Correspondence View of Truth

According to this view, truth is "that which corresponds to the actual state of affairs," to the way things really are. If this theory of truth is correct, then an "error" is that which does not correspond with the facts, with what is really the case.[13] Several corollaries of this view may be observed.

1. The first corollary of a correspondence view of truth is that a statement is true even if the speaker (or writer) intended not to say it, provided that the statement itself correctly describes a state of affairs.

2. The second corollary is that one can make a true statement that is actually *more* than he intends to say. Everyone has had the experience of accidentally revealing more by his words, to his own embarrassment, than he intended to say. This writer once heard an unfair umpire *say*, "I umpired *against* that team once." He obviously *meant*, "I umpired a game *for* that team." Judging by his highly questionable calls, what he actually *said* was true, even though he did not mean to reveal as much.

3. The third corollary of a correspondence view of truth is that, properly speaking, truth is a characteristic of propositions (or other expressions) about reality, but truth is not a characteristic of the reality itself.

4. The fourth corollary is that reality, or that which is, is neither true nor false as such; it simply *is*. For instance; a lie can be real but the lie is not true. That is, someone's lying can be the actual state of affairs. One would not say that the lie is therefore *true*. It is simply true that he is *actually* lying.

Therefore, strictly speaking, it is propositions about states of affairs which are true or false. Truth is found in the affirmation (or denial) about reality, not in the reality itself.

Of course "reality" or states of affairs referred to by propositions can be mental states of affairs (thoughts, ideas, etc.) or even other propositions. But strictly speaking, on a correspondence theory of truth, only affirmations (or denials) are true or false, not the reality about which the affirmations are made. Persons can be called true in the secondary sense that what they say can be trusted to come to pass or to correspond to reality. So they can be called true or trustworthy persons because their statements can be trusted to come to pass, or to correspond with reality.[14]

SOME IMPLICATIONS FOR INERRANCY

It seems apparent that if one adopts the noncorrespondence (intentionality) view of truth he could easily (and consistently) hold that the Bible is wholly true (as God intends it) and yet the Bible could have many errors in it. For if truth means only that the Bible will always

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Westminster Press, 1946), pp.369–70). This neo-orthodox view bears a strong kinship with the neo-evangelical views of Berkouwer, Rogers, and others.

[13] On a correspondence view of truth see Aristotle *Categories* 1.a. 10-4.b. 19 and *On Interpretation* 19.a. 10–19.

[14] Thiselton gives an excellent discussion of the various theories of truth and of the biblical usage of truth (*The New International Dictionary of New Testament Theology*, s.v. "Truth," by A. C. Thiselton, 3:874–902).

accomplish its intended purpose (regardless of factual incorrectness), say, "to make men wise unto salvation,"[15] then it can do that with or without minor errors. Even incorrect maps can get one to the intended destination. In this view, there can be unintentional biblical errors in minor matters, without affecting the author's main intention to save sinners. These minor errors do not reflect badly on the author's (God's) character, since they are not pernicious. In an intentionality view of truth one does not need an inerrant Bible; all one needs is a "reliable" and "trustworthy" Bible.

It becomes obvious that serious implications for the doctrine of inerrancy follow from each of these theories of truth.

Implications for Inerrancy in the Noncorrespondence (Intentionality) View

With this view several implications follow for inerrancy, two of which will be discussed.

First, factual incorrectness in affirmations is not necessarily an error unless the author *intended* to affirm it.[16] Accordingly neither the so-called "three-storied universe," the "mustard seed," nor affirmation about creation (versus evolution) are really errors, even if they are factually incorrect statements. For example, as long as Genesis 1–2 fulfils its intention, say, to evoke worship of God, then—any incorrect scientific affirmations notwithstanding—it could still be wholly true and without error. The same could be true of the Flood, of Jonah and the great fish, of Paul's view of male "headship," and of other biblical affirmations of this kind. On an intentionality view of truth these could all be factually wrong and yet the Bible would still be trustworthy.[17] As long as the intention of God is being fulfilled through these passages, that is, His redemptive function, then it does not matter whether some aspects affirmed in them correspond with reality.

Second, on an intentionalist's view, truth, properly speaking, can be personal and not merely propositional. Persons who fulfil someone's intentions are true or genuine. In this sense Jesus' claim, "I am the … truth" (John 14:6), could mean that He is the one who perfectly fulfils the Father's intentions for Him.

It should be noted in passing that proponents of this view cannot claim that something is not true *simply* because it was intended by someone. If this were so, then almost everything ever written would be true, since surely almost every author *intended* to tell the truth, even though most of them make many mistakes. In any event, the intentionalist view of truth discussed here holds that true statements are those which faithfully *fulfil* their author's

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[15] Fuller has stated this point very clearly. "I believe it is a necessary implication of II Tim. 3:15 that the Bible's truth depends on how well it lives up to this intention, stated explicitly here. I know of no other verse which states the Bible's purpose so succinctly as II Tim. 3:15" (Fuller to Geisler, March 29, 1978).

[16] A thoroughly consistent intentionalist's view of truth, in contrast to a correspondence view, is factually unfalsifiable. For no matter what facts are presented contrary to the affirmation, it is always possible that the author's intentions were true.

[17] Davis is more forthright than most errantists in admitting errors in the Bible (see Stephen T. Davis, *The Debate about the Bible* (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1977)). He tries to preserve the "infallibility" of the Bible in moral matters while denying its inerrancy in historical and scientific matters. But even here he runs into difficulty since some of his illustrations are "errors" and have decidedly moral aspects, for instance, the slaughter of the Canaanites (ibid., p.97).

intentions. That is, it is not simply a matter of intention but of *accomplished* intention which makes something true.[18] In the case of God's truth one could say it *always* accomplishes what God intends (Isa. 55:11). The Bible, then, would be inerrant so long as it always accomplishes its purpose to "make us wise unto salvation" (2 Tim. 3:15).

Implications for Inerrancy in the Correspondence View

Inerrancy means "without error" or "wholly true". On the correspondence view of truth, several implications are involved. First, it would mean that whatever the writer of a scriptural book actually *affirmed* is to be taken as true, even if he personally did not intend to affirm it. That is to say, the Bible could say *more* than its human authors intended it to, since God could have intended more by it than the authors did.[19] Psalm 22 may be an example of this. David may have intended merely to describe his own persecution, whereas God intended to affirm the Cross in this passage. This is what many think happened to the prophets (1 Pet. 1:10–11) when they wrote of things that seemed to go beyond them (cf. Dan. 12:4).

Of course the fact that the authors *could* say more than they intended does not mean they *did*. One might hold that God supernaturally restrained the biblical writers from doing so in order that there would always be an identity between God's intentions and the author's intentions.[20] In any case, an implication of the correspondence theory of truth is that one knows an author's intentions by his affirmations and not his affirmations by his intentions. This is so because there is no way for one to get at the biblical author's intentions apart from his expressions of them. A person cannot read a biblical author's mind apart from reading that author's writings.[21]

Second, on the correspondence view of truth an error can occur even when an author *intended* otherwise, because error has to do with his *affirmations* and not simply with his intentions apart from his affirmations. In short, mistakes are possible even if they are unintentional. Therefore to prove the Bible in error, one need not prove wrong intentions of

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[18] In this sense the intentional or functional view of truth is akin to or a kind of subspecies of a pragmatic view of truth. As James remarked, "Truth *happens* to an idea. It *becomes* true, is *made* true by events … '*The true*,' *to put it very briefly, is only the expedient in the way of our thinking, just as 'the right' is only the expedient in the way of our believing*" (William James, *Pragmatism: A New Name for Some Old Ways of Thinking* (New York: Longmans, Green, & Co., 1913), pp.201, 222, italics his).

[19] Even Hirsch, who places strong emphasis on the intention of the author in interpretation, admitted that "the human author's willed meaning can always go beyond what he consciously intended so long as it remains within the willed type, and if the meaning is conceived of as going beyond even that, then we must have recourse to a divine author speaking through the human one. In that case it is His willed type we are trying to interpret, and the human author is irrelevant" (E. D. Hirsch, Jr., *Validity in Interpretation* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1967), p.126, n.37).

[20] Kaiser places great weight on this point. See his recent essay, "Legitimate Hermeneutics," in *Inerrancy*, ed. Norman L. Geisler (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1980), pp.117–47.

[21] Phillip H. Payne makes an interesting point of this in "The Fallacy of Equating Meaning with the Author's Intention," *Trinity Journal* 6 (Spring 1977):23–33.

the author (which is virtually impossible to do) but simply show that he made an incorrect affirmation.[22] Hence any proposition affirmed as true by any writer of Scripture which does not (or did not) correspond with the reality to which it referred would be false and in error even if the author did not intend to so affirm.

For instance, *if* the Bible actually affirms that hell is geographically down and heaven is up, and *if* this is contrary to fact, then the Bible would be wrong regardless of what the author may have intended by the passage. Further, *if* the Bible affirms that God directly created all basic forms of life and *if* this is contrary to scientific fact,[23] then the Bible would be in error. Likewise, *if* Paul affirmed that a husband is the "head" of his wife and *if* in fact God does not intend this to be so, then the Bible would be in error here.[24]

It should be noted in passing that the correspondence view of truth does not have any direct implications as to the *beliefs* of the biblical authors. They may have believed many false things just so long as they did not *affirm* any of these false beliefs in Scripture.[25] For on this view of truth "whatever the Bible affirms, God affirms," and God cannot affirm as true what is false.

WHAT IS TRUTH?

At first one might think that the resolution of the problem as to which view of truth is correct could be achieved by a simple appeal to biblical usage of the terms for "truth", namely, ἀλήθεια and *emeth*.[26] However, these and kindred terms are used both ways in

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[22] Hirsch contends that there is no meaning apart from the author's intention of that meaning (*Validity in Interpretation*, p.58). But if this claim is not false it is at least in need of serious qualifications. First, it would seem to make all unintentional falsehoods meaningless statements, whereas it seems evident that unintentionally false directions can be clearly understood, even though they are wrong. Second, why cannot a statement be meaningful even if no human has affirmed it? As long as someone could affirm it, even as he reads it, it would seem to be a meaningful statement. In other words, is not its *affirmability* (not whether it has been affirm*ed*) a sufficient condition for its meaning?

[23] This writer believes the Bible does affirm creation and opposes evolution. See the excellent book by A. E. Wilder Smith, *Man's Origin, Man's Destiny* (Wheaton, IL: Harold Shaw Publications, 1968).

[24] In this sense inerrancy as held by a proponent of the correspondence view of truth is a truly falsifiable position. All one needs to do to falsify the biblical affirmation "Christ rose from the dead" is to produce the body of Christ or good evidence of witnesses who saw it in decay sometime after the first Easter morning (see 1 Cor. 15:12–13).

[25] It may even be possible for an author to *reveal* some of his beliefs through his affirmations without necessarily affirming those beliefs. First Thessalonians 4:15 may be an example ("we who are still alive …"). Paul did not *affirm* that he would be alive when Christ returned, but he seemed to *believe* (or hope?) that he would be alive at the Lord's return.

[26] The Hebrew word for truth (emeth) is used in roughly the same way as the New Testament word. It occurs some 127 times. Often it is used of propositional truth. The Old Testament speaks of true *laws* (Neh. 9:13), *words* of men (1 Kings 17:24), *words* of God (2 Sam. 7:28; Ps. 119:160), *commandments* (Ps. 119:151) *Scripture* (Dan. 10:21), and of the

Scripture. "Truth" is used of correspondence to reality in Proverbs 14:25; John 8:44–45; Acts 24:8, 11; Ephesians 4:25; and in many other places. On the other hand, God is said to be truth(ful) (Rom. 3:4) and Jesus said, "I am … the truth" (John 14:6), thus showing that "truth" is used of persons.

How, then, can the problem of the two views of truth be resolved? Is this an irresolvable impasse? This writer thinks not. For one view of truth is broad enough to include the other, but not the reverse. For example, a true statement will always accomplish its intention, but what accomplishes its intention is not always true. Lies and falsehood sometimes accomplish their intentions too. Hence only the correspondence view is adequate as a *comprehensive* view of truth. Further, if truth is only personal but not propositional, there is no adequate way of explaining the numerous biblical passages where truth means propositional correspondence.[27] In fact, of the some one hundred New Testament occurrences of the word "truth" (ἀλήθεια) only one passage indisputably uses truth of a person as opposed to propositions or expressions about reality (viz., John 14:6). Some other passages speak of truth as being (or not being) *in* a person (e.g., John 1:14, 17; 8:44; 1 John 2:4), but the latter passage makes it clear that a person is not considered true because he "is a liar," which involves false propositions (or expressions). In his second epistle John speaks of "walking in the truth" (v. 4) or of continuing "in the teaching" (v. 9) as though truth were personal, but then he explains that this means to "walk in obedience to his commands" (v. 6), which are propositional. Most of the other passages using truth in a personal sense employ words for truth in the adverbial sense of "truly," not in the substantival sense of "truth". At least one can safely say that the normal and consistent New Testament usage of "truth" is of truth in the cognitive, propositional sense. Truth is what can be *known* (Rom. 2:20), what can be *thought* (1 Tim. 6:5), what can be *heard* (Eph. 1:13; 2 Tim. 4:4), what can be *believed* (2 Thess. 2:12)—in short, it is used of propositions. And any passage where truth is used in reference to a person can be understood as meaning a person who *speaks* the truth or one whose *word* can be trusted (cf. Rev. 3:14; 21:5).

Even if some passages are best understood as meaning truth in a personal or practical sense, they still entail a correspondence view of truth. For the person or action must *correspond* to God's expectations in order to be true. Furthermore the passages where truth is used propositionally cannot all be explained as truth in a strictly intentional or personal sense, that is, a sense that is not necessarily factually correct. Hence truth—biblical truth—understood as primarily (or exclusively) personal or intentional does not accurately represent the teaching of Scripture about the nature of truth.

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factually correct (Deut. 17:4; 22:20; 1 Kings 22:16; 2 Chron. 18:15). Also "truth" is used of God (2 Chron. 15:3; Jer. 10:10), of value judgments (Ezek. 18:8), and of actions (Gen. 47:29; Judg. 9:16). But even these can be understood in the sense of correspondence to what is or what ought to be. In short, truth is what can be *spoken* (Jer. 9:5), *known* (Isa. 10:19), *declared* (Ps. 30:9), *factually investigated* (Deut. 13:14), *written* (Neh. 9:13), or *expressed* in some way (2 Sam. 2:6), and is what would correctly represent that to which it refers.

In view of this it is strange to read that "truth is not measured in the Old Testament by correspondence to a theoretical norm but by its ability to achieve its goal" (Brevard Childs, *Introduction to the Old Testament as Scripture* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1979), p.535).

[27] See note 26 for Old Testament examples and the following discussion for New Testament examples.

IN DEFENSE OF A CORRESPONDENCE THEORY OF TRUTH

There are two lines of argument for a correspondence view of truth—the biblical[28] and the philosophical.

Biblical Arguments

The ninth commandment is predicated on a correspondence view of truth. "You shall not give false testimony against your neighbour" ([Exod. 20:16](#)) depends for its very meaning and effectiveness on the correspondence view of truth. This command implies that a statement is false if it does not correspond to reality. Indeed this is precisely how the term *lie* is used in Scripture. Satan is called a liar ([John 8:44](#)) because his statement to Eve, "You will not surely die" ([Gen. 3:4](#)), did not correspond to what God *really* said, namely, "You will surely die" ([Gen. 2:17](#)). Ananias and Sapphira "lied" to the Apostles by misrepresenting the factual state of affairs about their finances ([Acts 5:1–4](#)).

    The Bible gives numerous examples of the correspondence view of truth. Joseph said to his brothers, "Send one of your number to get your brother; the rest of you will be kept in prison, so that your words may be tested to see if you are telling the truth" ([Gen. 42:16](#)).

    Moses commanded that false prophets be tested on the grounds that "if what a prophet proclaims … does not take place or come true, that is a message the Lord has not spoken" ([Deut. 18:22](#)).

    Solomon prayed at the dedication of the Temple, "And now, O God of Israel, let your word that you promised your servant David my father (that there would be a Temple) come true" ([1 Kings 8:26](#)).

    The prophecies of Micaiah were considered "true" and the false prophets' words "lies" because the former corresponded with the facts of reality ([1 Kings 22:16–22](#)).

    Something was considered a "falsehood" if it did not correspond to God's law (truth) ([Ps. 119:163](#)).

    Proverbs states, "A truthful witness saves lives, but a false witness is deceitful" ([14:25](#)), which implies that truth is factually correct. In court, intentions alone will not save innocent but accused lives. Only "the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth" will do it.

    Nebuchadnezzar demanded of his wise men to know the *facts* and he considered anything else "misleading" ([Dan. 2:9](#)).

    Jesus' statement in [John 5:33](#) entails a correspondence view of truth: "You have sent to John and he has testified to the truth."

    In [Acts 24](#) there is an unmistakable usage of the correspondence view. The Jews said to the governor about Paul, "By examining him yourself you will be able to learn the truth about all these charges we are bringing against him" (v. [8](#)). They continued, "You can easily verify (the facts)" (v. [11](#)).

    Paul clearly implied a correspondence view of truth when he wrote, "Each of you must put off falsehood and speak truthfully to his neighbour" ([Eph. 4:25](#)).

    The biblical use of the word err does not support the intentional theory of truth, since it is used of unintentional "errors" (cf. [Lev. 4:2](#), [27](#); etc.). Certain acts were wrong, whether the

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[28] These arguments are basically an elaboration and expansion on some of the same points made by Robert Preus (*The Inspiration of Scripture* (London: Oliver & Boyd, 1955), p.24).

trespassers intended to commit them or not, and hence a guilt offering was called for to atone for their "error".[29]

To summarize, the Bible consistently employs a correspondence view of truth. A statement is true if it corresponds to the facts and false if it does not. Rarely are there even apparent exceptions to this usage.[30]

If the biblical arguments are this strong for a correspondence view of truth, why is it that many Christians—even some who believe in inerrancy—claim to hold a noncorrespondence (intentionality) view of truth? Actually the reason is often quite simple: There is a confusion between *theory* of truth and test of truth. That is, often both parties hold the correspondence theory of truth but differ in their claims that truth is tested by correspondence, by results, or by some other method. In short, truth should be *defined* as correspondence but *defended* in some other way.

In summation, there are good reasons for insisting that a correspondence *theory* (definition) of truth should be accepted, regardless of the apologetic debate about how Christian truth is to be *tested*.

Philosophical Arguments

Several arguments outside biblical usage can be given in support of a correspondence view of truth.

Lies are impossible without a correspondence view of truth. If one's statements need not correspond to the facts in order to be true, then any factually incorrect statement could be true. And if this is the case, then lies become impossible because any statement is compatible with any given state of affairs.[31]

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[29] Of the five times shagag ("to err") is used in the Old Testament (Gen. 6:3; Lev. 5:18; Num. 15:28; Job. 12:16; Ps. 119:67), the Leviticus and Numbers references clearly refer to erring unintentionally. Further, the noun shegagah is used nineteen times and all but two are of unintentional errors (Lev. 4:2, 22, 27; 5:15, 18; 22:14; Num. 15:29, 25 (twice), 26, 27, 28, 29; 35:11 (twice); Josh. 20:3, 9). Only Ecclesiastes 5:6 and 10:5 could be understood as using shegagah to refer to intentional errors.

[30] John 5:31 (RSV) appears to be an exception. Jesus said, "If I testify about myself, my testimony is not valid" (ἀληθής). This would seem to imply that Jesus' factually correct statements about Himself were not "true". This, however, would be nonsense on even an intentionalist's definitions of truth, for surely Jesus *intended* truth about Himself. What is meant here is that a self-testimony was not *established* as true. Or, as the NIV puts it, such "testimony is not valid," despite the fact that it is true, since it is only "by the testimony of two or three (other) witnesses" that every word is *established* (Matt. 18:16; cf. John 8:17) and not by one's own word. Elsewhere Jesus clearly said, "Even if I testify on my own behalf, my testimony is valid" (John 8:14), meaning that it is factually correct, even if they did not accept it.

[31] Part of the confusion rests in the fact that errantists sometimes confuse "lying" which is always an *intentional* falsehood and "error" which is just a plain falsehood. Rogers and McKim seem to make this mistake when they said that "error, for Augustine, had to do with *deliberate and deceitful* telling of that which the author knew to be untrue" (*The Authority and Interpretation of the Bible*, p.30, italics added). Besides the fact that Augustine is not speaking of a mere error but a *lie* in this context—a crucial fact which Rogers and McKim

Without correspondence there could be no such thing as truth or falsity. In order to know something is true as opposed to something that is false, there must be a real difference between things and the statements about the things. But this real difference between thought and things is precisely what is entailed in a correspondence view of truth.

Factual communication would break down without a correspondence view of truth. Factual communication depends on informative statements. But informative statements must be factually true (that is, they must *correspond* to the facts) in order to inform one correctly. Further, since all communication seems to depend ultimately on something being literally or factually true, then it would follow that *all* communication depends in the final analysis on a correspondence view of truth.

Even the intentionalist theory depends on the correspondence theory of truth. The intentionalist theory claims something is true if it is accomplishing what it intends. But this means that it is true only if the accomplishments *correspond* to the intentions. So without *correspondence* of intentions and accomplished facts there is no truth.

CONCLUSION

A certain irony is involved in the present debate about inerrancy which illustrates this point. Hubbard, who is apparently an intentionalist and errantist, recently criticized Lindsell, who is an inerrantist and correspondentist, for *misrepresenting the facts* about the situation at Fuller Theological Seminary. He provided Lindsell with "a handful of errors"[32] in Lindsell's treatment of the Fuller situation. But why should these be called "errors" on an intentionalist's view of truth? Surely Lindsell *intended* well and even *accomplished* his intentions in arousing awareness of the drift from inerrancy at Fuller. But this is all that one can expect on an intentionalist's view of truth. In short, why should Hubbard complain about factual misrepresentation unless he really holds a correspondence view of truth? And if he holds a correspondence view of truth, then why should he reject the factual inerrancy of the Bible? The least to be expected is that he be consistent with his *own* view of truth.

There is more, however, that biblical Christians must expect and even demand. It is this: Every Christian should get his view of truth about the Bible from the Bible. And if this is the correspondence view of truth, as the foregoing discussion indicates, then it follows that the factual inerrantists are right. That is to say, the Bible is inerrant in whatever it affirms.

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mistakenly overlook—their use of the word *untrue* in the last part of the sentence belies a correspondence view of truth which is at odds with the intentional view they are proposing in the first part of the quotation.

[32] See David A. Hubbard, *Theology, News and Notes* (Pasadena, CA: Fuller Theological Seminary, 1976), p.26. Hubbard's comment is especially strange in view of the fact that he explicitly rejected Lindsell's view of an "error" or untruth (ibid., p.8).

The Phenomenon of Hebrew Christianity in the Early Church and Today

Ole M. Chr. Kvarme

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The author shows that the basic problem of Hebrew Christianity today is the same as it was in the Early Church: how to relate to the rest of the Christian Church and yet how to relate to Jewish traditions and customs and in particular to the Law of Moses.

This article is one of four lectures on Christianity and Judaism given in several theological training institutions in South and East Asia in 1978.
(Editor)

In the well known mosaic of the Church of St. Sabina in Rome from the beginning of the 5th Century A.D. there are two female figures standing beside each other: the church of the circumcision (ecclesia ex circumcione) on the left, and the church of the nations (ecclesia ex gentibus) on the right hand side. Over the former St. Peter is standing, over the latter St. Paul, and each of the women has a book in her hand. The basis of the composition is evidently the saying of St. Paul to the Galatians (2:7): "to me was committed the Gospel for the uncircumcized, as to Peter that for the circumcized."[1]

In the centuries between the mosaic of St. Sabina and our own century we can hardly speak of the existence of "a church of the circumcision" or a particular Hebrew Christianity. Although there have always been Christian Jews in the Christian Church, it is hardly wrong to say that "the church of the circumcision" faded away in the 4th and 5th Century A.D.[2] However, during the last century new and self-conscious congregations and communities of Hebrew or Jewish Christians have grown up.[3] Today one can find such communities and groups particularly in England, in US, in South America and of course in Israel.[4] These congregations and groups of Hebrew (Jewish) Christians may differ from each other on several points, but they also have common features which make them distinct from the predominantly Gentile Church, the church of the nations (ecclesia ex gentibus).

The development of a particular Hebrew Christianity represents a challenge and a problem for the rest of the Christian Church. Some time ago a Hebrew Christian congregation in New York, called the Congregation of Jesus the Messiah, was suspended from the American Lutheran Church to which it had belonged. It must be stressed that this

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[1] Cf. B. Bagatti, *The Church from the Circumcision*, Publications of the Studium Biblicum Fransiscanum, Smaller Series no. 2, Jerusalem, 1971, p.1f.

[2] Cf. e.g. J. Danielou, *Das Judenchristentum und die Anfänge der Kirche*, Arbeitsgemeinschaft für Forschung des Landes Nordrhein-Westfalen—Heft 121, Köln, 1964.

[3] Cf. e.g. A. E. Thompson, *A Century of Jewish Mission*, London, 1902. H. J. Schonfield, *The History of Jewish Christianity*, London, 1936.

[4] The best survey of Hebrew Christianity in Israel today is found in P. Osterby, *The Church in Israel*, Denmark, 1970. Cf. also B. Maoz, *The Work of the Gospel in Israel*, The Banner of Truth, 150, 1976, pp. 24–32.

was mainly a congregation of Christian Jews, but it carried a typical Jewish Christian character in its life and worship, and it was suspended because it subordinated the Gospel to Jewish custom and demanded Law observance from its members.[5] However, not all congregations of Hebrew Christians can be accused of similar sectarian doctrines; on the contrary there is today also a Hebrew Christianity which represents a genuine part of the Christian Church.

The problem of Hebrew Christianity is a twofold problem: first of all it concerns *indigenous theology* and *indigenous expression of Christian life and worship* among Hebrew/Jewish Christians. But since the Christian Church through Jesus Christ and the apostles grew out of the Jewish people and lives in continuity with the Old Covenant, there is a second aspect to the problem of Hebrew Christianity: in seeking an indigenous theology and indigenous expression of the Christian life and worship, the Hebrew Christians *seek to express anew the Jewish roots of the Christian Church* and the continuity with the chosen people of Abraham's descendants, which also means a new identification and solidarity with their own people. To get a firm hold on this twofold problem of Hebrew Christianity, we will first give a brief survey of the Jewish part of the growing Christianity in the Early Church, and then continue with a survey of Hebrew Christianity today, before we conclude with some remarks on how the Church of Christ today should tackle this problem of Hebrew Christianity.

HEBREW CHRISTIANITY IN THE EARLY CHURCH

When we today speak of Hebrew/Jewish Christianity in the Early Church, we generally intend to denote certain sects of Jewish Christians in the second, third and fourth century—sects that lived apart from the mainline Christian Church and slowly died away. Biblical scholarship as well as patristic and archeological research have in the later years refuted this understanding of Early Hebrew Christianity. One has stressed that the first Christian Church in Jerusalem was a Jewish entity within the Jewish People, and after the time of the apostles Hebrew Christianity developed both within and outside the mainline church and became a comprehensive movement, before it faded away.[6] Let us then first have a look at the first Christian Church in Jerusalem and Palestine before the decisive year 70 A.D.

In our context it is important to keep in mind that the Christian Church started as a Jewish and Messianic community in Jerusalem. Jesus, the resurrected Christ, was a Jew: born

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[5] WCC—CCJP Newsletter, Spring 1978, pp. 16–17.

[6] Important contributions to Hebrew Christianity in the NT period and the Early Church: J. Danielou, *Theologie du Judeo-Christianism*, Tournai, 1958; J. Munck, *Paul and the Salvation of Mankind*, pp.210–246: *Jewish Christianity according to the Acts of the Apostles*, London, 1977, 2; *ibid. The Acts of the Apostles*, Anchor Bible 31, pp. LXII–LXXI: *Primitive Jewish Christianity*, New York, 1967; B. Reicke, *Glaube und Leben der Urgemeinde*, AbThANT 32, Zurich, 1957; H. J. Schoeps, *Theologie und Geschichte des Judenchristentums*, Tübingen, 1949: *Ibid, Das Judenchristentum*, Bern, 1964. Of particular importance is the mentioned work by B. Bagatti and by I. Mancini, *Archeological Discoveries Relative to the Judaeo-Christians*, Publications of the Studium Biblicum Fransiscanum, Smaller Series no. 10, Jerusalem, 1970. Cf. also H. Conzelmann, *History of Primitive Christianity*, New York, 1973, and L. Goppelt, *Die Apostolische unds nachapostolische Zeit. Die Kirche in threr Geschichte*, B.1-A, Göttingen, 1966.

of a Jewish mother he grew up in a Jewish setting with the Holy Scriptures of the Jewish Old Testament as his Bible. The *Apostles* were also Jews who had recognized their Messiah in the Jewish Jesus from Nazareth. Also Paul, the Apostle to the Gentiles, was a Jew by birth, and on several occasions he felt it necessary to stress his Jewish identity. *The first Christians in Jerusalem* were also Jews, and in the first years after Pentecost Day communities of Jewish Christians grew up in Judea, Galilee and Samaria.[7] A radical change had taken place in the lives of these Jews as they accepted faith in the resurrected Jesus Christ. This radical change, however, did not mean that they stopped living as Jews or in a Jewish way. Their new faith did not remove them from the God of their fathers, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, and it did not make Moses superfluous. But Moses and his Law were now seen in a new perspective, and their faith in the resurrected Jesus Christ had given them a new fellowship and a new and perfect Covenant with the God of their fathers. What God had promised to the fathers, was now fulfilled in Jesus Christ. This is the recurring theme of the Acts of the Apostles in the NT (cf. ch. 2,3, 4, 7, 13, etc.).

Their Jewish identity and the Jewish way of life were not a problem for the first Jewish Christians in Jerusalem and Palestine. There are two aspects of the life of the first Christian Church of the Jews in Palestine that we have to stress: First of all it is clear that they *continued to practice circumcision and to keep the Law*. According to *Acts 21:20* the Apostle James tells Paul who is back in Jerusalem from his missionary journeys: "You see, brother, how many thousands there are among the Jews of those who have believed; they are all zealous for the Law." On this line it is also told in the Acts of the Apostles how the Jewish Christians in Jerusalem used to go to the Temple (2:46; 3:1; 5:12; 5:20), and on his third missionary journey Paul was hastening back to Jerusalem to be there at the Jewish festival of Pentecost.

On the other hand, we also see that the community of Jewish Christians in Palestine represent a *particular entity* which is distinct from the rest of the Jewish People that did not accept the faith in the resurrected Christ.[8] It is told in Acts that the first Jewish Christians had everything in common, and that they used to gather in their homes for fellowship in order to pray, to study the Old Testament and to celebrate the Lord's Supper (2:42, 45f). This distinctive feature of the community of Jewish Christians was strengthened as this community grew and multiplied: the persecution of the Jewish Christians by other Jews and the fact that they were joined by Gentiles in Palestine as well as throughout the Roman Empire, broadened the gap between the church of circumsized Jews and the rest of their own Jewish People.

When the Church grew, however, and became a community of Jews and Gentiles, certain difficulties arose for the Jewish Christians in their fellowship with Christians of gentile stock. The difficulties were discussed at the Apostolic Council in Jerusalem in the year 48 or 49 and are rendered in *Acts 15*. The problem then was not the Jewishness of the Jewish Christians, but how Christians of gentile stock should live. The agreement of the council was that Gentiles should not be obliged to live as Jews and according to Jewish laws and customs in order to be recognized as Christians. The obvious presupposition of this agreement was that Jews should not live as Gentiles in order to be Christians. It seems that both Paul and the

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[7] For this paragraph and the following, cf. the paper on "The Relationship between Christianity and Judaism in the Acts of the Apostles and Today".

[8] Cf. J. Munck, *Paul and Salvation*, etc., pp.214ff.

mother Church of Jerusalem followed this guideline, but later a different development took place, as we soon shall see.

The Apostle Paul very much stressed the unity of Jews and Gentiles in Jesus Christ (Rom. 10:12; Gal. 3:28). But this does not mean that he completely wiped out all differences between Jewish and gentile Christians. On the contrary, Gal. 2:7 that we quoted in the beginning, indicates that Paul distinguished between the Christians of Jewish and gentile stock, and the distinction was precisely their different relationship to Jewish customs and laws. It is then also important to add that Paul never permitted the adherence to Jewish customs and laws to break the unity of Jews and Gentiles in Christ (Gal. 2:11ff).

For the later development of Hebrew Christian thought and theology it may be of importance to recognize that the Jewish Christians in Palestine developed a christology that was not different from the one that developed in the gentile part of the Early Church. From the Acts of the Apostles we get the impression that the function of Jesus and his titles as prophet, as the suffering servant of God and as Messiah played a greater role among Jewish than gentile Christians (Acts 3:22f; 3:18; 8:32f; —2; 3; 7; 13) and it is particularly in the missionary proclamation of the Gospel to the Jews that these titles and functions are emphasized.[9]

In the year 70 A.D. the temple in Jerusalem was destroyed and the Jews expelled from their Holy City. This also implied expulsion of the Jewish Christians from the Judean capital, and they were scattered throughout Palestine, but many of them gathered in the trans-Jordanian city of Pella. The uniting role of the mother church in Jerusalem was then lost, and although somewhat later a church of Jewish Christians was again established in Jerusalem, this scattering of Jewish Christians resulted in the development of a lot of different Hebrew Christian groups and sects. When the Jewish Bar-Kochba revolt was crushed by the Romans in 135 A.D., and the Roman rule over Palestine was further strengthened, this also had a certain influence on the complex development of Hebrew Christianity.

The writings of the Church Fathers and archeological excavations of the later years give us a complex picture of various groups of the entity that we here call Hebrew Christianity, and some of their literature and their writings have also been handed down to us. It would be too much to give here a list of the various groups and sects and of the differences between them. We will therefore limit ourselves to mentioning and describing the two main lines in the development of Hebrew Christianity from the 2nd Century on, well aware of the danger of oversimplification.

HEBREW CHRISTIANS WHO MAINTAIN COMMUNION WITH GENTILE CHURCHES

1. One part of early Hebrew Christianity did not separate from the predominantly gentile Church that kept the apostolic tradition—or at least it continued to live in some sort of communion with gentile Christians. In this trend both Jewish and gentile Christians respected the agreement of the Apostolic Council. These Jewish Christians continued to live as Jews in their Jewish surroundings, but recognizing gentile Christians as their brothers and without demanding from them that they should become Jews.

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[9] cf. B. Bagatti, op. cit. pp. 152–236, somewhat otherwise than H. J. Schoeps, *Theologie* etc., pp.71–116.

One group of Hebrew Christians was called "*the Nazarenes*". Probably the so-called Gospel of the Hebrews has its origin in this group. The Nazarenes—a name not always used with precise reference in the patristic literature—have often been listed as an heretical group, but it is clear from the writings of Origen[10] and Eusebius[11] that they were generally considered as faithful, and that mainly national customs separated them from other Christians.[12] The Nazarenes also considered themselves the equals of the other Christians of gentile stock, and they wished, as the Nazarene writer Hegesippus says, to appear as true Christians distinct from the heretics, also heretics of their own stock. In the well known Dialogue of Justin with the Jew Trypho[13] Justin himself explains that he stands in communion with Jewish Christians who believe in Christ and live according to precepts of the Law, but who do not oblige gentile Christians to live in the same manner.

Archeological discoveries in the later years have revealed that a "Church of the Circumcision" existed throughout the greater part of Palestine quite actively to the end of the fourth century and then, in a state of decline, for another two centuries. This church lived side by side with the "Church of the Gentiles", and it had its own liturgy, expressive of Christian teaching with its root in Judaism, with its own books, buildings, worship and customs. It seems that large parts of this church followed the same trend as the Nazarenes which we have just mentioned, and to a certain extent lived in communion with the Church of gentile stock.[14] This can be seen from the fact that a considerable influence from this Church was felt in the gentile Church of neighbouring countries, particularly in Asia Minor,[15] and secondly from the fact that some very few communities of this Church of the Circumsion have survived in Palestine until today within the Greek Orthodox Church.[16]

EBIONITE CHURCHES WHICH SEPARATED FROM GENTILE CHRISTIANS

2. The second trend within early Hebrew Christianity is also mentioned in the just quoted Dialogue of Justin with Trypho. Justin here emphasizes that he does not approve of those Jewish Christians who absolutely obliged gentile Christians to live according to the Law of Moses, and who do not wish to communicate with the gentile Christians unless they do so. Justin here speaks of the Jewish Christians who later have been called *Ebionites*, and he also adds in this saying that he does not approve of their teaching about Christ, denying his divinity and asserting that he was generated of men and not born by a Virgin. This

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[10] *Contra Celsum*, Patrologia Graeca, 11, 1287–88. J. P. Migne, Paris, 1857, sqq.

[11] *Historia Ecclesiae* 4, 22, 3; (ed. B. J. Kidd, London, 1957).

[12] Cf. Bagatti, op. cit. p.30ff.

[13] *Patrologia Graeca* 6, 575–578.

[14] Cf. Bagatti, op. cit. pp.3–29, and Mancini, op. cit.

[15] J. Danielou, *Das Judenchristentum*, op. cit.

[16] J. Barcley, *Melkite Orthodox Syro-Byzantine Manuscripts in Syriac*, Studii Biblicj Fransiscani Liber Annus, 21, 1971, pp.205–219.

christological teaching of the Ebionites differed from the Nazarenes who maintained the divinity of Christ.[17]

The group of the Ebionites is the main representative of this second trend among the Hebrew Christians, but there were many smaller groups and sects scattered throughout Palestine and the Near East. They shared the view of the Ebionites on the obligation of Gentiles to follow the Law of Moses and also their particular teaching on the humanity of Christ. In the neighbouring countries to Palestine as well as in Asia Minor an influence was also felt from this heretic Hebrew Christianity, as there grew up in these areas groups of Judaizing Gentiles. As with the first trend of Hebrew Christianity this heretical trend dies out during the fourth and fifth century A.D.

We have briefly touched on the differences between the two main lines of Hebrew Christianity in their view of the Law and of Jesus Christ. But both trends kept *Jewish customs*, and particularly they followed the Jewish calendar and celebrated the different festivals according to this calendar. To illustrate this we will mention the question of Easter. The Christians celebrated their principal feast on two different dates. Some always chose the Sunday, others any day of the week as long as it was the 14th of Nisan. The reason for both dates was equally good, since the Sunday recalled the Resurrection of Jesus, while the 14th of Nisan was the date on which the paschal lamb was immolated, the date of the Jewish Passover that Jesus kept with his disciples. The greater part of the Churches of the Roman world adhered to the celebration on Sunday, whereas the Jewish Christian churches and others connected with them, e.g. in Asia Minor, kept the 14th of Nisan.[18]

At the Church Council of Nicea, held in 325, the main target was the Arian doctrine regarding the person of Christ, a doctrine largely taken from Ebionite teaching. We understand that the mainline and predominantly Gentile Christian Church which adhered to the apostolic tradition, had to reject this teaching as false doctrine and thereby also the Ebionite heresy. The same council, however, also confirmed that Easter should be celebrated on Sunday, and thereby rejected a custom that was common to the churches of Jewish stock. This decision represented a development in the Church whereby not only was the Ebionite Hebrew Christian heresy rejected, but the Nazarene trend too met with opposition. This development took place at a time when a more general hostility to Jews and everything Jewish grew up in the Church. The gap between the Church and the Jewish people became radically wider, and the losers in this development were the Churches of the Circumcision, who then slowly died away.[19] The intolerance and the passion of the Great Church for unifying everything are the basic reasons for the decline of Hebrew Christianity. We must therefore regret that the predominantly gentile Church did not show more understanding and solidarity with the relatively large part of the Church of the Circumcision that followed the doctrinal line of Nicea, but adhered to particular Jewish customs in their community life and worship in line with traditions from the mother church of Jerusalem.

HEBREW CHRISTIANITY TODAY

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[17] For this and the following, cf. Bagatti, op. cit. pp.30–40.

[18] Concerning the Quartodecimans, see the paper on "The Old Testament and the Jewish Festivals and their meaning for the Christian Church".

[19] Cf. Bagatti, op. cit. pp.80–82.

As briefly mentioned in the beginning, Hebrew Christianity appeared again in the arena in the late 18th and in the 19th century. Today it represents a movement which is present in many parts of the world. Although we in some countries can find particular Hebrew congregations (or synagogues as these also are called by their members), Hebrew Christianity today is properly called a movement, since we find Hebrew Christians in many of the historical churches, and since there are no "Churches of the Circumcision" such as in the Early Church. An important event in the development of Hebrew Christianity in our time was the establishment of the *International Hebrew Christian Alliance in 1925*. This alliance has today work and representatives all over the world in Europe, in Northern and Southern America, in South-Africa, in Persia (Iran) and as a matter of course in Israel. The alliance is an interdenominational organization whose aim is to help Hebrew/Jewish Christians to keep their Jewish identity and their connection with the Jewish People, and to encourage them to be witnesses of the resurrected Jesus Christ for their own people.[20] It is difficult to estimate the extent of the Hebrew Christian movement today, since there are absolutely no statistical data and we know very little about what is happening among Hebrew/Jewish Christians in e.g. Eastern Europe (Russia etc.) and in South America. Just to give some idea, we mention that Israel probably has about 1000 Christians of Jewish stock, in a population of 3 million Jews.

There are many similarities between the Hebrew Christianity of the Early Church and today, and it is obvious that Hebrew Christians today try to renew traditions of the Early Hebrew Christian Church of Jerusalem and Palestine.[21] But both Judaism, the Jewish People and the Christian Church have undergone important changes, and the various aspects of Hebrew/Jewish Christian life and worship now appear in a different context and with new connotations. Whereas the Jewishness of the first Hebrew Christians was a matter of course in their Jewish milieu, Hebrew Christians today in a new way feel it necessary to emphasize their Jewish identity, because of the gentile character of Christendom—or to say it in a different way: because of the Graeco-Roman and Western features of the Christendom that Jews have met. For centuries Jews who joined the Christian Church more or less had to cut their connection with their own Jewish people. This was the demand of European Christendom throughout the Middle Ages and even up to our own era.[22] Hebrew Christians of our times have reacted strongly to this, and therefore we often meet with the following slogan of Hebrew Christians: "You don't have to become a Gentile in order to believe in Jesus Christ (Messiah)." On the contrary, the Hebrew Christians stress that their Jewish identity as children of Abraham according to the flesh has been completed through their faith in Jesus Christ and through their belonging to the one people that is being gathered in Jesus Christ. Hence Hebrew Christians very often call themselves "*completed Jews*" because of their faith in Jesus Christ, a terminology which is in line with Paul's saying in Rom. 2:28: "For he is not a real Jew who is one outwardly, nor is the true circumcision something external and physical. He is a Jew who is one inwardly, and real circumcision is a matter of the heart, spiritual and not literal." Their strong emphasis on the continuity between their

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[20] Information about this alliance can be found in their magazine, *The Hebrew Christian*, published in London.

[21] For the following the discourse is to a large extent based on my own observations in Israel for the last three years.

[22] Cf. f.i. the standard work of Rengstorf-Kortzfleisch, *Kirche und Synagoge*, Stuttgart, 1971.

new faith in Jesus Christ and the traditions of the Old Testament has also led the Hebrew Christians to the frequent use of the expression "*Messianic Jews*" when they speak of themselves. We remember that the word Christian stems from "Christ" which is the Greek word for the Hebrew "Messiah".

From the foregoing we understand that the basic problem of Hebrew Christianity today is the same as it was in the Early Church: how do they on the one hand relate to the rest of the Christian Church, and how do they on the other hand relate to their own people, the traditions and customs of the Jews, and then also to the Law of Moses which in many ways represents the nucleus of the many Jewish traditions and customs? There are basically *two ways* in which Jews who have come to faith in Jesus Christ settle this problem, and these two ways are similar to the two main lines of Hebrew Christianity in the Early Church. But since both Judaism and Christianity have developed considerably since the first centuries, the two trends appear more distinct and differ from each other more radically today. For practical reasons we here limit our description to the situation as it is in Israel.

MESSIANIC CHRISTIANS AS A SECT OF THE SYNAGOGUE

1. The first trend is to some degree similar to the *Ebionite* movement of the first centuries. Those who adhere to this trend are Jews who have come to faith in Jesus as the Messiah of the Jews, but they have remained in the synagogue. They do not practice baptism and do not have communion either with any Christian Church or with congregations of Christian Jews and Gentiles. They more or less follow the Mosaic Law according to the rabbinic tradition of post-biblical and medieval times: they practice circumcision, let their children pass the bar-mitzva, the confirmation of the synagogue, and bury their dead in the cemeteries of the Synagogue; they keep the fasts and the festivals of post-biblical Judaism, and take their meals according to the rabbinic prescriptions for the ritually clean food. Their faith in Jesus Christ, which distinguishes them from the rest of the Jews of the Synagogue, is then more or less an addition to the Judaism that they have inherited in the Synagogue, and beside the ethical and moral implications, this faith in Jesus as the Messiah is mainly expressed in the context of Jewish millenarianism: the returning Jesus will be the Jewish Messiah who will restore the kingdom to Israel and establish the millenium in Jerusalem before God finally creates a new heaven and a new earth. A similar millenarianism was also extant in Early Hebrew Christianity. The similarity between this trend and the Ebionites is mainly the lack of communion between them and the universal Christian Church, and their emphasis on the binding obligation of the Law and the traditions of the synagogue. However, the Ebionites represented a distinct community with their own churches and were separated from the Synagogue, whereas this trend of Jewish believers in Jesus has identified with the Synagogue, at least more or less. For this reason we would hesitate to speak of this trend as a kind of Hebrew Christianity and rather regard it as a particular sect of the Synagogue. But we have described this trend here to show in which direction the consistent development of heretical Hebrew Christianity leads—that is: back to the Synagogue.

MESSIANIC CHRISTIANS IN FELLOWSHIP WITH GENTILE CHURCHES

2. The trend of heretical Hebrew Christianity in Israel today represents a very small group. The main trend of today's Hebrew Christianity is found among Jewish Christians who belong to the Catholic and to the main Protestant Churches, and in addition to this we find independent and interdenominational congregations and groups of mainly Hebrew

Christians. Although there are many groups with different doctrinal standards, there is a certain unity and a certain fellowship among these Hebrew Christians, and they have certain common denominators.

Vis-à-vis the Jews of the Synagogue these Hebrew Christians represent a distinct group because of their communion with the gentile Church and with gentile Christians, and because of their identification with the living Church of Christ that comprises both Jews and Gentiles. Their faith in Jesus Christ is not just an addition to the religious traditions of the Synagogue, but it has given a new meaning and a new direction to their Jewish identity, and their belonging to the new community of the Body of Christ is given priority.

But these Hebrew Christians within the denominational and inter-denominational Churches also represent a particular group within the Christian Church. Similar to the first trend they also follow *Jewish traditions and customs*, but they do it in a different way, and with a different emphasis. They do not feel obliged by the rabbinic traditions and prescription, but keep up Jewish traditions from biblical times. These traditions and customs they keep because of their meaning to the Jewish People as a nation, and also because of their biblical roots. They practice circumcision, because this custom always has been a sign that separated the jewish people from the nations and hence expressed their belonging to the Jewish people, and because it is a sign that they also are children of Abraham according to the flesh. They keep the sabbath since it is practical in Jewish surroundings, and since this was the day of rest ordained by God; this does not mean, however, that the first day of the week is not commemorated as the day of the resurrection of the Lord. A peculiarity of Early Hebrew Christianity was the celebration of Easter/Passover according to the Jewish calendar, on the 14-15th of Nisan, and this is also a distinctive peculiarity of Hebrew Christians today. Then they celebrate the Passover meal in accordance with Jewish tradition and recite the Passover story and partake the meal with its different ingredients.[23] But this celebration of the Jewish Passover meal is determined by their faith in Jesus Christ, the true Passover Lamb, and through their commemoration of the death and resurrection of Jesus at this meal, it is transformed into a clearly Christian celebration. This must suffice to illustrate how these Hebrew Christians follow Jewish customs and traditions: partly as national customs, partly as a renewal of biblical traditions.

The teaching of the different groups of Hebrew Christians is in line with the main denominational distinctives in Christendom, despite the growing scepticism towards firm doctrinal standards. However, it is important to mention that Hebrew Christians of this trend are also influenced by a particular *millenarianism*, in which the State of Israel will play an important role as the crucified and resurrected Jesus Christ will return to establish his kingdom of one thousand years at the Mount of Zion. This millenarianism is clearly influenced by Jewish and rabbinic apocalyptic, but when it is found among Hebrew Christians in Protestant Churches today, it also represents a heritage from the pietistic movement of the Church and the so-called left side of the Protestant Reformation.

The description of these two trends of Hebrew Christianity represents a simplification of the actual situation, as one will understand. In the United States there have developed in later years so-called Messianic Synagogues: communities of mainly Hebrew Christians who gather for worship in a house they call Synagogue, and who call their pastor "Rabbi" etc. These messianic Synagogues, however, should not as a group immediately be put in line with the Ebionites or the mentioned heretical Hebrew Christians, since some hold sound

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[23] The *Messianic Assembly* in Israel has published its own "The Passover Haggada to the Glory of our Lord, Yeshua Ha-Mashiach", Jerusalem, 1977.

doctrines and keep communion with other congregations. This group is very complex, and every case in the group should be studied to see what line it follows.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

The number of Hebrew Christians in Israel and in other parts of the world is growing, not very fast but steadily, and Hebrew Christianity is a developing movement. This is a challenge, not only to the Hebrew Christians themselves and their leaders, but also to the rest of the Christian Church which is mainly of gentile origin.

Despite the fact that the first Christian Church in Jerusalem and Palestine was a Jewish entity, the predominantly Gentile Church in the third and fourth centuries A.D. rejected almost everything Jewish in the life of the church in its fight against the Ebionite heresy. The result of this intolerance on the part of the "Great Church" was not only that the heretical Hebrew Christianity died away, but also that the other "Churches of the Circumcision" declined and eventually faded away. With the challenge of a growing Hebrew Christianity of today the Christian Church should take notice of what happened in the Early Church and learn from it. To us it is obvious that the mentioned heretical Hebrew Christianity which appears more as a sect of the Synagogue, cannot be accepted by a Christian Church that takes seriously the Christ event and the apostolic traditions of the New Testament. We here stress this point since there are within the Christian Church also gentile Christians who support this trend of heretical Hebrew Christianity. At the same time the Early Church in a negative way teaches us that the Christians of Jewish origin need the support and the understanding of the rest of the Church, so that they can develop their national customs and the biblical traditions kept by their people, and at the same time remain faithful to the Gospel and in a sound relationship to their Christian brethren of gentile stock.

In Jesus Christ the dividing wall between Jews and Gentiles was broken down (Ephes. 2:14) and in Him they have become one. But this does not mean that they should be uniform: in the communion of faith, in the one church of Jews and Gentiles, both parts need the other one. In this fellowship the Christians of Jewish origin can maybe help those of gentile origin to maintain the Old Testament and the Jewish heritage of the Christian Church, and also in the reading of the New Testament the Hebrew Christians can supply the church with dimensions which are not new, but which too often have been forgotten.

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The African Church and Selfhood

Tokunboh Adeyemo

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INTRODUCTION

The problem of selfhood is not peculiar to Africa; it is a problem that every genuine believer has to face. The moment we become Christian, we automatically become a citizen of two countries. On the one hand, we belong to our own ethnic or national or geographical cultural context; and on the other hand, we are citizens of heaven. The laws of these two countries do not always agree. Your culture may demand something from you, but the laws of God, that are above your culture, may demand something different, so that you are faced with the question of identity—"Who am I? What am I supposed to do in this situation?" When you look into Africa, it is more complicated, because we did not only have our own culture and traditional religion and we did not only have the western culture that came with the Gospel, but Christianity came to us in different brands, like Methodist, Catholic, Lutheran and so forth.

But it is not a recent problem. Actually it dates back to the beginnings of Christianity in the New Testament when there was a question as to whether Gentile believers should be circumcised so as to become Christians. The Jews who believed in Jesus Christ and the finality of His sacrifice continued with the Old Testament sacrificial system. So there was a question of identity there. To help us focus our attention to this crucial problem which everyone of us has to face, let us read Galatians 2:11–16:

> When Peter came to Antioch, I opposed him to his face, because he was in the wrong. Before certain men came from James, he used to eat with the Gentiles. But when they arrived, he began to draw back and separate himself from the Gentiles because he was afraid of those who belonged to the circumcision group. The other Jews joined him in his hypocrisy, so that by their hypocrisy even Barnabas was led astray. When I saw that they were not acting in line with the truth of the gospel, I said to Peter in front of them all, "You are a Jew, yet you live like a Gentile and not like a Jew. How is it, then, that you force Gentiles to follow Jewish customs? We who are Jews by birth and not 'Gentile sinners' know that a man is not justified by observing the law, but by faith in Christ Jesus. So we, too, have put our faith in Christ Jesus that we may be justified by faith in Christ and not by observing the law, because by observing the law no one will be justified."

This passage deals with the problem of selfhood in a nutshell. In your own time, read the whole chapter, even the whole book of Galatians as well as reading Acts 15 as the background to this epistle.

Should these Gentiles be circumcized in order to become Christians? Or should the Jews be Hellenized so as to be Christians? This is the question that churchmen in Africa are asking today. Before we can worship Jesus Christ the Lord, do we have to be European Christians? Does God understand our Yoruba or Swahili language if we address Him in that language? These are some of the questions that selfhood raises.

THE CRISIS OF SELFHOOD

At the inaugural meeting of the All Africa Conference of Churches (AACC) held in Kampala, Uganda in 1963, the Assembly voiced what was considered as the greatest weakness of the church in post-colonial Africa. They said:

> The lamentable truth is that after centuries of Christianity in Africa, the Church, on the whole, cannot be said to have attained true selfhood. The tragedy of our situation is that in spite of more than 300 years of contact with our continent, in spite of our boast of so many

churches and approximately sixty million Christians on the continent, Christianity is still a foreign religion to us.[1]

Two years later, Professor Bolaji ldowu wrote a booklet entitled *Towards an Indigenous Church*. In it, he discussed the thesis of selfhood and its various implications. He wondered whether what we have in Africa is in fact Christianity or only transplantations from what he described as a European cult, the various ramifications of which are designated Methodists, Anglicans, Baptists, and so forth. In no uncertain terms, he declared:

> The Church in Nigeria is on trial: she is being called upon to justify her existence in the country; to answer in precise terms the question as to whether her purpose in Nigeria is not to serve as an effective tool of imperialism.[2]

But those who have known Jesus Christ as their personal Saviour and Lord know that Christianity is not the preserve or the monopoly of the West at all. Christianity is God's answer to the dilemma of mankind. So we have to wrestle with this question of how we can be African Christians and still be Africans in our land.

Moving away from the 1960s into the 1970s, the cry for selfhood did not subside. On the contrary, it gained momentum. In 1970, it was Professor Mbiti, who strongly called for the localization of the church in Africa. He charged that Christianity must be Africanized just as Europe and America have westernized it and the Orthodox churches easternized it. "Localization", he says, "means translating the universality of the Christian faith into a language understood by the peoples of a given region."[3]

Realizing that the concept of selfhood cannot be realized without due consideration of the rôle of foreign missionary organizations and churches in Africa, Rev. John Gatu of East Africa, suggested moratorium. He describes it as a strategy to halt or limit the flow of money and personnel from overseas churches to African churches for a period of at least five years. He first made the appeal before an American church audience in 1971, and repeated it in 1973 at Bangkok at a conference "Salvation Today" sponsored by the Commission on World Mission and Evangelism of World Council of Churches (WCC). His contention is that through this strategy, Africans will be able to assume more responsibility in their own church affairs, and be allowed to find their own identity.[4]

Moratorium received the approval of the AACC, who, at their Third General Assembly in Lusaka in 1974, recommended it as an option to the churches in their search for selfhood and self-reliance. The purpose advanced is three-fold:

1. To help reduce the dependency of African churches on foreign mission churches and boards;

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[1] *Drumbeats from Kampala*, Report of the First Assembly of the All Africa Conference of Churches (AACC), 1963, p.32.

[2] Bolaji E. Idowu, *Towards an Indigenous Church* (London: Oxford University Press, 1965), p.1.

[3] John S. Mbiti, "Christianity and Traditional Religions in Africa", *International Review of Mission*, October 1970.

[4] For the various addresses given on moratorium and related subjects by John Gatu, check: "Missionary, go home" in *IDOC International Dossier*, No. 9, 1974; and "The Urgency of the Evangelistic Task" in *The New Face of Evangelism*, René C. Padilla (ed.), first printed in 1976.

2. To enable African churches to become self-reliant; and
3. To enable African churches to develop authentic structures, orders and programmes based on African values and priorities.[5]

That same year, at the International Congress on World Evangelization in Lausanne, Switzerland, Gatu reiterated his call for a moratorium. He stressed that a lasting relationship between the African churches and western missionaries will be questionable as long as the missionaries regard Africans as ecclesiastical children.

Although some evangelical brethren present at Lausanne rejected a blanket moratorium on spiritual and practical grounds, they did not refute the reasonableness of the proposition. Neither will they oppose the concept of selfhood.[6]

In 1976, InterVarsity Press in America published Plus Wakatama's *Independence for the Third World Church subtitled as An African's Perspective on Missionary Work*. In this work, the author indentified himself with the advocates of what he labels as "selective moratorium". This group demands that only the people with particular social and cultural and spiritual qualifications should go overseas as missionaries to meet specific needs, especially in the area of training nationals at a higher level.[7]

While the emphasis and approach may vary, the general concensus of the African church leaders on identity crisis over the past two decades cannot be denied. But the question of selfhood is deeper than just a moratorium.

THE LANGUAGE OF SELFHOOD

What exactly do we mean by selfhood? Can it really be attained? What are the implications and values? To these and similar questions I shall address myself in this paper.

According to the Concise Oxford Dictionary, "selfhood" is defined as "personality, separate and conscious existence". It is an "autonomous existence", realizing that each man, each individual is created in the image of God for a definite purpose. Selfhood means that you do not want to be like anyone else, however nice they may be, but that you want to be yourself, that you want to be you; and when we apply this to the Church, it means the same thing. Selfhood means that the Church in Africa wants to be an African Church in an African context. That does not mean that I go back to the old religion and take animism and mix it in a little bit of Christianity and come up with something that is less Christian. I want to be truly biblical, but authentically African, so that when they see me they know that I am a brother in Christ and that I am from Africa.

It also implies a concept and the concept is deep. One of our African thinkers by the name of Augustine of Hippo, when talking of the Africans' faith, once said: "We live beyond

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[5] Reprinted in *AACC Newsletter*, Vol. 5, No. 5, May 1979, p.8.

[6] The late Byang Kato, who was the first African General Secretary of the Association of Evangelicals of Africa and Madagascar (AEAM) was reported as saying: "Gradual transfer to African leadership is our objective". (See P. Wakatama's book entered next, p.30.)

[7] Pius Wakatama, *Independence of the Third World Church* (Downers Grove, III.: InterVarsity Press, 1976). In this work, the author identifies four different groups on the moratorium debate. He considers the strategy to be desirable and necessary but, because of the nature of the Great Commission, he disagrees with "across the board" stoppage of personnel and funds.

the limits of our bodies"[8] To the average western mind one is just an individual, but to the African mind we are because the community is. As long as the community is, then you are. When the community ceases to exist, you are finished. So selfhood for us is "being-in-relation", it is an "existence-within-a-community".

Michael Kayoya, a young priest who died tragically in Burundi in 1972, graphically portrays this theme of existence-in-community in his poetry *My Father's Footprints*. He saw self as a quest, as a conquest of self and all that is contrary to humanness. To this francophone African, to become a Christian means becoming a fully African man in an African context. He goes on to say that since God has assumed humanity in Christ, Jesus Christ has become the standard for us.[9] To become a Christian, then, means to become truly man or human. This is very important and I am going to show you the importance of that as we go into the dynamics of selfhood.

From the aforesaid, one can see why the African church leaders consider the traditional missionary concept of church indigenization as inadequate. The "three selfs" theory of Henry Venn and Rufus Anderson places emphasis on the ministries of the church, whereas the African concept of selfhood focuses on the people, the church. With this fundamental conceptual difference one can better see the cause of communication breakdown between the missionaries and the nationals.

THE DYNAMICS OF SELFHOOD

Can the community think of Jesus Christ as belonging to them rather than as a foreign Christ? Can the community worship jesus Christ in a pattern that is understandable to its own people? It used to be said that to have a drum in an African church was demonic and some people even wanted us to use the violin which cannot wake up a sleeping demon. In some churches, they have gone to the extent of having a pipe organ in an African church.

Selfhood means that we ask ourselves if it is really wrong biblically—it means that we ask ourselves whether it is unchristian to clap our hands and jingle a little bit in an African church, whether you can participate with such freedom in worship and shout "alleluia" if that is the cultural expression. This is selfhood. It has three important dynamics: cultural orientation, freedom from structural domination and the pre-eminence of Christ as Lord of His Church.

1. *Cultural Orientation*. What is culture? Culture is anything but a heap of unrelated elements that make a people think. It is the lifestyle of any people, of any ethnic group. Unfortunately, when Christianity came to Africa, it did not come to us naked, rather it came in the garb of the people who brought it. And in those days, the way you could identify a Christian was by the narrow tie he wore, the Victorian lifestyle and all kinds of food which you had to eat with a fork in one hand and a knife in the other. What is wrong with eating food with your fingers? God made them! These are the cultural elements which you have to grapple with.

Let us take a look at a typical African man. Before he drinks his beer, for example, he will pour a little bit to the ground as a sort of libation to his ancestral spirits. Some people have identified that as worshipping ancestors, but that is truly not the case. When I look at the

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[8] Quoted by John V. Taylor in *The Primal Vision* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1963), p.44.

[9] Michel Kayoya, *My Father's Footprints*, trans. Aylward Shorter and Marie-Agnes Baldwin (Nairobi, 1974).

West, although one does not pour out a little bit of one's drink to the ground, one holds one's glass high to make a toast. This is a question of cultural orientation.

Similarly, an African home is not just a dwelling, it is also a temple, wherein he worships. His religiosity affects all areas of life—social, economic and political—and people look at life and experience it through this religiosity.

The Church has a task to perform: the Church has to study the culture of its own people and make the Bible speak to that culture. Where the culture and the Bible are in conflict, the culture must give way, because the Bible is the Word of God and is above culture. We know from experience that selfhood means that in some cases, the Bible transforms the culture, and in other cases the Bible modifies the culture. But it would be very unjust to condemn any culture as being totally demonic and this is something that we ought to bear in mind as we proclaim the good news of Jesus Christ.

2. *Freedom from Structural Domination*. It is a law of nature that, when a child is born, it has to depend upon its parents for some time. But then comes the adolescent stage when the child must define himself in terms of his own needs. He has to look into his own social, economic and political structure and be able to relate to that.

When Christianity came to Africa, the structure by and large was patterned after the mother or the sending country. This was good for a time, because it was needed. But there has to come a time when the church must identify with the present-day realities and to continue to hold on to a foreign structure will only lead to the death of the church. The fact that one administrative system or church policy or evangelistic programme works in Europe or America is no guarantee that it will succeed in Africa. Cases abound where projects that flourished under the missionaries' administration collapsed when the nationals took over either because funds were not sufficient to run them or the nationals were not skilled in that area or there was no interest or all of these combined.

Today the advocates of selfhood are saying that the Church in Africa must examine its needs, determine its own priorities, evaluate its own resources and devise suitable practical programmes. In other words, we cannot fight the battle in strange armour. African church leaders are asking how they can really minister to the needs of their own people. So we are saying that in order to have its own identity, the Church must address itself to the cultural needs of the people and it must be free from foreign domination.

3. *The Lordship of Christ*. It is argued that the Church in Africa should no longer be an institution acknowledging a human overlord elsewhere outside Africa; nor should it continue to be a marionette with its strings in the hands of some foreign dominators. Instead the Church in Africa should be a Church which acknowledges and proclaims the Lordship of Jesus Christ in a language that is understandable to its own people. The Church in Africa strongly advocates the Reformation theme *sola Scriptura*, the Bible and the Bible alone. They say that the day is gone when the authority to obey is in the Vatican, or in Canterbury or elsewhere in Europe or of some "providence" who dispenses dollars from America. Jesus Christ has to be the Lord of the Church and Jesus Christ alone.

THE EXPRESSIONS OF SELFHOOD

How does selfhood express itself? As I have said, Christianity came to Africa to a people who have been described as "incurably religious" in all things. There was no dichotomy between the sacred and the secular to the African mind. When the African man goes about his business, there is that religious thought in his mind, he is always conscious that his

forefathers are watching and he knows that he belongs to the particular community which has gone before. The expression of selfhood must take that into account.

One of our African scholars said this about the Christianity which we inherited:

Mission Christianity has come to mean for many Africans simply a set of rules to be observed, promises to be expected in the next world, rhythmless hymns to be sung, rituals to be followed and a few other outward things. It is a Christianity which is locked up six days a week, meeting only for two hours on Sundays and perhaps once during the week. It is a Christianity which is active in a church building. The rest of the week is empty. Africans who traditionally do not know religious vacuum, feel that they don't get enough religion from this type of Christianity, since it does not fill up their whole life.[10]

In contrast, many of the developing African churches are very expressive. We call them the independent churches partly because they do not acknowledge foreign domination, their leaders live among the people, their worship is conducted in the native language, there is that community atmosphere which is enjoyed, the expression of concern for each other (body life) and so they feel it is a place to really feel at home. Their theology may not be academically (and in some cases biblically) sound, but their preachers give a message relevant to the social and material problems of the members because of their close affinity. Regardless of whatever qualms (and there are many of them) one may have against the independent and charismatic churches, it goes without saying that they are closer to selfhood than the historic mission churches.[11]

African church leaders are then saying that the church in Africa must be a place to feel at home. But it should be remembered that it is an existence in a community; in other words, the African Church cannot isolate itself from the rest of Christendom. We cannot exclaim that we do not belong to others, because we do. We are the Church of Jesus Christ in Africa because there is the Church of Jesus Christ elsewhere.

THE IMPLICATIONS OF SELFHOOD

The first practical outcome of selfhood is a sort of creative tension. I call it creative tension because it is exciting! On the one hand you may come from a culture which advocates violence, on the other hand Jesus Christ claims to be, and I believe is, the Prince of Peace. Now, as a Christian, where do I go? Shall I use a gun and shoot or shall I pursue peace with every man? Without this nobody is going to see God, as the Bible says. So there is that tension. How can the Church in Africa be truly the Church of Jesus Christ without watering down the Gospel? In other words, when I look at the Church, how can I say that really there is something different about this particular community? Can I really identify this community with Jesus Christ the Lord? At the same time, can I identify it as an African community of worshippers? There is that tension because you have to avoid what is called syncretism. What this means is that the African church workers have to study both the culture and the Word of God.

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[10] John S. Mbiti, *African Religions and Philosophies* (Garden City, New York: Anchor Books, 1970), p.305.

[11] It is believed that the independent churches and charismatic renewal movements are numerically growing faster than the main historic mission churches. It is estimated that an average of five new congregations are launched daily across the continent.

Now what is the implication of this for foreign missions? Does this mean the end of foreign missions, that we do not need foreign missions in Africa? No, it does not mean that. What it means is this: it means that the day of pioneer missionaries in Africa is ended for foreigners. In many African countries today, the government will not even let you in, if you say you are coming just to preach the Gospel. They will tell you that there are already Christians in the country and that it is up to them to preach the Gospel. But there is something else: it means that you have to come as what we call specialized missionaries. There is still a need for missionary doctors, technicians, communicators, educators in these various specialized areas. All the African countries are developing countries and the governments will never turn anybody down who will assist in this development.

Another implication is that unlike the past when foreigners came as directors and managers, selfhood demands their coming as guests and partners. They are strangers and aliens to our world as we are to theirs. This requires their dependency on us for at least information, direction and contact. But they are not ordinary guests: they are ambassadors of Christ as we are, engaged in the common task of taking Christ to the nations and discipling them. Which means that we are partners! Ontologically, partnership implies equality, autonomy, agreement and free sharing of resources. Which means we can learn from their insights about the Word of God, their heritage and tradition, and benefit from their spiritual endowments. We, therefore, depend on them! The picture is like that of the relationship between the different members of the body. They are all *important*; they are all *essential*; they are all *necessary*; and they are all *interdependent*. Missionaries all over the world, whatever their race or denomination, should work *with* the nationals and not *for* them.

Selfhood and begging are incompatible. Begging does not help the individual solve his problem of poverty or realize his potential. Begging actually destroys self. If I have to go about begging every time I have a need, then my self is totally destroyed. I am speaking to myself as well as to the Church in Africa. We are faced with the task of teaching our own people how to give to the ministry of Jesus Christ. The moment we continue to go abroad begging, we destroy and cripple self.

THE VALUES OF SELFHOOD

The first important value of selfhood is this: it gives the people the opportunity to communicate the Gospel of Jesus Christ to their own people in the language they can understand. People like to become Christians without crossing unnecessary barriers; these barriers could be linguistic, racial, cultural or social.

The incident at Pentecost (Acts 2:5–12), when thousands of people from about fifteen different nations heard the Gospel being declared in their own language can be cited as a biblical precedent. On that day of Pentecost, the people said "Oh! Are these men drunk? How come every one of us can hear his own language what is spoken by these people?" What happened? We are told that about 3,000 accepted Jesus Christ on that occasion as their own Lord and Saviour, because they heard God speak to them in their own language. "In our own tongues" is an important phrase that affirms self.

Until recently, African Christians used to think that missionaries are only white people and that to talk of a missionary is to talk of a white Christian man or woman who has come from abroad. But recently the situation has begun to change. The African churches are now discovering that missionary work is not colour barrier-bound. It is not only meant for white people. Today, many of the African churches are sending out missionaries; for example, my own church, ECWA, the Evangelical Churches of West Africa, has a missionary society,

currently supporting 240 Nigerian missionary families working in Sudan, Chad, Niger, Benin and Ghana. They are totally supported by the local churches in Nigeria.

The same thing applies to evangelism or evangelization. In August 1978, over 1,000 evangelical leaders in Nigeria met and decided to launch "Operation Good News", which is an effort to reach 80 million Nigerians with the good news of Salvation in Christ by the end of 1980.[12] Evangelism and Mission no longer carry colour tags. When churches reach out they grow and when growth occurs, self is affirmed.

Next to growth is stability. A church that has attained selfhood is a stable church. Webster Dictionary describes stability as the strength to stand in a time of crisis. It is being firm in times of persecution and the Church in Africa is grappling with this particular need today.

One cannot resist telling the story of the Church in Ethiopia in the late 1930s and early 1940s. When the Italians invaded the country in 1935, all missionaries departed, leaving national believers behind. When the Italians were driven out by the British and Ethiopians in 1941, the missionaries returned to find several thousands of believers. The same thing could be said today. Since Emperor Halle Selassie's empire collapsed and the new power is proletarian and pro-Moscow, many missionaries were asked to go again, but God remained behind with the people so that local believers are carrying on the work of the Gospel. Stability: it is part of selfhood.

There remain many more values of selfhood, but mention shall be made of only one more: self-reliance.[13] If a denomination said that it has sufficient well-trained national leaders for its local congregations, schools and various other establishments, and demands that their foreign missionaries go home, or if it asked its foreign benefactors overseas to discontinue sending funds or any other type of assistance because it is able to run its affairs, that does not mean the end of mission or foreign missionary enterprise. Instead, it is a fresh opportunity not only to move on, but to co-operate and work together in reaching some of the two billion people who are still to be reached in various areas of the world.[14]

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[12] "Let the Earth Hear His Voice" was the 1974 Lausanne banner for the International Congress on World Evangelization. In 1975, the Nigerian delegates who attended Lausanne organized a National Congress on Evangelization wherein the report and vision of Lausanne was shared. In August 1978, a second Congress was held at the University of Ire. It was during this congress that "Operation Good News" was launched. At one of the business sessions, Panya Baba, the Secretary of the Evangelical Missionary Society of ECWA gave a report of his denomination's missionary programme. See also AFROSCOPE No. 16 (December 1978) for more details on the Operation Good News campaign.

[13] When Rev. John Gatu, Moderator of the Presbyterian Church of East Africa (PCEA), suggested a moratorium on overseas support in the early 1970s, he wasn't only talking about it. His church committed itself to a self-reliance programme, the details of which are reported on page 11 as an Appendix to this paper. The report was published in the AACC Newsletter, Vol. 5, No. 5, May 1979, p.9.

[14] In 1945, it was estimated that there were 40 million professing Christians in Africa. By 1963, the number had risen to 60 million. Today, the estimated number is over 100 million, making the ratio 1 out of every 3 persons on the continent. But one fact often overlooked is that there are about 175 million professing Muslims in Africa.

Having said all this, the conclusion to this paper remains open. One thing is certain, however, the Spirit is like the wind and He moves whichever way He chooses.

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Urban Explosion and Missions Strategy

Timothy Monsma

Reprinted from Evangelical Missions Quarterly, Jan. '81*, with permission*

Culture shock leading to both apathy and violence is escalating in the cities of the world, especially in the less affluent nations. Staggering population growth together with the widening gap between rich and middle class people living in high rise apartments and poor people living in slums challenge the urban Church to new dimensions of mission. Today it is the cities that put Christianity on trial. This article calls the Church to new priorities in missionary strategy.
(Editor)

WORLDWIDE URBANIZATION

An Overview

Recent United Nations statistics on worldwide urbanization numb the imagination. The following chart gives some picture of what is happening: Of the 60 giant cities (5,000,000 or more population) projected for the year 2000, 45 (or 75%) will be in less developed countries. Many of these countries are fertile areas for mission work today. Opportunity beckons.

CITIES OF THE WORLD HAVING POPULATIONS OF 5 MILLION & OVER[1]
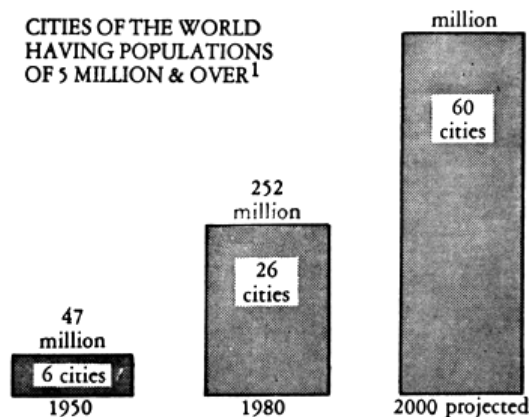
The growth of smaller cities is also important, in Latin America three of every four persons will be living in a city by the year 2000. In Africa, cities of all sizes are growing

rapidly, while in the United States the farming population has dropped from around 25% in 1930 to about 4% today.

Conclusion: Worldwide urbanization is a reality that any mission strategy for the future must take into account.

Cities as Centres of Dominance

Louis Wirth and Robert Redfield are among the fathers of urban anthropology. In his early writings Redfield tended to idealize the advantages of rural life and to emphasize the problems of urban life. But in his more mature years he increasingly emphasized cites as centres of the "Great Tradition" and pointed out that cities are centres of cultural dominance. The city dominates its hinterland and takes the lead in cultural changes that come to a society.

Horace Miner developed these ideas still further when he defined the city not in terms of its physical appearance, but in terms of its function within society. He called the city a "center of dominance". Wheatley and Aernsberg referred to cities as "nodes" of dominance. Uzzell and Provencher agree with this approach.[2]

If cultural change tends to spread from the city to the countryside, this is also true of religious change, for religion is part of culture. Roland Allen maintained that Paul was very much aware of this dynamic when he chose to preach in the cities of the Roman Empire.[3] But McGavran has responded that Paul went to the cities because this is where Jews were found.[4]

The question is one of intention and effect. Paul intended to preach "to the Jew first".[5] But the effect of this intent was that he went to cities. From these cities the gospel spread until it covered the entire area in which the cities were found. Ephesus is a good example. Paul ministered in the city of Ephesus, but: "This continued for two years, so that all the residents of Asia heard the word of the Lord, both Jews and Greeks."[6]

If it is true that cities are centres of cultural and religious dominance, this has tremendous implications for missionary strategy. It means that even in those countries where the majority are still living in small towns or on the farms, urban ministries ought to receive top priority.

There is an increasing willingness in missionary circles to recognize this priority. Recently the Intercristo missionary service organization did a computer check at my request on the number of openings for prospective missionaries in urban work. There are hundreds of openings on all continents.

A THREE-PRONGED MISSION STRATEGY

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[2] Edwin Eames and Judith Granich Goode, *Anthropology of the City* (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1977), pp.9–13.

[3] Roland Allen, *Missionary Methods: St. Paul's or Ours* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1962), pp.12, 13.

[4] Donald McGavran, *Bridges of God* (London: World Dominion Press, 1955), p.30.

[5] Romans 1:16.

[6] Acts 19:10.

Evangelize the City

The cities of the world need evangelism, or discipling as described in [Matthew 28:19](), [20](). Here the primary concern is to introduce urbanites to the Lord Jesus Christ and to affiliation with his body, the church. Various methods have been used successfully in different parts of the world. I will briefly cite some of the more popular methods along with some examples, and then move on to the second aspect of a helpful urban strategy.

1. House Churches. House churches are a very useful way to get started in places where there is no church or where there might be government opposition to public meetings and/or the building of mission chapels. It certainly is an economical way to proceed. House churches are often accompanied by door-to-door calling either to find a place to meet or to invite people to attend services that are already under way. If all goes well, the house church will outgrow the house and larger facilities must eventually be found.

Roger Greenway has described the successful use of this method in *An Urban Strategy for Latin America* and also in *Guidelines for Urban Church Planting*.[7]

2. Mass Evangelism. A problem associated with the traditional mass evangelistic meetings is that many who decide for Christ never validate their decision by way of active membership in a local church. Peter Wagner tells us that the Pentecostals have been the fastest growing Protestant group in Latin America.[8] They have developed a type of mass evangelism that is effective in gaining new church members. People are led to Christ not in a stadium or some other neutral place, but in the Pentecostal churches. For example, there is a congregation of Methodist Pentecostals in Santiago, Chile, that sends about thirty preaching teams into the streets every Sunday evening. They preach and sing and invite people to go with them to church. Many do. In the church building they confess Christ as Saviour and Lord, and begin a new life in him.

3. The Family Web. Donald McGavran has described web movements as a type of people movement.[9] With a people movement many members of a clan or other group move toward Christianity together, reinforcing one another in the faith. With a web movement, the decision to embrace Christianity is not a simultaneous decision on the part of all concerned, but rather is a chain reaction decision following the lines of least resistance especially among relatives. In a recent book McGavran emphasizes "the high evangelistic potential of the urban monoethnics."[10] This suggests that web movements are still doing well in the cities of India.

Web movements are also highly effective in the cities of Africa.[11] This does not mean that other methods of evangelism are not useful in Africa. But it does suggest that the African sense of solidarity with the extended family and the clan must not be neglected, regardless of what other methods are used.

4. Christian Compassion. J. H. Bavinck calls missionaries to Christian compassion for the physical needs of others by reminding them that the preaching of Jesus "was ever enclosed

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[7] Grand Rapids: Baker, 1973 and 1976.

[8] Peter Wagner, *Look Out! The Pentecostals Are Coming* (Carol Stream, IL: Creation House, 1975).

[9] Donald McGavran, *Understanding Church Growth* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1970), p.320.

[10] *Ethnic Realities and the Church* (Pasadena: William Carey, 1979), p.176.

[11] Timothy Monsma, *An Urban Strategy for Africa* (Pasadena: William Carey, 1979),p.90.

within the framework of his deeds. His deeds illustrated, classified, and undergirded his preaching."[12]

Missionary Cornelius Persenaire made specific efforts to meet the physical needs of the people in the barrio in which he was working in Tegucigalpa, Honduras. These efforts included a milk-feeding programme, literacy classes, a medical clinic, and a day care centre.[13] The programmes are promoting the evangelistic programme in that part of Tegucigalpa.

When James Hefley began working in inner city Chicago, he wanted to preach and teach only. But when he came face to face with monumental physical needs, and when he remembered that evangelical foreign missionaries had been ministering to the whole man—both soul and body—for a long time, he decided that his ministry too must be comprehensive.[14] For many evangelicals in the inner city, one must preach the truth and one must do the truth by acts of kindness and helpfulness. This doing is part of the message that is to be communicated.

Conclusion: Good strategy uses the most effective means it can find to evangelize urbanites.

Extend the Church to the City

McGavran speaks of three types of numerical church growth: internal growth, transfer growth, and conversion growth. The first prong of the three-pronged urban strategy was to "Disciple the City". The chief concern was conversion growth.

Now the second prong will be considered, and here the main concern is with transfer growth. If one brings a multitude of people into the church, through the front door, but loses them as they transfer out the back door as fast as they come in the front door, the growth rate for that church will be zero. Transfer growth is not to be despised.

The Christians who were in Rome prior to Paul's visit to that city, are a biblical example of transfer growth. Paul wrote a letter before he ever got to Rome. Some of them went out to meet Paul when they heard he was on his way to Rome.[15] As far as is known, no apostle had visited Rome prior to Paul's visit. The Roman Christians had been converted in Jerusalem and elsewhere. Then they carried their Christianity with them to Rome, establishing a community of believers in this strategic city. That which happened in the first century can and must happen today.

In this connection one can observe a difference between the work in Latin America and the work in Africa and Asia. All of Latin America is nominally Roman Catholic. Work in a rural area that is nominally Catholic can be difficult. But in the city people have greater freedom to forsake the traditions and strike out in new directions, including new religious directions. The Pentecostals, mentioned earlier, have had their greatest growth in the cities of Latin America.

In Africa and Asia, on the other hand, both Protestants and Catholics are relatively new on the scene. They compete—if that's the right word—on an equal basis. Here it is often fully as easy to reach people in their rural homes before they move to the city as to reach

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[13] Roger Greenway, *Guidelines for Urban Church Planting* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1976).

[14] James and Marty Hefley, *The Church That Takes on Trouble* (Elgin, IL: David C. Cook, 1976).

[15] Acts 28:15.

them in the city. The result is that, in some countries at least, many are already committed, evangelical Christians when they migrate to the urban areas. Here the problem of conserving the gains already made becomes more critical.

It must be frankly admitted that the growth of formal schooling and the expansion of cities encourages the secular outlook. Under the secular outlook religion either becomes nominal or is squeezed out altogether. This is not to say that secular humanism is a necessary consequence of schooling and urbanization. It is simply to recognize that this is the way it often goes. A knowledge of the disease is the first step toward finding a cure. That is why I mention this problem.

In the city of Nagpur in India 14,000 reported themselves as Christians in the 1971 census. But all the city churches put together had only 3,000 members.[16] There was a failure of transfer growth.

The problem of attrition from the church is also found in Latin America. "A recent study conducted in Central America indicates that nearly 80 per cent of Protestant youth who enter the secular universities are lost to the church."[17]

In Africa the further one goes in secondary school or the university, the more likely he is to leave the faith. Stevens, Tate, Riddle, Schwartz, and Shorter all mention and illustrate the problem of attrition away from the church in Africa.[18] Secularism has entered Africa through the schools, through secular literature, and through the entertainment media. Urbanization tends to encourage secularization unless helpful antidotes are administered.

While the message of the church in this situation is very important, there will be no message at all in the cities of the world unless there is a physical presence. Too many American Christians have given up on the city—especially the inner city—because they consider the situation virtually hopeless. They have forgotten that they serve a sovereign God whose business it is to overcome human obstacles.

Many Christians in the Third World have also given up on cities because they have been intimidated by the funds required for doing urban work, and also by the very complexity of urban life. In both areas Christians from the West can help them. William Smalley and others have helped us understand that funds flowing from one church to another do not necessarily destroy the indigenous character of the receiving church.[19] Some missions have pioneered in the area of financial assistance for urban churches. Other missionaries who know the urban scene in the West have counselled and assisted Christians for whom urbanization is a new and perplexing experience.

In emphasizing the contribution that missionaries can make I do not intend to take responsibility away from Christian brothers and sisters in the Third World. The church in the Third World has an urban responsibility and the strategy that this entire article has in view is actually a co-operative strategy in which indigenous church leaders and their missionary assistants work together in urban ministries.

Conclusion: Wise strategy will extend the church within the city wherever urbanization is taking place.

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[16] Donald McGavran, *Ethnic Realities and the Church* (Pasadena: William Carey, 1979), p.159.

[17] Roger Greenway, *Discipling the City* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1979), p.94.

[18] Timothy Monsma, *op. cit.*, pp.79, 80.

[19] William A. Smalley, "Cultural Implications of an Indigenous Church," *Readings in Missionary Anthropology* (Pasadena: William Carey, 1974).

Develop a Theology of Urban Pastoral Care

Presence in the city is not enough. One must be present with a timely message. We are mistaken if we think of church growth purely in terms of numerical growth. There must be spiritual (and structural) growth as well, if even the numerical growth is to be maintained. A timely message fosters spiritual growth. The call for contextualization, if the term is properly understood, is one we dare not ignore. Contextualization means "to put our message and ministry in context with our present world and people's life situation."[20] Good strategy includes contextualization.

In my book *An Urban Strategy for Africa*, I suggested three elements that will be found in any viable African urban theology.[21] These elements are actually appropriate to any urban theology for anywhere in the world. They are as follows:

1. Concern for structural change. The teaching and preaching ministry of the organized church must point out the need for changing structures that are evil. Slavery was abolished in the world partly because the church came to see the evils of slavery and preached against it. The church today must see the evil of racial or tribal discrimination as well as economic exploitation, and sensitize Christians to these evils. Once Christians are sensitized they will begin to act.

2. Concern for urban community. There are many anonymous people in the city in the sense that one does not know them by name even though he has dealings with them. Gregarious human beings must not be allowed to remain anonymous. They need fellowship groups where people know them and they know others. The local church is one such group. It is an appropriate fellowship group especially for those Christians who do battle with urban forces of evil and get hurt in the process. Within the fellowship there is healing for the wounded and there is fresh inspiration to go out and try again.

3. Concern for the laity. All of God's people are called to use their gifts in his service, especially in urban situations. In the city Christians often stand alone. They need to be tough but also flexible as they meet the temptations and challenges that come their way. Urban pastors must equip the saints for this diverse ministry in which they are involved. Only a well equipped laity will be able to man their positions on the front lines successfully.

Conclusion: Urban pastoral care involves much more than visiting the sick or holding the hands of the dying. It involves feeding God's people a steady diet of spiritual food filled with spiritual vitamins, minerals, and proteins. Only this will give them the strength they need to evangelize others, to extend God's church, and to promote his kingdom in the rapidly growing cities of the world.

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[20] Russel A. Cervin, *Mission in Ferment* (Chicago: Covenant Press, 1977).

[21] Timothy Monsma, *op. cit.*, pp.96–99.

Islam as Rival of the Gospel in Africa

J. N. J. Kritzinger

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INTRODUCTION

The discussion of Islam as a rival of the Gospel in Africa must commence with a clarification of the terms involved.

ISLAM

It should be noted at the outset that "Muhammadanism" and "Muhammadans" are terms offensive to Muslims. The religion is Islam (submission) and a follower of Islam is a Muslim (one who submits). The offence is that the term "Muhammadan" creates the impression "that the founder of the faith has become an object of worship as in Christianity".[1]

Islam is more than a "religion" as this term is commonly understood in the West, viz. as a set of teachings about God and man with rules for worship and morality. Islam can more appropriately be described as an ideology,[2] because "it is a complete way of life, catering for all the fields of human existence. Islam provides guidance for all walks of life—individual and social, material and moral, economic and political, legal and cultural, national and international."[3] It is an all-encompassing system of life based on the Qur'an, the Sunnah (example of Muhammad), the principle of *Qiyas* (analogy), and *Ijma'* (the consensus of the Muslim community).[4] This complete code of laws (also called *shari'a*) is found in four different "schools" of law, viz. the Hanafi, Shafii, Maliki and Hambali.[5]

Although it is true that many Muslims regard Islam merely as a religion in the narrow sense, the worldwide revival of Islam at present is in fact a rediscovery of this total character of the Islamic ideology.[6] Therefore religion and politics are inseparable in Islam; in the words of Col. Gaddafi of Libya, "There is no contradiction between religious consciousness and

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[1] G. H. Jansen, *Militant Islam*, London: Pan Books, 1979, p.81; *Al-Qalam*, 1:18, Feb./March 1976, p.2; Muhammad is not worshipped by Muslims, only respected as Allah's last prophet.

[2] This is also done by Muslims recently, e.g. *Al-Qalam*, 2:10, November 1977, p.1. *Al-Qalam* is the mouthpiece of the Muslim Youth Movement (MYM), an active South African organization stressing the propagation of Islam and social service.

[3] K. Ahmad, "Islam: Basic principles and characteristics", in K. Ahmad (ed.): *Islam, its meaning and message*, London: Islamic Council of Europe, 1976, p.37.

[4] These four elements are called the *usul ul-fiqh*, i.e. the roots of Islamic law.

[5] In South Africa the Indian Muslims generally follow Hanafi law and the Malay Muslims Shafii law.

[6] G. H. Jansen, *op. cit.*, p.17–30.

political decisions."[7] It is this total Islam which Christians will encounter during the last twenty years of the twentieth Christian century, which are also the first twenty years of the fifteenth Islamic century.[8]

GOSPEL

In the light of the above it is clear that the area of contact is not merely between Islam and "the Gospel" (understood as a message of good news), but between Islam as an ideology on the one hand and on the other hand the Gospel, the church and the political and economic systems with which they go hand in hand. In other words, the choice which confronts the people of Africa is not merely a religious one between the church and the mosque but at the same time between the political and economic ideologies associated with these religious commitments. It is only in this widest context that the "rivalry" between Islam and Christianity can be properly understood.

RIVAL

There are two aspects to the "rivalry" between Islam and Christianity in Africa: 1) competing for the allegiance of the remaining followers of African Traditional Religions (A.T.R.); 2) winning converts from each other.

1. Competition

According to statistics there are just more than 40% Muslims, a little less than 40% Christians and about 20% followers of A.T.R. in Africa.[9] Both Muslims and Christians are gaining ground through conversions from A.T.R. and the first aspect of rivalry between them is the competition to gain the largest amount of these converts. This competition aspect was prominent in earlier Christian missionary thinking, in which a Christian "belt" across sub-Saharan Africa to halt the south-ward advance of Islam was a part of the strategy.[10] In the religious "scramble for Africa" this was supposed to have given Christians the time to Christianize Africa south of the Sahara before the arrival of Islam. The fast changing reality of Africa has made this kind of thinking redundant and except in isolated rural areas the challenges of Christianity and Islam are reaching the people of Africa simultaneously. There is a growing interpenetration in that there are many active Muslim minorities south of the equator and many Christian missionary agencies and local Christian groups north of it. This competition is therefore not so much a geographical issue any more, but is becoming a merely numerical one.

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[7] Quoted in *ibid.*, p.17.

[8] The Islamic calendar is a lunar one, according to which a year is 352–354 days long. The years are counted from the *hijra*, Muhammad's migration from Mecca to Medina in 622 A.D., and the present Islamic year is 1400 A.H. *Anno Hegitae* or *Hijrae*).

[9] J. D. Holway, "Christianity and Islam in Africa—looking ahead", *Missionalia*, 2:1, April 1974, p.3.

[10] This view was aired by a Dr. Robson at the World Missionary Conference of 1910 in Edinburgh and strongly propagated by Dr. H. K. W. Kumm, *Khont-hon-Nofer, The lands of Ethiopia*, London and Edinburgh: Marshall, 1910, pp.211,230–235.

2. Converts from each other

The real and lasting "rivalry" for which the church must prepare itself and which is taking place already throughout Africa is that of Muslims and Christians "evangelizing" one another.[11] This rivalry takes different forms in the various African countries, depending on the percentages of Muslims and Christians and on the policy of the particular government towards proselytization.[12] One effect of the current Islamic revival has been the curbing or prohibition of Christian missionary work in Muslim countries[13] and rumours of the reintroduction of the law of apostasy.[14] There is very little possibility that this rivalry will cease since both Islam and Christianity are missionary faiths with truth claims that contradict each other at crucial points.[15] Although this rivalry will remain, it need not be the only attitude prevailing between Christians and Muslims.

3. Only rivalry?

In spite of the conflicting truth claims mentioned above, Christians and Muslims do share many things in common and co-operation between them in areas of e.g. justice and development is possible. The Islamic evaluation of Christianity has always been ambivalent: some Qur'anic verses speak with high regard of the Christians as "People of the Book"[16] while others condemn their beliefs and practices in no uncertain terms.[17] The same applies to the Christian evaluation of Islam: although it has been largely negative[18] there has always been the recognition that Islam is a special case and therefore (with Judaism) it has been

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[11] J. D. Holway, *loc. cit.*, p.3, "Seventy years ago the Muslim challenge was one of competition, a race to evangelize Traditionalists before they become Islamized. Now the challenge is switching to the evangelization of Muslims themselves."

[12] *Ibid.*, pp.6, 8–11, 14–16.

[13] *Africa Now*, July–August 1977, p.3. *Africa Now* is the mouthpiece of the Sudan Interior Mission.

[14] *Vandaar*, 4:2, February 1978, pp.7, 16.

[15] The central points of contradiction from the side of Muslims concern the Christian doctrines of Trinity, Incarnation, Crucifixion, Atonement, and the trustworthiness of the Bible. The contentious issues from the side of Christians are the Muslim doctrines of the prophethood of Muhammad, the denial of the crucifixion, and the Pelagian view of sin.

[16] e.g. S.2:62, 5:82f.

[17] e.g. S.5:17, 56, 72, S.9:30–34, S.19:34f.

[18] W. A. Bijlefeld, *De Islam als na-Christelijke religie*, The Hague: Van Keulen, 1959, pp.47–78; A.-Th. Khoury, *Der theologische Streit der Byzantiner reit dem Islam*, Paderborn: Schöningh, 1969; A. Wessels, *De moslimse naaste*, Kampen: Kok, 1978, pp.52–81.

distinguished from "paganism".[19] Both Islam and Christianity are "Abrahamic"[20] and theocratic[21] faiths and therefore share a deep concern for the establishment of justice among men as the demand of the true God who is Creator, Lord and Judge of mankind. On this basis co-operation is possible.[22]

To conclude, the relationship between Christians and Muslims is a complex one, but the element of "rivalry" (i.e. proclaiming to the other the unique claims of one's faith and calling him/her to conversion), will remain a permanent feature of this relationship.

THE HISTORY OF THE SPREAD OF ISLAM IN AFRICA

The history of the spread of Islam through Africa is very interesting but also highly complicated. It will suffice here to indicate the main streams and movements in order to understand the types of Islam encountered in the different parts of Africa.

THE FOUR PHASES

The first phase (A.D. 638–1050): The first thrust into Africa was the military conquest of North Africa which commenced in A.D. 640. The sad story of the virtual disappearance of the North African church under Islam is well known.[23] It is by no means true that the whole of North Africa was converted to Islam "at the point of the sword" as is commonly thought.[24] A host of political, cultural and religious factors played a role and the result was a near total Islamization by the year 1000.[25]

The second phase (A.D. 1050–1750): From the north coast Islam spread gradually down the west coast, across the Sahara and down the east coast. This was due largely to Berber traders and later also to Sufi "holy men". This movement continued through the Middle Ages and by a gradual "osmosis" Islam established itself in most of northwest Africa and down the

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[19] This is evident from the specific view that Islam is a Christian heresy (W. A. Bijlefeld, *op. cit.*, pp.98–100) but also from a more general recognition of its monotheistic and anti-idolatrous character. In the older hymnals of the Dutch Reformed Churches in South Africa one finds the expression "heiden, Jood, Mohammedaan", which indicates that Jews and Muslims were not regarded as "pagans": *Die berymde psalms saam met die evangeliese gesange*, Pretoria: N. G. Kerk-uitgewers, 1965, p.234 (Ges. 149:6), p.247 (Ges. 157:3).

[20] By "Abrahamic" is meant not only the fact that both Christians and Muslims regard Abraham as the "father of all believers", but also the basic structure of faith in a transcendent God who leads believers into the future by his promises.

[21] The Muslim and Christian concepts of theocracy differ, but they have in common the fundamental outlook that God rules over all things and that He therefore has to be obeyed in every area of life.

[22] See later under *Conclusion*.

[23] e.g. U. Schoen, "The death of a church", *Theological Review*, Near East School of Theology, 2:1, April 1979, pp. 3–20.

[24] T. W. Arnold, *The preaching of Islam*, Lahore: Muhammad Ashraf, s.a., pp.102–130.

[25] *Ibid.*, pp.126–127.

east cost to present-day Somalia.[26] The penetration in numbers and quality was not extensive or deep and religious life was characterized by various forms of accommodation to traditional practices.[27]

The third phase (A.D. 1750–1901): From 1750 onwards there appeared militant and intolerant clerics who established a belt of theocratic states across Africa.[28] They rejected compromise with traditional African religion and brought Islam into the centre of communal life as state religion.[29] This resulted in a great expansion of nominal allegiance to Islam and a breaking up of tribal and social groups to form states based on Islamic law.[30]

The fourth phase (A.D. 1901-today): When the colonial powers occupied Africa they brought with them new technological, economic and religious forces which furthered the breaking up of traditional patterns and thus unwittingly accelerated the spread of Islam.[31] It was especially the railroad which enabled Islam to spread to the "Bantu" tribes of the interior for the first time.[32] During the colonial period the first neo-Islamic movements like the Ahmadiyya made their appearance and they established Muslim groups on the pattern of Christian churches in the West.[33]

ISLAM IN SOUTHERN AFRICA

Islam came to South Africa with the exiled Malay political prisoners and slaves who started arriving from 1667 onwards. Sheikh Yusuf, who arrived in 1694, made a great contribution to establishing the Muslim community at the Cape.[34] The other way in which Islam entered was through the arrival of free passenger Indians from Gujurat in 1880, many of whom were Muslims.[35]

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[26] "The Islam in Africa", *Pro Mundi Vita Bulletin*, vol. 28, 1969, pp.7–9; N. Q. King, *Christian and Muslim in Africa*, New York: Harper & Row, 1971, p.16–29; J. S. Trimingham, *The Influence of Islam upon Africa*, London: Longmans, 1968, pp.10–33.

[27] J. S. Trimingham, *op. cit.*, p.34.

[28] J. S. Trimingham, "The phases of Islamic expansion and Islamic culture zones in Africa", in I. M. Lewis (ed.): *Islam in tropical Africa*, pp.127–129, speaks of "the Sudan belt", cf. also N. Q. King, *op. cit.*, pp.60–65.

[29] *Ibid.*, p.129.

[30] *Ibid.*

[31] *Ibid.*, p.130; T. W. Arnold, *op. cit.*, p.361.

[32] T. W. Arnold, *op. cit.*, pp.345, 361–2.

[33] Trimingham, "The phases of Islamic expansion …", p.130.

[34] T. W. Arnold, *op. cit.*, pp.350–352; C. J. A. Greyling, *Die invloed van strominge in die Islam op die Jesusbeskouing van die Suid-Afrikaanse Moslems* (unpublished doctoral dissertation, University of Stellenbosch), pp.6–17.

[35] C. J. A. Greyling, *op. cit.*, pp.17–22; F. Meer, *Portrait of Indian South Africans*, Durban: Avon House, 1969, pp.15–21.

These Malay and Indian Muslims have spread throughout South Africa, mainly as traders and businessmen. Many of them have learnt the languages of the Black people and are in an ideal position to propagate Islam via literature and personal contacts. It is only since the 1960s, however, that a concerted effort has been made by Indian Muslims to bring Islam to the Black people of South Africa. Specific missionary societies were set up for this purpose[36] and they seem to be having a measure of success.[37] The missionary approach that is being used[38] and the type of people being reached[39] indicate a neo-Islamic modality, similar to that of the Ahmadiyya missions[40] and very different from the type of Islam produced by a process of gradual penetration (see phase two above). The fastest growth in the Black community seems to have taken place among young people and since the 1976 riots.[41] This suggests that ideological factors played a large role in these conversions (see below).

ISLAMIZATION OF MODERN AFRICA

A significant feature of the contemporary Islamic missionary enterprise in Africa is the role of Arab oil dollars in funding organizations and erecting Islamic centres. From time to time one reads of large sums of money being donated by Arab governments for mosques or

[36] The most prominent are the Islamic Propagation Centre (Durban), the Islamic Missionary Society (Johannesburg), the Universal Truth Movement (now defunct), and the Muslim Youth Movement (countrywide). The Tabligh movement, which has a very large influence, is not a Western-styled missionary organization like the above-mentioned groups, but is an India-based worldwide movement of Islamic revival and propagation (= *tabligh*), with a very conservative theological emphasis and a definite style of its own.

[37] In *Al-Qalam*, the mouthpiece of the Muslim Youth Movement, one reads from time to time about Black converts, e.g. *Al-Qalam*, 1:24, Sept./Oct. 1976, p.16; 2:4, April 1977, p.1; 2:10, Nov. 1977, p.1; 3:15, Nov. 1979, p.1.

[38] The methods used are symposia, conventions, lectures, the printing of tracts and books, clinics, distribution of food and blankets, etc.

[39] The Black people being reached in South Africa are mainly urbanized and educated, especially young people (see note 41).

[40] By this is not necessarily meant that there is widespread influence of Ahmadiyya teachings, but that the methods employed and the strongly anti-Christian and anti-Western stance are very similar. There are, however, influences of Ahmadiyya, e.g. in the tracts of Ahmad Deedat on the crucifixion ("Was Christ Crucified?", "What was the sign of Jonah?", Durban: Islamic Propagation Centre, s.a.). In publications attacking the authenticity of the Bible (e.g. A. Deedat, *Is the Bible God's Word?*, Durban: Islamic Propagation Centre, 1980; A. S. K. Joommal, *The Bible: Word of God or word of man?*, Johannesburg: Islamic Missionary Society, 1976) many arguments are also used that have been made famous by the polemicists of the Ahmadiyya movement. For a discussion of Ahmadiyya influence in S.A. Islam, see C. J. A. Greyling, *op. cit.*, pp.45–52.

[41] Several Black Muslims (in personal interviews) confirmed that since the 1976 riots there has been a marked increase of interest in and conversion to Islam in Black urban townships. This is a phenomenon that merits thorough investigation.

universities to further the Islamization of Africa.[42] This plays a definite role in South Africa also, especially for erecting mosques in Black residential areas and for propagating Islam.[43]

THE DYNAMICS OF ISLAM'S GROWTH IN AFRICA

Although there are great differences between different African states and between rural and urban areas in each state, there are some generalizations which can be made about factors favouring islam's growth in Africa.

POLITICAL FACTORS

The anti-colonialist sentiment in independent African states is often accompanied by an anti-Christian sentiment because of the link between colonialism and mission in the past.[44] The influence of Gamal Abdul Nasser of Egypt in the 1950s as champion of African independence and the influence of the Ayatullah Khomeini in 1979 as a Third World leader who openly defied the mighty U.S.A. must not be underestimated. These Muslim statesmen have given encouragement to Third World countries to stand up and play their role in world politics. Various Afro-Arab agreements have been drawn up and virtually all African states support the Arab cause against Israel.[45] In world politics most African states are part of the non-aligned group with its policy of "positive neutrality". Within this political climate there is a positive attitude to Muslim states and therefore generally also an openness to Islam.[46] It is important that this political dimension be taken into account because conversion is never a merely individualistic "religious" decision. It is also identification with a certain group of people. Therefore the "image" one has of that group (whether it is a true image or not) will decisively influence one's openness to its ideology or religion. In a rural environment this political dimension may be less prominent but in an urbanized environment where people have had more formal education and are more politically conscious, this plays a decisive role. In South Africa and the U.S.A. Islam's growth in Black communities is strongly influenced by ideological factors. The slogan, "Christianity is the religion of the Whites"

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[42] *Africa Now* (Sudan Interior Mission), July–August 1977, p.3, mentions mosques of $12 million in Chad, $1.6 million in Niger, $8 million in Senegal; *Al-Qalam* mentions Islamic centres in Gabon, Togo, Uganda and Rwanda (2:2, Feb. 1977, p.2), an Islamic university in Mauritania (2:11, Dec. 1977, p.2), etc.

[43] Through the Islamic Council of South Africa (ICSA), funds from Arab countries are channelled to different Islamic organizations and projects in South Africa. There is also another agency, AID International (Association for Islamic Development), operating in South Africa with international funds.

[44] See e.g. Ram Desai (ed.), *Christianity in Africa as seen by Africans*, Denver: Alan Swallow, 1962, passim.

[45] "The Islam in Africa", *Pro Mundi Vita Bulletin*, vol. 28, 1969, pp.27–30.

[46] A good example of this is the conversion of two African heads of state to Islam due to political contacts with Muslim states, especially Libya: Albert (now Omar) Bongo of Gabon in 1973 (see *Al-Qalam*, 1:19, March/April 1976, p.2) and Jean-Bedel (now Salah-al-Din Ahmad) Bokassa of the Central African Republic in 1976 (1:26, Nov./Dec. 1976, p.3).

represents a mood of Black consciousness looking for its "roots".[47] The memories of slavery in the U.S.A. and the present reality of racism (U.S.A. and S.A.) establish a negative image of the Christian faith in the minds of many Black people. There is widespread reaction against the cultural aggression of White missionaries and a growing interest in Islam as a religion of Africa.[48] In this respect it is often stressed that one of the first muezzins[49] was a Black man, Bilal, a freed Abyssinian slave.[50]

The strong emphasis on the *brotherhood* of Islam regardless of race, culture, or social standing which is expressed five times daily when Muslims pray shoulder to shoulder in the mosque and above all in the annual pilgrimage to Mecca is very attractive, especially when compared to racially separated churches or the image of a Christianity which sanctions racial separation. Islamic propaganda stresses the fact that both Christianity and Communism have failed to bring about justice and inter-racial harmony in Africa and that Islam is the only answer to these problems.[51] It is the "third way" between the extremes of capitalism and Communism in that it allows private property but has strict safeguards against exploitation. The view of Toynbee is sometimes quoted in this regard, viz. that the special contribution of Islam to world history will be the solution to the problems of racial discrimination and alcoholism.[52] The universal unity and brotherhood of Muslims is based on the unity of God, the finality of Muhammad's prophethood, the uniqueness of the Qur'an, the prayer direction *(qibla)* towards Mecca and the use of the Arabic language in ritual worship. Precisely this expression of unity is a strong factor in the conversion of Black people in S.A. and the U.S.A. to Islam.[53] They experience conversion to Islam as a receiving of *dignity* because they are accepted as equals in the community of believers. According to Makonnen the dignified way in which Somali immigrants to the U.S.A., dressed in their distinctive Muslim garb, conducted themselves towards White Americans was what initially attracted Black Americans to Islam.[54] Islam gave them a sense of worth and dignity and was therefore

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[47] Alex Haley, *Roots*, London: Pan Books, 1976, is the account of such a pilgrimage of a Black American Muslim who found his roots and his identity in Islam. See also *Al-Qalam*, 3:7, Sept. 1978, p,3, "God's racial image"; 2:10, Nov. 1977, p.1, "Islam is the black man's natural religion."

[48] Ram Desai, *op. cit.*, p.35.

[49] A muezzin (more correctly transcribed muadhdhin) is the man who calls the Muslims to prayer from the minaret of a mosque.

[50] Hence the custom among Indian Muslims in S.A. to employ black Muslims as muezzins at their mosques. Black Muslims in the U.S.A. call themselves "Bilalians" and have a newspaper *The Bilalian Times*; cf. *Al-Qalam*, 1:22, July/August 1976, p.12; 2:5, May/June 1977, p.1; 3:9, Dec. 1978, p.4; 2:10, Nov. 1977, p.2.

[51] *Al-Qalam*, 3:1, Jan. 1978, Supplement: "Islam—the solution for Africa".

[52] G. H. Jansen, *op. cit.*, p.203.

[53] This was borne out in several personal interviews which the author had with Black S.A. Muslims.

[54] Ras Makonnen, *Pan-Africanism from within*, London: Oxford University Press, 1973, pp. 75–77.

a humanizing force among people who still had an inferiority complex decades after the abolition of slavery. Islam's total prohibition of alcohol and its emphasis on cleanliness very, soon made Black Muslims healthier and more prosperous than their neighbours, creating the image that Muslims are successful and dignified people, proud of being who they are. They realized to what extent alcohol and a slave mentality had dehumanized them and they discarded not only their bottles but also their "slave names".[55] The message of a Black Muslim leader from the U.S.A. to his Black audiences in S.A. was, "Wake up, clean up, stand up".[56] This was backed up with the Qur'anic verse quoted often in the present Islamic revival, "Allah does not change the condition of a people unless they change what is in themselves."[57] In other words, moral uprightness is a prerequisite for the improvement of their lot and this can be received only in Islam. To hear this message from people who have clearly risen above their inferiority feeling of the past, is a very strong attraction to Islam in a marginalized and oppressed community.

RITUAL AND CULTIC FACTORS

Apart from the ideological attraction of Islam, which is limited to the politically conscious, the cultic and ritual elements of Islam attract people from a wider spectrum.

The first and most obvious cultic element is the ritual prayer (*salat*), performed five times daily. It consists of various postures of standing, kneeling and prostrating while prescribed Qur'anic phrases and verses are silently recited in Arabic. When praying "in congregation" there must be a leader (*imam*) and it must be undertaken in a prayer room (*jama'at khana*) or mosque (*masjid* = place of prostration). The call to prayer (*azzan*) is sounded about 15 minutes before the prayer commences and proclaims the essential beliefs of Islam:

> Allah is the greatest (4x)
> I testify that there is no deity but Allah (2x)
> I testify that Muhammad is the messenger of Allah (2x)
> Come to the prayer (2x)
> Come to success[58] (2x)
> Allah is the greatest (2x)
> There is no deity but Allah

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[55] One of the best-known examples of this is Malcolm Little who changed his name to Malcolm X to rid himself of his "slave name". His full Muslim name was El-hajj Malik el-Shabazz.

[56] *Al-Qalam*, 2:9, Sept./Oct. 1977, p.1. The speaker was Abd-ul-Malik Rushiddin whose tapes are being widely used in S.A. among Blacks to propagate Islam.

[57] S.13:11. This verse was made popular by Jamal-al-Din Afghani (1839–97) well-known Muslim reformer of the last century; cf. G. H. Jansen, *op. cit.*, pp.91ff.

[58] There are different possibilities of interpreting the Arabic word *falah*, translated here as "success". See e.g. E. W. Lane, *The modern Egyptians*, New York: Dover Publications, 1973, p.73, who translates it as "security" and K. Cragg, *The call of the minaret*, New York: Oxford University Press, 1964, pp. 140ff., "the Good", "welfare", "prosperity".

This call in Arabic announces the presence of Islam and exercises a strange attraction in a Black community even if only for the novelty of it.[59] People come to this new "church", are attracted by the ritual washing, the postures of worship and receive literature. In this "centripetal" way a local *jama'at* comes into existence which eventually builds its own mosque or Islamic centre, often with financial help from elsewhere.[60]

In connection with Muslim public worship, one feature, unattractive to some is the fact that women do not worship with men in the mosque. According to Muslim tradition Muhammad did not prohibit women from attending public prayer in the mosque, but said that it was better for them to pray in private at home.[61] In the great mosque of Mecca women pray in the mosque behind the men while some other mosques provide separate facilities behind a screen or in an adjoining room. It is significant that among missionary minded Muslims in S.A. like the MYM and IPC, who are sensitive to Western criticism and intent on providing a strong apologetic, there is the tendency to advocate such separate facilities for women in the design of mosques.[62] It is always the missionary "cutting edge" of a religious community which is most sensitive to the obstacles which certain practices of its community present to potential converts.

Other ritual practices that prove attractive in Africa are circumcision, the slaughtering of a goat annually for Eid-ul-adha[63] and amulets (*ta'wiz*) used in protective magic.[64] The figure of the Muslim *alim* (scholar/jurist) or the *sufi* holy man as a "man of power", giving out amulets and medicines for healing and protection, is a well known one in a Black community.

VARIOUS OTHER FACTORS

Another characteristic favouring the spread of Islam is its *adaptability* and its tolerance with practices of the traditional religion.[65] This flexibility has caused Islam to be gradually

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[59] A Black S.A. Muslim "missionary" told the author in an interview that he has merely to put up a prayer room and start sounding the *azzan* in a Black community and he will have ten people more every day. This is clearly exaggerated but it does reveal the unique "centripetal" missionary method of Islam.

[60] For this financial help, see notes 42 and 43 above.

[61] *Al-Qalam*, 2:10, Nov. 1977, p.10; 1:10, p.8; Muhammad Ali, *The religion of Islam*, Lahore: Ahmadiyya Anjuman Isha'at Islam, pp.390ff.

[62] *Al-Qalam*, 2:4, April 1977, p.10.

[63] The festival celebrated during the time of the pilgrimage to Mecca by all Muslims everywhere in remembrance of Abraham's obedience in being willing to sacrifice his son.

[64] The most common *ta'wiz* is a piece of paper with a Qur'anic verse written on it or a pattern of Arabic numbers (representing words or phrases), which is sewn into a little pouch (often black) and worn around the neck for protection against sickness or evil.

[65] According to Professor John Pobee of Ghana in a lecture at the Rand Afrikaans University in Johannesburg on 9th May, 1980, this flexibility of Islam was the most important factor in its success in Africa; see also Edward W. Blyden, *Christianity, Islam and the Negro Race*, Edinburgh: University Press, 1967, pp. 11f.

assimilated into the life of a tribe or village by what can be called "osmosis".[66] It was partly a result of the fact that most of the "missionaries" of Islam were not orthodox jurists (*'ulama*) but traders and members of *sufi* brother-hoods.[67] The traders were able to win over the "top people" in African communities because they not only exhibited Islam as profitable and successful, but also because they opened the gateway to a bigger and wider world beyond.[68]

In many cases traders married women of the local tribe and thus entered naturally into the life of the community and could influence it in a profound and lasting way.[69] When a Muslim marries a nonMuslim the latter has to convert to Islam or at least consent to let the children grow up as Muslims. Because Muslims are very insistent on this, such a marriage always results in a gain for Islam.[70] The toleration of *polygamy* in Islam also counted in its favour.[71] The Qur'an allows a man to have four wives, provided that he treats them equally.[72] Many followers of A.T.R. are polygamists and are accepted by Islam but frowned upon by the Christian church. This advantage to Islam seems to be declining, however, because polygamy is generally on its way out in Muslim circles and many Muslim apologists have in fact come out against it openly.[73]

The fact that Islam is a *post-Christian* religion also counts in its favour in relation to Christianity.[74] It comes with the claim of having received the final revelation from God to restore the original monotheism of Abraham to its pristine purity. This claim of possessing the *final* truth which supersedes Christianity and makes it redundant, gives Islam a decided psychological advantage. The claim of being the *original* monotheism from which Judaism and Christianity have strayed introduces an *anti*-Christian element, although this is not equally pronounced in all the modalities of Islam. It is prominent in Ahmadiyya propaganda and in missionary societies influenced by their arguments.[75] In the S.A. Black community, where there is a growing rejection of Christianity because of its association with the "Christian national" policy of separate development, this anti-Christian propaganda finds fertile ground. The majority of Black converts to Islam in S.A. apparently belong to this

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[66] G. H. Jansen, *op. cit.*, p.40 speaks of "three stages of Islamic osmosis".

[67] *Ibid.*, pp.40ff.

[68] *Ibid.*, p.44.

[69] Ram Desai, *op. cit.*, p.33; cf. E. W. Blyden, *op. cit.*, p.20: "So the Arab missionaries often entered into the bonds of wedlock with the daughters of Negroland, and by their teaching, by their intelligence, by their inter-marriages with the natives, by the trade and generosity of their merchants, they enlisted so many interests and such deep sympathies, that they rapidly took abiding root in the country."

[70] J. D. Holway, *loc. cit.*, pp.6f.

[71] *Ibid.*, p.8, Ram Desai, *op. cit.*, pp.33f.

[72] S.4:3.

[73] J. D. Holway, *loc. cit.*, p.8.

[74] The *post*-Christian character of Islam must be understood in the light of what is said by W. A. Bijlefeld (*op. cit.*, pp.166–175).

[75] See note 40 above.

modality of Islam.[76] Islamic propaganda seems to be riding the wave of anti-White and anti-Christian sentiment let loose in 1976 and providing a viable alternative to Christianity. It is essential to make a thorough study of the dynamics of Islam's growth in S.A. Black communities in order to understand the situation and approach it in a truly Christian way.

LOOKING AHEAD—THE CHALLENGE OF ISLAM

There is no doubt that Islam will continue its steady numerical growth in Africa in the next twenty years. There is also no doubt that Islam will become a stronger political, economic and social force in African and world politics towards the end of the century. As the militant Islam, which strives to totally Islamize the Muslim countries and turn them into Islamic states, increases its influence, a more total and self-assertive Islam will emerge.[77]

Exactly who will win the "scramble for Africa" and "stake the most claims" is difficult to predict. The World Muslim League has declared that Christianity is growing at 6%, in Africa as compared to Islam's 2% p.a. and that although Islam is presently the larger of the two in Africa, Christianity will have passed it by the end of the century.[78] It is extremely difficult to comment on predictions like these because the future trends in African Christianity and Islam are unpredictable. What is certain is that the present Islamic revival will have its effect on the growth rate and character of Islam in Africa. What is ultimately at stake is not only a question of numerical expansion but the struggle for the heart of Africa. The depth and solidity of Christian penetration and its contextual relevance are equally important issues and these cannot be expressed in statistics.

In any case it seems certain that Islam will grow extensively in the Black communities of S.A. and this is the immediate challenge we have to face. A scare campaign is however not what is needed. It is not a "Muslim gevaar" (= Muslim danger) that we must combat or fear. Such a response would not be a mature Christian one at all. We have to *face* the challenge which Islam presents to us with humility, patience and confidence. We need not panic or withdraw into a defensive attitude. Controlled by the perfect love which casts out fear, we can face the Islamic challenge with *courage*. But what exactly are the challenges that Islam presents to us as Christians in Africa? The three most acute areas are those of ideology, community and theology.

IDEOLOGICAL CHALLENGE

As explained earlier,[79] Islam is not merely a religion in the reduced Western sense of the word but rather an ideology, a complete system with prescriptions for every area of life.[80] Worship in the ritual sense stands at the centre of this system but there is no dichotomy between the "sacred" and the "secular"—every human action is seen as *ibadat*, the

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[76] This statement is made on the basis of personal interviews but it requires thorough investigation to establish whether this is true of the majority of Black converts to Islam.

[77] G. H. Jansen, *op. cit.*, especially pp.121–204.

[78] Quoted in *RES News Exchange* 17:1, January 2, p.1522.

[79] See the *Introduction* above.

[80] K. Cragg, *op. cit.*, pp.140ff.

worshipful service of slaves to their Master.[81] There is, however, an intense discussion going on in Muslim reformist circles about whether the *shari'a*, as it was formulated by the four Sunni law schools, can be applied literally in the modern world.[82] Can one be satisfied with contemporary laws as long as they are in basic harmony with the *shari'a*, or must the latter be applied as it stands? There is a whole spectrum of opinions regarding this and the debate is continuing, but there is agreement that an Islamic state must be ordered according to the dictates of almighty Allah and not according to the whims or self-interest of men. The dedication and energy with which modern Islam is seeking to implement its "theocratic vision" is exemplary to us as Christians and challenges us to examine our dedication in "hammering" the principles of Scripture into the hard realities of politics and economics. Because we as Christians do not have a "nomocracy"[83] such as in Islam, we do not strive for a massively Christian state as they are attempting, but certainly militant Islam challenges us to recover the *wholeness of life under God* which is inherent in the biblical message.[84] Modern Islam denounces Christianity for having failed Western civilization by teaching, "Give to Caesar what belongs to Caesar and to God what belongs to God."[85] This is understood by Muslims to mean total separation between religion and politics and therefore a surrendering of politics, economics and law to the selfish will of man, withdrawn from the authority of God. Regarding economics, there is no final agreement on the shape of an Islamic economic system, but it is emphasized that private property is allowed while all hoarding, exploitation and monopolies are forbidden.[86] The prohibition of usury (*riba'*) is generally interpreted to exclude all taking or giving of interest and some Islamic interest-free banks have been established. We shall have to wait and see what a fully fledged Islamic economy looks like, but at least Muslim effort in this field challenges us to think through the relevance of the Gospel for social and economic structures.

Islam presents itself as a "third way" in international politics as an alternative to capitalism and Communism.[87] Colonel Gaddafi of Libya has issued a "little green book" propagating his "third international theory" called "Islamic socialism". He has encountered opposition from Muslim states following an Islamic nationalism, but also from a group of young thinkers rejecting all Western terms like "socialism" and who are drawing up a

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[81] This unity of reality ultimately flows from the absolute insistence on *tawhid*, the unity of God.

[82] G. H. Jansen, *op. cit.*, p.148 and *passim*.

[83] This term captures the central place which the divine law takes in Islam. See Robert Miller, "Islam and the West", *Theology* 692, March 1980, p.120.

[84] The biblical categories of creation, providence, history, and Kingdom of God (in their inter-relatedness) are of central importance in this regard.

[85] Ahmad D. Azhar, *Christianity in history*, Lahore: Sh Muhammad Ashraf, 1975, p.82, "Secularism, Capitalism, and through both of them, Communism itself are the offspring of this division of an indivisible life between the opposing forces of Caesar and God."

[86] Charis Waddy, *The Muslim mind*, London: Longman, 1976, pp.52f.

[87] Abd-al-Rahman Azzam, *The eternal message of Muhammad*, New York and Toronto: Mentor, 1964, p.114f; The Muslim Institute for Research and Planning, *Draft prospectus*, London: Open Press, n.d.; K. Siddiqui, *Towards a new destiny*, Slough: The Open Press, 1974.

completely Islamic epistemology and framework of knowledge.[88] According to the latter group it is enough to say "Islam" or "the Islamic ideology". To describe it as democratic, socialist, etc. would be to deny the uniqueness and originality of the Islamic system by applying to it unislamic categories. It is important to note that this group consists of intellectuals who have studied in the West and who live there,[89] but who have become disillusioned with Western science and are now using their expertise to develop a thorough-going Islamic ideology for the modern world. This line of thought is propagated in South Africa by the MYM and is therefore directly relevant to our situation.

In Africa there is general acceptance of socialist ideas but a total rejection of the materialism and atheism of Marxism.[90] In such a situation the all-encompassing ideology of Islam with its theocratic character and yet clearly "socialist" tendencies will always be attractive, especially to people who have become disillusioned with a Christianity which has not been able to bring about justice and reconciliation in society.

COMMUNAL CHALLENGE

The body of Muslim believers (the *ummah*) is a closely-knit entity with a great internal loyalty. The emphasis on brotherhood and solidarity, which has been mentioned above as one of the factors favouring conversion to Islam, is one of the most important dimensions of the Muslim challenge to the church in S.A. The divisions of Christians along denominational, racial and cultural lines are a denial of the unity of Christ's body and nothing but "conformity to this age" (Rom. 12:2). The "massive" unity of all Islamic life in its orientation towards Mecca[91] and above all the annual pilgrimage itself is indeed impressive and attractive. The simple white clothing (*ihram*) worn during the pilgrimage by all Muslims regardless of rank, wealth or race, expresses the equality of all believers before God as no other symbol in the world.

It is true that in the mosque and during the pilgrimage all the acts of worship are conducted in Arabic (which all converts have to learn) and that they therefore have no language or communication problems during worship.[92] The Gospel as a message, which has

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[88] K. Siddiqui, *op. cit.*, passim.

[89] The "Muslim Institute for Research and Planning" is situated in London and is doing intense study and research into Islamic science, philosophy, economics, etc.

[90] See the paper of T. Kneifel, "Marxism as rival of the Gospel in Africa", *Missionalia* 8:2 (August 1980), pp.54–66.

[91] It is not only prayer which is directed towards Mecca; beds, graves and toilets, in fact the whole of daily life is oriented towards Mecca for a devout Muslim.

[92] This is not to deny that there is controversy from time to time among S.A. Muslims regarding the sermon (*khutba*), which is delivered by an *imam* at the Friday noon prayer (*juma'*). Traditionally this sermon is read in Arabic from approved books of sermons and since it takes the place of one *raka'at* (sequence of prayer postures), it has to be in Arabic. Young Muslims objected to the Arabic and to the set pattern of the sermons since they expect relevant guidance for contemporary life. At the moment a translation of the *khutba* is given in Urdu or English after it is read in Arabic, but contemporary sermons do not seem to be forthcoming since the *'ulama* (jurists) are generally conservative traditionalists; cf. C. P. le

to be understandably communicated and constantly expounded in Christian worship, may be served by separate worship in different languages, but definitely not by separate churches. The "body language" of Muslims worshipping shoulder to shoulder in a mosque has a stronger impact than all the sermons preached on unity in our separate churches.

THEOLOGICAL CHALLENGE

The specifically doctrinal challenge of Islam concerns mostly the doctrines of the Trinity, the person of Jesus, original sin, atonement and the inspiration of Scripture. In Muslim missionary literature one often reads of the "simple, clear and logical" doctrines of Islam as opposed to the "mysterious, paradoxical and irrational" doctrines of Christianity.[93] Sometimes Christians are pictured as people who have to make a blind irrational leap of faith on the authority of their "priests".[94] There is an element of deliberate caricature in this view,[95] but we also know that many Christians cannot in fact give a reasonable account of their faith. Islam challenges the church to take seriously the rationality of its faith and to show the reasonableness of commitment to God in Christ. In the light of the intense religious instruction which Muslims give to their children[96] (approximately 10 hours per week during afternoons), the church must also examine its own pattern of Sunday school, catechism, etc., and we must ask ourselves whether this has been taken seriously enough. In a world which is fast becoming religiously and ideologically pluralistic, will the church survive without thorough and systematic instruction of its members? The tremendous tenacity of Islam and its resistance against conversion can be explained to a large extent by the great emphasis placed on the religious socialization of the young. Indeed a challenge to the church of Christ!

When entering into conversation with Muslims, with their rigid uncompromising monotheism, one becomes aware of certain problematic phrases commonly used by Christians. These include "Jesus is God", the practice of addressing prayer exclusively to

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Roux, *The Ulama—hulle rol in Suid Afrikaanse konteks* (unpublished M.A. dissertation, Rand Afrikaans Univ., 1978). See also *Al-Qalam*, 1:24, p.13; 1:25, pp.6, 11; 1:26, p.6.

[93] Cf. e.g. A. S. K. Joommal, *The Bible: Word of God or word of man*?, Johannesburg: Islamic Missionary Society, 1975, passim.

[94] *Ibid.*, p.12, "Christianity, as we all know, is founded on BLIND BELIEF where rational thinking plays no part whatever"; p.105, "We are told by the priests NOT to use our reason in trying to understand the dogmas of the Church … Our belief in these doctrines must be BLIND, UNQUESTIONING, ABSOLUTE!"

[95] It is sad to see the amount of caricature in Muslim views of Christianity and in Christian views of Islam. Fourteen centuries of rivalry and animosity have caused an abyss of misunderstanding. Mutually open dialogue is the only way that this abyss can be bridged.

[96] Since there is no Islamic instruction in S.A. government schools, Muslim communities organize *madressa* instruction after school in which Islam is thoroughly taught to Muslim children. See C. du P. le Roux, *op. cit.*, pp.67–96.

"Jesus", the preaching of the cross which creates the impression that God's love and justice are separate entities.[97]

Another fundamental issue concerns the Christian view of *man*. Islam does not accept original sin or the "fallenness" of man and thus emphasizes his dignity and free will.[98] It therefore has no qualms about using *propaganda* in spreading Islam or about speaking of *converting* people to Islam. They are proud of their faith and regard other religions as inferior and false.[99] Christian missions had a similar approach to people of other faiths in previous centuries and this can still be clearly seen in the military terminology used at Edinburgh in 1910.[100] There is a widespread rejection of propaganda and proselytism in some Christian circles and the question posed to the Christian mission today, especially vis-à-vis Islam, is whether it can witness in such a way that there is a clear and firm appeal for conversion without it degenerating into propaganda or proselytism. The polarization of dialogue versus conversation must be overcome by adopting a full biblical approach in which the urgent call to conversion is made by a humble and listening servant.[101]

A final theological challenge to be mentioned here concerns the very existence of Islam. The Christian evaluation of Islam (and other faiths), i.e. the *theologia religionum*, must be taken much more seriously by all theologians.

The few doctrinal issues mentioned here give an indication of the magnitude of the task before us in theologizing relevantly in our African context. As the church of Christ in Africa we ignore these challenges at our own peril.

CONCLUSION

In the preceding section we have allowed Islam to question and challenge us by exposing ourselves to it in some measure. It must be stressed, though, that our real meeting is not

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[97] It is not possible to go into the reasons why these views are common among Christians or why Muslims find them totally unacceptable. Suffice it to say that contact with Muslims makes one aware of these unbiblical emphases that go unquestioned normally in the church. Real exposure to Islam is therefore an enriching and valuable experience.

[98] e.g. F. Karim, Al-Hadis. An English translation and commentary of *Mishkat-ul-Masabib*, Vol. III, Lahore: The Book House, s.a., p.123.

[99] This thought is based on certain Qur'anic verses, e.g. S.5:4: "This day have I *perfected* your religion for you, completed my favour upon you, and have chosen for you Islam as your religion" (i.e. Islam is the *perfect* religion), and S.3:110: "You are *the best of peoples*, evolved for mankind …" Regarding this superiority, see H. Kraemer, *De Islam als godsdienstig- en als zendingsprobleem*, The Hague: Boekencentrum, 1938, p.23.

[100] I. P. C. van't Hof, *Op zoek naar her geheim van de zending*, Wageningen: H. Veenman & Zonen, 1972, pp.27ff.

[101] The anthropological continuity and the theological discontinuity must be upheld at the same time. To hold these two in their biblical tension is the prerequisite for truly Christian witness. To avoid this tension by a simplistic overemphasis of the one or the other is its constant temptation. See also J. Triebel, *Bekehrung als Ziel der missionarischen Verkündigung*, Erlangen: Verlag der ev-luth Mission, 1976, pp.216ff.

with *Islam* but with *Muslims* as people.[102] This exercise *in abstracto* is only meaningful to the extent that it actually prepares us to relate to Muslims in a more responsible Christian manner. In this meeting we are not only challenged by Muslims, we are also a challenge to them if we are true to our Christian faith. We must present to them the truth claim of the Gospel and in this sense Muslims are a *missionary* challenge to us. It is a human group highly resistant to the Gospel because it has been "immunized" against it,[103] and which is itself a highly active missionary force. The myth that "Muslims never become Christians". must be dispensed with and Christians must witness to Muslims with humble confidence.

As mentioned above, however, mutual rivalry is not the only dimension of Christian-Muslim relations. Co-operation for justice and development is possible because of the basic world view that Jews, Christians and Muslims have in common. There are Muslims and Christians who are beginning to say that they should join forces against Communism. There are indeed many areas in which Christians and Muslims can join hands and work together.[104]

To sum up, the relationship between Islam and Christianity is a complex one:

1. Islam is a rival of Christianity in competing for the allegiance of the followers of A.T.R. in Africa.
2. Islam is a rival of Christianity which challenges and questions it radically about the truth it professes.
3. Christianity is a rival of Islam which questions its truth claim and confronts it with the Gospel of Christ.
4. Christians and Muslims should engage in dialogue and cooperate where possible for justice and freedom in society.

Christians must take Islam with utmost seriousness. It should be taught thoroughly in theological courses to prospective ministers of the Gospel and on a broader level to members of Christian congregations so that they are not taken by surprise by Muslim propaganda and may be able to respond to this challenge responsibly.

In order to encourage this, the suggestion of J. D. Holway that an "Islam in Africa Project" be supported, must be carried out.[105] A study centre distributing literature and arranging training courses for members and ministers of all churches can make a great contribution in

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[102] This was the reason why the WCC changed the name of their programme on "The Word of God and the Living Faiths of Men" to "Dialogue with Men of Living Faiths and Ideologies". See S. J. Samartha (ed.), *Living faiths and the ecumenical movement*, Geneva: World Council of Churches, 1971, pp.68f.

[103] The idea of "immunization" is an appropriate description of the defence which Muslims have built up against the Gospel. The Qur'an contains just enough "Christology" to make Muslims feel that they do not need to receive Christ, that they in fact have the true Jesus.

[104] This is the theme for another study, which is very important but also very difficult because of the existing estrangement and suspicion between Christians and Muslims.

[105] J. D. Holway, *loc. cit.*, p.12f, 17; Holway's criticism of the I.A.P., "The IAP approach however does seem to the critical observer to encourage Christians to study Islam rather than to evangelize Muslims" (p.13), must be heeded, but that can also lead to a one-sided approach. The mutual dependence of *understanding* Muslims and *witnessing* to them must be upheld throughout.

this regard.[106] In the six years since Holway's lecture at this Missiology conference nothing constructive has been done about it. Before another six years pass something must be done about this urgent matter.

In conclusion, there is a painting in Edinburgh showing Muhammad riding on a war camel and Jesus riding on a donkey.[107] It was the other way around in Africa for the last hundred years or so, since Christians entered with colonial powers and Muslims as humble traders. Now we as Christians must set this right and in all humility be present among Muslims to witness to them about Christ and to cooperate with them for justice in society.

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The Sanctity of Human Life: An Appraisal of Trends in Medical Ethics

C. Everett Koop

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In speaking to you on the sanctity of life: an appraisal of the trends in medical ethics, I do so as a Christian physician who has spent thirty-five years as an active pediatric surgeon, teaching surgery at every possible level, and observing in the oldest medical school in America the trends in medical ethics. As the founder and editor-in-chief of the only English-speaking journal on pediatric surgery in the world, I have had an extraordinary opportunity to be in close contact with that group of physicians who deal with the situations medical and ethical which surround the birth of a child who is less than perfect.

When I speak to an audience such as this which is fundamentally Christian, I do not have to be exhaustive in my definition of the sanctity of human life. The Bible certainly affirms from cover to cover that life is precious to God. But what I have to say should be of importance to every thinking individual regardless of where he comes from spiritually. The sanctity of human life is being eroded and is being done so to the distress of millions of people, Christian and non-Christian alike. The erosion of the sanctity of human life is extraordinarily significant in the moral and political development of our shrinking world, so that even an atheist should be concerned about what is happening.

Communication is improving so rapidly that it takes less and less time for one part of our world to appreciate what is going on in another.

Social advances, so called, do not take long to travel across the Atlantic. Although the traffic goes both ways, it has been my general observation that you import from us by way

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[106] For more information on the activities of the lAP elsewhere in Africa, see J. Crossley, "The Islam in Africa Project", *International Review of Mission*, vol. 61, 1972, pp. 154f.

[107] Cf. N. Q. King, *Christian and Muslim in Africa*, New York: Harper & Row, 1971, p.113.

of the cinema a number of frivolous things that you probably would be better off without while we import from you concepts which have far-reaching effects upon our society and which I wish we had not learned. Major concepts like a national health service take twenty-five years to cross the Atlantic from the United Kingdom, while a symptom of the change in society such as abortion-on-demand can make the passage in five to six years. The mini-skirt and the Beatles' music crossed in a matter of days.

I use that term symptom after some thought. I believe our cultures are sufficiently similar to be able to say that we both suffer the effects of a disease and that the inhumanities of abortion, infanticide, and euthanasia are merely symptoms of that disease which have surfaced in recent years.

The disease I refer to is the change in the basic philosophical and religious concepts in the West, which had their origins in Judeo-Christianity. It was the Judeo-Christian consensus which gave us not only our heritage but our laws, our method of government and our cultural relationships with each other. These have been abandoned for a philosophy which might best be called secular humanism. In America at least you might even say it is the new religion, although it has no god.

Secular humanism is taught directly or subtly in our educational system in the United States, whether it is in the inexpensive books you read to your children or in formal education from kindergarten through graduate school. God is no longer at the centre of this universe; Man is! The universe is seen as a great mechanism of which this planet is just one complex machine. You and I, they say, came about in random fashion through an evolutionary process from some primordial ooze. We ourselves are machines—more complicated to be sure than the machines we make, but we are machines, nevertheless.

With that philosophy, only the memory of the Christian consensus remains, where Man was unique because he was created in the image of God.

Several years ago, a student at the University of Pennsylvania where I have been privileged to teach since 1942, stood 16,000 dominoes on their ends in such a way that when he knocked over the first, it hit the second, which fell against the third, and so on, until all 16,000 dominoes fell in orderly fashion without a break in continuity. The inhumanities I am talking about might be likened to falling dominoes.

The first domino to fall was abortion-on-demand and it fell with a resounding boom. Abortion has split the United States as no other social issue has since the practice of slavery which led to the Civil War.

The second domino to fall was infanticide. It fell silently because unlike abortion, which is a public issue, infanticide is practised behind the shielding facade of the hospital.

The third domino is euthanasia; it has been struck and is falling.

These three dominoes, abortion, infanticide and euthanasia, are examples of the erosion of the sanctity of human life—an acknowledgement that Man is unique because he is created in the image of God.

The three inhumanities are being practised against a background of moral decay in a hedonistic society where life other than one's own is lightly esteemed and readily destroyed.

Abortion-on-demand set the stage for infanticide and euthanasia. Or, to say it another way: First the unborn were deprived of their right to life, which had been established for centuries, then the recently born were classified as having either no potential for meaningful life or life not worth living. How do you feel now concerning the sick, the aged, the senile, the dependent, the mentally retarded? How do you see them compared with your view of them seven or eight years ago? When you talk about a better society or a desire for an improved quality of life, what are your standards? Whatever your answer to these

questions, I know that your reaction will determine whether we have a society in which human life is respected or is uncharitably disdained.

ABORTION

Of all the immoralities that we cite as examples of the loss of our Judeo-Christian heritage to the forces of secular humanism, abortion is the keystone and for that reason I may seem to spend disproportionate time in discussing it. Even though abortion is the pivotal point, do not lose sight of the procession of events from abortion to infanticide to euthanasia to who knows what?

What is legal is right. At least, that is the way the world sees it. But the legality of abortion is not the same as the legality of gambling, or the practice of homosexuality. No matter how strict or how liberal may be the stance one might take in reference to these issues, they lose their similarity with abortion because of the fact that there is more than one set of rights involved in abortion.

The real reasons for abortion are social with economic implications in our society. It is not a medical question, but nevertheless abortion because of the. skill of the physician becomes a medical answer to a social problem. As a physician, I resent that! The doctor has been named the social executioner.

Abortion is the taking of human life. Biologists have no problem in declaring the life of a sea anemone, an earthworm, a fox, or a baboon to be a continuum from fertilization until natural death of the organism, but medical doctors when discussing the highest form of animal life, whether they arrive there by evolution or by creation, talk about that elusive, non-definable moment when the developing fetus acquires a soul and therefore becomes a human being.

I am a soul. I inhabit a body. I have a spirit. Until someone can prove to the contrary, I intend to assume that that soul which I am has existed from the moment of conception and that the development of the fetus which has become me was to provide a body for that soul to become incarnate.

I have assumed the role of prophet on several occasions in reference to the abortion issue and in 1976 I said that if abortion in the United States continued to be performed without restraint that we would soon have abortion for no more important reason than the sex preference of the parents. In other words, destroying an unborn child when it was a girl and the parents wanted a boy.

The diagnosis of sex of a developing unborn child cannot be made until after the 16th week of pregnancy and sometimes not until after the 20th. The first step is to withdraw fluid by amniocentesis from the amniotic sac and then to culture it—a procedure which takes up to three weeks. This brings the developing baby very close to the point of viability.

My prophecy, made in 1976, proved to be incorrect, because I said that this would come upon us by 1985. It actually came to the United States in 1979 and to the United Kingdom in 1980.

We have referred to abortion-on-demand frequently, but now would you accept abortion-at-whim? I cannot understand why pro-abortion feminists are not up in arms over the obvious result—the disproportionate destruction of females.

Whitaker Chambers once said that Satan's greatest triumph was convincing us that he did not exist. What I have been talking about is sin, and sin has been buried in our cultures. It has been buried not by an anti-religious effort, not by a juggernaut of weaponry, it has been buried only by human contempt. Our humanistic philosophers and many psychologists

whose contempt is perhaps the greatest have replaced our concept of sin by the most unbelievable drivel.

Abraham Lincoln recognized the threat of secular humanism although he did not call it by that name. Listen to what he said:

> We have been the recipients of the choicest bounties of heaven: We have been preserved, these many years, in peace and prosperity … but we have forgotten God. We have forgotten the gracious hand which preserved us in peace, and multiplied and enriched us; we have vainly imagined, in the deceitfulness of our hearts, that all these blessings were produced by some superior wisdom and virtue of our own. Intoxicated with unbroken success, we have become too self-sufficient to feel the necessity of redeeming and preserving grace, too proud to pray to the God who made us.

That statement could have been made today. It leads me to believe that whatever happened to the human race began to happen a long time ago. We cannot escape responsibility. We read in the 24th chapter of the book of Proverbs: "Rescue those being led away to death; hold back those staggering toward slaughter. If you say: 'But we knew nothing about this', does not he who weighs the heart perceive it? Does not he who guards your life know it? Will he not repay each person according to what he has done?"

INFANTICIDE

Infanticide is the killing of a born child. Whether that killing takes place by the withholding of something vital to the child's sustenance or whether that takes place by a direct act is immaterial; in either case a newborn life is being terminated.

Infanticide is extraordinarily important to those of us who are interested in the sanctity of the human life, because infanticide could never have come about had it not been for abortion-on-demand. When I read in the months following the January 1973 decision of the Supreme Court in the United States various references to Justice Blackmun's majority opinion, my blood ran cold. He stated in his decision that the Hippocratic oath which forbids abortion was irrelevant. He also said that he would not take any cues from the Judeo-Christian heritage of the United States, but instead he turned to the pagan religions of Rome, Greece, and of Persia for exemplary circumstances. Although these cultures did practise abortion, it was infanticide and euthanasia which were more important inhumanities in their day. The second important thing to remember about infanticide is that it is euthanasia in an age group. The hidden importance of infanticide in reference to our concerns in the future is that I am certain the day will come when the euthanasia forces will say: "Why are you concerned about euthanasia? We have had euthanasia for infants for a long time and there has been no outcry." The third important thing I would say about infanticide is that it is being practised by a segment of my profession from which we should expect more, and it is being ignored by a segment of society from which we should expect more integrity. It is being practised by that segment of the medical profession that in days gone by we could always look to to stand in the role of advocate for children; namely pediatricians and pediatric surgeons. Infanticide is homicide. The law from which we should expect more integrity makes believe it does not happen.

To illustrate how important the domino effect from abortion to infanticide is, consider this. The fetus in the United States has no protection at all up until the moment of birth. The reason for that is that the fetus has been declared to be a non-person without the rights that go with that personhood. Newborn infants who have defects which are physical and/or mental are now being referred to as fetus-exutero. In this way the protection of the law

which applies to the living child is being eroded by redefining him, not as a child, but as a fetus outside of the womb.

It was Leo Alexander, the psychiatrist appointed by the United States to be its observer at the Nuremberg War Trials, who said that the Holocaust began with the notion that there was such a thing as life not worth living. Infanticide in the United States and the United Kingdom where I know the situation best, is based upon exactly the same principle. The quality of life has replaced the equality of life. That does not auger well for you and me as we grow older and lose some of the faculties we now enjoy.

Perhaps the first thing that concerns me about infanticide is the fact that so many non-medical factors are taken into consideration when a physician decides that a youngster has a life not worth living. These include such things as the economics of the family, the stability of the marriage, the effect that a handicapped child might have upon the siblings in reference to certain luxuries they might enjoy as they grow up.

The second thing that concerns me is the application of a distorted ethic to other classes of human beings. If we are to acquiesce to the destruction of a newborn because he has the potential for a respiration insufficiency, a problem with his intestine, an orthopaedic contracture, or a sexual handicap, how long will it be before we decide that those adults who already have such handicaps also have lives not worthy to be lived?

Just as I believe that we are on a slippery slope from abortion to infanticide to euthanasia, we are on a slippery slope within each of these inhumanities. For example, infanticide was originally practised on those infants who had congenital anomalies which if untreated would cause the death of the child. This included such things as intestinal obstruction and congenital heart disease amenable to surgical correction. Now, non-lethal problems of the newborn such as spina bifida are also causes for what the British call the selection process. Here an infant who has a defect which is correctable but which would end up with a child having perhaps the need for orthopaedic surgery and braces and/or the construction of an artificial bladder is declared by fiat to be nontreatable. Then the problem arises how to get rid of this child. Lorber of Sheffield, England, the man who has brought about the change in attitude toward spina bifida in the United Kingdom, sets the death sentence this way: "It is essential that those who are not treated should not live long. It is imperative, therefore, that nontreatment should really be nontreatment, not just no operation. Nothing should be done to prolong life." These children are given eight times the sedative dose of a sedative like chloral hydrate or phenobarbitol, they become so floppy they cannot feed, and their death takes place in about three weeks from dehydration and starvation.

That example I think makes this an appropriate place to state my major thesis: In the West, at least, we are at the crossroads of the corruption of medicine with the corruption of the law. The corruption of medicine takes place when the profession acquiesces to the demand by the social planners to become the social executioners. The corruption of medicine takes place when the profession does not rise up in rebellion when some of its members choose to become killers as well as healers. The corruption of medicine takes place when the disease is eliminated by eliminating the patient.

The corruption of the law takes place when it enacts legislation or hands down judicial decrees that make the corruption of medicine legal, or as in the case of infanticide, when the law simply turns its back as though infanticide were not homicide and as though infanticide did not exist.

One final word about infanticide and the reaction of those from whom we should expect more. Two Nobel Laureates have voiced opinions concerning this subject. James Watson, of

DNA double Helix fame, said: "If the child were not declared alive until three days after birth, then all parents could be allowed the choice only a few are given under the present system. The doctor could allow the child to die if the parents so chose, and so save a lot of misery and suffering. I believe this view is the only rational, compassionate attitude to have." He said that in May 1973.

In January of 1978 Francis Crick, also a Nobel Laureate, was quoted in the Pacific News Service as saying: "No newborn infant should be declared human until it has passed certain tests regarding its genetic endowment and that if it fails these tests, it forfeits the right to live."

EUTHANASIA

I cannot leave the subject of the handicapped without expressing one more concern. If there is anything that annoys me more than discussions of the quality of life as the criterion for survival, it is cost-effectiveness—because I have never been able to bring myself to put a price tag on human life. We are constantly bombarded by propaganda not only in the lay press, but in medical journals as well, concerning the cost of the handicapped to society, and the cost of the retarded and otherwise mentally disadvantaged to society. I would submit to you that the cost of all the physically handicapped individuals and for all the mentally handicapped individuals in our society today and in the future is but a drop in the bucket compared to the cost to our society for the morally handicapped. I never read anything in the newspapers about how the physically handicapped have perpetrated tremendous crimes against society. The same could be said of the mentally handicapped. But the headlines in your newspapers and mine and the commentaries in our international news magazines constantly bring to mind the fact that we are burdened almost beyond our ability to stand it with the cost of the morally handicapped. In fact they are never called the morally handicapped at all. As a matter of fact, these are people who are defended by legal aid societies. These are the people for whom we are asked to provide every conceivable rehabilitation programme. We are asked to see that they have easy sentences when convicted. We are informed about the advantages of plea bargaining and for some of them there is not even an ultimate penalty because capital punishment has been abolished. Why then do we demand perfection for those who have physical handicaps and those who have mental handicaps when we do not even demand normal behaviour from those who are morally handicapped?

Euthanasia means happy death, but for people of my age it has a bad connotation because of the mercy killings which preceded the Holocaust in Nazi Germany.

The proponents of euthanasia use a language or vocabulary which is inaccurate, imprecise and on occasion even incorrect. Euthanasia is the purposeful killing of a dependent human being allegedly for his own good. It matters not whether that death is accomplished by withholding necessary vital support or whether an action is taken to terminate that life. In either instance, a life is terminated. It will not stretch the imagination to recognize that inevitably there will be a shift in emphasis from the killing of an individual for the *alleged* benefit of that individual to the killing for the benefit of others.

The role of physician is shifting from healer to killer. The late Margaret Mead, the anthropologist, pointed out just before her death in 1978, that in the days before Hippocrates and the Hippocratic Oath, the patient never knew whether the approaching physician was coming in his role as healer or killer. Do you see how with euthanasia we will

have come full circle? Once again, the elderly patient in a nursing home would not know whether the physician is coming in the form of killer or healer.

Terms such as the right to die, natural death, and death with dignity, are euphemisms around which the passive euthanasia movement is built. In any relationship between a physician and a patient, the patient is master and the physician is servant. Most physicians practise in the realm of trust between patient and physician and the patient can count upon his physician for doing the right thing. By the right thing, I mean not prolonging the act of dying, but on the other hand, giving the patient the full benefit of the life to which he is entitled.

Proper care is the human alternative to euthanasia. Under these circumstances the withdrawal of inappropriate support which only prolongs the act of dying is not to be confused with the term euthanasia no matter how many adjectives precede it to make it more palatable.

Those who are in the vanguard of the euthanasia movement are promoting an ethic of the quality of life which eventually must deprive imperfect individuals of their right to live. Spokesmen for the movement have extolled death and promoted the taking of human life as a public good.

Just before I close, I would like to express my concern about the apathy in that branch of the Protestant Church from which I come, namely the conservative evangelicals. These should be thinking people. These should be people who can understand the sanctity of life as it is expressed in the Word of God. These people are numerous and these people have political clout. Why are they so apathetic? Is it because they are so convinced of their citizenship in heaven that they are more concerned with the Hereafter than the Here-and-Now? Certainly if the Lord left us here to be salt and light to our generation, it should include a deep concern for the inhumanities I have been discussing.

The unrestricted liberty to perform abortion is destructive to the family. The pregnant woman becomes totally autonomous and the law permits her separation from her husband in the act of procreation. In the case of a minor girl, it separates her from the authority and advice as well as the love of her parents.

Abortion sets the poor against the rich, protestants against catholics, secularists against those who adhere to the Judeo-Christian belief. Parents are at enmity with their daughters, wives are in opposition to their husbands, and mothers are without doubt the enemies of unborn children.

Finally in the assault on human life, even the child who is born alive as the result of an abortion is in jeopardy because his former mother-to-be somehow or other has achieved the right to a dead baby.

In the 19th century, Dr. Christopher Hufland made this astute comment: "If the physician presumes to take into consideration in his work whether a life has value or not, the consequences are boundless and the physician becomes the most dangerous man in the state."

From a spiritual point of view, we must by word and action show our understanding of what it means to be created in the image of God. Those who are Christians must give witness to the fact that Jesus who existed in union with God the Father from before the foundation of the world, became flesh and dwelt among us, that his incarnation took place at conception, that he came to minister to the outcasts in society—those who today would be said to have "lives not worth living". Finally we must proclaim that life was so precious to God that his plan of redemption demanded the death of his son so that we who believe in him might live.

A Place of Their Own
A Bible Study Guide

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This Bible Study Guide is designed to help Christians discover what the Old Testament says about our just stewardship of the natural environment in which we live. It is one of three studies by 10 members of the Environment Problems Group of the Shaftesbury Project, England. It is published as A World to Waste. *For further details see "Journal Information", p. 308.*
(Editor)

The people of Israel had a very special relationship with God and with the Promised Land which was their environment. The place which God had given them, and the sustenance it provided played a vital part in their history. We therefore have an opportunity to see how biblical teaching on environment and resources applied to a nation and how it affected the conduct of national affairs and the laws governing the life of the people.

The world was living under the consequences of the Fall: the broken relationship between man and God; the conflicts between man and man, and between man and his environment. In forming the nation of Israel, God provided laws which, if they had been obeyed, would have helped resolve these conflicts.

God made a covenant (or binding agreement) with Abraham (Genesis 15:18–21 and 17:7–8) and later with the people of Israel (Exodus 19–23). He made great promises to the people, but he also gave them laws to obey as their part of the covenant. The promises and the laws involved the whole of the life of the nation and each individual member of it. They affected environment and resources in a variety of ways which show how the principles to be found in the early chapters of Genesis applied to the social and economic problems of the nation.

We can attempt to apply these principles to our own society, although we must take care in doing this because:

- The covenant with the people of Israel has now been superseded by the new covenant instituted by Christ (Matthew 26:26–28, Hebrews 9:15). The Old Testament law has not lost its validity, but we must be careful to understand its real meaning for us (see, for example, Matthew 5:17, Romans 13:10, Mark 2:27).
- The Old Testament is describing a society and economy very different from our own; we should therefore understand the basis of the principles involved rather than simply apply specific instructions intended for quite different circumstances.

- We do not live in a Christian society, and our country's rulers and laws are not necessarily Christian. We must consider carefully in what ways it is right for Christians to press their point of view.

THE LAND GOD GAVE

The land which God gave to his people was good and broad, a land flowing with milk and honey (Exodus 3:8).

The resources of the land are described:

Crops: barley, wheat, vines, fig trees, pomegranates, olive trees, grass for cattle.

Other produce: honey, copper, 'iron' (probably a hard rock used for various purposes).

Water supplies: brooks of water, fountains, springs flowing in valleys and hills (Deuteronomy 8:7–9, 11:10–17).

Bashan was famed for its sheep, goats, and cattle (Ezekiel 39:18); Gilead for grapes and spices (Genesis 37:25); Moab for sheep (2 Kings 3:4).

Water supplies were of vital importance to crops and animals alike and depend on rainfall; but rainfall could vary considerably from year to year and there was always the danger of drought (Jeremiah 17:8).

The Promised Land was therefore on a knife-edge balance of fertility. Drought or misuse of the land could tip the balance and produce arid and unproductive conditions. The danger of soil erosion is mentioned (Job 14:18–19) and forest fires during drought (Psalm 83:14). Balanced and restrained use of the land was essential, because overgrazing or over-cultivation could turn fertile land to desert.

GROUP STUDY QUESTIONS

1. A Promised Land

How is God's plan for the Promised Land shown in:
—his promises (Genesis 17:7–8, Exodus 3:8)
—his laws: work (Exodus 20:9–11)
        honest dealing (Exodus 20:15, Deuteronomy 19:14)
        protection of livelihood (Leviticus 25:8–13)
        caring for the weak and needy (Deuteronomy 24:19–22 and 15:1–11)
        restrained use of resources (Exodus 23:10–11)
        rejoicing and tithing (Exodus 23:14–17, Leviticus 27:30–33)
What would be the fruit of obedience? (Deuteronomy 28:1–14)

2. When Israel Disobeyed

How would disobedience affect the land and its resources? (Leviticus 26:14–33)

3. The Message of the Prophets

How did the prophets link their message of judgment to Israel's land and resources? (Joel 1:1–12, Amos 2:6–12, 4:6–13, 8:4–8)

But the prophets also brought a message of hope: what can we learn from them about the future of the earth? (Joel 2, especially 18–27, Micah 4:1–4)

4. What Can We Learn?

What lessons about the use of land, environment and resources can be learned for our country? For the Christian Church?

NOTES ON THE QUESTIONS

1. A Promised Land

How is God's plan for the Promised Land shown in: His Promises

Genesis 17:7–8: When God made his original covenant, he made the promise that Abraham would be the father of many nations (17:4) and gave to him and his descendants the land of Canaan—the Promised Land. In return he required Abraham's trust and obedience (17:1). Abraham's obedience would be necessary so that God could bring about what he had promised him (18:19).

Exodus 3:8: When Moses was called to lead the people of Israel out of Egypt and through the wilderness to the Promised Land, God told him that it was a good and fertile land. If the people obeyed God, he would provide for them richly.

As part of the laws God gave to his people, there were commands about the proper use of land and natural resources which God had promised them.

In "Enough is Enough", John Taylor draws attention to the ideal of "shalom" which is to be found in the Old Testament. It meant more than simply "peace"; it was the "harmony of a caring community informed at every point by its awareness of God".

Perhaps we may see in this the wish to restore as far as possible the original harmony of Creation which was recognized in Study 1. In relation to land and resources it resulted in what John Taylor calls "the theology of enough", comprising many laws and revelations within an overall attitude of restraint. We see it reflected in many of the following laws:

Work

Hard work and the exercise of many crafts and skills are necessary if full and proper use is to be made of the resources of the earth. The fourth commandment (Exodus 20:9–11) not only told the people to keep the sabbath but to work for six days each week. The ability to do skilful work was valued (for example, in making objects for use in worship: Exodus 35:30–36:2). Wages were to be paid promptly (Deuteronomy 24:14–15).

Honest Dealing

The eighth commandment (Exodus 20:15) forbade stealing, and in Deuteronomy 19:14 this is applied to land, which was vital for the support of each tribe and family.

Protection of Livelihood

There were other laws intended to protect the livelihood of individuals and families. Excess wealth or poverty were to be avoided, and this is reflected in the land laws. Leviticus 25:8–13 ensured that land went back to its original owners and prevented the development of large estates. (But this was after the land had been allocated fairly to begin with, on the basis of need (Numbers 26:53–56), and would change hands mainly by inheritance, so we must be careful how we apply this to our own situation.)

Caring for the Weak and Needy

The provision for the poor included special laws relating to the produce of the land. Deuteronomy 24:19–22 ruled that crops were not to be too thoroughly harvested: the gleanings were to be left for the needy. Also certain tithes were to be used to feed the needy, including widows and orphans (Deuteronomy 14:28–29). All the people were to have a share in the good things of the land God had given. Deuteronomy 15:1–2 allowed for the release of debtors every seven years and 15:4–11 commands that the poor shall be provided for.

Restrained Use of Resources

Exodus 23:10–11: Every seventh year the land was to be allowed to lie fallow, uncultivated. This would enable it to regain its fertility and provide food for the poor and for animals. (See also Leviticus 25:1–7.) God backed this up with the promise that his special blessing in the sixth year would supply the people's needs in the seventh year (Leviticus 25:19–22).

There were also laws to protect wild birds (Deuteronomy 22:6–7) and fruit trees (Deuteronomy 20:19–20).

Special considerations applied in the early years of the conquest, when God permitted the land to be settled only gradually, so as to avoid its becoming desolate (Exodus 23:29–30). The fruit of the trees planted in the new land was not to be eaten until the fifth year (Leviticus 19:23–25).

The sabbath regulations included provision for proper rest to be given to the ox and ass, and the slave (Exodus 23:12).

Rejoicing and Tithing

Gratitude to God for the land and resources he had given them became part of the people's way of life. The three main annual festivals had an agricultural as well as religious significance (Exodus 23:14–17).

a. *Unleavened Bread:* commemorated the Exodus from Egypt, but took place in April, when the first sheaves of barley could be brought before God.
b. *First Fruits of Harvest:* celebrated in June at the completion of the wheat and barley harvests (Leviticus 23:9–14).
c. *Ingathering at the Year's End:* celebrated in October, when the vines and olives had been gathered in (Leviticus 23:39–43).

The people were also commanded to tithe (or set aside a tenth part of) the produce of the land, crops and animals (Leviticus 27:30–33). Tithes had first been given as a token of gratitude (Genesis 28:22). By setting aside a definite proportion of their produce, the people were reminded that it was God who gave wealth (Deuteronomy 8:17–18).

The tithe was consumed as a celebration of God's goodness (Deuteronomy 14:22–26) besides supporting the Levites who had been allocated no share of the land, and was also intended for the needy (Deuteronomy 14:27–29).

Compare these laws with the pattern for man's place in Creation outlined in Study 1, Question 2. How far do they reflect that original pattern for man? In what ways are they especially adapted to the injustices and conflicts in a society made up of fallen man?

What would be the fruit of obedience?

Deuteronomy 28:1–14: If the people obeyed God he would bless them through:

i. strength and victory as a nation (1, 7–10)

ii.   children ([4](), [11]())
iii. fertility and water supplies ([3](), [11–12]())
iv. crops ([3](), [8](), [11]())
v.   animals ([4](), [11]())

2. When Israel Disobeyed

How would disobedience affect the land and its resources?

The Old Testament gives the other side of the coin of God's promises—the consequences of disobeying him:

a.   If the laws for wise use of the land were ignored, there would be infertility due directly to misuse.
b.   God himself could bring drought, or the military defeat which would mean the people were dispossessed.

[Leviticus 26:14–33](): The consequences of disobedience are spelled out in detail. Punishment would come through:

i.   disease (16)
ii. drought and infertile soil ([19–20]())
iii. marauding wild beasts (22)
iv. defeat by enemies (17)
v.   being violently thrown out of the land (33)

[Deuteronomy 28:15–25]() mentions other ways in which disobedience would bring punishment, by a curse on children, livestock, crops and water supplies.

The people of Israel probably saw every drought as God's judgment upon them. The drought described in [1 Kings 16:31–17:7]() led to King Ahab being confronted with his sin ([18:18]()). Only when the priests of the false god Baal (who may have been a rain god) were slain did God bring rain again ([18:40–41]()).

Despite the restraint set by the Jubilee Year ([Leviticus 25:8–13]()), crownlands, large estates and forced labour appeared in Israel, bringing debts and servitude (see [1 Samuel 8:11](), [14–18](); [22:7]() and [25:2]()).

3. The Message of the Prophets

How did the prophets link their message of judgment and salvation to Israel's land and resources?

The prophets whose messages have been recorded for us in the Old Testament lived during a period when the people were in danger from the powerful empires of Assyria and Babylon. As God had warned them, they were actually cast out of their land to exile in Babylon, but eventually were able to return.

[Joel 1:1–12](): The first two chapters of the Book of Joel tell of judgment which has come in the form of swarms of locusts, destroying vines and fig trees (7), olives (10), wheat and barley (11), pomegranates, palm and apple (12).

God's hand was seen in this invasion, when at one stroke both the people's food supply and the joy and gladness of the Temple (16) were cut off. The sins of the people are not specified, but clearly they had turned from God ([2:13]()).

We do not know when Joel lived, but his message clearly shows how natural disasters may be an expression of God's judgment.

Amos was sent by God from his home in Judah to be a prophet in the northern kingdom of Israel. He lived in the reign of Jeroboam II (793–753 B.C.), a period of great prosperity and of religious and social corruption. 2:6–12: the sins of Israel are specified, including oppression of the poor (6–8), sexual immorality (7) and abuse of religion (7–8, 12).

4:6–13: Amos proclaims the judgment of God against the people. They would suffer military defeat (3:11), but also nature itself would turn against them, bringing:

i.   famine (6)
ii.   drought (7, 8)
iii. blight, mildew and locusts (9)
iv.   disease (10)
v.   earthquake (11)

But Israel had not repented, and so worse judgment yet was in store (12–13) unless they sought God and lived in justice and righteousness (5:4, 24).

8:4–8: The sins of the people are again described. Because of their greed they oppressed the poor, traded dishonestly (see Leviticus 19:35–36) and abused God's festivals.

It was not long after Amos' time that Israel was conquered and led into captivity in Babylon.

Other prophets pointed to disobedience affecting land and resources. Jeremiah cried down shame on the man who used fraud or other unjust means to make a fine house for himself, or those who had no thought for anything but gain. This was greed, which could only destroy peace and harmony in the nation (Jeremiah 22:13–17; see also Isaiah 5:8–10).

Failure to give tithes as the law required was denounced by Malachi (3:7–12). He challenged the people to trust God to bless them if they gave him his due. The "windows of heaven" would open—suggesting that drought would end. The devourer (locust) would no longer eat their crops.

See also Isaiah 24:1–13, where the prophet warns that the Lord will bring judgment on all men equally. The earth itself will be twisted and made desolate and the cities will be broken down. His prophecy seems to look to a future universal judgment rather than an imminent local one.

But the prophets also brought a message of hope; what can we learn from them about the future of the earth?

The prophets follow their pronouncements of judgment with the promise of restoration—if only the people will return to God. The possibility of future restoration includes the land which God had given them, made newly prosperous and productive. There is also a glimpse of a new creation—the new heaven and new earth which we will find described again in the New Testament.

Joel 2, especially 18–27: Even after the great judgment which Joel had pictured, the way is open for the people to return to God in repentance. The fruits of blessing would be both material and spiritual:

a.   The productiveness of the land would be restored and the people would eat in plenty (25–26). The land would rejoice and be glad!
b.   At some later time (afterwards, v.28) the Lord would pour out his Spirit. Judgment would come and God would save his own people. God will rule in a land which is holy and

where there are good things in abundance (3:17–18). The interpretation of this passage is not certain, but it seems to look forward to the Christian Church and to the end times, of which the New Testament tells us.

Micah 4:1–4: In the "latter days" the mountain of the Lord will be established as a place of peace and of obedience to God's commands.

The "mountain of the Lord", Mount Zion is described by Isaiah too as a place of peace, righteousness and fertility (2:2–5, 35:1–10) in a new heaven and earth (65:17–25). This is linked with the prophecy of Christ's future rule on earth in 11:1–9. Elsewhere Isaiah writes in a similar way, but seems to be describing a much more imminent salvation at God's hand (41:17–20, 43:18–20). Although we probably cannot treat the prophets' visions of the new heaven and earth as literal descriptions, they show us that God's salvation was seen as involving man's environment as well as man himself.

4. What Can We Learn?

What lessons about the use of land, environment and resources can be learned for our country? For the Christian Church?

Our country has a complicated economic system which produces a great variety of goods and services to meet our needs and to sell abroad to cover the cost of our imports. Life in biblical times was much simpler, but are the principles outlined under Question 1 still relevant? Consider how they might apply to contemporary issues, for example:

- the distribution of wealth, land and property—is it just?
- the poor, the homeless—who is responsible for meeting their needs?
- the aims and motives of society and governments—are they the right ones?
- the quality of the environment in city, town and country—who is responsible?
- Government action—town planning, compulsory purchase of land and buildings, nationalization of land and other resources: are they needed? What should they achieve?
- attitudes to work and what we are paid for it.
- attitudes to money and what it can buy.

What relevance does the Old Testament teaching on these environmental and resource issues have for our lives—as individuals, as groups of Christians? Does the Church—as a society within society—have a duty to include this teaching in its message?

A Candle in Barbed Wire: Hope for Prisoners of Conscience

Gwen Graham

Reprinted from Zadok Centre News, December 1980*, with permission*

> No man is an island, entire of itself; every man is a piece of a continent, a part of the main; if a clod be washed away by the sea, Europe is the less, as well as if a promontory were; *any man's death diminishes me, because I am involved in mankind* …

We who are followers of Jesus Christ have experienced with John Donne, His call to caring involvement in mankind, His call to be neighbour to those in need; His call to speak for those who cannot speak themselves.

Over and over again we see this practical care demonstrated and exhorted in the Gospels. It is epitomized in Jesus' parable of the Good Samaritan, who rescued a wounded and helpless member of an enemy race; his need was a sufficient call for the Samaritan to act in love to establish justice and restore a human life.

This caring involvement is also the basis of Amnesty International, whose area of concern is particularly for those locked away in prisons, forgotten, tortured, deprived … for no other reason than that they have stood firm in their beliefs. The aims of Amnesty are three–fold:

(i) To work for the release of prisoners of conscience—men, women and even children—who are jailed for their political or religious beliefs or racial origins, and who have neither advocated nor taken part in violence;
(ii) To seek fair trials for all political prisoners;
(iii) To work against torture and the death penalty for all people.

The organization is non-sectarian, non-political and impartial, seeking to combat violations of human rights within their mandate, wherever they occur.

Christians, as followers of Jesus Christ, should perhaps be able, above all others, to empathize with the prisoner of conscience because in this world every Christian is potentially such a person. Our patriotism is qualified as we have only one absolute loyalty, for, as Peter, himself a prisoner of conscience for some time, affirmed, "we must obey God rather than men".

Many Christians, in countries as disparate as Romania and South Korea, China and Bolivia, already suffer imprisonment and torture for their unswerving loyalty to Jesus Christ. Of course, many nonChristians are also prisoners of conscience, and Amnesty International provides an opportunity for us to extend practical help both to fellow believers and to others punished for exercising their right to express their beliefs in a peaceful manner.

In the years that I have worked in the Australian Amnesty movement I have increasingly found it to be a very practical channel to express Christian discipleship, especially in terms of the words in Luke 4:18, 19. "He hath sent me to announce that captives shall be released and the blind shall see, that the downtrodden shall be freed from their oppressors."

It is so easy as we read the newspapers with the headlines on jailings, tortures and executions throughout the world, to feel overwhelmed and helpless. I have found in Amnesty that ordinary people can carry out effective action to free people, stop torture and bring hope and light into many dark places in the world.

I had early proof of the effectiveness of Amnesty when I was a new AI member. A missionary told me of the indefinite detention without trial in Sabah of a young Christian Chinese economist, Mr. Lie, who had won a seat as an independent in the legislative assembly. The ruling party had promptly jailed him to simplify government unity.

A Sabahan student in Perth told me that when he had returned home on holidays no one would discuss the prisoner. "It is best to forget", they said—because involvement might bring suspicion upon them. I contacted the international headquarters of AI in London and research into his case was initiated, and he was subsequently "adopted" as a prisoner of conscience. Later he was chosen as one of the three "Prisoners of the month", and in the

following weeks many thousands of letters from AI members all over the world poured in to the office of the Prime Minister of Malaysia, each one courteously requesting the release of Mr. Lie.

The violation of human rights in this outer province could not now be ignored, and this prisoner of conscience was released the following month. Amnesty exists to make sure the world does not forget those locked away at the government's whim. My opportunity to share in the release of Mr. Lie was as close as my pen and paper. The prisoner of the month scheme continues to be one of AI's most effective weapons.

In 1961, a British lawyer, Peter Benenson, read in the paper of two students sentenced to seven years' imprisonment in Portugal for raising their glasses in a toast to freedom. His indignation at this, and the many other cases he had discovered of the repression of dissent, led to a campaign to draw world attention to the plight of prisoners of conscience. This campaign was launched with an article by Benenson in the London Observer, "The Forgotten Prisoners", and from this developed Amnesty International.

A young Czechoslovakian serving an 11-year sentence for her noncommunist stand told me later what this meant to her. She said: "In prison you do not live by bread, but by hope." News of this new organization seeped even into this high security jail, and a hope shone in the cells which nothing could destroy because now these persecuted people knew they would no longer be forgotten.

Now Amnesty has developed into a vast humanitarian body with over 200,000 members in over 100 countries. Basic to Amnesty's work for prisoners of conscience have been the "adoption groups"—now over 2280 of them—who are allocated three prisoners from quite disparate political systems. Mainly through their continued letter campaigns, these groups manage to gain many releases. In 1979 1573 new cases were taken up and 1449 adoptees released.

An ex-adoptee, Julio de Pena Valdez, described the effect of the thousands of letters written on his behalf:

> I was being kept naked in an underground cell. When the first two hundred letters came the guards gave me back my clothes. Then the next two hundred letters came and the prison director came to see me. When the next pile of letters arrived, the director got in touch with his superior. The letters kept coming and coming: three thousand of them. The President was informed. The letters still kept arriving and the President called the prison and told them to let me go.
>
> After I was released the President called me to his office for a man to man talk. He said: "How is it that a trade union leader like you has so many friends all over the world?" He showed me an enormous box full of all the letters he had received and when we parted, he gave them to me. I still have them.

The Amnesty group seeks to shine the rays of the AI candle into the prison cell, to give sustaining hope to its adoptee—by sending parcels and letters to him and his family, by becoming the friends who will not forget. A priest in the Philippines wrote:

> This is the sixteenth month of my prolonged Holy Week and Easter Sunday seems to be still very far away … I'm sharing with you all these thoughts because I feel like talking to friends. It is my way of telling you how I appreciate your sympathy.
>
> It is a long letter because it is expressing the panic of a man who has been badly hurt—the burning pains of living life in the depths. I can now understand how St. Paul composed all those beautiful epistles while confined in some murky dungeon in Rome. He could not help but be lengthy and forceful. There are more than 60 of us in this compound. One lady is a nursing mother … like myself, most of them do not yet have formal charges …"

For some, the link with Amnesty has not only brought comfort in jail, but saved them from suicide. Groups also share in the joys of releases. A Zimbabwe prisoner of conscience wrote about the news of his release: "If only I could make you feel how I feel deep inside me. I read and hear of people who shed tears of joy. Yesterday, I did not shed tears, but *burst out* in tears of joy."

Amnesty's role in the world is a vital one. In its London research centre it prepares not only material on individual cases but information on human rights situations around the world. In 1979 alone it published reports on 96 countries. Its action is not only on behalf of the individual, but international campaigns are mounted which are directed towards an area of violations in a country, such as escalating torture in Uruguay and the thousands held without trial in Laos.

TORTURE

As the research centre has developed, Amnesty investigators have become appalled at the extent of the growing disease of the 20th century—torture—particularly in the interrogation of political detainees. In 1972 AI launched a world-wide campaign for the abolition of torture, and in 1973 published a report detailing incidents of torture occurring in more than 60 countries.

In some countries it has been possible for Amnesty to halt torture through public outcry; but in others it continues today, ranging from incidents of beatings of detainees of South Africa, electric shock and other gross mal-treatment in Chile and many other South American countries, and legal amputations in Pakistan, to sophisticated misuse of drugs in the USSR. To meet this apparently escalating problem, Amnesty has developed new methods.

It set up, for example, a world-wide Urgent Action network, whereby telex or airmail information about impending or occurring torture are sent to all Amnesty sections which immediately act by cabling or phoning a protest to the recalcitrant authorities. Teams of letter-writers follow up these initial telegrams with expressions of concern. Often this sudden, broadly-based protest is successful; unfortunately it can also fail.

But the volunteers who reach across the world to save their fellow human beings know they must try. The victim has no other hope. Most offending governments have vanquished effective opposition and imposed controls on the press and the judiciary.

Torture for these governments is as much a means of repression as it is a means of eliciting information. The candle in the barbed wire, Amnesty's symbol, is for many the only light in a dark future.

MASSACRE

Amnesty must also seek to evolve techniques to combat other frightening trends in the world today. In Uganda, Kampuchea and Ethiopie wholesale massacres have been carried out, and the usual AI techniques are ineffective or even counter-productive. The movement is experimenting with the use of "country dossiers" whereby groups adopt not only individuals but an entire region, aiming to increase the worldwide awareness of the crisis situations.

Amnesty's publication of information on the massacre of children in the Central African Republic, for example, led to the toppling of the Bokassa regime; sadly, in some other countries, it seems that the international community has turned a blind eye to atrocities and Amnesty's pleas have fallen on deaf ears.

ABUSE OF MEDICINE

The growing abuse of medicine for political purposes is another area of great concern. In psychiatric institutions in the USSR and Romania, many sane human rights workers, Christian believers and other dissenters are being held in prison and mistreated with large doses of neuroleptic and other drugs, in a form of pressure to have them renounce their disapproval of beliefs and behaviour.

Arvidas Chekhanavichius, for example, is a 31-year-old Lithuanian human rights campaigner declared "socially dangerous" and now confined to Chernyakhovsk Special Psychiatric Hospital and "treated" in the severest type of psychiatric confinement in the USSR. He had already been arrested and confined from 1973 to 1979 after being charged with "anti-Soviet agitation and propaganda" after poems and tape-recordings of foreign broadcasts were found in his flat.

But there have been successes even in the USSR—Victor Fainberg, for example, confined for five years in a psychiatric prison for taking part in a five-minute peaceful demonstration in Red Square, was released, without recanting, due to world-wide pressure.

EXTRA-JUDICIAL KILLINGS

Another frightening trend is the increase in extra-judicial killings. In some countries, either governments or non-government organizations, instead of detaining opponents, are eliminating them. Death squads are rife in places such as Guatemala and Argentina. But other countries are guilty also. In Turkey, nearly 3000 people have been murdered for political reasons over the past two years—the political assassination rate now averages 10 a day.

Thousands of people just "disappear", and it is often not known whether they have died or are imprisoned. "A single death by firing squad can provoke a world-wide scandal: with the thousands of disappeared people there is always the convenience of uncertainty … there are no crimes to report or explanations to be given" (Eduado Galeano *Index*, March/April 1978). Often whole families "disappear" and Amnesty has documented lists of young children in Argentina who have become such political victims.

Amnesty wants the death toll to stop, not only extra-judicial killings, disappearances, massacres, but legal executions also, and in 1979 carried out a world-wide campaign to draw attention to the extent of both criminal and political executions, often carried out after speedy secret trials, without the right of defence and without any appeal. The Urgent Action network of Amnesty has been extended to help not only the torture victims, but those under threat of death. Relatives, lawyers and ex-prisoners have expressed their belief that such international appeals have helped protect individuals from torture and death.

Amnesty has grown enormously in numbers and prestige as a human rights organization in recent years, but it is still dependent on the ordinary person for its effectiveness. As Suriya Wickremasinghe said in receiving the UN Human Rights Peace Prize on Amnesty's behalf:

> Let there be no mistake about who is being honoured here today. It is everyone Who has ever put their name on the bottom of an Al appeal. It is everyone who has ever written a letter asking for the release of a prisoner of conscience. It is everyone who has ever stood in a vigil mourning the death of a political prisoner.
>
> It is everyone who has ever handed out leaflets, stuffed envelopes, licked stamps, kept membership lists, done the accounts and helped out behind the scenes …

Human rights cannot be left to governments, legislators and jurists. They are the concern and responsibility of the man and woman in the street, of the labourer, the farmer, the office clerk, the student. Every name on every petition counts."

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Steak, Potato, Peas and Chopsuey Linear and Non-linear Thinking in Theological Education

Peter Chang

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Is straight line thinking the only way to do theology or does this linear approach sometimes lead to a truncated form of biblical understanding? How important is the story, the parable, the mystical experience or the emotional response in understanding a truth of the Bible? Professor Peter Chang challenges our western epistemology. We hope that he will develop his chopsuey approach to theological understanding.
(Editor)

Why do Chinese restaurants seem to be ubiquitous in the West? It is because an occasional chopsuey is a welcome change from steak, potato and peas or chicken and French fries. This may well have a lesson for theological educators.

The cry for alternatives in theological education is heard not only in many Third World countries, which are growing more and more uneasy about the imported Western system of seminary training. Western theological educators are also searching for new ways. Various proposals have been made and numerous innovative ideas are in the experimental stage. This essay is to share some "chopsuey" insight, which may contribute to the "Steak, Potato and Peas" dominated theological cookery.

Theological education evolves in the larger context of culture and is closely related to people's thinking style. In the Western academic scene, linear thinking has been the dominant mode. It is largely analytical, objective, logical and systematic. In the following, we will see how such a thinking style is manifested in inductive Bible study, theology, homiletics and theological education. To see its pervasiveness and to understand its weaknesses will help us to reform and to innovate.

THE IMPLICATIONS OF THE INDUCTIVE METHOD

In the West, the inductive method is perhaps one of the most prevalent ways for serious Bible study. Basically it consists of three steps: Observation, Interpretation and Application. It embodies the spirit of scientific inquiry as exemplified by the famous story of Louis

Agassiz, a zoology teacher, who required a new student to observe minutely a well-preserved fish on a laboratory dish for two whole months and make sketches from his observation. The moral of the story is that it pays to observe, to look, look and look closely.

The painstaking effort in studying nature is transferred to Bible study. The Bible is also regarded as an external object of inquiry. One is to use one's intelligence to observe carefully, to dissect and analyze the text, in short, to attempt to find out exhaustively all the textual phenomena. Then one is entitled to proceed to interpretation and finally to apply the truth thus gathered from the text.

The inductive procedure is actually the popular version of grammatical-historical exegesis: understanding what the text meant, making sure of the author's intended meaning before venturing to say what the text has to say today. One is admonished to remain objective in digging out the meaning of the text before letting the subjective part of application come in. A great number of variations stem from this basic approach and appear in different names such as Methodical Bible Study, Independent Bible Study, Effective Bible Study, etc.[1]

The inductive approach may carry the following implications. First, for the objective part, one does not necessarily need to have a faith commitment to what the text says. Or, to put it another way, an honest atheist should come up with pretty much the same observations as a Protestant, a Catholic or a Jew studying the same passage. Second, the step to find out the meaning then is distinct from the step of finding out the meaning now. Indeed, many respectable commentaries only deal with the former and leave the latter to the individual reader. Usually the more scholarly one gets, the more frequently the above two implications are put to work.

Personally, I have been trained in the inductive approach. However, a seemingly unrelated thought concerning marriage stimulated me to question the dominance of this method, and gradually an alternate and perhaps equally valid way emerged.

In the U.S. or Great Britain, nowadays marriage is normally preceded by dating and courtship. A young man or woman should get to know each other, i.e. to gather enough pertinent information. Then they should think calmly and rationally in spite of the involvement i.e. to interpret the other person in relation to oneself. If all is well, they get engaged and married. Hence, one may say personal application comes last as in the good inductive procedure.

However, in India, it is well known that one may get married by arrangement without ever seeing one's spouse before the wedding night. This seemingly risky and irrational custom does work. The Chinese also had the practice of *zhi fú wei hun*, the parents pointing to the fetuses yet in the womb and agreeing to have them engaged for marriage if they turn out to be of opposite sexes.

Such procedures are totally against the grain of inductive thinking. The inductive mind wants to have enough information before action. One must gather enough objective facts before personal involvement.

Does information always come by inquiry? For instance, a tourist visiting Hong Kong got up to the Victoria Peak, which overlooks the magnificent harbour, and exclaimed, "What a gorgeous view!" In order to do exegesis of his utterance, we may apply the battery of inductive questions and ask, "Who is that tourist? When did he go up there? How did he get

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[1] Cf. Irving Jensen, *Independent Bible Study* (Chicago: Moody, 1953), Howard F. Vos, *Effective Bible Study* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1956) and Robert A. Traina, *Methodical Bible Study* (New York: Ganis & Harris, 1952).

there? Where is Victoria Peak? What is it famous for? What did he see? …?" According to the inductive method, such fact-gathering is the prerequisite for knowing what the tourist meant by "What a pretty view!" However, as a resident of Hong Kong who has been up to the Peak, I can get to the meaning of his utterance without all those questions and may come close to understanding his meaning. This is a different way of knowing. It can be said to be empathetic.

The above has something to do with Bible study. For instance, take 2 Cor. 1:3b–4 (NIV), "the Father of compassion and the God of all comfort, who comforts us in all our troubles, so that we can comfort those in any trouble with the comfort we ourselves have received from God." To understand this passage inductively, we would ask, "Who wrote these words? When was it? Why did he write these words? Why is the author able to comfort those in trouble? What is the purpose of the trouble that the author went through?" A believer who had similar experience in the past can read this text and exclaim, "I can understand what it means!" Indeed, his understanding may surpass the exegete who has gone through the sweat and toil of grammatical-historical investigation while never having an existential experience of suffering and comfort from God. Of course, experience and analysis are not mutually exclusive. But, does analysis always need to be the first step in understanding the text? The basic assumption of the inductive method is that if one does not understand, observe more closely, analyze further, and gather more information. Is this the only approach to achieve understanding?

As a matter of fact, many great texts of the Bible turn out to be such that one can readily understand them without paying much attention to the W's questions. For instance, a believer who has experienced God's love in his life can come to John 3:16 without going through questions such as, "Who is speaking to whom? Is Jesus or the evangelist the speaker? Where and when was this said? Why was it said?" etc., and may sincerely and justifiably say that he understands it. Whereas, can someone who has all the answers to the analytical questions concerning the text but sees absolutely no personal meaning in it really understand this verse? One can further reflect upon texts such as Heb. 13:8, Rom. 6:23, and Pr. 3:5, 6. If the most influential texts may be fairly well understood without the inductive procedure, why is the inductive approach supposed to be the proper way to approach the Bible? Is it not a hangover from preoccupation with historical questions concerning the biblical documents? The inductive way is supposed to be a superior way to grasp the text, being able to prevent a lot of misusage such as allegorical interpretation and proof-text mentality.

One with inadequate schooling in analysis would find it difficult to follow such a scribal injunction of epistemological ritual, and can only be regarded as intellectually inferior and despised as '*am ha-*' aretz, though he may be skilled in other modes of knowing such as existential, intuitive, empathetic and Gestalt. However, he cannot get beyond the first hurdle of observation and analysis in the inductive scheme. For too long the analytical mind has presumed the guardian position of God's truth. Now, we need to question such monopoly.

NON-LINEAR APPROACH OF BIBLE STORIES

When linear thinking is applied to theology, systematization would be perceived as a major task. The Bible is in many ways unsystematic. For instance, it does not say clearly in one place what attributes God has. Hence, theologians are to create order out of disorder, to prepare from nature a botanical garden where plants are properly labelled and grouped.

Historical events are regarded as raw materials. Theologians are to dissect, distill, extract and come up with principles and doctrines. The product would therefore be a rather systematic presentation of the various doctrines, where main concepts will be clearly defined and their inter-relationships carefully delineated.

C. S. Song sees the weakness of such linear approach. Using Cullmann's *Heilsgeschichte* as an example, he points out the weakness of straight-line theology, and says,

> I seriously doubt whether a straight line can express the immense complexity of God's saving activity in the world. A straight line simplifies. It cuts off irregularities. It straightens out knotty problems. It geometricizes all.[2]

The major prerequisite to studying and understanding this type of theology is to have a clear mind. It takes intellectual effort to grasp what has been the work and product of great minds. But, it need not involve the whole person. The affective domain is largely left untouched. Actually, the abstract and technical language used in theology depersonalizes the text. Alonso-Schökel points out that propositional statements, commonly regarded as a higher form of expression, are actually a truncated form. They are less holistic.[3]

In the article, "The Bible: God's Storybook", Leland Ryken says that stories reveal truth and experience in a way that no other literary form does. The Bible recounts how God acts; whereas theological treatises enumerate the attributes of God. The Bible communicates something through our imagination that it does not communicate through our reason. We should respect the story quality of the Bible in our exposition of it.[4] Thus, stories are not inferior. Their linear transformation by theological scholars does not necessarily produce something better.

ALTERNATIVE APPROACHES TO PREACHING AND TEACHING

In homiletics one could again see linear thinking in operation. The model sermon should have an outline with the main points clearly stated. The subpoints should be logically related to the main points and to one another. To be otherwise is to have a bad sermon.

After having been thus taught, I began to analyze many Chinese preachers and concluded that they did not know how to construct sermons properly. However, a Chinese pastor, well versed in both the American and Chinese ways, corrected me by an analogy concerning food. In the American meal, one has steak, potato and peas placed separately on the plate; whereas in chopsuey everything is mixed together. The latter is not without organization but only organized differently. It gradually dawned on me, that there is another type of thinking, which is non-linear.

Look at the streets of New York City; they are rather typically ordered in an X, Y-coordinate grid system. Even the names of the streets and avenues are quite systematic. They are easy to remember, easy to locate and efficient. However, when one comes to Paris, one finds an entirely different system in operation. There is little regard for the X, Y axes. At

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[2] "Many Peoples and Many Languages", *The Northeast Asia Journal of Theology*, No. 24/25 (Mar./Sept., 1980), 34.

[3] L. Alonso-Schökel, *The Inspired Word: Scripture in the Light of Language and Literature* (London: Burns and Oates, 1967), p.122.

[4] *Christianity Today*, XXII (October 5, 1979), 38.

the junctions, one seldom finds two streets meeting each other perpendicularly. Is one system better? Yes, in some ways. But each has its advantages and disadvantages. One represents linear thinking; the other, non-linear thinking. The linear mind should not always feel urged to straighten out the non-linear pattern.

Some books in the Bible such as Hosea and 1 John are notoriously hard to outline. There are many proposals to make sense out of their thought sequences and to outline them properly. However, a meandering river may be much prettier than a straight canal. The non-linear outline of a mountain range is far more pleasant than the linear silhouette of a concrete housing estate. Non-linear thinking is not disorder or non-thinking. The seemingly disorganized sermons I heard have patterns that escape my search for linear outlines and logical connections.

Kosuke Koyama has made a delightful comparison between these two types of thinking in his article, "Theological Reflections on the Bamboo room and the Oil Room". Concerning the two rooms he visited in Kuching museum in Sarawak, he says,

> The Oil Room expresses the human mind which is (1) *straight* (look at the long, straight steel shaft); (2) *fast* (look at the power of the engine that rotates the enormous iron mechanism); (3) *self-assertive* (look at the sharp, aggressive drill head).
>
> The Bamboo Room represents an almost exactly opposite type of human mind which is (1) *curved* (look at the graceful curves of the bamboo bird traps); (2) *slow* (look at the models of canoes and paddles); and (3) *dialogical* (look at all those bamboo products blending harmoniously into the surrounding nature).
>
> The curved, slow, dialogical spirit is the indigenous spirit of Sarawak. Here mother nature is curved, slow, and dialogical. Her self-understanding is curved, slow, and dialogical. Her history is curved, slow, and dialogical. The Sarawak man, in his appreciation of the relationship between his spirit and the outside world, does not go in a straight, fast, self-assertive direction. He goes, on the contrary, in the direction of animism (curve), symbolism (slow), and integration (dialogue).

Then he goes on to say, "My observation of curved-spirituality was in fact stimulated by the strong impression the Oil Room imprinted on my mind. I felt the Oil Room was a threat directed at my personality."[5]

Linear thinking as applied to theological education tends to stress compartmentalization and specialization. Hence, we have Old Testament, New Testament, Church History, Theology and Practical Theology departments, each offering a gamut of courses. The professors are further specialized in their respective fields. This practice has its merits and facilitates the exploration of new frontiers of knowledge.

The major aim of theological education is to train future ministers, who are in a sense general practitioners. The virtue of specialization tends to force the specialists to their confined area of research. Thus they may become less and less qualified to produce integrated general practitioners. The whole is greater than the parts. A host of excellent specialists does not guarantee the effective training of capable generalists. The situation deteriorates with the pressure to publish.

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[5] *Anticipation*, No. 16 (March, 1974), 8–9.

What we have been describing concerning linear and non-linear thinking turns out to have a physiological basis. Research has shown that our brain is double, having two hemispheres, each capable of functioning independently in some degree from the other.[6]

> … the organization and processing of data by the right hemisphere is in terms of complex wholes, the minor hemisphere having a predisposition for perceiving the total rather than the parts. By contrast, the left hemisphere is seen to analyze input sequentially, abstracting out the relevant details and associating these with verbal symbols.
> … the scientific and technological aspects of our civilization are products of the left hemisphere, while the mystical and humanistic aspects are products of the right.

Such discovery has serious implications for education.

> If there is any truth in the assertion that our culture stresses left-hemispheric skills, this is especially true of the school systems. Selection for higher education is based predominantly on the ability to comprehend and manipulate language … If the right hemisphere does indeed process data in a manner different from the left, we may be shortchanging ourselves when we educate only left-sided talents in basic schooling … Many problems can be solved either by analysis or synthesis; but if people are taught to habitually examine only one approach, their ability to choose the most effective and efficient answer is diminished.[7]

Our exegesis, theology and theological education are reflecting the same dominance of left hemisphere. It is high time that we should appreciate and exercise more non-linear thinking to upset the lopsidedness and work out a more balanced approach.

CONCLUSION

This paper, though by no means the first of its kind, challenges the hegemony of linear thinking. As a mode of thinking, linear thinking has its contributions and handicaps. Therefore, we need different modes to complement and to shed light on the blind spots of the other mode. For instance, in Bible study, objectivity avoids the danger of reading one's own mind into the text, but the empathetic approach leads the whole person into the passage instead of remaining aloof while analyzing it. A balanced combination of both approaches might be in order.

In communication, it is important to deliver the message in the audience's thinking style. In other words, no matter how good the content is, it will do the audience little good unless they comprehend it. For non-linear thinkers, a linear message may not even guarantee its accurate reception.

In conclusion, though non-linear thinking is less explored and utilized, as even manifested in the "non" prefixed terminology, it may well represent a considerable slice of cultural phenomena. Hence, more sensitivity, respect and utilization of this mode of thinking should be cultivated in generating exegesis, theology, homilectics and theological education programmes in the future.

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[6] Joseph E. Bogen, "Some Educational Implications of Hemispheric Specialization", in *The Human Brain*, ed. M. C. Wittrock (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1977), pp.133 and 136.

[7] Robert D. Nebes, "Man's So-called Minor Hemisphere", in *The Human Brain*, pp.102, 104 and 105.

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St. Augustine on the Education of a Preacher

John Peace

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St. Augustine's sermons taken down in shorthand and later published influenced the preaching and theological education in the Church for 1000 years. His reflections on how to study the Bible still have a message for today. This article is the second part of a paper on Augustine's view of theological education.
(Editor)

Among the most hotly-debated topics concerning theological education today, the content of the curriculum stands high. With more and more courses being compressed into the brief span of three years, we would do well once again to reconsider the question, 'What exactly does the modern preacher need to know in order to expound the Scriptures?'

Augustine not only presided over what may be called the first real theological college, but taught them so well that the leadership of the North African church was almost monopolized by his students in later years. What does he have to tell us about the curriculum of such a school?

ON UNDERSTANDING THE BIBLE

First of all, of course, comes knowledge of Bible content: "The first rule … is to know these books even if they are not understood, at least to read them or to memorize them, or to make them not altogether unfamiliar to us." Presumably, this kind of approach lies behind the practice of many schools of requiring a rapid reading of the whole Bible at the beginning of theological training, followed immediately by general Bible survey and introduction courses.

Then follows a step which is likewise imitated today: "Then those things which are put openly in them either as precepts for living or as rules for believing are to be studied more diligently and more intelligently, for the more one learns about these things the more capable of understanding he becomes." Could this be where our beginning Systematic Theology and Ethics courses originated? At least, the principle is the same.

Now comes the main theme of Book Two of *On Christian Doctrine*—which, we recall, may also be translated as "On Christian Education" or "On Theological Education".

"Having become familiar with the language of the Divine Scriptures, we should turn to those obscure things which must be opened up and explained, so that we may take examples from those things that are manifest to illuminate those things which are obscure,

bringing principles which are certain to bear on our doubts concerning those things which are not certain."

"There are two reasons why things written are not understood: they are obscured either by unknown or by ambiguous signs." Now Augustine has returned to his sign-terminology to furnish the outline for the next two books. He further divides signs into two classes: literal or figurative, and discusses how to understand "unknown literal signs" first: "For (these) the sovereign remedy is a knowledge of languages." He goes on to say that for Latin-speaking (we would add English- or Chinese- or Japanese-, etc.) men, there is a need for a knowledge of Hebrew and Greek, in order to refer to these originals whenever the translations of the Bible in the vernacular prove ambiguous.

Before turning to the Hebrew and Greek texts, Augustine recommends that we first compare the various translations available to us. As in his day the Latin translations were numerous, so in ours those in English abound. Other languages have many fewer renderings, but even Chinese offers a half-dozen translations of the New Testament, and only a few less for the Old.

While a multiplicity of translations causes some to despair, as Augustine says, "This situation would rather help than impede understanding if readers would only avoid negligence. For an inspection of various translations frequently makes obscure passages clear."

Naturally, some of these editions render the original more faithfully than others. When we have doubts about a certain translation, "we must either seek a knowledge of those languages from which Scripture is translated (into the vernacular) or we must consult the translations of those who translate word for word." These word-for-word translations are, of course, deficient in one important respect: they do not translate idioms from one tongue to another. (Augustine's discussion of the values of what we would call a "dynamic equivalence" translation merits attention even today.) Nevertheless, they are to be preferred "because by means of them we may test the truth or falsity of those who have sought to translate meanings as well as words."

If an unknown word or expression meets us while we read the Bible, it is either in our own language or in the original Greek or Hebrew. If the latter, then "we must consult one who speaks those languages (this was written in a day when Jews and Greeks still spoke more or less biblical Hebrew and Greek), or learn them ourselves if we have leisure, or make a comparison of various translations." The phrase, "if we have leisure" expresses succinctly one of the chief arguments in favour of residential theological education: in no other way can one find the time to master these difficult languages (so the argument goes).

What if the unknown expression or word is one in our own language? The remedy is to "become familiar with them by reading and hearing them". Augustine suggests that we store up such unfamiliar items in our memory so that we can ask people more learned than ourselves to explain them. Another solution is to let the context illuminate such passages. Here, one might add, lies the justification for a careful knowledge of the Bible in our own tongue and an adequate understanding of that tongue! Thus, mastery of one's own language is as essential to understanding the Bible as is mastery of Hebrew or Greek— perhaps more so!

As an important aside, although we cannot agree with Augustine's naïve credence towards the story about the origin of the Septuagint, nevertheless his high estimation of the value of that primitive translation of the Old Testament finds an echo in the preface of most Greek New Testament lexicons and word-books: one can hardly understand why the Greek Old Testament, so widely used in the Early Church, should be read so rarely today. Perhaps

our theological curriculum should include courses not only in the Greek New Testament, but in the Septuagint as well.

Augustine has been talking about how to unravel the mysteries of unknown literal signs—words we don't recognize. Now he turns to unfamiliar figurative signs. These we should study "Partly with reference to a knowledge of languages and partly with reference to a knowledge of things." For example, unless the Evangelist had told us that "Siloam" means "sent", we would not appreciate the significance of Jesus' telling the blind man to go wash in that particular pool. Likewise, a knowledge of the Hebrew language—or at least the ability to consult a lexicon—will let us in on the meaning of many Hebrew names. Augustine cites, for example, Adam, Eve, Abraham, Moses, Jerusalem, Sinai and others.

ON THE USE OF THE ALLEGORICAL METHOD

What does he mean when he advocates "a knowledge of things"? At this point the advocates of a grammatical-historical, literal exegesis will become a bit uncomfortable with our venerable author, for he demonstrates his love of what is now called the allegorical method. Before we dismiss him, however, let us at least hear him out.

Let us take just two examples, both based on habits of certain snakes.

An ignorance of things makes figurative expressions obscure when we are ignorant of the natures of animals, or stones, or plants, or other things which are often used in the Scriptures for purposes of constructing similitudes. Thus the well-known fact that a serpent exposes its whole body in order to protect its head from those attacking it illustrates the sense of the Lord's admonition that we be wise like serpents. That is, for the sake of our head, which is Christ, we should offer our bodies to persecutors lest the Christian faith be in a manner killed in us, and in an effort to save our bodies we deny God. It is also said that the serpent, having forced its way through narrow openings, sheds its skin and renews its vigour. How well this conforms to our imitation of the wisdom of the serpent when we shed the "old man" as the Apostle says, and put on the "new"; and we shed it in narrow places, for the Lord directs us, "Enter ye in at the narrow gate."

We would, perhaps, question the suitability of using this particular saying for the purposes Augustine wishes (here the matter of context as a determining factor in interpretation enters the picture), but the fertile field of illustrations drawn from nature has been reaped by such diverse Bible teachers as Charles Spurgeon and Bill Gothard, and not without effect. Certainly, in any literary work, the impact of a simile will depend upon the reader's familiarity with the thing being held up for comparison.

Next Augustine turns to an even more disputed department of exegesis: the meaning of numbers. At the very least, we must agree when he begins, "Certainly, a gifted and frank person cannot avoid wondering about the significance of the fact that Moses, Elias (Elijah), and the Lord Himself all fasted for forty days." Even when we doubt the certitude with which this and other numerical matters are solved for us (in this case, forty is said to teach that we are to live chastely and continently in this temporal existence), we must heed his advice to investigate more carefully the significance of the numbers found in the Bible, especially since letters were used also as numbers.

For an understanding of the Psalms, Augustine suggests that we become acquainted with some things concerning music. For instance, the difference between the psaltery and the harp has been held to be significant by some writers. We might expand on this theme a bit by noting that in modern times the interpretation of Hebrew poetry has been enhanced by a fresh appreciation of the role of rhythm and parallelism in ancient Hebrew music.

ON TRUTH IN NATURE AND IN PAGAN PHILOSOPHY

At this point, Augustine introduces the vital question: Should a Christian learn from non-Christians? If so, what things are legitimate and useful for the Christian, especially the Christian exegete, to study? His treatment has relevance for the current debate of the ways in which the Christian message is to be "contextualized" in various cultural settings. Space permits only a brief review now, but the entire passage deserves careful study.

At the start, he enunciates the famous principle: "Every good and true Christian should understand that wherever he may find truth, it is his Lord's."

To further divide the kinds of things found among pagan teachings and customs, he observes that there are "things which men have themselves instituted," and "things which they have seen to be firmly established or divinely ordained".

Of the things instituted by men, some are superstitious and are thus to be avoided. These include all types of idol-manufacture and worship as well as any king of prognostication, through magic or astrology. The current popularity of astrology in the West makes Augustine's devastating critique of that pseudo-science most useful.

Other than superstitious practices, human institutions include some extravagant and useless things such as the signs which actors use to express themselves, as well as much art and all literary fiction. The useful and necessary institutions are represented by dress distinctions, weights and measures, coinage and the like. "All this part of human institutions helpful to the necessary conduct of life is not to be shunned by the Christian; rather, as such institutions are needed, they are to be given sufficient notice and remembered."

Moving on to other useful branches of knowledge, a quick approbation of shorthand (widely used in taking down his sermons for later publication) precedes his strong commendation of the study of history, which "helps us a great deal in the understanding of the sacred books, even if we learn it outside of the Church as a part of our childhood education." By such a study, the idea that Jesus learned his doctrines from the Platonists becomes hard to believe, for example (although Augustine's belief that the Greeks learned the truth from Jews in Egypt is not now given credence by most scholars, it should not be laughed out of court; after all, Moses had been dead many hundreds of years, and the Jews dispersed around the Mediterranean basin, long before Plato put pen to papyrus).

Editors of Bible dictionaries and encyclopedias will be happy to learn that Augustine, as mentioned before, placed a high priority upon knowing about such things as the locations of places, the nature of animals, trees, plants, stones and other objects.

Naturally, the more we know about the world and human activities, the more complete will our understanding of the biblical writings be. Nevertheless, although the stars have fascinated mankind for millenia, they appear rarely in the Bible, and the exegete need know only a little about them. As for an understanding of such arts as carpentry, medicine, agriculture, navigation, dancing, wrestling and similar everyday phenomena, Augustine believed that we could pick up such knowledge along the way, so to speak, rather than making a special study of it. The scientific, industrial, and technological advances of recent years, along with urbanization, make this assumption less true than in his day.

Book Two concludes with mention of the three most highly valued fields of learning in Augustine's day: logic—what he calls "the science of disputation"—rhetoric, and philosophy. For our purposes, only a cursory glance at his evaluation of these will be needed, but—once again—the reader would do well to examine these pages himself, since Augustine's conclusions have profoundly affected subsequent Christian education and attitudes.

What is the value of logic? As a science, it was not invented, but "discovered in the nature of things". Wicked men may make improper use of it, but defenders of God's truth can use this weapon to uncover fallacies in their opponents' reasoning. Some qualifications are in order however: "A knowledge of inference, definition, and division (the three branches of logic at that time) aids the understanding a great deal, provided that men do not make the mistake of thinking that they have learned the truth of the blessed life when they have learned them." Likewise, a knowledge of this science may breed an unwarranted pride in petty men, who are more delighted by these rules than by the truth itself.

As for rhetoric, he will treat this fully in Book Four. For the present, he simply affirms that "certain precepts for a more copious discourse, which make up what are called the rules of eloquence … are very true, even though they may be used to make falsehoods persuasive." As such, being inherent in nature rather than invented by men, they deserve our study.

Finally, the question of philosophy comes up. This topic had engaged the minds of Christian thinkers ever since Paul spoke at Athens and wrote to the Corinthian Christians. Augustine's momentous judgment can here be only summarized.

First of all, we should not fear the philosophers, but, like the children of Israel when leaving Egypt, we should take whatever of value is found among the pagans and convert it to our own use. This so-called "spoiling of the Egyptians" approach to philosophy has dominated much of Christianity's attitude to non-Christian thought since Augustine's time, with a few (significant) exceptions. Moses' education "in all the wisdom of the Egyptians" becomes the type for all future Christian intellectuals.

In closing, Augustine makes two comments which ought to be etched in bronze over every seminary entrance: First, he reminds us of the apostolic saying, "Knowledge puffs up; but charity builds up." Thus, no one can be saved apart from faith in Christ, no matter how learned that person may be.

Second, "the knowledge collected from the books of the pagans, although some of it is useful, is … little as compared with that derived from the Holy Scriptures. For whatever a man has learned elsewhere is censured there if it is harmful; if it is useful, it is found there … And … he will also find very abundantly things which are found nowhere else at all except as they are taught with the wonderful nobility and remarkable humility of the Holy Scriptures." Amen.

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Faith and Church

PAUL'S IDEA OF COMMUNITY

by Robert Banks

(Exeter, Paternoster, per Anzea Books, Surrey Hills, N.S.W., 1979),
Pp.237, £7.00

Abstract of a review by John Painter in *The Reformed Theological Review*, September–December, 1980.

The author's aim is to present Paul's idea of community in its contemporary setting. He sets out to do justice to the social and historical perspective recognizing that Paul was more a *social thinker* than a systematic theologian.

Dr. Banks suggests that "freedom" is the image of salvation which provides the key to Paul's understanding of community. The theological basis of freedom and the pattern of household gatherings provide a foundation for understanding the Pauline idea of community. In such communities organization was "*familial*" rather than formal and patterns of ministry were functional rather than institutional. Authoritarian structures were excluded in principle as well as practice on the basis of the freedom and responsibility of all believers.

Dr. Banks also gives some attention to the character of the Pauline mission which is distinguished from that of the Pauline communities in that, as members of the mission, they were not primarily concerned with "participating in a common task". The task of the mission was to found communities rather than to participate in the life of a community.

Dr. Banks makes three points against the institutional churches. 1. The Pauline communities were based on households and were small enough to maintain close interpersonal relations. 2. The structure of the communities was *familial* (modelled on the personal relations of a family) and not formal. 3. The communities were not linked together institutionally as denominational or national churches. They were linked by personal ties.

Assuming that Dr. Banks is right in his analysis, and I would want to quibble on a number of matters, including his, in my view, oversharp distinction between personal and institutional, and the restriction of the relation of communities to each other on the basis of purely personal ties, what follows? Does the relevance of what Paul says involve *copy* or an interpretative application for a new age? I am not at all sure that the charismatic life of the Pauline communities could survive and thrive through history without some institutional framework.

THE BIBLE AND THE FUTURE

by Anthony A. Hoekema

(Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1979; Exeter: Paternoster Press, 1979),
Pp.343, $12.95, £8.00, hardback

Abstract of a review by William C. Thomas in *Themelios*, September 1980.

Hoekema's basic presupposition is that eschatology dominates and permeates the entire message of the Bible. He begins with the expectation of the coming redeemer in Genesis 3:15 and moves to the Old Testament passages that provide hope for the kingdom of God, the new covenant, the restoration of Israel, the outpouring of the Spirit, the day of the Lord, and the new heavens and the new earth. These promises would be fulfilled, in the mind of a believer, at some future time, variously called the "day of the Lord", the "latter days", the "coming days", or "at that time".

The New Testament gives evidence that this great eschatological event predicted in the Old Testament has happened—the redeemed has come in the person of Jesus Christ. But what was once seen as one movement is now seen to involve two stages: the present age and the age of the future. The blessings experienced by believers in the present age are the pledge and guarantee of greater blessings to come when Christ returns in power and glory.

We note the courtesy and respect with which the prophetic views of other interpreters of the Word are treated. An amillennialist, Hoekema acknowledges his appreciation, for example, of dispensational premillennialists for their adherence to the verbal inspiration and infallibility of the Bible, their vibrant hope of Christ's return, and their insistence that in every age salvation is by grace alone. He agrees with the dispensationalist "in looking for a future phase of the kingdom of God which will involve the earth, in which Christ will reign and God will be all in all". He then offers an eight-point critique of dispensationalism on the basis of his exegesis of Scripture, concluding that it must be rejected as a system of biblical interpretation which is not in harmony with Scripture.

This book will make a first-rate text for college and seminary students and is a storehouse of exegetical knowledge for students of the Word who base their views on divine revelation rather than on popular trends.

THE TWO HORIZONS
by Anthony C. Thiselton
(Exeter, Paternoster Press, 1980),
Pp.xx, 484, £15.00

Understanding the text is of crucial importance to those who hold a high view of Scripture, yet all too often they fail to recognise, let alone confront, the problems posed for understanding by an ancient text.

Anthony Thiselton is Senior Lecturer in Biblical Studies at the University of Sheffield and in this volume, which began as a Ph.D. thesis, he has tackled some of the most fundamental hermeneutical problems via the writings of Heidegger, Bultmann, Gadamer, Wittgenstein and others. The result is a work which is impressive in its size, scope and scholarship. We are offered a detailed and generally surefooted review of recent hermeneutical discussion, and an appreciation which should do much to establish the value of the writers discussed for those whose attitude towards contemporary and especially "Continental" philosophy and theology has hitherto been one of suspicion and scepticism. In addition, Thiselton attempts to apply the results of his investigation to certain ongoing theological concerns, in particular the understanding of "justification by faith".

The depth, detail and comprehensiveness of the book represent considerable achievements, but against them must be placed a tendency for the wood to get lost among the trees, stylistic clumsiness, and the irritating habit of producing a quotation for every occasion.

Thiselton argues that although the interpreter of Scripture cannot but address it in terms of some pre-understanding, he is not therefore at the mercy of his present cultural framework, for "the text itself progressively corrects and reshapes the interpreter's own questions and assumptions". Nevertheless, three broad questions confront the interpreter. The first concerns the relativizing potential of historical distance. The second concerns the role of theology and the Holy Spirit in interpretation and the third concerns the bearing of semantics and other language studies on hermeneutics.

Though much of the argument is (almost inevitably) heavy going, this is a book that repays the effort.

Theology and Culture

GOSPEL AND CULTURE
by John Stott and Robert T. Coote (eds.)
(Pasadena, CA: William Carrey Library, 1979),
Pp.464, paper, $6.95

This volume grows out of the Consultation on Theology and Culture convened by the Theology and Education Group of the Lausanne Committee for World Evangelization held in January 1978.

The monographs are subsumed under three main topics: Culture and the Bible; Culture, Evangelism and Conversion; and Culture, Churches and Ethics. These are preceded by a stimulating historical introduction by Stephen Neill. The text by the Willowbank Report concludes the book.

The report does not provide a consensus or a majority and minority report. For example, there is a significant divergence of opinion here concerning the limits of dynamic equivalent translation—both as a method and as a model. Charles H. Kraft, Charles R. Taber and C. René Padilla view it positively, almost as a kind of cross-cultural panacea. I. Howard Marshall, Bruce J. Nicholls and J. I. Packer (and Alfred C. Krass for entirely different reasons) raise some serious cautions. The Report draws attention to both positions but, while raising the question as to whether the dynamic equivalent model advocated here is dynamic enough as a guide for church formation in rapidly changing cultures, it fails to raise the question as to whether it is equivalent enough to preserve biblical Christianity in a pluralistic world.

Guidelines and suggestions for contextualization deemed to be both practical and biblical by most missionaries will probably be forthcoming from consultations and collaborative efforts where participants possess a greater uniformity in their theological presuppositions than was the case at Willowbank.

ROOTS OF WESTERN CULTURE: PAGAN, SECULAR AND CHRISTIAN OPTIONS
by Herman Dooyeweerd, *Translated by* John Kray
(Canada, Wedge Publishing Foundation, 1979, UK, Norfolk Press)
Pp.xii, 228, £7.95

Professor Herman Dooyeweerd of the Free University of Amsterdam is known mainly in Reformed circles as a philosopher and interpreter of culture, a disciple of Abraham Kuyper and the proponent (with Kuyper) of "sphere sovereignty. The present book is the most substantial example of Dooyeweerd's writing to appear in English after the *New Critique of*

Theoretical Thought. It consists of an unfinished series of periodical articles written immediately after the Second World War at a time when Dutch politics was dominated by a call for the submerging of party differences in a government of national unity.

Dooyeweerd resolutely opposed this, because in his view such a call ignores the aforementioned antithesis between the Anti-Revolutionary Calvinist political party and the rest. There follows a full-dress exposition of his views: the antithesis, the spheres, the relation of faith to politics and culture, the rejection of Greek dualism, the nature-grace dichotomy of the medievals and of much post-Reformation Protestant Christianity, and the evils of historicism.

Two or three areas where there are serious problems are worth indicating. One concerns the character of the "faith function". According to Dooyeweerd, this is pretheoretical, innate and ineradicable, and it informs all the various spheres, the various areas of human theoretical enquiry, in either a faithful or an apostate direction. The seat of this function is in the "heart".

A second area of doubt concerns "sphere sovereignty". A third doubt has to do with the relationship between the high-level analysis of culture that Dooyeweerd presents, and the actual political process, particularly the idea of Christian politics and of a Christian political party.

Despite these difficulties, the book represents a sound investment on the difficult question of the relationship of Christianity to the wider culture.

Mission and Evangelism

THE INTEGRITY OF MISSION THE INNER LIFE AND OUTREACH OF THE CHURCH
by Orlando Costas
(New York and San Francisco, Harper and Row, 1979)
Pp.xiv, 114, paper, $3.95

Abstract of a review by Harvie M. Conn in *International Bulletin*, January, 1981.

This slender volume represents to me a "pause that refreshes" in the controversy between mission and missions. Its goal, "to look at the Christian world mission as a unitary, indivisible whole, in the hope of generating a wider vision and stimulating a more effective missional involvement", is imposing but achieved.

The great contribution of the book is Costas's refusal to create dichotomies. He demands that we continue to "make *proclamation* a central aspect" of functioning Christianity (p.12). His chapter on "Mission as Disciple-Making" (pp.13–24) links him clearly and effectively with the evangelical tradition. But he is not afraid of denouncing our temptations to cheap grace, to "culture-Christianity".

In his discussion of the church-growth emphasis, Costas offers new perspectives. The final chapter on "Mission as Celebration" (pp.84–93) explores the correlation of mission and worship.

All of this Costas accomplishes in what is almost always a responsible use of Scripture. A sample of his helpful probing is his brief dialogue with Herman Ridderbos's treatment of the "poor" texts in the Gospels (pp.77–78).

I found myself wishing that Costas had made it clearer exactly with whose views he was interacting at times. But the message of the book is a powerful one and potentially of great help in the church's selfunderstanding. We look forward to the varied contributions of Dr. Costas as he settles into his new post on the faculty of Eastern Baptist Seminary in Philadelphia.

THE GOSPEL AND ISLAM: A 1978 COMPENDIUM
by Don M. McCurry (ed.)
(Monrovia, CA: MARC, 1979)
Pp.638, paper, $6

Abstract of a review by Norman E. Allison in *Missiology*, Vol. VIII No. 2, April 1980

Combining the work of 43 authors and hundreds of respondents, this volume focuses on the responsibility of the Christian church to rethink its role in reaching the Muslim world. Foundation papers written for the North American consultation on Muslim Evangelization held in Colorado Springs during October, 1978, served their purpose well. The key issues raised and a summary of responses, as well as the authors' rejoinders, are included with the original articles.

The book gives an excellent cross section of contemporary issues relating to the evangelization of the Muslim world. Many books written about Muslim evangelization tend to dwell heavily on theological issues to the exclusion of gut-level practical problems. Theological imput is here: J. Edwin Orr, *The Call of Spiritual Renewal*; Bruce J. Nicholls, *New Theological Approaches in Muslim Evangelization*; Charles R. Taber, *Contextualization: Indigenization and/or Transformation*; Arthur F. Glasser, *Power Encounter in Conversion from Islam*; Kenneth A. Cragg, *Islamic Theology: Limits and Bridges*; and others. But along with some new thinking in areas of theological concern, there is a gold mine of innovative concepts in strategy and method, many in the form of proposals, but others having been "field tested" in Muslim areas. One of the most thought-provoking was Bill Musk's, *Popular Islam: The Hunger of the Heart*. Charles Kraft's *Dynamic Equivalence Churches in Muslim Society* was much discussed at the Consultation.

WITNESS OF THE WORLD: THE CHRISTIAN MISSION IN THEOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVE
by David J. Bosch
(London: Marshall, Morgan and Scott, and Atlanta: John Knox Press, 1980),
Pp.277, £8.95

Abstract of a review by J. J. Kritzinger in *Missionalia*, April 1980.

It has been said that a basic need today is not so much for a good theology of mission, but a missionary theology (Jackson et. al.). Bosch incorporates recent contributions of Old and New Testament science as well as Systematic Theology and adds to it the thrust of the missionary dimension.

Part II, The Biblical Foundation of Mission, stands out as a contribution of lasting value. He refutes the usage of the Bible as a "mine", where the missiologists must sift the

missionary texts out of the "rubble" of non-missionary passages. Instead of building a theology on these missionary "gems", he poses the thesis that the Character of God, and therefore his whole revelation in the Scriptures, is missionary. He gives four examples of how this basic thesis can be worked out. It succeeds in whetting the appetite for a full scale treatment. The four themes are; (i) the compassion of God, (ii) God and history, (iii) Martyria in Old and New Testaments, and (iv) God's mission.

The third part on The Theology of Mission through the Ages (110 pages) attempts a summary of how the theological and biblical foundation motive and goal of mission has been seen historically. In the process he shows how the church always moved in the tension between "movement" and "institution", or "Spirit" and "office", how the church developed from its earliest beginnings, through the Constantinian and Vasco Da Gama eras to our modern confusion—and how all this influenced the theology of mission leaders.

In his fourth part, Towards a Theology of Mission, he indicates some guidelines for the future. The ecumenical evangelical controversy is dealt with. Only by seeing the church in its proper position in the world and for the world, without being of the world, can the polarization be overcome. "Only as community which is simultaneously distinguishable from and in solidarity with the world, can the church be missionary". (p.222)

David J. Bosch is Professor of Missions at the University of South Africa, Pretoria.

Ethics and Society

PORNOGRAPHY: A CHRISTIAN CRITIQUE
by John H. Court
(Inter-Varsity Press, 1980)
Pp.96, paper, $2.95

Abstract of a review in *Christian Bookshelf*, September 1980.

Pornography, as a modern-day social phenomenon, in spite of all the controversy surrounding it, is not only here, it is flourishing. So, what's new about pornography? What's new, according to Professor Court, is that today pornography claims many cultured (so-called) and socially eminent advocates, who claim that pornography does no harm, that pornography is good for people, that pornography should remain an individual matter, and that to censor pornography would be quite immoral.

In this short, but brilliant study, John Court, who is Professor of Psychology at the Flinders University, Australia, presents the arguments which are commonly ventilated to endorse pornography. He evaluates scientific evidences, discusses pyschological findings, and analyzes social implications. And he offers an informed and practical Christian response to this pressing and morally destructive social virus. He forcefully argues that pornography "exploits and dehumanizes sex, so that human beings are treated as things and women in particular as sex objects".

It is imperative that Christians recognize this spreading social force before it destroys society and its moral codes completely. Professor Court challenges Christians to see the

imminent danger in this evil phenomenon and to take a positive stand against it. He implores them, that, as Christians, they must demonstrate, by word, act, and manner of life, their opposition to the prevailing destructive impact of pornography.

This Evangelical Theological Monograph No. 5 in the Outreach and Identity series is published by the WEF Theological Commission, Editor Klaus Bockmuehl.

"The late Director of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, J. Edgar Hoover stated, 'I believe that pornography is the major source of sex violence' ". *Christian News*, August 4–5, 1980.

GOD'S PEOPLE IN GOD'S WORLD: BIBLICAL MOTIVES FOR SOCIAL INVOLVEMENT
by John Gladwin
(IVP, 1979),
Pp. 191, £2.95

Abstract of a review by Simon Webley in *Churchman*, Vol. 94, No. 3, 1980.

This volume is about biblical motives of convinced Christians for social involvement. The author, who is the Director of the Shaftesbury Project, England, starts by showing that this subject is not new in Protestant thinking. He goes on to suggest that some evangelical theology has too often ignored reality and, that some courses of action suggested have proved unworkable. When this happens, he argues, the theology which explains the belief is wrong!

The following three chapters ground the reader in the doctrines of creation, redemption and man. He states that "the tragedy of so much of our Christian life today is the wretched way in which we have divorced the truths of Christ from their power in human life". A chapter on the biblical meaning of the world, and another on corruption (particularly in politics), set the scene for the more complex part of the book, that on the kingdom and the state, and their relationship with the church.

This book is a milestone in biblical thinking about Christian living in the community. It is a book that Christians in positions of leadership can confidently recommend to younger Christians who are concerned about being involved in a secular society.

EARTHKEEPING, CHRISTIAN STEWARDSHIP OF NATURAL RESOURCES
Edited by Loren Wilkinson
(Grand Rapids, Eerdmans, 1980),
Pp.317, $10.95

Abstract of a review by Paul G. Schrotenboer in *RES News Exchange* April 7, 1981.

This book is the result of a year's study by the fellows of the Calvin Center for Christian Scholarship at Calvin College. It succeeds admirably in describing the state of the planet, the historical roots of the current concern to conserve natural resources, the meaning and scope of stewardship and the challenge we face as would-be stewards of God's creation. The book is geared to the second-year college level. It is written in a lucid style and largely avoids technical language. A large number of graphs and a few cartoons elucidate or emphasize salient points.

This is not an ordinary book on conservation. It provides an historical perspective of humankind's earthkeeping, considering i.a. the contribution of the Greeks, the influence of

Christianity, the medieval view of history, the scientific revolution, and the North American experience. One can find in *Earthkeeping* philosophy, theology, economics, and good plain sense.

Pastoral Ministry

NEW WAYS TO WORSHIP AND PRAYERS FOR SUNDAY SERVICES
Compiled on behalf of The Church of Scotland Committee on Public Worship and Aids to Devotion
(Edinburgh, The Saint Andrew Press)
Pp. 125 and 136, £1.75 and £2.50

Reviewed by Kathleen Nicholls.

Imagination, an attribute of our Creator-God, is not much in evidence in most evangelical churches. The lives of the worshippers change at a startling rate, but the pattern of worship in the churches remains static—an unhealthy situation. For those ministers and elders concerned to bring variety and flexibility in their churches, these two books have gathered together many ideas.

"From the gallery a voice rings out during the reading of a lesson, not in protest but in participation. A buzz of prayer ascends from the pews as neighbours share in thanksgiving for what the week has brought. A young mother gives the children's address. The prophetic voice is heard in a contemporary poem."

The second part of *New Ways to Worship* contains outlines of complete services. Chapter four in the first part has suggestions for different parts of a service—ideas for beginning worship, reading the Word, preaching the Word, the prayers, the offering, the "intimations", the Sacrament, the hymns and the ending.

Prayers for Sunday Services follow the order of the *Book of Common Order* (1979) reflecting "the style and idiom of their different contributors". The Committee has not attempted to blaze any new trails, but to "provide a quarry from which materials may be drawn by those who wish to stand in the main stream of the Church's tradition of worship". They have certainly succeeded. "Prayers for Sixteen Services" is a gold mine rather than a quarry. The prayers for special events in the Church's year are reverent, fresh and full of the hope and solemnity of our faith. This reviewer commends both books in the hope that they will help to make our worship "a living reality reflecting the times in which we live".

THE GOLDEN COW: MATERIALISM IN THE TWENTIETH CENTURY CHURCH
by John White
(Downers Grove, Inter-Varsity, 1979),
Pp. 175, paper, $3.50

Abstract of a review by Robert W. Wall in *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society*, September 1980.

In writing *The Golden Cow* White addresses the problem of materialism (or perhaps secularism) as it encroaches upon the Bible mandates of the Church. As a keen and witty observer of human ecclesiastical behaviour, White concludes that secular desires and ambitions have indeed replaced the sacred. Religion has become big business. Evangelism has become a game of numbers instead of a reverent mission of redemption. The games churches play have evoked an apathetic response to those actions and toward those needs that have been proclaimed necessary by both Scripture and tradition.

However timely this book is, it will surely have its critics. More interaction with Wallis or Sider or Ellul would have made White's biblical response more insightful and precise. Future discussions must take seriously the theological-biblical agenda against materialism.

I was somewhat disappointed that White, who is a psychiatrist, did not deal more fully with the psychical and with the destruction to personal relationships caused by a materialistic orientation. Yet the book succeeds overall. It succeeds primarily because it draws our attention to those very things in our life of faith that once destroyed Israel's. It succeeds because it begins to offer evangelicals a grid for more sophisticated theological discussions.

Theological and Church Education

EVANGELICAL THEOLOGICAL EDUCATION IN THE 1980S: A GLOBAL PERSPECTIVE
Edited by Paul Bowers
(International Council of Accrediting Agencies—limited edition. Available from Dr. Paul Bowers, P.O. Box 49332, Nairobi, Kenya),
Pp. 60, $1.50

Reviewed by Kathleen Nicholls.

March 17–20 1980 an international consultation on evangelical theological education was held in England under the auspices of the Theological Commission of the World Evangelical Fellowship. In an effort to generate a "comprehensive, critical review of the present state and future prospects of evangelical theological education" the representation was global. Participants were chosen for their contribution to evangelical theological education at an international level. Each of the existing major regional associations for evangelical theological schools was represented. This consultation was the occasion for the formation of the International Council of Accrediting Agencies.

Paul Bowers writes in the Preface to the monograph:

> Bruce Nicholls' paper, given as the opening address of the consultation, set the stage for everything to follow by a vivid evocation of the rapid change which awaits us in the 1980s, and the challenges this poses to theological education. The pragmatic centrepiece of the consultation was Bong Ro's paper, outlining concrete proposals for international co-operation in evangelical theological education. The consultation concluded with two papers facing towards the future. Lois McKinney and Wilson Chow challenged theological educators and accredited executives, in the midst of and by the means of the newly born co-operative

endeavors, vigorously to promote programmes of theological education that will be more directly orientated upon the needs of the church, more culturally contextual, and more holistic and integrated.

It is to be hoped that the four papers in this global perspective together with other material presented at the Consultation, will eventually be made available in permanent book form. Stimulus is needed in the improvement of theological education that the desire for (to quote Wilson Chow) "the academic, spiritual and practical formation of leadership in one whole" may be achieved.

Journal Information
Publications Referred to in This Issue

Bibliotheca Sacra
Published by Dallas Theological Seminary, 3909 Swiss Avenue, Dallas, Texas 75204, USA. Subscriptions to Subscription Secretary, above address. Rates: $6.00 per year; $6.50 foreign (4 issues)

Christian Bookshelf
Published by Christian Bookshelf, P.O. Box 602, Zion, Illinois 60099, USA. (Monthly)

Churchman
Published by Church Society (Anglican), Whitefield House, 186 Kennington Park Road, London, SE11 4BT, UK. Rates: £6.50 a year (4 issues)

Evangelical Missions Quarterly
Published by Evangelical Missions Service Inc., 25W560 Geneva Road, Box 794, Wheaton, Illinois 60187, USA. Rates: $7 a year (4 issues); 3 years, $20.

International Bulletin
Published by Overseas Ministries Centre, P.O. Box 1308-E Fort Lee, N.J. 07024, USA. Rates: $9.00 a year (4 issues)

Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society
Published by the Evangelical Theological Society, 5422 Clinton Boulevard, Jackson, Mississippi 39209, USA. Rates: $12.00 a year (4 issues)

Missiology: An International Review
1605 East Elizabeth Street, Pasadena, California 91030, USA. Rates: $10.00 a year (4 issues)

Missionalia
Published by the South African Missiological Society, 31, 14th Street, Menlo Park, 0081, Pretoria, South Africa. Rates: R6.00 a year (3 issues)

Perception
Published by the Association of Evangelicals of Africa and Madagascar, P.O. Box 49332, Nairobi, Kenya.

Reformed Theological Review
Box 2587W, Elizabeth Street, P.O. Melbourne, Vic. 3001, Australia. Rates: $5.40 a year (3 issues)

RES News Exchange
Published by Reformed Ecumenical Synod, 1677 Gentian Drive SE, Grand Rapids, Michigan, USA.

Shaftsbury Project
8 Oxford Street, Nottingham NG1 5BH, England.

Themelios
Published by the British Theological Students Fellowship and the International Fellowship of Evangelical Students, 10 College Road, Harrow, HA1 1BE, Middlesex, England. Rates: £2.00 or $4.50 a year (3 issues)

Zadok Centre News
13 Edgar Street, Ainslie, ACT 2602, Australia. Published 5 times a year.