

Theme:
Global Trends

Contents

Editorial	99
Dynamics and Directions of World Evangelical Theology for the 21st Century <i>David Parker</i>	100
On Women and Men Working together in the Church <i>Thomas C. Oden</i>	119
The Church's Responsibility within the East African Context <i>Robert Lang'at</i>	136
Philippine Tongues of Fire? Latin American Pentecostalism and the Future of Filipino Christianity <i>George W. Harper</i>	153
Book Reviews	181

THE EVANGELICAL REVIEW OF THEOLOGY/VOLUME 26/No. 2/APRIL 2002

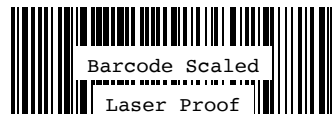
Evangelical Review of Theology

Volume 26
No. 2
April 2002

GLOBAL TRENDS

WORLD EVANGELICAL ALLIANCE
Theological Commission


paternoster
periodicals



0144-8153(200204)26:2;1-S



Evangelical Review of Theology

EDITOR: DAVID PARKER

Volume 26 • Number 2 • April 2002

*Articles and book reviews original and
selected from publications worldwide for
an international readership for the purpose
of discerning the obedience of faith*



Published by
PATERNOSTER PERIODICALS

for
**WORLD EVANGELICAL
ALLIANCE**
Theological Commission

ISSN: 0144-8153

Volume 26 No. 2 April 2002

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Editor

David Parker

Committee

The Executive Committee of the WEA Theological Commission
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Manuscripts, reports and communications

should be addressed to the Editor and sent to Dr David Parker,
17 Disraeli St, Indooroopilly, 4068, Qld, Australia

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

Please send clear copies of details to the above address.

Email enquiries welcome: Parker_david@compuserve.com

*Typeset by Profile, Culmdale, Rewe, Exeter, Devon EX5 4ES
and Printed in Great Britain for Paternoster Periodicals,
PO Box 300, Carlisle, Cumbria CA3 0QS
by Polestar Wheatons Ltd., Exeter, Devon.*

Editorial

Whatever may be the resolution of the 'war on terror' being waged (at the time of writing) in the wake of the Sept 11, 2001 events in New York and Washington, the context for global theology is now quite different from before.

In this new climate of international relationships in which religion has been thrust to the forefront, the initial events raised anew the question of our approach to justice and forgiveness at a national level and in the context of national policies and cultural pride. This is an issue which has many pastoral implications as well. Closely linked to it is the Christian ministry of reconciliation and our attitudes towards people of other faiths and cultures. Here then is a call to radical mission in the name of the God of love and sacrifice.

We have also been forced us to think once again about the reality of evil and the ease with which personal thoughts can turn to revenge and even hatred. This, no doubt, reveals our sense of insecurity in a world that is suddenly so uncertain, but we need to pay more attention to the biblical witness which urges us to place our confidence in the sovereign God alone. Even more than that, we need to remember that we have a saving, redeeming God who works in the most unlikely circumstances.

The shock of the events on Sept 11 and their aftermath, as well as forces surrounding them, have reminded us again how precious is each person made in the image of

God. In difficult circumstances, we are called to stand with the lowly and marginalized in the name of Christ over against the loud voices that seek other ways to solve the problems of the world.

So these age-old themes which are of deep concern to evangelicals—sovereignty and judgement, grace and forgiveness, sin and salvation, humility and discipleship, mission and the God of love—are once again central to our thinking.

Thus it is appropriate to open this issue of our journal with a review of trends in global evangelical theology and then to pass on to some detailed studies drawn from around the world. Dr Thomas Oden sums up his thinking on the place and role of women and men together in the church, a practical issue which raises fundamental theological considerations. Dr Robert Lang'at of Kenya calls our attention once more to the responsibilities of the church in evangelism, compassion and social justice. Finally, Dr George W. Harper is interested in trends in church growth and provides a meticulous analysis of the situation in the Philippines set against the background of trends in Latin America

Together these papers highlight both local and global issues which typify our call to theological reflection that is both honest to God and potent in its application to our human context.

David Parker, Editor.

Dynamics and Directions of World Evangelical Theology for the 21st Century

David Parker

Keywords: Salvation, hermeneutics, unity, social responsibility, globalisation, spirituality, fellowship, reform, scholarship

1. Introduction

I compliment the Korea Evangelical Theological Society on its desire to include the global perspective in this conference. The Korean church is well known for its global missions perspective and so it is natural for you to have this topic on your program. It is a delight for me too to participate in this way, not only because of my own personal interest, but also because of the purpose of *Evangelical Review of Theology* to be a forum and channel for global evangelical theology. I think this is a unique perspective in the field of theological journals. Many other fine journals are, of course, devoted to

particular regions, confessions or denominations, schools or areas of theological interest. But our special interest is to serve the international evangelical community by publishing quality articles and book reviews (both original and re-published) which foster global perspectives and interchange.

It is more obvious than ever that Christianity as a whole is truly a global phenomenon—that is, it is ‘catholic’ or ‘universal’—already in these days we are able to experience something of the perspective of the book of Revelation when it speaks of ‘every tribe and tongue and people and nation’ who share in the fellowship of Christ our Lord. For more than two hundred years now, Protestant Christians have been able to have something of this global perspective—ever since William Carey read the journals of English explorer, Captain James Cook (whom we honour in Australia), and as a result, commenced the first major effort in the modern period to express a world missionary vision in practical

Dr David Parker is Editor of *Evangelical Review of Theology*. He is an Adjunct Lecturer at Queensland Baptist College of Ministries and Bible College of Queensland in Brisbane Australia in Theology and New Testament, and holds degrees from the University of Queensland and the University of London. This is a slightly edited version of a paper delivered at the Korea Evangelical Theological Society International Conference on ‘Evangelical Theology for 21st Century’ held at SungKyun University, Anyang City, Korea, October 25-27th, 2001.

terms. Before Carey's time, the faith had reached many countries, although sometimes at the edge of sword and in company with colonialists and merchants. In many cases, these links were too close for safety, and this is still a continuing problem for us today.

But now more than ever we do not have to travel or look at world Christianity from a foreign missions perspective. With the advent of globalisation, mass communication, travel and migration, the many splendoured fabric of the Christian family (Eph. 3:10; 1 Pet. 4:10) is close at hand geographically and in terms of information and relationships—we are urged to 'think globally, act locally'. We need only to consider the large numbers of people from various parts of the world now resident in other locations, and the fact that there are now thriving churches based on these immigrant communities. For example, in the state of New South Wales in Australia, there are about 300 Baptist Churches but there are fifty churches and fellowships based on migrant communities representing 23 different languages—Korean is the largest single group. The same kind of situation can be found in many other areas of the world of course, especially North America and the United Kingdom.

Within the broader picture of global Christianity, evangelicals are also widespread, numerous and varied. This is true of their evangelism, missions, church planting and of their theological understandings

There is no doubt that the church is on the move globally, especially in

the developing world, which contrasts strongly with the situation in western European countries where traditional Christianity is in decline. Yet this rapidly growing church needs to be matured and deepened to strengthen it and to ensure it does not make the same mistakes as the West.¹ It also needs to be more indigenised to refute claims that it is only a western or colonial religion. At the recent Triennial Assembly of the Asian Theological Association held in Malaysia August 7-10, 2001, the chairman, Dr Sang-bok David Kim, emphasized this point by saying it was not a post-Christian situation in Asia but pre-Christian, and that while much had already been done for the kingdom of God, much more remained to be done in the future.

My task is to bring some perspective on this global scene, both past and present, and to think about the future trends. I can do so only from my own particular perspective² and within the very limited range of my knowledge—the amount and extent of activity makes it difficult for anybody to have much more than a partial view of the whole. Yet, despite this, it is impossible for theologians today to carry out their tasks authentically without a global perspective. We are in fact much closer to the early church than we imagine, both in its

¹ Wonsuk Ma, 'Mission: nine hurdles for Asian Churches', *Journal of Asian Mission*, 2/1 (2000), pp. 103-124

² cf William A. Dyrness, *Emerging Voices in Global Christian Theology* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1994); William A. Dyrness, *Learning about Theology from the Third World* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Academic, 1990)

multi-cultural context and its intimacy of fellowship; even though the distances are great and the cultural divides significant, it is possible through the benefit of communication to be aware of the rest of the Christian world as if it were as close as it was in the days of the apostle Paul.³

2. Evangelical Issues

In this context it is interesting to reflect on issues of concern to evangelical theologians in the recent past. For example, in the 25 volumes of *Evangelical Review of Theology* which we are just completing this month, some of the most prominent topics have been: culture, contextualisation and the reporting of regional theologies; salvation, pluralism and dialogue; doing theology and theological education; the church, Scripture, hermeneutics and tradition; women, ministry and gender issues; and social justice, poverty and the environment. Since 1984 the latter area has been taken up strongly by the journal of the Oxford Centre for Mission Studies, *Transformation*, which had its original roots in the Theological Commission. Other important concerns which this journal has discussed include poverty, environment, globalisation and the Jubilee 2000 call, population, economics, work and employment; church and state, political praxis and philosophy in a Christian perspective; refugees, relief and develop-

ment; urban issues, feminism and power; nuclear issues and peace; and matters of critical concern in particular areas of the world including South Africa, and Latin and Central America. Evangelism itself and its relation to social justice has also been on the agenda.

The WEF Theological Commission has during the last twenty-five years focused on a range of topics in its consultations, including, Defending and Confirming the Gospel, Nature and Mission of the Church, Jesus Christ our Redeemer and Liberator, The Unique Christ in our Pluralistic World, and Faith and Hope for the Future. (<http://www.world-evangelical.org/theology.html>)

In the North American scene, a prominent theme has been culture wars involving a large number of issues such as gender, sexuality, pro-life, science, peace, and race; other interests have included forms of spirituality (both innovative and traditional), restructuring and refocusing the church to reach Busters, Gen-X and other such groups, pluralism, inter-church relations, the achievements of (American) cross-cultural mission, eschatology (exacerbated briefly by the advent of the new millennium), tele-evangelists and the charismatic/Pentecostal movement.

This period was the era of Liberation Theology, the inerrancy controversy, the Lausanne movement and its congresses, with the important Covenant of 1974. The Pentecostal and Charismatic movements have stepped into the mainstream during this period, and closely associated with this has been the rise of the

³ of Robert Webber, *Ancient-Future Faith: Rethinking Evangelicalism for a Postmodern World* (Grand Rapids: Baker Bridgepoint, 1999)

mega-church and the wholesale restructuring of the institutions of the church, its leadership and its worship; in many cases, far-reaching changes have also taken place in cross-cultural missions from the sending perspective, partially in response to the rapid growth and relative independence of national churches. Some of these churches have now begun to become more indigenised, which means clarifying their own history and colonial heritage, and also tackling some of their own local problems such as ancestor worship and the spirit world, nation building and public ethics, and church nurture and leadership training.

The changes and developments in the global context as well as the growing maturation of evangelical scholarship have both resulted in profound and far reaching shifts in evangelical thought and attitudes. This demonstrates the diversity and vitality of evangelicalism as it responds vigorously to the contemporary issues. However, this diversity and change is too great for some who believe that in the rush to be relevant, not enough of the foundational elements of evangelicalism are being conserved, and that there is too little united focus on essentials. While there is a lamentable lack of local variety in some areas, due to the effects of evangelical globalisation in the hands of major book publishers, to take but one example, there is at the practical level the lack of uniformity which can sometimes be uncomfortable—whether it be the use of Bible versions, the songs used in worship, or the customs and

habits related to personal and social behaviour.

However, the feeling that there is a lack of uniformity and a loss of commonly held beliefs only opens up the question of whether there may be a need to identify a new more basic and valid centre of unity deriving from the fundamental identity of the movement. That is, the claim that evangelicalism is in danger of losing its roots and identity due to recent changes touches on the role of the movement and its very reason for existence.

We shall come back to this question again later, but in the meantime, we may state in defence that some of the observable changes at least arise from the genuine commitment to the question of on-going relevance in a world which is itself rapidly changing as well. A glance at the history of the church shows that the forms, expressions and conceptualisations of the Christian faith have never been static. In fact, they were never meant to be, at least if we take seriously the metaphors used by Jesus and throughout the New Testament about growth, development and the pilgrim nature of a body of God's people on the move. Great diversity and rapid expansion and growth in many different cultures of the world make it hard, indeed impossible and perhaps unwise, to give any absolute judgements on these matters, but we can at least offer some impressions in the hope that they may stimulate deeper reflection and better understanding.

3. Some Classic Concerns

Some of the battles that engaged our

attention in earlier times are still with us, at least in some areas. These include the inerrancy and infallibility of Scripture; social justice and the gospel; varieties of eschatology; the place of critical scholarship; spiritual gifts and baptism in the Spirit; the role and place of women in the church and ministry; contextualisation and mission; and separatism and Christian unity. Some, like eschatology, have received renewed interest—if only temporary—with the change of the millennium and the September 11 attacks on the World Trade Centre in New York—and others seem to persist despite new contexts, as revealed in the article 'Don't hate me because I'm an Arminian'.⁴

Thankfully though, many are no longer the hindrance they once were to our life and work, because they have been resolved by adjustments to thinking, clarification of misunderstandings or some kind of pragmatic working arrangements that allow the contending parties to move on positively. In some cases, the old battles have lost their point because it has become necessary to consider them in a new light brought on by changing contexts and the emergence of other related issues. For example, questions of hermeneutics and the entire issue of how the Bible is used have overtaken the inerrancy debates. Similarly, great issues of human survival related to the abuse of our ecological resources have made it obligatory for even conservative Christians to give serious

thought to the stewardship of our environment as the gift of our Creator God.

This does not mean of course that there are not still positions that need to be defended. Resurgent world religions make mission and beliefs about salvation and the uniqueness of Christ key areas of concern, while ordinary Christians in the now multi-ethnic urban areas of the West must come to practical terms with pluralism in their own communities. Furthermore, at regional, national and international levels, the economic and political implications of these developments must also be taken into account, with questions of religious freedom being a key concern. The revival of local religions, especially in their more assertive forms, are having a significant impact on the attitudes and life of Christian communities in many parts of the world.

In the West and areas affected by it, the practical atheism of secular materialism and the vagaries of post-modern culture are making their mark, both at the conceptual level affecting theology and ethics, and at the practical level of evangelism, community involvement and daily Christian living.

Then in matters of theology and church life, liberalism which places reason and relevance above the authority of the Word of God, though mostly a spent force, may still be found. Denials of the resurrection especially when made by a bishop or other prominent church leader, calls to take a modern approach to the Bible or to update the church and its worship are sure to attract the atten-

⁴ *Christianity Today* (ChrT) 6 Sept 1999 pp. 87-94

tion of the media. There is considerable hope, however, that these old-style liberals whose appeal is often to the popular audience, will be seen in a more balanced perspective as 'The New Theologians' (to use a term from a recent issue of *Christianity Today*⁵) and church leaders who have a more positive approach to the faith take a higher profile. Although for some of them it is true that 'the word "evangelical" makes academics nervous', it is also true that a new climate exists in many areas which has created 'open space' and that 'the intellectual world is no longer dominated by a liberal-conservative polarity'.

Evangelicals in the West are increasingly comfortable in moving into this 'space'. Their counterparts from developing countries are emerging with high quality theological education, and their character and faith tested and tried in the fires of experience to develop credible and impressive post-colonial indigenised expressions of the age-old gospel. There are also others from around the world whose Christian experience has been affected strongly by the impact of the Spirit in recent times through the rapid expansion and renewal of the church. Some are recent converts from previously unchurched backgrounds who therefore sit loosely to the traditional evangelical or general ecclesiastical culture. Notice must also be taken of the 'enormous

demographic transformation' in the Christian population from western to eastern and southern hemispheres and the overall result is seen as a massive change in the global face of Christianity, as it turns into a 'faith without borders'.⁶ Just one example of the changing balance can be seen in the way non-western bishops dramatically re-directed the decisions of the 1998 Lambeth Conference of the Anglican Church in a far more conservative direction on some social issues than had been expected.

Although it is dangerous to generalise too much, it is obvious from events like the WEF General Assembly (May 2001, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia) that this globalised faith has certain characteristics. One of the most prominent is a holistic appreciation of the Christian faith, even what might be called 'a positive worldliness' that pays attention to political involvement and nation building, the expression of faith in culture, the arts and public life; this is a faith that is comfortable with areas such as ecology, economics, ethical behaviour and social transformation. As Jun Vencer, recently retired International Director of WEF, has said, 'There are some negatives to this [involvement in public life], of course, but by and large, it doesn't change the fact that they are picking up a biblical agenda to be truly evangelical and take, as we say, the whole gospel to the whole world.'⁷

If there is a positive dynamic regarding public life, there is also a

⁵ 9 Feb 1999 featuring Kevin Vanhoozer, N.T. Wright, Richard Hays, Ellen Charry and Miroslav Volf

⁶ *ChrT* 19 May 1997, p. 39

⁷ *ChrT* 19 May 1997, p. 45

corresponding confidence in mission. The rapid growth of the church in non-western areas is one clear example of this, but we can also notice the transformation of the traditional missionary culture with 'tent-making', short-term and third-world missions, re-structuring of older organizations and the creative use of all kinds of new technologies and opportunities. Church planting and innovative efforts of worship, witness and service in many older established Christian areas are also encouraging signs even if they have not yet restored the church to its former strength.

There is also a fresh approach to the church, emphasizing community, spirituality and compassionate ministry in the world. In some cases, this may be seen as a negative factor, arising out of a weak or almost non-existent ecclesiology, but overall, it is a serious response to mission in a post-Constantinian context, often backed up by careful thinking and solid scholarship.

Although the evangelical wing of the church globally can marshal high quality scholarship, experienced practitioners of ministry and extraordinary examples of sacrificial faith which give it great hope for the future, yet there are areas of genuine concern that need to be addressed.

4. Some Areas of Continuing Concern

a) Scripture

Fundamental for our faith is a sound and authentic approach to Scripture. Evangelical scholars can easily take

their place in the academic world in areas such as exegesis and backgrounds, even if their basic assumptions and perspectives about biblical authority and hermeneutics are not always accepted. Opinions such as the following are sometimes found in mainstream scholarship: 'The various papers are necessarily confined to a rather narrow theological spectrum and unlikely to appeal to those readers not sharing evangelical convictions'⁸ or 'It collects recent scholarly opinions and debates about Mark, supports those that cohere with a conservative perspective, but rejects more innovative readings'.⁹

This often patronising approach is not a reason for evangelicals to abandon their basic convictions about Scripture as the Word of God, but it is a reminder of the gap that continues to exist between evangelicals and the mainstream. This has been extended by the significant revolution in biblical interpretation that has taken place in recent times with the advent of the new literary and sociological criticism. Evangelical scholars are well aware of the challenge, and need skill in handling it.¹⁰

Furthermore, they need wisdom in

⁸ Review of *The Land of Promise* (IVP/Apollos, 2000) in *Expository Times* July 2001 112/10, p. 350

⁹ Review of Ben Witherington III, *The Gospel of Mark: a Socio-Rhetorical Commentary* (Eerdmans, 2001) in *Expository Times* Aug 2000 112/11, p. 390

¹⁰ Gordon J. Thomas, 'Telling a Hawk from a Handsaw? An evangelical response to the new literary criticism'. *Evangelical Quarterly*, 71/1 Jan 1999, pp. 37-50; Christopher J.H. Wright, 'Interpreting the Bible among the world religions', *Themelios*, 25/3 June 2000, pp. 35-54

showing how their insights make a definite and positive contribution to the actual exegesis and exposition of the text in practical pastoral settings. One ambitious attempt to do this is the new *Asia Bible Commentary* series, edited by Dr Bruce Nicholls and launched at the Triennial Assembly of the Asia Theological Association in Malaysia in August 2001.¹¹ According to Dr Nicholls, 'Our mandate is to produce commentaries of 125-300 pages that are exegetically faithful to the whole of Scripture, theologically and missiological contextualised in the plurality of cultures of Asia and are pastorally oriented to the needs of the churches.'¹² Thus this project takes full account of the 'Globalization of Hermeneutics' which along with the globalised approach to theology mentioned above is an essential part of our work today.¹³

The temptation is to use the insights of scholarship selectively, and thus to lose authenticity both as scholars and as Christians. This also separates academia and the church, thereby contradicting the basic integrity of heart and mind, and denying both church and academia

the benefits of mutual enrichment.¹⁴ This problem may be the result of lack of courage on the part of our leaders who are not prepared to take the sometimes controversial position that is needed in reforming the church. However it may be a more fundamental problem—as David Wells has pointed out, there is in fact 'no place for truth' in a postmodern church or world.¹⁵

Whatever may be the final analysis, the importance of theological education and pastoral training for moulding the life of the church and its leadership in the current context cannot be underemphasized. While 'the issue of doctrinal integrity is paramount for a theological seminary'¹⁶ it is obvious that a much more comprehensive approach is needed for pastoral training and indeed for the life of the church generally, which leads us to the consideration of spirituality.

b) *Spirituality*

A second area of concern is spirituality, including worship, nurture and discipleship. It is striking how much interest evangelicals are now taking

¹¹ The first two volumes in the series are *The Gospel according to St John* by Dr Jey Kaanagaraj and Rev. Ian Kemp, and *Song of Songs* by Dr Andrew Hwang and Rev. Samuel Goh. Details can be obtained from the General Secretary, Derek Tan (DerekTan@trinity.org.sg)

¹² Report on the Asia Bible Commentary project to the Triennial Assembly, Asia Theological Association, August 2001.

¹³ See Craig Blomberg's article of this title in *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society* (JETS), 38/4 Dec 1995, pp. 581-593

¹⁴ Moises Silva, 'Can two walk together unless they be agreed?' JETS 41/1 Mar 98, pp. 3-16, especially p. 11f Silva warns against the danger of 'scholars who in one way or another identify themselves as conservative know that they have abandoned distinctive evangelical principles and are simply not very honest about it.' Even more 'alarming', he says, are those who are 'blissfully unaware of having adopted approaches or positions that conflict with their religious convictions at a fundamental level'.

¹⁵ David F. Wells, *No Place for Truth, or what ever happened to Evangelical Theology?* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1993)

¹⁶ Quoting a slogan used in a recent advertisement in *Christianity Today* 2 Apr 2001

in traditional types of spirituality and the number of evangelicals taking the journey to Iona, Canterbury, Istanbul or Rome, apparently in search of a more satisfying expression of devotion than they have found in their own classic evangelical forms.¹⁷ The tensions that have existed between evangelicalism and Charismatics and Pentecostalism is as much a matter of spirituality as it is of exegesis and theology. Thus Stanley J. Grenz can say, 'Fundamentally, I believe, the evangelical understanding of what it means to be a Christian focuses on a distinct spirituality.'¹⁸ The revolution in worship in many western churches is another example of the same quest for spiritual reality.

While there could be considerable discussion about the secondary matters of styles of music, forms of liturgy and prayer and aesthetics, temperament and cultural context, perhaps Dr Iain Provan¹⁹ of Regent College Vancouver points us in the right direction in his Bible Study on Genesis chap 1 and 2 at the WEF General Assembly in May 2001 when he asked the question, 'What are we redeemed for?' He said:

¹⁷ See, for example, Robert W. Webber, *Evangelicals on the Canterbury Trail*, (Waco: Word, 1985), and Robert Webber, *Ancient-Future Faith: Rethinking Evangelicalism for a Postmodern World*, (Grand Rapids: Baker Bridgepoint: 1999)

¹⁸ Stanley J. Grenz., *Revisioning Evangelical Theology: a Fresh Agenda for the 21st Century* (Downers Grove: Intervarsity Press, 1993; cf David Parker, 'Evangelical spirituality reviewed', *Evangelical Review of Theology* (ERT) 16/2, April 1992, pp. 152-166)

¹⁹ 'Creation and Holistic Ministry: A Study of Genesis 1:1 to 2:3' by Iain Provan, *ERT* 25/4 Oct 2001, pp. 292-303

We all know, or we think that we do, what it is that we are redeemed from; but what are we redeemed for?... It is, in my experience, a question that many modern Christians find it difficult to answer. Indeed, they have not really asked it; for the Christian discipling that they have received has emphasised only redemption *from* something, and that is how they have come to conceive of the Christian life overall. They have a fairly good idea, therefore, about what they are *against*; but they are vague to the point of incapacitation when asked what it is that they are *for*.... All of this, I suggest, is related to (although not exhaustively explained by) a fundamental theological problem; that such Christians ... possess no sufficiently robust idea of creation, with which to undergird and explain their idea of redemption... . Holistic Christians they therefore cannot be. Holistic ministry they therefore cannot practice, for they have not even conceived, yet, of its possibility...

In answering this question, Dr Provan pointed to the divine image, conferred on humankind and lost, but restored in Christ, as the key to our identity and vocation.

What are we redeemed to be? Bearers of the divine image in every aspect of our lives. What are we redeemed to *do*? To live out that reality with integrity and joy, doing whatever our hand finds to do in particular instances, at particular times, and in particular places.

If we follow through on this line of approach, we will find a focus and empowerment that will enable us to move on towards a positive goal and also be able to cope with the diversity that is a normal part of the kingdom.

c) Church unity

For years the slogan of the World Evangelical Fellowship was 'Spiritual Unity in Action'. Although it almost sounds like a contradiction in terms,

it is an effective way to sum up the attitude of many evangelicals to the issue of Christian unity—there is a profound unity ultimately created by the Spirit (Eph. 4:3; 2 Cor. 13:14) in which we are to exist as Christians and which we are to express in our relationships, ministries and activities. While this is a sound approach, it is possible to use it as an excuse not to face the more difficult questions of visible unity, and worse, to use it as a shield to hide selfish and unchristian efforts of empire building or independence. In such cases, there is a shocking lack of theological and spiritual integrity.

Part of the motivation for maintaining the traditional stand on spiritual unity is biblical, but it is also part of the non-denominational heritage of much evangelicalism. Although this is an inescapable aspect of our historical background (which needs to be considered again later), it does mean that there is likely to be either a lack of ecclesiological thinking, or more, a strong resistance to it. Some strands of evangelicalism are explicitly non-denominational or para-church, and so are not expected to be concerned with ecclesiology as such—their role is to work alongside of ecclesial structures. Others, however, set aside or demote their church-related thinking for the purposes of greater unity, or often simply because of weak or undeveloped theological convictions. Yet another factor is the emergence of new concepts of post-denominational church life in a postmodern context.²⁰

Whatever the background, ecclesiology and hence the nature and unity of the church is an unresolved issue for evangelicalism. This is likely to be made more difficult by uncritical and even absolutist emphases on the controlling role of the church and the faith community by those influenced by postmodern hermeneutics. This will raise new concerns by evangelicals on both the Protestant ideal of *ecclesia semper reformanda* and the spiritual renewal and biblical basis of the church. For this reason, the WEF Theological Commission gave attention to this matter at its recent Consultation in Kuala Lumpur, papers of which will be published in *Evangelical Review of Theology* in January 2002. There is also a task force being set up to review the WEF Statement of Faith, which, in common with many similar statements, has no clear or definitive article about the visible church. The WEF statement reads: 'We believe in ... 6. The Unity of the Spirit of all true believers, the Church, the Body of Christ.'²¹

When Evangelicals apply their minds to the doctrine of the church and its unity to develop an understanding that speaks specifically to this present age, they can be confident of making a particular contribution where previous institutional, confessional and sacramental approaches have proven to be unsatisfactory.

First of all, they can draw upon the

²⁰ Robert Webber, *Ancient-Future Faith*, chapters 8-10

²¹ For a good piece of foundational theology in this area, see Miroslav Volf, *After Our Likeness: The Church as the Image of the Trinity*, (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1998)

vast variety of expression that is found in their movement to bring a rich treasury of experience and insight into the arena of discussion. Evangelicals, for example, have learned to work together in their missionary, evangelistic and service ministries with an extremely broad range of people, and they have quickly adapted and innovated their strategies and methods to make their work more effective, especially in the area of the use of technology. The rapid renewal of the missionary movement with the advent of new forms of pioneer and short term agencies at the present time is only one more example of a long line of progressive innovations in the past that include such developments as the faith missions movement, the science of linguistics and the use of radio, film and sound recordings. If evangelicals can draw effectively upon this legacy, then they will not be held up by the traditional and parochial attitudes that often exist in mainstream church life. Thus the sheer reality of interdenominational partnership (*koinonia*) that is an everyday fact of evangelical life on local and global levels will be a strong incentive for progress towards viable understandings of unity.

Then at the doctrinal level, we can refer to the concept of spiritual unity, and point to the church in its oneness as the creation of the risen Lord who showers upon it the blessing of his Spirit (Eph. 4:8). As Miroslav Volf put it at the recent WEF General Assembly: 'Here, then, you have a definition of the church that is capable of providing impetus for new and fruitful developments: *the church is*

the continuation of Christ's anointing by the Spirit.'²²

Intrinsic to this 'Spirit of Jesus' approach to the nature of the church is another which the evangelical movement can bring with confidence—the missiological element (understood in the broadest possible way, including the concept of the kingdom of God.) As Volf concluded his paper: 'The only thing that truly matters is that the Church be reflection of Christ's own light in that it continues his mission anointed by the Spirit.'²³

Thus we can envisage an understanding and praxis of the church centred on the Spirit endowed people of God in mission, building strong but flexible communities for worship, service and witness which are in integral fellowship with others even though the institutional and bureaucratic links may be minimal. But in the meantime, practical efforts at unity and cooperation are difficult enough to realize within the confines of the evangelical and Protestant world, but they become even more problematic in other contexts. The WEF Theological Commission has been engaged in conversations with the Roman Catholic Church now since 1993 when the late Dr Paul Schrottenboer began the process. Dr George Vandervelde is the current convenor of this Task Force which will conclude its current round of talks early in 2002 when a joint statement summarising the four

²² Miroslav Volf, 'The Nature of the Church', *ERT*, Jan 2002, 26/1 pp. 68-75) p. 69

²³ Volf, 'The nature of the Church', p. 75

sessions is expected to be finalised. It is anticipated that the WEF Theological Commission will also be involved in joint talks with other confessional groups in due course.

This can be a painstaking process and one that is considered too controversial for some. So the approach adopted by those individuals involved in the March 1994 'Evangelicals and Catholics Together' statement in North America is worthy of attention. In that particular context (which is not necessarily comparable to any other area), the desirability of what James Packer described as 'non-proselytising joint action for the conversion and nurture of outsiders'²⁴ has led a number of prominent individuals on both sides of the Evangelical/Roman Catholic divide to draw up a statement of commonly held positions, without prejudice to the clearly acknowledged theological issues that remain between them.²⁵

This informal approach has not been clearly understood or accepted by all observers, of course, but it does hold some promise of providing a workable procedure for progress, especially as several doctrinal points of concern were clarified in a later document, *The Gift of Salvation* (1997). One important factor that made such a development possible was the change in the theological landscape, which Timothy George explained when releasing it.

The Gift of Salvation has been made possible by a major realignment in ecumenical discourse: the coalescence of believing Roman Catholics and faithful evangelicals who both affirm the substance of historic Christian orthodoxy against the ideology of theological pluralism that marks much mainline Protestant thought as well as avant-garde Catholic theology. Thus, for all our differences Bible-believing evangelicals stand much closer to Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger than to Bishop John Spong!²⁶

d) *Relations with other Faiths*

Developments such as globalisation and the September 11 terrorist attacks are causing Evangelicals along with other Christians to reconsider their relationships towards the other world faiths and their attitudes to their adherents. This has been the case over many years for those in the non-western world where Christianity is in the minority. Then, as we have noted above, it is a new but pressing issue for many in the old world where there are increasingly large populations who adhere to these religions. However, in this case, the situation is reversed, and Christianity, at least in a nominal form, is the majority religion.

There are at least three critical areas for evangelicals in these kinds of inter-faith and ecumenical relationships—the integrity and resilience of our own personal faith and confidence in the gospel; the practical application of commonly held ethical positions and moral values in public life; and questions of theology and belief. By drawing

²⁴ see *ChrT*, 12 Dec 1994, J.I. Packer, 'Why I signed it', pp 34f; he used Francis Schaeffer's term, grassroots 'co-belligerence'.

²⁵ Charles Colson and Richard John Neuhaus, *Evangelicals and Catholics Together: toward a common mission* (Dallas: Word 1995)

²⁶ *ChrT*, 8 Dec 1997, pp. 34

upon their spiritual resources, the doctrine of common grace and biblical authority, evangelical Christians should have little difficulty in principle in maintaining a positive and faithful witness in all these areas.

Another approach to the matter of cooperation between apparently competing or rival interests is illustrated by the findings of a conference held in Malaysia 1984 on 'Word, Kingdom and Spirit' as the final part of a programme dealing with chronic misunderstandings between evangelicals, social activists, and the Charismatic/Pentecostals. The conference Manifesto stated:²⁷

When we understand the Gospel as the Good News of the Kingdom, we are better able to overcome the tragic oneness that has torn apart proclamation, social transformation and renewal in the Spirit. Jesus specifically commanded us to share the Gospel in the way he did in the Power of the Spirit (John 20:21-22). We believe that Jesus both joyfully welcomed all people into the Kingdom and modelled costly incarnation and identification with the poor, weak and oppressed. Since he cared about the whole person, so must we.

The church is called to be the visible expression of the Kingdom, a new community of reborn men and women, transcending differences of race, class and gender, serving the world, suffering courageously for righteousness' sake, witnessing through its communal life to Jesus Christ its King and growing in likeness in him.

This line of approach focuses, therefore, on carrying out the mission Jesus has given us in his role as the embodiment and herald of the kingdom of God as the criterion our

fellowship, rather than on doctrinal agreement, a shared religious experience or organizational links. As the Preamble to the Kingdom Affirmations issued by the conference stated: 'We believe that focussing on the Gospel Jesus himself announced can unite and empower the church for costly obedience and wholistic mission.'

e) Social change

With the massive cultural changes facing the world, different in each area for sure, there is need for a body such as the church with its remarkably long heritage, deeply held traditions, elaborate institutions and complex patterns of authority to be particularly alert to the questions of relevance and strategy. Even evangelicalism, which has a far shorter heritage than the church at large, has a problem with entrenched traditions. Thus we need to bear in mind that this was a matter which our Lord seemed to target specifically in his engagement with the religious leaders of his day.

In many cases, the problems are ones of priorities, methodology, communication and even perception; as such they can be dealt with through education, patience and love—and sometimes applying the principle of 'the strong and the weak' (Rom. 14; 1 Cor. 8). In other cases it is a matter of strategy and policy, where prayerful discussion and common sense must be used to seek unanimity of purpose. Thus, for Africans, whether to direct resources to the equally desperate needs of leadership training to meet the dramatic numerical explosion of the church or compassionate assistance

²⁷ *Transformation* Vol 11/3 July-Sept 1994, pp 2-3

in response to the devastating AIDS epidemic is not a matter of basic principle but of practical guidance and fellowship.

However, there are other matters which require more profound thought and adjustment to attitudes and values. In the West, the advent of postmodernism, considered by many to be as far-reaching as any of the great conceptual revolutions of the past, calls for radical re-thinking and re-strategizing by evangelicals no less than by any other section of the church. For other regions, the advent of liberal democracies and their associated social-economic systems, or the downfall of traditional cultures may be the issue. Certainly for the world in general, the church as a global body is in the forefront. These changes throw up various particular issues, such as worship, gender, and the leadership structure and governance of the church, which must also be addressed one by one, but always with the larger context in mind. In some cases, we may need to revise our received interpretations of Scripture to correct mistaken positions, or to fill out gaps in our worldview (such as a Westerner dealing with the spirit world of an African society); in other situations, new issues, such as bio-ethics, may call for fresh applications of basic principles.

As our survey of trends in recent times mentioned above shows, evangelicals have made considerable progress in dealing with many of the new ethical issues.²⁸ In this they are

driven by a genuine desire to meet deep human needs in the name of Christ, but there is also considerable activity at the theoretical level.

However, more reflection is needed in these areas, especially at the local level, because a naturally conservative membership requires careful teaching about the biblical and practical aspects of controversial issues if uncertainty and even division over questions such as gender and ministry, life and family issues (abortion, contraception, euthanasia), sexuality, or race are to be avoided.

But whether it be matters of methodology, strategy, ethics or worldview, evangelicals will find that a missiological and spiritual approach to the church and a dynamic view of scripture will provide important guidelines and norms for progress. These factors will also be relevant in tackling areas of doctrinal controversy currently exercising the minds of evangelicals, although more theoretical factors will be needed to resolve them. Among the more interesting of the doctrinal matters on the evangelical agenda at present are open theism, annihilationism, the nature, mission and ministry of the church, the impact of postmodern thought and culture, salvation and the Lordship of Christ, and especially the role and ministry of women in the church. There are also many interesting developments in the Pentecostal and Charismatic area as these movements move towards greater theo-

²⁸ See, for example, John R.W. Stott, *Issues Facing Christians Today*, (London: Collins Marshall Pickering, 1990)

logical maturation.²⁹ The events surrounding the terrorist attacks in the US on Sept 11, 2001 have thrown up a whole new context for theological work which affects evangelicals, as well as others, with a focus on such key issues as reconciliation and forgiveness, the nature of God, justice and evil, relations with other faiths and the mission of the church.

5. Trends in understanding Evangelicalism

From this brief and rather selective survey, it is clear that the new context of a globalised, post-denominational, post-colonial Christianity causes us to review many of the older issues and turn our attention to new ones, or at least to develop a new perspective on existing issues. Many of the concerns are intrinsic to evangelicalism and the wider church, but others are the products of a complex, but overbearing global sociopolitical climate where human rights, crimes against humanity, abuse of economic power and ecological irresponsibility are rife. Others arise from profound changes in the worldview and religious outlook. We need a revived and re-envisioned evangelicalism for these circumstances that is capable of pursuing the goal of faithful discipleship on the broadest possible spectrum as it has done so successfully in the past.

In the past, evangelicalism has been characterized variously as a confessional position by its adherence to certain doctrinal positions, or as an ecclesiastical party (especially in the Anglican world), or especially of late in North America, as a cultural option. Historically, it has carried out the role of a reform (or protest) movement, witnessing against doctrinal and spiritual decline both negatively by standing for the fundamentals, and positively by its active commitment to evangelism, missions and spirituality. With the passing of time, this cause has achieved considerable success, making it now appropriate to speak of evangelicalism in sociological terms as a kind of loosely knit denomination.³⁰ It is difficult to hold all these elements together in any meaningful way, but David Wells has proposed with some success the triad of confessional, transconfessional and charismatic to interpret recent British and American evangelicalism.³¹ In this paper, I have tried to avoid focusing on any particular strand, but have concentrated on what is held in common and what characterizes the movement at its heart.

What is obvious, however, is that the older definitions are not necessarily any longer appropriate or advantageous, at least in their traditional forms. Furthermore, the rapid

²⁹ See, for example, William W. Menzies and Robert P. Menzies, *Spirit and Power: foundations of Pentecostal experience* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2000); Sam Hey, 'Changing roles of Pentecostal Hermeneutics', *ERT*, 25/3 July 2001, pp. 210-218; and *Asian Journal of Pentecostal Studies*

³⁰ See a brief discussion of this idea of George Marsden in Robert K. Johnstone, 'Orthodoxy and Heresy: a problem for modern evangelicalism' (*Evangelical Quarterly* LXIX/1 Jan 1997, pp. 7-38).

³¹ 'On Being Evangelical' in *Evangelicalism*, edited by Noll, Bebbington and Rawlyk, (Oxford, OUP, 1994), pp. 390-393

growth of the movement has inevitably produced wider variety and increased fragmentation. Hence there have been attempts to produce new definitions of the movement, such as David Bebbington's famous 'quadrilateral of priorities'—biblicism, conversionism, activism, crucicentrism.³² Richard Turnbull argues that Bebbington's list is too general and seeks to improve upon it by offering 'four centres of evangelical spiritual identity: authority, doctrine, spirituality and practical commitment'.³³ Roger Olson, however, reverts to a stricter position, believing that evangelicalism is 'primarily a theological movement' and therefore lists the following four as 'minimum characteristics'—biblical authority, a supernatural worldview centred in a personal transcendent God, the grace of God in conversion as the 'center of authentic Christian experience' and the role of theology to serve the mission of the church in bringing this grace to the world in witness and service.³⁴ However, it is evident that even this 'theological' approach spills over into areas of experience, spirituality and action, indicating that evangelicalism is best defined in terms of 'a specific vision of what it means to be a Christian'.³⁵

Assessments of the current state of evangelicalism have therefore been set against both the old and the new definitions, but often in these discussions, the protest or reforming nature of the movement has been insufficiently noticed. Robert Letham,³⁶ for example, points to this feature by noting that 'Evangelicals tend to consider as axiomatic that theirs is the quintessential expression of the Christian faith'. He then goes on to argue that in comparison with some classic expressions of Christianity, evangelicalism falls short by being insufficiently God-centred or Trinitarian and for holding a low view of the church. After drawing attention to current forms of evangelicalism that emphasize regeneration and personal spiritual experience, world missions and personal evangelism and the defence of the authority, infallibility and inerrancy of the Bible, he concludes, 'Evangelicalism at its best has marched off at a tangent from the trajectory of the historic church. It has followed interests it has perceived as important in the confidence that it, more than others, has a true understanding of the Christian faith.' As a result, he finds, 'evangelicalism is a variant form of Christianity, and one that ... could now be in danger of losing its grasp of the faith it seemingly holds dear'.³⁷

Despite this negative assessment, the evangelical movement in its various has emphasized from the days of

³² *Evangelicalism in Modern Britain: A History from the 1730s to the 1980s* (London: Routledge, 1988), pp. 2-17. See John Stott's comments on this in his *Evangelical Truth: a personal plea for unity* (Leicester: Inter-Varsity, 1999), pp 24-28

³³ Richard Turnbull 'Evangelicalism: the State of Scholarship and the Question of Identity' *Anvil* 16/2, 1999, p. 95

³⁴ Roger E. Olson, 'The future of evangelical theology', *ChrT* 9 Feb 1998, pp. 40-48

³⁵ Stanley J. Grenz., *Revisioning Evangelical Theology: a Fresh Agenda For The 21st Century* (Downers Grove: Intervarsity Press, 1993), p. 30f.

³⁶ Robert Letham in Robert Letham and Donald Macleod, 'Is Evangelicalism Christian?' *Evangelical Quarterly* LXVII/1 Jan 1995 pp. 3-33, p. 3

³⁷ Robert Letham, 'Is Evangelicalism Christian?' p. 16

the Protestant Reformation the importance of such key features of Christian truth as justification, holiness, evangelism, cross cultural mission, the transforming empowerment of the Holy Spirit and the authority of Scripture.³⁸

It is obvious, however, that there are difficulties with a protest movement and its negative message when it achieves a measure of success and becomes dominant (as in USA and some other parts of the world), or if the causes of concern against which it is directed are rectified or removed (as is the case with some forms of liberal or Catholic doctrine). If protest or opposition to the mainstream is what defines a group rather than a positive message, then the (fighting) fundamentalist spirit, (that is, fighting for one's position as the sole object of one's existence), easily emerges. When there is nothing important left to fight against, its proponents can only perpetuate obsolete controversies, or worse still, turn upon each other and their friends.

It is better therefore to see evangelicalism as a reform movement taking its place within the broader church, enjoying its fellowship and supporting its mission. This approach is seen in some recently revised statements of faith which retain the standard evangelical clauses on Scripture and Christology but relate them primarily to the central doctrines as reflected in the ecumenical creeds. For example the

Australian Evangelical Alliance refers to 'the faith therein set forth and summarised in such historic statements of the Christian Church as the Apostles' and Nicene Creeds, and in particular, the assertion of doctrines summarily stated as follows' (which includes seven familiar statements of evangelical emphasis). The Scripture Union and the Evangelical Fellowship of the Anglican Church (EFAC) adopt a similar approach.

6. The way forward

It is understandable that in this process some people may fear their position has been compromised and that evangelicalism will lose its identity. So we are brought back to a problem we mentioned at the outset—the need to identify a new more basic and valid centre of unity deriving from the fundamental identity of the movement which people could adopt enthusiastically and without any fear of compromise.

Certainly, adjustments will need to be made to evangelicalism as time progresses such as corrections to statements of faith, re-formulation to maintain relevance in newly emerging situations, not to mention more radical changes to reflect new insights and its own continual need to be reformed. This is true for any movement, but particularly for a reform movement. Some particular ways of making the transition from one period to another have been already identified earlier in this paper, but two more general ones may be mentioned in conclusion as suggestions for the way forward.

One has already been alluded to—

³⁸ Stott, *Evangelical Truth*, draws a helpful distinction between 'evangelical essentials' and 'evangelical distinctives' (p. 9)

the historical relativity that is intrinsic to any human movement. It is only necessary to think of well known contemporary cases of historical ghettos, where customs and rules of a bygone era are still literalistically applied, to see the point. An application of this principal to the area of belief is to consider the concept of the 'progress of dogma' (to refer to James Orr's book of this title) and see that theology has focused on different issues as it has expanded and matured. We need also to think of theology as a derivative exercise, not a primary one. One way in which this can be seen is in Robert Webber's discussion of the difference between 'creeds, confessions and personal opinion'. He further points out that in accordance with the reality of the Incarnation, 'the task of the church is to articulate truth within the context of history and culture'. Thus we can see that creeds and theologies have been developed 'as means to communicate truth, not as ends in themselves.'³⁹ Hence there is scope for re-presentation of theological statements in varying contexts without any threat of assault upon fundamental truth.⁴⁰

A second mechanism is the now familiar distinction between 'bound-

ed sets' and 'centred sets'.⁴¹ In the former case, evangelicalism would be defined by 'a list of essential characteristics which allow clear boundaries to be defined and maintained.' Examples of such a list would be the five 'fundamentals' or other doctrinal statements, or a set of behavioural norms, giving a static condition in which orthodoxy is defined with extreme clarity and variance is as obvious as it is difficult.⁴²

'Centred set' thinking however, focuses on what holds people together at the heart of their movement with less emphasis on the boundaries, which are defined *only* in terms of the centre. 'Here the relationships are dynamic, not static. One can be moving towards or away from the centre. There is still clear division as to who belongs ...' Johnstone interprets recent American evangelicalism as a transition from bounded to centred set thinking, and accordingly offers his definition of the movement in terms of *solus Christus* and *sola Scriptura*.

A clear application of this kind of thinking is to focus on the question of discipleship, finding our unity, not doctrinally, organizationally or culturally, but in the Lordship of Christ and our 'obedience of faith' (Rom.

³⁹ Robert E. Webber, *Ancient-Future Faith*, pp. 195-199

⁴⁰ See also Brad J. Kallenberg, 'Conversion Converted: a Postmodern Formulation of the Doctrine of Conversion.' (*Evangelical Quarterly* 67/4 Oct 1995, pp. 345.f) for a discussion of George Lindbeck's distinction between first and second order propositions.

⁴¹ A clear explanation of this in the current context may be found in Robert K. Johnstone, 'Orthodoxy and Heresy: a problem for modern evangelicalism' (*Evangelical Quarterly* LXIX/1 Jan 1997, pp. 7-38); see also Roger E Olson, 'The Future of Evangelical Theology', *ChrT* 9 Feb 1998 p. 41ff.

⁴² Cf the 2002 Annual Meeting of the Evangelical Theological Society in North America with its advertised theme, 'Defining Evangelicalism's Boundaries' (http://www.etsjets.org/meetings/annual_2001.html)

1:5). This does not rule out intellectual or other interests, for we are to worship God with our minds, but it does put them into the proper perspective. To put it another way, we are fundamentally *evangelicals*, or *gospel* people.⁴³ This may not seem

so convincing or definite for those who want absolute answers and neat definitions, but what could be more Christian, and what could be more appropriate if indeed the Spirit is with us to empower and guide?⁴⁴

⁴³ Stott, *Evangelical Truth*, pp. 29ff. 135-146.

⁴⁴ I would like to thank Dr George Vandervelde of Toronto, Canada, for his advice in editing this paper for publication here.

Where Wrath and Mercy Meet

Editor: David Peterson

The cross of Jesus is central to evangelical Christianity. Yet the theology of atonement is under attack, not only from those outside the evangelical fold, but also from those within who challenge the doctrine of penal substitution.

In this collection of papers, delivered at the Oak Hill College Annual School of Theology 2000, four members of the faculty defend a strong articulation of penal substitution in the face of contemporary challenges. **David Peterson** surveys the atonement in both Old and New Testaments; **Garry Williams** examines the nature of punishment at the heart of a penal doctrine; **Michael Ovey** expounds how sin is the 'de-creation' of God's world; and **Paul Weston** reflects on John's Gospel and the lessons it provides on proclaiming the cross today. The collection is then completed with an appendix on justification by faith by a former vice-principal of Oak Hill, **Alan Stibbs**.

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Carl Trueman, Senior Lecturer in Church History, University of Aberdeen.

David Peterson is the Principal of Oak Hill College and has written amongst other volumes 'Possessed by God'.

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Paternoster Press, PO Box 300, Carlisle, Cumbria CA3 0QS, UK

On Women and Men Working Together in the Church

Who Will Lead Us? Surely the One whom the Spirit Gifts

Thomas C. Oden

Keywords: Incarnation, creation, image, sin, sexuality, gender, gifts, church, ministry, learning, worship, subordination, child-bearing, gospel, redeemer

'Male and Female God Created Them' (Gen. 1:27)

There are two audiences for this paper: The Women's Commission of the World Evangelical Fellowship (mostly women), and the Theological Commission (mostly men), together

representing some 150 million evangelicals worldwide. I have been invited to present this one paper, or portions of it, to serve both audiences.

The agenda for this discussion is largely shaped by the concerns of the Women's Commission, but since it deals with the biblical and theological issues of the gifts of women and men working together in the church, it will be of interest, I think, to the Theological Commission. Few issues are more pressing for evangelical Christians world wide than the relation of men and women.

How does the Bible invite us to understand the giftedness of women and men through the Holy Spirit? In what providential ways does the Spirit marvellously distribute to both genders? I am honoured to be asked to attempt to represent fairly both genders in this presentation. I ask your prayers, that my words be

Thomas C. Oden is Henry Anson Buttz Professor of Theology at the Theological School of Drew University in Madison, New Jersey. He is general editor of the *Ancient Christian Commentary on Scripture*. He also served over a decade in pastoral ministry and has written a number of works dealing with psychotherapy and pastoral theology. Oden documented his theological pilgrimage in *Agenda for Theology* (Harper and Row, 1979; revised in 1990 as *After Modernity—What?*) He has also written a theological trilogy, *The Living God* (Harper and Row, 1987), *The Word of Life* (1989) and *Life in the Spirit* (1992). One of his latest works is *Requiem: A Lament in Three Movements* (Abingdon, 1995). This is part of a paper delivered to sessions of the Women's Commission and Theological Commission of the World Evangelical Fellowship during the General Assembly, May 4-10, 2001 in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia.

respectful to every person present.

The first and most important question has to do with the fairness of God.

I. The Giftedness of Women and Men through the Holy Spirit

1. Does God show bias toward one gender or another in the Incarnation?

Augustine wrote: God's 'temporal plan ennobled each sex, both male and female. By possessing a male nature and being born of a woman He further showed by this plan that God has concern not only for the sex He represented but also of the one through which He took upon Himself our nature'.¹ 'Not only that sex which He assumed pertains to God's care, but also that sex by which He did assume humanity.'²

If both sexes are to be honoured and blessed in the incarnation, and if the one giving birth must be female, then the one born must be male.³ Do not hasten over this point. Linger. Meditate. Savour a delicious classic inference: if the incarnation required birth, that males cannot do—there is no way physiologically — this forms

the plausible hypothesis for why the Saviour was male: *If the mother of the Saviour must of necessity be female, since only females are mothers, the Saviour would logically have to be male for both sexes to be significantly involved in the salvation event.* The only alternative would be to have a female mother of the Saviour and a female Saviour. For one cannot have a *male mother* of the Saviour. More so a male plus female (hermaphrodite) Saviour would fail entirely to share in the specific *either/or* nature of our human sexuality as male or female. Surely the female birth-giver is no less an intrinsic part of the divine economy than the Messiah in the male line of David as promised.⁴ This hypothesis reverses egalitarian arguments, by making the female birth-giver the primary basis upon which the incarnate Lord became male.

The incarnation indisputably convinces us that God is not ashamed of either female and male bodies, or of human embodiment, or of sexuality. Augustine must have been in a playful mood when he wrote, commenting on the biblical narrative of Jesus' baptism: 'Now the reason why the Holy Spirit was not born of a dove, whereas Christ was born of a woman, is this: The Holy Spirit did not come to liberate doves, but to declare unto humanity innocence and spiritual love, which were outwardly symbolized in the form of a

¹ R.J. Deferrari, ed., *Fathers of the Church: A New Translation* (100+ vols. to date. Washington, D.C.: Catholic University of America Press, 1947), 27:236

² *On Faith and the Creed*, P. Schaff et al., eds., *A Select Library of the Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers of the Christian Church*, Series 1 and 2 (14 vols. each) (Buffalo, NY: Christian Literature, 1887-1894), (Reprint, Edinburgh, T. & T. Clark, and Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1952-1956, Reprint, 1971-79), 1 III:325

³ Augustine, *Eighty-three Different Questions*, *Fathers of the Church*, 70, p. 42.

⁴ Thomas C. Oden, *The Living God*, Vol. 1 of *Systematic Theology* (San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1987), pp. 7-9, 222-3; Thomas C. Oden, *The Word of Life*, Vol. 2 of *Systematic Theology* (San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1989), pp. 117-8, 148

dove. The Lord Jesus Christ, having come to liberate human beings, including both men and women destined for salvation, was not ashamed of the male nature, for He took it upon himself, or of the female, for he was born of a woman.⁵

Augustine delighted in imagining the ancient Deceiver's exasperation at both the female and the male sexes being decisively used by God for human salvation: 'There is a profound mystery that, as death had befallen us through a woman, Life should be born to us through a woman. By this defeat, the Devil would be tormented over the thought of both sexes, male and female, because he had taken delight in the defection of them both. The freeing of both sexes would not have been so severe a penalty for the Devil, unless we were also liberated by the agency of both sexes.'⁶

Mary is female, Jesus is male. God's way of coming involves both genders in a particular way fitting to those genders: female, for the birthing of the One Mediator, the God become flesh, without human father, and male, for the mission of the messianic servant, according to Jewish expectation, of a male of Davidic descent.

The core of this classic equilibrium between female and male is found in Paul's Letter to the Galatians: 'But

when the time had fully come, God sent his Son, born of a woman, born under law, to redeem those under law' (Gal.4:4). It is an article of faith that Jesus was born of a particular woman, without male assistance, not born of woman and man.

2. Are Spiritual Gifts Distributed according to Gender?

We find Paul's teaching of spiritual gifts concentrated primarily in Romans 12, and 1 Corinthians 12 and Ephesians 4 (compare these with 1 Pet. 4:10). *Charisma* is the gift of some God-given ability to render a service empowered by grace. The gifts of the Spirit are given by the risen Lord to build up his body (Eph. 4:11). The Spirit administers them, knowing what gift best befits each believer for service (1 Cor. 12), and each congregation's needs, and the world's needs.

The distribution of gifts is not stratified according to gender. These gifts are abundantly found among both women and men. By the Spirit 'Othniel judged; Gideon waxed strong; Jephtha conquered; Deborah, a woman, conquered', wrote Cyril of Jerusalem.⁷

Spiritual gifts are not given to individuals as such, but to individuals on behalf of the whole body, the community of faith, not for self-advancement but for upbuilding the body (*oikodomen tou somatos*, Eph. 4:12,16,29). When a symphonic conductor selects violinists for a difficult repertoire, he does so not to

⁵ Augustine, *Christian Combat* 22, *Fathers of the Church*, 21:339; see also Augustine, *Of True Religion*, J. Baillie et al., eds., *The Library of Christian Classics* (26 vols. Philadelphia: Westminster, 1953-1966), XIV, 27

⁶ Augustine, *Christian Combat* 22, *Fathers of the Church* 21:339; see also Letters, 3

⁷ *Catechetical Lectures* XVI.28, *A Select Library of the Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers of the Christian Church*, 2 VII, p. 122

advance their careers but to insure that the music they create will be rightly balanced and harmonized. Similarly, when the Spirit distributes gifts to the body of Christ, they are not for personal advancement, but rather for the health and upbuilding of the body.⁸ God has joined the members of the body so that 'its parts should have equal concern for each other. If one part suffers, every part suffers with it; if one part is honoured, every part rejoices with it' (1 Cor. 12:25,26).

God's gifts continue to be given, even to those unaware of them, in ways providentially adapted to finite capacities. All of us are called to show mercy, but to some are given special gifts of showing mercy, or hospitality. While the command to serve one another applies to the whole church (Gal. 5:13), the gift of serving is given to some in greater measure. These gifts are not sorted out between men and women, but are given to both men and women.

Several varied lists of gifts of the Spirit are found in the New Testament. Those frequently listed include the gifts of discernment (1 Cor. 12:10), of serving (Rom. 12:7), and of governance (*kubernesis*) which seeks to enable the work of ministry of others (1 Cor. 12:28; cf. Rom. 12:8). Also described among the spiritual gifts are faith (1 Cor. 12:9), hope, (1 Cor. 13:13), joy, (Rom. 15:13), patience, meekness (1 Tim. 5:11), encouragement (Rom. 12:8),

the ability to distinguish true and false revelation (1 Cor. 12:10), showing mercy and generosity (Rom. 12:8), diligent leadership, wisdom, and knowledge (Rom. 12:8; 1 Cor. 12:28), prophecy, where one speaks the Word of the Lord (1 Cor. 14:1); evangelization, proclaiming good news to all (Eph. 4:11; Acts 21:8); teaching the truth (Rom. 12:7); the gifts of confession (1 John 4:2), exhortation (Rom. 12:8); healing (1 Cor. 12:9, 28, 30) and miracles (1 Cor. 12:28); ecstatic utterance, speaking in other languages, and the interpretation of other tongues (Acts 2:4,8; 1 Cor. 12:10). Married persons experience the gift of generativity and the privilege of nurturing families (1 Cor. 7:29, 33). Those called to the single life enjoy the gift of freedom from entangling commitments, in order to have the opportunity to serve the Lord more freely (1 Cor. 7:32). Above all there is the consummate gift of love, which shows forth God's own benevolence and mercy (Rom. 12:8), poured out upon both women and men.

3. *How do women and men work cooperatively in the gift based church?*

The evangelical vision of the church is a community in which the gifts of the Spirit enable and energize every member. We delight in and uplift the vision of the gift-based church, especially as it applies to the relation of men and women working together in the church.

The essential meaning of deacon (*diakonos*) is servant. Paul frequently used *diakonos* to describe his own ministry and that of others (Rom.

⁸ John Chrysostom, *Homily on Ephesians*. X, XI, *A Select Library of the Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers of the Christian Church*, 1 XIII, pp. 99-108

16:1; 1 Cor. 3:5; 2 Cor. 3:6; Col. 1:23; 4:7), even as Jesus served as the model for the servant ministry (Mark 10:45). Persons in serving ministries must give able leadership in family life, being faithful to one spouse and nurturant of children (v. 12). *Diakonia* is not merely a silent ministry of service but a speaking ministry, wherein one gives the cup of cold water in the name of Christ, speaking Christ's name through the service.

In the gift-based church, everyone is called and enabled to serve on the basis of their giftedness. Everyone has a sense of belonging because they contribute something of value, something of their very own, to the whole body of Christ. Leadership rises from the awareness of who has the most appropriate gifts for each task. Each one is invited to ask: 'In response to God's self-giving, what would I rather do than anything else?' When we are trying to do things for which we are not gifted, we easily exhaust ourselves. When we serve according to our gifts, our joy in service overflows.

We see evangelical men and women today the world over sharing leadership. In the Spirit-led community, giftedness is the decisive factor rather than simply gender as such. Both men and women lead by empowering others rather than with hierarchical constraints.

This calls for an end to the battle of the sexes striving for power against each other, and a beginning for working together in humility and mutual respect. God wills us to live out our gifts joyfully and together.

To do this we need to reflect on some of the biblical and theological teaching on the relation of men and women in relation to the Giver of their maleness and femaleness in the Body of Christ. I ask your permission, for the sake of order and unity, to set aside for now the highly controverted question of ordination about which evangelicals have varying views, an important topic for some other discussion. If pursued here and now it could easily throw us off course from our search for unity in the truth of the gospel concerning the gifts of women and men. This will help us bring into sharp focus the urgent questions relating to the general ministry of the church, the whole gospel of the whole church to the whole world.

4. *Are women to learn and teach?*

Paul focuses in 1 Timothy 2:11-15 on the excellence or virtue of 'quietness'. Note that Paul's injunction is *not to prevent* women from learning Christian teaching, *but to permit*—'Let a woman learn' (v. 11). This represented a major step beyond the late Judaic view of the status of women, who by contrast were not allowed to prophesy or read Torah, confined as they were to the outer court of the temple. Greek women experienced even more limiting conditions. Even the fact that a few women were causing mischief for Timothy at Ephesus was itself a kind of indirect evidence of the improvement of the position of women in Christianity as compared with Jewish and Hellenistic circles, where these troubles would far less likely be connected with any sort of

‘learning’.

The learning to be commended for women, Paul thought, was best accomplished with a particular attitude of tranquillity fitting to the special gifts of women: in *hēsuchia* (tranquillity, quietness, calm), silence with all submissiveness. The Greek phrase (*gunē en hēsuchia mathanētō en pasē hupotagē*) implies: Let a woman be a learner under tranquil conditions inwardly and outwardly, showing attentiveness to the received apostolic teaching. The point is not to be silent, but to seek inward quietness and attentiveness to the proclamation. Long before the King James English translators rendered this flatly ‘silence’, John Chrysostom understood clearly that ‘he is speaking of quietness’—a particular virtue.

The same demeanour at public worship for women—quietness (*hēsuchia*)—is elsewhere commended for men (Acts 22:2; 1 Thess. 4:11; 2 Thess. 3:12; 1 Peter 3:4; cf. 1 2:2; Titus 2:2). Certain women at Ephesus may have been disturbing services of worship in some unspecified way under the influence of disruptive teachers. This preempting of leadership roles was not occurring at Thessalonica or Rome or Philippi, but apparently was occurring at Corinth, and probably at Ephesus where Timothy was. Paul was not suggesting that women should be reduced in power in the life of the church but that their centring and resourcing for the exercise of power be based upon inner serenity.

Men and women are encouraged by Paul not to resist or despairingly

protest the natural limitations of their particular gender. Sexuality is a gift and a responsibility. Men are asked to refrain from complaining to God about the special burdens of their maleness. Women are asked to resist crying out against God for the special tasks of their femaleness. To learn tranquillity with all attentiveness is to learn that tranquillity from God through humility. The obedience is to God, not patriarchy.

(This section of Paul’s letter to Timothy cannot be read without raising blood pressure. But the fact that our emotions enter strongly into dialogue with the text attests the fact that what Paul says is indeed important to us. This is a passage I have always disliked, resisted, and until now avoided at all costs. But in so far as I have allowed myself to be examined anew by the text, I have slowly come to realize that Paul requires my closest attention in grasping his deeper meaning and intention. However I may resist it, it comes to me as the word of God, asking me to listen and pray for guidance. So even against my reservations, the text has gradually invaded my consciousness and made its mark).

Verse 12 inserts a matter of personal instruction from Paul, as if it could be parenthetical—‘I permit no woman to teach or to have [or more specifically usurp] authority over men’; she is to pursue inward quietness (this great virtue of *hēsuchia*, serenity, silence) (v. 12). ‘I permit’ is arguably a personal opinion as distinguished from a formal apostolic instruction. Wesley translated this phrase: ‘to usurp authority over the

man—by public teaching’ (p. 776). Wrote Jacob Bengel: ‘*Over the man*—implying not merely a husband but the whole human race’.⁹ The intent appears to be this: I personally do not allow a woman to teach or claim inordinate authority (to domineer, or dictate, lord it over, usurp, rule) over ‘the man’. It is not that women in general cannot teach but that a woman cannot teach in such a way as to usurp authority over teachers already duly designated.

That Paul’s statement here addresses a particular situation at Ephesus seems probable from the fact that he did not take this position about women in the other churches (Rom. 16:1-3; Philp. 4:2-3). This verse likely pertains primarily to a special time and place, Ephesus, with a particular problem. This problem was teaching church doctrine in a public worship setting, which had apparently been disrupted by the women who assumed a disputatious type of teaching role, under their false teachers, that evidenced a domineering attitude toward their husbands or other men in general.

Elsewhere it is clear that women had teaching roles and offices in the New Testament church: in Titus 2:3-4 older women were specifically asked and authorized to be good teachers of the younger ones. It is evident elsewhere in Paul’s writings that Priscilla has served as a teacher, even of the learned Apollos, ‘a native of Alexandria ... an eloquent man, well versed in the scriptures’. For Priscilla and Aquila ‘expounded to him the way of God more accurately’, so as to enable Apollos to answer

critics, ‘showing by the scriptures that the Christ was Jesus’ (Acts 18:24, 26, 28). It was this same Priscilla (Prisca) whom Paul had repeatedly commended (Rom. 16:3; 1 Cor. 16: 19; 2 4: 19). In Philippians, Paul commended the way in which Euodia and Syntyche laboured with him in the gospel (Phil. 4:2-3). Philip’s four daughters are described in Acts as prophetesses (Acts 21:9).

5. *Are the Spirit’s Gifts to Women Distributed Widely in the General Ministry?*

The New Testament did not limit women to duties of family and household. Women played important roles as prophets, an office that was typically ordered second only to the apostles (1 Cor. 12:28; Eph. 4:11; Acts 2:17,18; 21:9; Rom. 16:1,2; cf. Num. 11:29; 2 Kings 22:14).

Paul’s first public proclamation in Europe was to a group of gathered women ‘outside the city gate’ by the river at Philippi. His first convert in Europe was a woman named Lydia (Acts 16:9-15). At the head of a long list of greetings in Romans 16, Paul commended to Rome ‘our sister Phoebe’ who was ‘also a minister of the church in Cenchrea’ [*kai diakonon tes ekklesias*], and a protectress [*prostatis*] of many (Rom. 16:1,2).

Contrary to the Jewish practice of initiatory rites only for males in circumcision, in Christian practice women were not only baptized but

⁹ Bengel, John A., *New Testament Word Studies (Gnomon Novi Testamenti)* (Reprint of 1864 ed., 2 vols.) (Grand Rapids: Kregel, 1971), 2:515

baptized others.¹⁰ Women were the first to proclaim the good news of Jesus' resurrection to doubting male disciples (Matt. 28:7-9, 17). 'She, while apostles shrank, could danger brave; Last at the cross, and earliest at his grave.'¹¹

Among those who are by faith baptized into the body of Christ, having become clothed in Christ, 'There is neither Jew nor Greek, slave nor free, male nor female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus' (Gal. 3:28).

6. Do women serve in ministry?

Having spoken in 1 Timothy 2:11 of women in public worship, Paul returns in 3:11 to the theme of women in serving ministries. He could be referring here to deacons' wives or deaconesses or female deacons or simply women. In any case, the women who served in ministry were perceived as working right alongside men in ministry, with courage and ability, labouring 'side by side' as full partners with Paul and other leaders (Philp. 4:3; Rom. 16:1-2). There can be little doubt that women held offices of ministry in the early church, of which widows devoted to works of mercy may have been a subgroup or a separable order (1 Tim. 5:9-10). References to Phoebe of Cenchreae (Rom.16:1), Euodia and Syntyche (Philp. 4:2), Tabitha (Acts 9:36-41), and others

provide abundant evidence of the ministries of such women, to whom even Pliny's letter to Trajan made note. Paul hopes that faithful 'women helpers' would resist false teachings. As men were warned against double-talk, women were warned against malicious gossip. All their efforts should be marked by self-control and integrity, from alms distribution to instruction of women seeking baptism.

7. What are the gifts and responsibilities of men and women in public prayer?

The key passage on women and men in public worship is 1 Timothy 2:8ff. It begins with a call for peaceful character among men who lead public prayer: Men in public worship are instructed to lift holy hands without anger or quarrelling. To lift holy hands is to pray sincerely, in a way congruent with one's behaviour, without hypocrisy, single-mindedly, with a pure heart focused upon the one thing needful—attentiveness to the will of God.

Paul then proceeds to discuss the conduct of women in public worship, in the light of this distinctive excellence of women, quietness. In this context, he speaks of the adornment of women who participate in worship. The general subject under consideration is public prayer, viewed in terms of the two genders: male and female. This text is intrinsically connected with the previous sentence, not accidentally. The connection seems odd at first: As men are called to pray without anger, so women are called to adorn themselves modestly and sensibly in seemly apparel (v. 9)

¹⁰ *Council of Carthage, IV, XII, A Select Library of the Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers of the Christian Church 2 XIV, p. 41*

¹¹ Amos Binney and Daniel Steele, *Binney's Theological Compend Improved* (New York: Phillips and Hunt, 1875), p. 195; cf. Matt. 26:56; Matt. 27:55,56; 28:1; Elizabeth Schüssler-Fiorenza, *In Memory of Her* (New York: Crossroad, 1983)

fit for the occasion of public prayer. Why this odd connection? The link keys upon behaviour fitting to the life of prayer in a community of prayer of men and women: (1) Men are to pray without anger and (2) women are to pray without ostentation. The kind of prayer Paul thought that men most need is that which reaches out for others in trust and mutual caring. The kind of prayer that women most need is that which actively manifests good deeds.

We diminish the depth of this passage if we think of it primarily as an instruction to men on the posture of prayer or an instruction to women on physical clothing. For the most fitting adornment of the person, man or woman, is good works of love rooted in faith. The most fitting posture of prayer, for men or women, is with accompanying deeds of moral responsibility.

The apparel one wears should be fitting to one's life as recipient of God's mercy in Jesus Christ. Women should adorn themselves in worship 'not with braided hair or gold or pearls or costly attire but by good deeds, as befits women who profess religion' (v. 10). Paul does not promote drabness, which itself can become a matter of display and pride. Nor does Paul condemn all decoration or excellent clothing. Rather he was resisting the hypocrisy that would pretend verbally to come before God in penitence, yet contradict that penitence through one's whole physical self-presentation.

A part of the trouble in the Christian community at Ephesus sprang

from a small group of women under the guidance of disruptive teachers who had not made a sufficiently significant commitment to sexual chastity and moral purity; they were self-indulgent (1 Tim. 5:6); they 'learn to be idlers, gadding about from house to house, and not only idlers but gossips and busybodies' (1 Tim. 5:13). If members of the Ephesian church came to public worship wearing clothing that announced a lack of commitment to the poor, they were forgetting the one who became poor for our sakes.

8. *Did God personally show the way of subordination for both sexes?*

Consensual Christian teaching did not uniformly affirm only passive or restricted roles thought to be traditionally assigned to women. It sought a theological language shaped by reciprocity between women and men.¹² But this did not mean that all subordination metaphors must be abandoned, for none other than God the Son has taken on the ultimate subordinate role, and called men and women to follow this serving model with the male serving and caring for the woman, and the female serving and caring for the man. 'In the Lord's fellowship woman is as essential to man as man to woman. If woman was made out of man, it is through woman that man now

¹² John Chrysostom, *Homily on Ephesians, A Select Library of the Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers of the Christian Church*, 1 XIII, pp. 115-6; 123-4; 143-52; cf. David Ford, *Women and Men in the Early Church: The Full Views of St. John Chrysostom* (St. Tikhon's Orthodox Theological Seminary, S. Canaan, PA, 1995)

comes to be; and God is the source of all' (1 Cor. 11:11-12).

'Be subject to one another out of reverence for Christ. Wives, be subject to your husbands as to the Lord...Husbands, loves your wives, as Christ also loved the church and gave himself up for it' (Eph. 5: 21-25).

There are three kinds of subordination or subjection, only one of which is Christian. (1) A subjection which is coerced, such as rape or slavery. (2) A subjection which is socially constructed, economically determined, or based on class oppression. (3) A voluntary subjecting of ourselves to others out of love and reverence for Christ, who became servant unto death for our sakes. Only the last is biblical.

II. Rethinking Eve and Mary

1. If Eve went first in transgression, how are women to be saved?

Equally man and woman broke the command of God. If woman was first in yielding to temptation, man was first in following.¹³ Paul explained that 'sin entered the world through one man, and death through sin, and in this way death came to all men, because all sinned' (Rom. 5:12). The fall is thus a federal act, involving all humanity, but only through the cooperation of both genders did the fall occur. Indeed Paul says that it was 'through the disobedience of the one

man the many were made sinners' (Rom. 5:19). For 'by the trespass of the one man, death reigned through that one man' (Rom. 5:17; cf. 1 Cor. 15:21). Yet far from exempting Eve from any responsibility, it emphasizes the power of woman to tempt.

Rabbinic teaching suggested that Eve, who would become the 'mother of all living', was created to complete something left quite incomplete in the male. This is not a statement of inferiority or superiority, as often interpreted, but completion of the spouse's limitation. (But one important way that this glorious completion would occur, thought Paul, is through her potential capacity for serene quietness. This larger capacity for tranquillity may just be a part of what makes women incontestably more beautiful than men). That man was created before woman does not imply that the male was complete in himself, for otherwise there would have been no Eve. The great Puritan preacher, Matthew Henry, commented:

Eve's being made after Adam, and out of him, puts an honour upon that sex, as the glory of man (1 Cor. 11:7). If man is the head, she is the crown. ... The man was dust refined, but the woman was dust double-refined, one removed further from the earth. [She was] not made out of his head to rule over him, nor out of his feet to be trampled upon by him, but out of his side to be equal with him, under his arm to be protected, and near his heart to be beloved.¹⁴

The rabbis generally held the view

¹³ Gen. 3:6; John Chrysostom, *Homily on Genesis*, 16, *Fathers of the Church: A New Translation* 74, pp. 207-21

¹⁴ Matthew Henry, *Matthew Henry's Commentary on the Whole Bible* (Rev. and corrected. 6 vols.) (New York: Revell) (Reprint, Iowa Falls, IA: World Bible Publishers)

that though woman was the second in creation, she was first in making an opening for sin. This was hardly an invention of Paul's.¹⁵ There is no suggestion here that Eve was mentally inferior or morally more perverse or spiritually deficient. If anything, Eve the rabbis portray as being more curious, more eager to experiment than Adam. The result was that Eve was the first to be deceived—ironically 'ahead' of Adam. She ate first, then offered the fruit for Adam to eat. Hence the fall of humanity was caused by a collusion of man and woman, with woman leading the way and man following.

2. Does childbearing redeem women?

Just as hard labour in the dirt is the context in which Adam's moral awareness would grow, so the hard labour of childbirth is the context in which Eve's moral awareness would grow. The pain of childbirth was not man's sentence but woman's; yet in undergoing this pain, salvation would appear through the coming of God to save humanity. The curse of Eve's transgression (that 'in pain you shall bring forth children', Gen. 3:16) proved a blessing, according to Paul's ironic interpretation. For Eve, the mother of all living, is the one from whose seed springs the Christ, God's own coming. The salvation of woman comes through 'the Childbearing', the birth of the Saviour.

Paul does not imply here a work-righteousness by which women are saved through a particular work, bearing children, which would be contrary to everything else he wrote. Women will be saved just as men through 'the Childbearing' (the incarnation), assuming that they abide in faith, love, and holiness, using good judgement.

The seed of this one woman alone, without male intervention, would become the Saviour of all. All human history would come from her seed and be unified in her seed. While one woman was called Eve (life-giving) 'because she would become the mother of all living' (Gen. 3:20), the other was called Mary, after Miriam, because she would deliver the Deliverer. Paul was not referring to childbirth generally but to a particular Childbirth, that of the Lord, a man born of woman, the promised seed. The woman (Eve) will be saved by the Childbearing (of Christ by Mary).

3. Why was the gospel first proclaimed to woman?

Salvation was promised to come through the seed of woman. Normally the metaphor of seed refers to the male seed, the semen, which implanted in the egg enables life. Yet the prophecy immediately after the fall revealed that the promised seed would be the seed of woman, the mother of all living, through the seed of Abraham as prototype of the faithful, and descendant from the royal seed of David (Gen. 13:15, 16; Ps. 18:50; 22:23; 48).

Genesis 3:15 prophesied that the tempter's temporary victory would ultimately be thwarted. The Lord

¹⁵ The 'deception of Eve' had a complex history of rabbinic interpretation: II Enoch 31:6; IV Macc. 19:6-8; Yebamoth 103b; Rabbah Genesis 18:6; Philo, Questions on Genesis 1.33, 46; Perke Rabbi Eliezer 15a

said to the serpent: 'I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your seed and her seed; he shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise his heel.' Virtually all classic Christian exegetes understood the seed of Eve as the coming Christ, who would crush the serpent's head, bind up the demonic powers, and bring salvation to Eve's descendants.

The first clue in scripture of the coming gospel came in the form of a promise to Eve that the Saviour would come from the seed of woman. Yet woman does not have seed. That is just the point. Without the seed of man, through the 'seed' only of woman, deliverance would occur. Through a woman the devil had tempted. Through a woman the devil would be bound. This passage is often called the 'earliest gospel' or 'protoevangelium' or 'first hint of good news' already embedded in the narrative of the fall.

The Redeemer would come by a female (from the seed of woman). The Redeemer promised to crush the demonic power would be male ('he will crush,' as a 'man born of woman'). Thus the crucial event of salvation was revealed from the outset: God turning toward the sinner in reconciling love to reverse the human condition from sin to promised salvation by grace (Gal. 4:4).

A Redeemer from a virgin, that is, by the seed of woman alone, without male initiative, and without any male implanting, would deal the death blow to Satan's head at the cross. Satan would cause the Redeemer to

suffer,¹⁶ but would be himself defeated. Thus through a man born of woman, God would guilelessly undo what the tempter of human freedom guilefully had done, and by holy love on the cross would bind up the strong man. Ambrose reasoned that it was fitting that a woman be appointed as first messenger of the gospel of the resurrection to all humanity, in order 'that she who first had brought the message of sin to man should first bring the message of the grace of the Lord'¹⁷. Tertullian commented: 'It was while Eve was yet a virgin that the ensnaring word had crept into her ear which was to build the edifice of death. Into a virgin's soul, in like manner, must be introduced that Word of God which was to raise the fabric of life; so that what had been reduced to ruin by this sex, might by the selfsame sex be recovered to salvation.'¹⁸ This is the crucial role of woman in salvation history, announced from the beginning.

4. *Is the metaphor of the church as Beloved Bride viable today?*

The New Testament characteristically employs the metaphor of the bride to understand the church. The Son

¹⁶ 'strike his heel'; John Calvin, *Commentaries* (J. King, trans. 45 vol. in 22. Edinburgh: Translation Society, 1845-56. Reprint, Grand Rapids: Baker, 1981), 1 pp. 170-1

¹⁷ Ambrose, *Of the Holy Spirit*, III. XI.7, *A Select Library of the Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers of the Christian Church*, 2 X, p. 145

¹⁸ *On the Flesh of Christ*, 17, A. Roberts and J. Donaldson, eds., *Ante-Nicene Fathers* (American reprint of the Edinburgh ed., 10 vols., Buffalo, NY: Christian Literature, 1885-1896. Reprint, Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1951-1956. Reprint, 1978-80) III, p. 536

loves the church with a love willing to risk all for the beloved. 'Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her to make her holy, cleansing her by the washing with water through the word, and to present her to himself as a radiant church, without stain or wrinkle or any other blemish, but holy and blameless' (Eph. 5:25-7).

The bridegroom willingly dies for the bride, to ready her for the end time wedding by cleansing her with baptism, washing away every hurt, so that she will be comforted, and without blemish, holy, completely ready for the final marriage feast celebrating the reconciliation of God and humanity (Rev. 19:7).

The intensely personal love of Christ for the church is richly described by John Chrysostom:

He espoused her as a wife,
He loves her as a daughter, He provides for
her as a handmaid,
He guards her as a virgin,
He fences round her like a garden
And cherishes her like a member:
as a head He provides for her,
as a root He causes her to grow,
as a shepherd He feeds her,
as a bridegroom He weds her,
as a propitiation He pardons her,
as a sheep He is sacrificed
Many are the meanings in order that we
may enjoy a part even if it be but a small
part of the divine economy of grace.¹⁹

The relation of Christ and the church prefigures the redeemed union of man and woman (2 Cor. 11; Eph. 5:21-33; Rev. 19:7-9). The metaphor of the bride has a long biblical history, from Hosea (1-3), through Ezekiel (6, 23), Isaiah (54:4-

8), Psalms (64), and the Song of Songs, and all this before it was transmuted in the New Testament by Pauline and Johannine traditions.

Scripture views the relation of God and the redeemed people with the most intimate symbol of bonding: as a marriage bond existing between a beloved husband and wife. The coming reign of God is often presented as an end time wedding celebration.²⁰ The readied church prepares as a bride adorned for her husband (Rev. 21:1-4).²¹ The espousal of the bride begins at Pentecost. The wedding will be consummated at the final day of history.²²

As dowry precedes marriage, so Christ provides gifts (*dotes beatorum*, the dowry of the blessed) to enable the spouse to enjoy eternal life and to enhance and beautify that enjoyment. The key event of the Revelation of John is the marriage supper of the Lamb (Rev. 19:6ff.). The scene is the messianic banquet. The bride, the church, appears in a spectacular wedding garment, clothed in the righteousness of the bridegroom, Christ. The other symbolic woman, Babylon, gaudily dressed, clothed in unrighteousness, is brought to nothing (17:4). The

²⁰ Methodius, *The Banquet of the Ten Virgins*, VIII, *Ante-Nicene Fathers* VI, p. 319; Council of Vienne, H. Denzinger and C. Bannwart, eds., *Enchiridion Symbolorum: Definitionum et Declarationum de Rebus Fidei et Morum*. (Ed. 14 & 15) (Berlin: Herder, 1922), p. 901

²¹ *Second Helvetic Confession*, J. Leith, ed., *Creeds of the Churches* (Richmond, VA: John Knox Press, 1979), p. 143

²² Irenaeus, *Against Heresies*, V.25, *Ante-Nicene Fathers* I, p. 566; W.M. Abbott, ed., *Documents of Vatican II* (n.p.: America Press, 1966), Ch 6.

¹⁹ John Chrysostom, *Eutropius, A Select Library of the Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers of the Christian Church* 1 IX, p. 262.

wedding feast ends sensationally with the fireworks of the conclusion of the existing heaven and earth, and the creation of a new heaven and earth (Rev. 21:1), a new Jerusalem (21:9-11), where God and the Lamb are worshipped, and where 'the dwelling of God is with men, and he will live with them. They will be his people, and God himself will be with them and be their God. He will wipe every tear from their eyes. There will be no more death or mourning or crying or pain, for the old order of things has passed away' (21:3,4).

All members of Christ's body will in the end time be gathered from around the world (Mark 13:27). The dross having been burned away, and unworthy members having been removed, the church will receive her completed form (Matt. 13:41,42), and will celebrate her marriage 'prepared as a bride beautifully dressed for her husband' (Rev. 21:2), being welcomed into the city of God (Rev. 21:8-10).

III Language Fairness

1. Is biblical language unfairly masculine or oppressively male-dominated?

Classic Christian teaching holds that neither of the sexual pronouns, he or she, adequately reflects the fullness of the divine being. Yet it is not possible to speak in a literally sexless way of God, for that would require giving up all personal pronouns. Naming conveys power. The naming of God normatively or exclusively as 'he' tends to limit the idea of God by human sexual categories. Even when

its intent may have been generic to both genders, the tradition's language has sounded exclusionary to many, who regrettably may have too readily dismissed the biblical tradition on the grounds of language alone before allowing it a reasonable hearing.

The crux of the language fairness issue hinges on whether Father-Son language, with the reference to God as he, results primarily from male-dominated social structures, and therefore degrades the dignity of women and men, or whether such language is a part of the scandal of particularity that accompanies all claims of historical revelation. The 'scandal of particularity' means that, according to biblical history, God meets us in specific times and places amid people with specific names and genders and of particular parents of a particular race and culture. To back away wholly from gender reference is to stand offended at the gospel of a man born of woman, which remains an intrinsic aspect of God's historical self-disclosure, and thus actually seeks to promote the dignity and healthy self-identity of women and men when rightly understood.

2. Is the Spirit addressable as feminine?

May we appropriately, within the bounds of classic Christian assumptions, address the Spirit in the feminine gender? We cannot settle the issues on grammatical grounds alone: *Ruach* in Hebrew is feminine. *Pneuma* in Greek is a neuter, yet even when the neuter is used, masculine pronouns may accompany it. Even in the New Revised Standard

Version, whose mandate specified that 'masculine-oriented language should be eliminated as far as this can be done without altering passages that reflect the historical situation of ancient patriarchal culture', crucial passages could not be rendered in the neuter: 'When the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all the truth; for he will not speak on his own, but will speak whatever he hears [*akouei lalēsei*], and he will declare to you the things that are to come' (John 16:13, NRSV). God is repeatedly named by Jesus as *Abba* (Father). The messianic Son (*ben, huios*) stands in the male line of David. The Spirit is *ruach* or *pneuma* (feminine or neuter). Grammatical gender, however, does not necessarily imply sexual distinctions. We cannot with clarity appeal either 'to Hebrew or Greek to determine the choice of English pronouns for the Holy Spirit'.²⁴

While God has become self-revealed in scripture largely but not exclusively in masculine terms (such as king, lord, husband, master, and father), the work of the Spirit is at times compared to mothering and nurturing actions: 'As a mother comforts her child, so will I comfort you' (Is. 66:13; Ps. 22:9, 10; 139:3). God the Spirit is not named Mother but compared to a mother.²⁵

²³ John Chrysostom, *Baptismal Instructions*, J. Quasten et al., eds., *Ancient Christian Writers: The Works of the Fathers in Translation* (55 vols.) (New York, NY: Paulist Press, 1946-) 31, pp. 27-30

²⁴ Alvin F. Kimel, Jr., *A New Language for God?* (Shaker Heights, OH: Episcopalians United, 1990), p. 8

²⁵ Roland M. Frye, *Language for God and Feminist Language* (Edinburgh: Handsel Press, 1988) pp. 17-22

Grammatical heroics that attempt a complete withdrawal from masculine language too often result in rhetorically awkward, contorted, and unwieldy communication. We see this especially where nouns are repeated to avoid the pronoun regarded as offensive, where verbs are preferred that require no object, with the odd repetition of the word 'God' as a substitute for 'he,' and with the shifting of direct address to 'you.'

The great biblical teacher, Gregory Nazianzen, in the fourth century, was long ago amused by those who foolishly held 'God to be a male', which he regarded as a misplaced analogy. Just as one cannot say that God because Father is therefore male, so one cannot conclude that 'Deity is feminine from the gender of the word, and the Spirit neuter,' since the designation 'has nothing to do with generation. But if you would be silly enough to say, with the old myths and fables, that God [flatly and literally] begat the Son by a marriage with His own Will, we should be introduced to the Hermaphrodite god of Marcion and Valentinus who imagined these newfangled Aeons.'²⁶

3. Do modern sexist premises undermine classic understandings of the relation of the gifts of men and women?

Evangelicals are committed to allowing biblical texts to speak for themselves, hence classic biblical teaching

²⁶ Gregory Nazianzen, *Orationes*, XXXI.7, *On the Holy Spirit, A Select Library of the Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers of the Christian Church*, 2 VII, p. 320

maintains faithfulness to the historic language of the church, but in doing so, seeks fairness and balance in the contemporary use of language.

It is because grace comes to us personally that sex has become a decisive theological issue. Sexual differentiation is not a novel or recent issue for biblical interpretation, but a question lodged already in the Incarnation event.

Whenever we speak *personally*, whether of ourselves or God, we use personal language, the language that speaks of he and she, and not merely it, i.e., with personal pronouns (him and her), rather than impersonal pronouns (it). Ironically when we speak personally of God it seems to trap us in sexual categories, because the English language does not have a capacity for generic personal terms (that would remain personal while not preferring one gender or another) except for them. Yet historically these personal terms for God have been preferred to the flat depersonalization of all language about God. Even then all personal plurals must be ruled out to avoid idolatry.

The Giver of grace is less a depersonalized 'it' than the divine personal Thou who addresses us as responsible, free individual persons. Only through a particular Person, God the Son, is the love of the Father offered up. It is only through a particular Personal Thou, God the Spirit, that the Father's love incarnated in the Son is applied inwardly. One is sorely tempted to rewrite scripture to gain a more advantageous posture with some modern audiences. But no well-instructed believer thinks of the

Giver of grace as 'it' or prays to an 'it,' even if steeped in modernity.

4. *Is God rightly called Abba (Father) by women struggling for justice?*

Elizabeth Achtemeier has astutely shown that the Hebrew prophets did not suffer from a failure of imagination to grasp God as female, for they were already surrounded by cultures dominated by feminine deities. Rather they deliberately chose in their context not to apply feminine language uncritically to God, she says, 'because they knew and had ample evidence from the religions surrounding them that the female language for the deity results in a basic distortion of the nature of God and of his relation to his creation' — namely, the deification of nature, pantheism, and immanent religion. Even as male terms for God are prone to diminish the fullness of God, so are female. 'When you have a Goddess as the creator, it's her own body that is the universe. She is identical with the universe.'²⁷ This the prophets called idolatry and classic Christianity has defined as pantheism. These dangers call us to make a sustained effort to use language fairly and without sexist bias, according to the mission of God which redeems and embraces both sexes.

Liturgical 'reforms' that systematically expunge the name Father from all acts of worship are unconscionable to the believing community. Jesus repeatedly called God

²⁷ D. Miller, ed., *The Hermeneutical Quest* (Allison Park, Pennsylvania: Pickwick Publications, 1986), p. 109

Father (*Abba*). This is a singular feature of his teaching, quite unusual in the Jewish tradition. God is not merely like a father; God is Father, named as such by the Son. God the Spirit teaches us to cry out 'Abba' (Rom. 8:16). The church is that community that celebrates God as *Abba*.²⁸ Christian worshippers reticent to address God by the name Jesus specifically taught them to speak can hardly be said to have learned how to pray. 'We are bound to be baptized in the terms we have received and to profess belief in the terms in which we have been baptized'.²⁹ Yet the spiritually reborn do not utter the name of God as Father (*Abba*, *Papa*) without the community of faith as mothering matrix.³⁰ The life of faith is never motherless (*ameter*, Heb. 7:3).

The scandal of particularity remains. God meets us in specific

²⁸ Irenaeus, *Against Heresies*, V.8, *Ante-Nicene Fathers* I, pp. 533-4

²⁹ Basil, in Thomas F. Torrance, *The Trinitarian Faith* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1988), p. 193

³⁰ Cyprian, *Letters*, 39, *Ante-Nicene Fathers* V, pp. 316-9

times and places amid people with specific names and genders (notice, not a single hermaphrodite), as ordinary people with particular parents of a particular race, an unrepeatable time, and a distinctive culture. To back away wholly from gender reference is to stand offended at the gospel of a man born of woman, and the Spirit who utterly transcends the linguistic limitations of gender differences that only seem to be implied in the feminine *ruach* and the neuter *pneuma*.

To denude language of all gender reference reveals an ideological bias reflecting an anti-historical prejudice, a hatred of actual history, that fails to reason with the believing church over all generations. This is quintessential modern chauvinism. This exclusion tends toward an implicit denial of our very createdness as sexual beings. No woman or man I know wishes to be called an 'it'. If so, how can one finally rest easy with 'it' language addressed to God? God is not rightly viewed as even less personal than ourselves.

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Stan Guthrie

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Stan Guthrie is the managing editor of *Evangelism and Missions Information Service* based at Wheaton College USA.

1-84227-042-7 / 197 x 127mm / pb / 240pp / £9.99

Paternoster Press, PO Box 300, Carlisle, Cumbria CA3 0QS, UK

The Church's Responsibility within the East African Context

Robert Lang'at

Keywords: Evangelism, mercy, justice, culture, community development, good works, restitution, land, business

1 Introduction

The purpose of this article is to draw attention to some of our neglected Christian responsibilities. We will identify the priorities of the Christian church and the role that it plays in various societies in bringing changes that God wants. The model used in the study is Jesus in Jewish society and that of the great preachers such as John Wesley.

It is my conviction that evangelicals could be very influential in our societies if they maintained a balance between spirituality and social work.

Dr Robert Lang'at, served as an urban and rural pastor of the Africa Gospel Church and as a hospital chaplain in his native Kenya before joining Kenya Highlands Bible College, Kericho, Kenya first as deputy principal and then for six years as principal. He currently serves as a lecturer at this school where he undertook his initial education before studying at Columbia International University, SC, USA (BS, MA) and Fuller Theological Seminary (MA); his PhD (University of Denver and Iliff School of Theology) is in religion and social change. He has also taught Bible and missiology at Taylor University. Dr Lang'at is currently developing a theology for the Kipsigis people and studying the missionary movement amongst them.

This is very important particularly in the continent of Africa where the masses are uneducated and poor. We have many Christians in Africa who need education to develop skills for earning a living. What are evangelicals doing to meet some of these needs? This paper is an attempt to answer this question.

2 Church Responsibility

Church responsibility is a very broad discipline. Therefore, my discussion is narrowed down to evangelism and the way Christians and the church must work out their salvation in response to their social context.

a) Evangelism

The church must give priority to the ministry of evangelism. Jesus commanded his disciples to be witnesses starting from Jerusalem, then to Judea and Samaria and to the rest of the earth. The purpose of evangelism can be captured in a statement of the Amsterdam Assembly of the World Council of Churches which states in no uncertain terms, that evangelism

is making Christ known to people so that each is confronted with the choice of making a personal decision to accept Christ as their saviour.¹ The Lausanne Covenant of 1974 also has a clear statement which recognizes that 'our Christian presence in the world' and dialogue with others are 'indispensable to evangelism' and but are not to be confused with evangelism itself — the 'proclamation ... of Christ as Saviour and Lord'.²

Once we have identified the main priority of the church, we raise the question, is that all? Are there other things Christians can do once they have given their lives to God? We must bear in mind that there is a broad view of Christian work depicted in the Bible. Jesus himself gave guidance on this by saying, 'You are the salt of the earth'. To be the salt means to be tasteful. Is there any place for Christians to think about people who are hungry, poor, unskilled and oppressed in the same context as evangelism? Commenting on the Wesleyan tradition of evangelism, Outler stated:

...evangelism must issue in visible social effects or else its fruits will fade and wither. Christian proclamation must take on visible form and the Christian community must be committed to social reform, or else it will stultify our Lord's prayer that God's righteous will shall be done on earth here and now, in justice and love and peace as always it is being done in heaven.³

¹ Samuel H. Moffett, *The Biblical Background of Evangelism* (Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, 1962), p. 9

² *The Lausanne Covenant*, para 4, 'The nature of evangelism'; see also paras 5, 'Christian social responsibility' and 6 'The church and evangelism'.

³ Albert C. Outler, *Evangelism in the Wesleyan Spirit* (Nashville, Tennessee, 1971), p. 25

Wesley was a preacher who believed in heart holiness, experience and practice. Outward witness in daily living should be a confirmation of inward experience of the work of the Holy Spirit in a Christian. Christian experience must be made visible in the life of a Christian through the testimony of their works. Realizing this, John Wesley organized his converts into societies. He related these societies to church sacraments and Christian discipline. He encouraged Christians to share life in the Spirit. He organized evangelistic enterprises that were rooted in the laity who were the workers of the society of that time. The laity carried the Christian testimony to the market place, to the work place, and to their communities. Wesley's evangelistic tradition brought reformation in all sectors in England. He brought reform within the organized work force, prisons and institutional slavery. Wesley's programme addressed the social problems affecting the common people of his time, Outler states:

He wanted to prepare men and women for the daily triumphs of grace but always within a corporate matrix of disciplined fellowship. He knew...that men shall not live by bread alone nor yet without bread; not by violence but also not in servility and destitution; not by institutional self-maintenance nor yet without institutions.⁴

The Wesleyan tradition of evangelism is rooted in the love of God and neighbour and is expressed in meaningful social action. If the church translates what God is doing in her, the result will be transformation of the society. Social work or rendering

⁴ Outler, *Wesleyan Spirit*, p. 32

services to society is an expression of God's love to people. The church must love the work of mercy for it is a way of expressing the grace of God. The integration of social work and evangelism is very important in reaching the world and showing that God loves the people regardless of their sins.

b) Motivation for Evangelism

Christian witness is not for glorifying personalities or to earn spiritual 'brownie' points to advance our own status as Christians. Loving those who are Christians means we desire the best for them. The 'agape' love which God manifested to us while we were yet sinners should be in our hearts and our daily practice. It is a love which is not based on merit. Outler has described this love in this manner:

Methodism... is the old religion, the religion of the Bible, the religion of primitive Church... This old religion is no other than love, the love of God and of all mankind... This love is the greatest medicine of life... Wherever this is, there are virtue and happiness going hand in hand... this religion of love and joy and peace has its seat in the inmost soul; but is ever showing itself by its fruits... spreading virtue and happiness all around it.⁵

The work of evangelism is the work of the Holy Spirit. We cannot convert people. This is the work of God. If we portray the impression that we use the work of evangelism to advance our interest, people will resent the preaching of the word of God.

The theology of pastoral care comes in here. Most evangelical pas-

tors today are trained to be good listeners to their clients. The idea that people talking about their problems to a counsellor makes them feel better, is not relevant to all cultures. This approach is perhaps appropriate to an individualistic culture, where people are always concerned with their own life and problems, and become careless of others around them. Traditionally, Africans had ways of counselling themselves. This was done through extended families or friends who cared for each other's needs. What does a pastor do when a family comes for counselling not because of a spiritual problem, but because they cannot make ends meet? Third World countries are full of such Christians. It is not easy to quote a scripture to those who are hungry and expect their needs for hunger or shelter to be met. The story of the good Samaritan should give us some clue on how we should deal with human needs. The priest and the Levite were religious people who were supposed to render help to those who were afflicted. Sometimes religious people may not be doing God's will; they may be doing what they think is God's will. We also learned this from the Pharisees. They were very strong 'church' members of that time, but Jesus disapproved of their religious practices. Caring for human beings is the ultimate concern of God. The Pharisees cared more for their religious practices than for people.

If pastoral care is to be relevant to the people and their situation, the leadership must be aware of the variety of needs represented in their con-

⁵ Outler, *Wesleyan Spirit*, p. 39

gregations. For instance, within the congregation there are those who are needing remedial care, those feeling hurt, those already involved, and those who are against constructive social change. The people who need remedial services are those who have been hit by certain crises such as death caused by accidents, unhappy marriages, financial problems, severe sickness in the family, or children's misbehaviour and so on. These needs may differ from one culture to another, so pastoral care must be approached in context in order to meet the needs of the people.

A further problem must also be noticed. People going through such difficulties are so caught up with emotional pain that they do not have any resources left to minister to others. Their attention is directed toward their own emotional and physical survival. So their problems must be dealt with first before they are free to take responsibility of addressing concerns beyond themselves. This is the situation for most pastors in East Africa for they are immersed in conditions of economic hardship and stress.

c) Caring for the Saved

When evangelistic services are held we get converts. These converts come to the church with various needs, and they have a hope that God will meet their needs. These needs could be spiritual or physical in nature. The church is responsible for creating channels for meeting those needs—for example establishing medical institutions, agricultural projects, or educational institutions. In

his life Jesus demonstrated the integration of evangelism and social work. He fed those who were hungry and healed those who were sick. He counselled those in need and warned against injustice and evil practices. His process of doing ministry brought transformation within communities with corrupt practices.

d) The Work of Mercy

The work of mercy can be defined as an act of kindness. The church should be known for this. The Roman Catholic nun, Mother Teresa, was an example of what I am trying to convey here. She worked among the poor and the needy in India.

A story of the work of mercy is narrated very well by Jesus when dealing with the question from a lawyer, 'Who is my neighbour?' Jesus told the story using two religious leaders (Luke 10:25-37). The expert in the law was familiar with the functions of the priests and the Levites. They were supposed to show compassion to those who were hurting and to care for the needy. Jesus told of a man going down from Jerusalem to Jericho. He was caught by robbers and beaten. The robbers stripped everything from him and left him half-dead. This man might have been a Jew. The priest and the Levite, being godly people, should have been the first to show compassion, but they walked on their way.

A Samaritan, who belonged to group who were despised by the Jews, came and saw the man. He stopped and provided the help the man needed. He not only helped to dress the man's wounds, but also

provided transportation to a hotel and paid the bills. The priest and the Levite were lacking in compassion or mercifulness.

What do we lack today in our churches? Who are our neighbours? There are children classified as 'street children', people we call 'homeless', or 'poor'. The church must preach the gospel and at the same time do social work (or the work of mercy, as I would prefer to call it). The church must make efforts to meet the spiritual as well as the physical needs of people.

The work of mercy can easily thrust the church into the world if care is not taken. The church must be a light, salt and yeast. She should not be a friend to the world but seek to transform the world (Rom. 12:2, Matt. 5:16; 13:33). The book of Acts provides a picture of individuals who cared for each other and showed special concern for widows and orphans, although these efforts may have been limited to those of 'the way'. However, individual Christians, such as Dorcas in Acts 9:36-41, performed acts of mercy wherever need was found.

The biblical examples should be our model when approaching issues that affect our church members and the people in the world at large.

e) The Practice of Justice

The subject of a just society is addressed throughout the Bible. It is an easy subject to talk about but difficult to attain. Policies may be drawn up to address the issues, but usually the practice proves to be difficult. Third world theologians are concerned with issues of justice particu-

larly when it comes to the distribution of wealth; this is where their people are hurting. The basis of injustice is a heart problem for often its cause is selfishness and greed for material wealth. Corson-Finnerty points this out by saying that people in all parts of the world and throughout history have often suffered oppression at the hands of others.⁶ The church should not be oppressive because that is not what God wants. Social injustice occurs within a society or social groupings or social institutions. It has its roots in the rejection of people because they are perceived to be different from others.

Some of these oppressive attitudes within religious institutions are so subtle even honest Christians fail to recognize their existence until the victim cries out for help. The power of pastors must be checked because they can also oppress their members. Peter the apostle warned the church elders against an attitude of oppression. In 1 Peter 5:3, for example, we read that pastors should be an example to their flock. Because of the way they use God's word, some pastors and councils can be dangerous if not checked by the members. The church exists on earth as a witness to God through nurturing people spiritually and empowering them to explore and use God's purposes and gifts.

For leaders to develop fair practices of justice, they must encourage a participatory approach in decision making by the members of the social

⁶ Adam Daniel Corson-Finnerty, *World Citizen* (Maryknoll, New York: Orbis, 1982), p. 61

group or religious institution. The United Methodist form of government is an ideal one. An oppressive pastor can be weeded out by the congregation. The practice of justice needs careful evaluation, using a biblical paradigm to consider decisions taken by church councils. The most vulnerable group affected by injustice are the uneducated, who might not be aware of their God-given rights. James warned the Christians of his day not to practise favouritism. The poor and the rich should be given equal treatment (James 2:1-4). Our churches today are not free from this problem. The disciples tried to oppress the children, but Jesus rebuked them saying that the kingdom of God belongs to such little ones (Matthew 19:13-14). Religious institutions, by invoking the name of God, can be oppressive to naïve people.

f) The Root of Injustice

In order to correct the injustice, the church should first uncover the root of injustice. Cultural Christians (those born into their parents' Christian beliefs) can easily practise injustice unintentionally. Faith development, which social science scholars describe in six stages, shows the practices of injustice that we may not be aware of as cultural Christians.

In the first stage (extending from infancy to six years), we learn our faith from our parents, by picking up their attitudes toward prayer, church, and God. This is learning through diffusion from the people with whom we are in immediate contact.

The second stage extends from ages seven to twelve, when we learn

our faith from parents or people such as our sisters, brothers, Sunday school teachers, and the pastor or missionary. These people pass on Christian stories to us. These stories are not limited to Bible stories but also cover cultural beliefs and practices. The younger generations are told that these are 'our Christian heritage'. No one questions if these values are oppressive or just, or even if they are biblical.

The third stage starts at age thirteen, and continues throughout adulthood. In this stage we learn our faith within our environment or through our neighbours. We learn to stick to norms of our church. Whether these norms are right or wrong, we practise them without question. The people in this stage like to stay in the middle of the group—not to be too far ahead or behind the group; this is to protect one's security within the group.

The fourth stage is the stage in which we realize that Christian faith is not based on groups or church organizations, but that each individual must give an account to God of what he or she did with their faith. We will have to give an account for our actions and value systems. This stage is where we take our individual responsibility for what we believe.

While the fourth stage may begin as early as sixteen, the fifth stage begins at thirty. At this stage we become eclectic in our theology; wishy-washy acceptance becomes the trait of this stage. Walsh describes this stage as a 'kind of theological jello flowing every direc-

tion'.⁷

The sixth stage contains seven categories namely: form of logic, form of world coherence, role taking, locus of authority, bounds of social awareness, form of moral judgement and role of symbols. We cannot discuss all these categories because our purpose here is to help us think of the values of cultural Christianity that are accepted and practised without question.

Most Christians die in stage three. They cannot evaluate their mission and the changes of society and come up with new approaches of doing the work of God. Churches or institutions made up of Christians who remain in stage three of their faith will die a slow death. A church, or any religious institution, can practise injustice. Without the members raising questions they can continue to hurt those who are affected. The churches and other religious institutions are the most vulnerable, because if anyone raises a question against her practices it would seem that one has questioned God's command.

Religious personalities can also be in the same category. Paul faced the problem when he was abused by the high priest in Jerusalem. The high priest was so highly respected that no one could question his orders (Acts 23:2-4). The book of Acts narrates the struggles of change against injustice and Jewish religious discrimination. Most African Christians today are examining themselves and

their Christian faith. This examination has resulted in the call for an African Theology.

3 The Approach of Evangelism and Mission

The influential missionary today in Third World countries is the one who provides soup, soap and the gospel to the people. These are the more influential ones, whereas others are likely to be irrelevant. Jesus himself set the example of preaching the gospel while at the same time providing bread and healing for those who needed them. Evangelism must go hand in hand with social work in order to be effective, Batchelor states,... 'for the Christian, social and economic development cannot be separated from evangelism'.⁸ For the church to be the salt of the earth, the ministry of evangelism must be integrated with social work and other works of mercy. Throughout his ministry, Jesus showed concern for the whole person. In Mark 6:34, we see a crowd waiting to hear from him. He taught the people about the kingdom of God but he did not stop there; the people had physical as well as spiritual needs. The disciples would have wanted the people to go away and find food but Jesus asked the disciples to collect what food the people had and bring it to him. With Jesus' blessings, the two fishes and the five loaves were enough to feed the crowd. God is interested in the development of the whole person; denying people their physical needs is not right before God. He created

⁷ John Walsh, *Evangelization and Justice* (MaryKnoll, New York: Orbis, 1980), p. 6

⁸ Peter Batchelor, *People In Rural Development* (Carlisle UK: Paternoster, 1993), p. 161.

good things for human beings to enjoy. The only problem is how people have used these things. Selfishness and greed are what God hates. Material things sometimes have been used to oppress others who have little. Christians should fight this misuse of material things.

a) God's People in the Society

In Matthew 5:13, we find Jesus teaching his disciples to be the salt and light of the world. We know that salt is used for flavouring and preserving the food we eat. Without salt the food will be tasteless and the food will probably go bad if it is kept for a few days. The disciples also were instructed to be the light of the world.. What do these two symbols mean today for the followers of Jesus Christ? Or to the church?

The first thing that the Christian worker, evangelist, missionary and Bible teacher must do is to study constantly the Word of God and our changing societies to be sure that the Word of God remains true and speaks to contemporary issues. We must not water down the word of God to fit our interests and those of our societies. The second thing that they must do is live what they preach and teach. We can preserve the word of God only if we are devoted to studying it carefully and practising what we teach and preach. Societies and cultures of the world keep changing but the word of God is the same yesterday, today and forever.

What do we need as a 'flavour' (or salt) for people to taste? First of all, our lifestyle must draw people to God. A life which expresses itself through God's love will be tasteful to

people. We must also do some work to show the love of God to people. A Christian is also likened to light that exposes things hidden in darkness and shows the way to God. A Christian must keep his light shining; this light is the word of God in him. Things that are hidden in darkness could be corruption, injustice, oppression, craftiness, discrimination and jealousy, and so on. The Christian must expose these by teaching and preaching against them. He must also live a life style free from these vices.

b) Doing Good Works

For a Christian to be influential in society he must do good works. A Christian must strive for excellency in whatever he does. Mediocre service does not honour or glorify God. Jesus told his disciples to let their light shine before men so that they may see their good deeds and glorify God. Good works done to others will cause them to glorify God (Matthew 5:16). What kind of good works can a Christian do that will help people in their lives? What did Jesus do to the people? In Mark 7:32, we find Jesus healing the deaf. People had brought the man to him, just like we take our sick people to hospital for treatment and wish to see them become well. Therefore, the creation of hospital, clinics, community health services, and any other similar services that would cure or prevent diseases of any kind are good works. If it is done right, this is where good deeds are manifested.

Another area is educating people. We have institutions of higher learning which are meant to develop

potential skills and intelligence so that people can use them to earn a living and serve the community. Jesus was called a teacher (Mark 9:38) and emphasized the need for good morals. He also warned his disciples against religious groups who offered misleading teaching, such as the Pharisees who were very strict in their religious laws. Jesus said, 'Be careful... watch out for the yeast of the Pharisees and that of Herod' (Mark 8:15). Yeast was used at that time to ferment large amounts of dough. In this context it refers to the evil disposition of both the Pharisees and Herod Antipas who wanted Jesus to produce a sign of divine authority (Luke 23:8). Jesus taught against religious groups who used others in their own interest. The Pharisees burdened others with religious rules that they themselves could not keep.

Modern education is very influential in our societies. It is a very strong salt. Many people want to get this kind of education. Therefore, Christians must get involved in education. This is one good work that can help God's people. Educational ethics affects the students' values, hence the society. Holmes states:

...education is not job training, although it will of course have career outcomes. It is not just broad learning across various arts and sciences. Nor is it just an introduction to the heritage of our past... Education helps shape people, cultivating abilities and qualities that last throughout life and transfer to a myriad of tasks.⁹

To develop people educationally

includes promoting thinking ability, language and communication skills, decision making, social concern and responsibility, and a sense of personal identity and moral character. It is very important to help people think for themselves; then they can make responsible decisions and become the kind of persons God meant them to be. Theologians must have a broad education in order to serve God's people well in our modern cultures. They will then be able to see ideal values that Christians ought to pursue—moral values such as honesty and justice for all. So it is important for Christians to venture into the world of education and develop good education programmes with broad curriculums that address the needs of the changing cultures.

The church, or the Christian educator, should be careful when developing an educational programme. The curriculum should be broad in order to avoid what I call 'oppressive education'. Oppressive education is a narrow education developed for the poor people by charitable organizations or oppressive governments for the purpose of using the results to advance the interest of the educators. For instance, in 1911 the British were interested in African education, so they created the Department of Education for Africa and appointed J. R. Orr as its director. He was the wrong person to be given this post, because J. R. Orr had a wrong view of African people. Tignor states:

Orr's philosophy of African education was based on stereotyped, racist, and educationalist ideas ... He believed African

⁹ Arthur F. Holmes, *Shaping Character* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1991), p. 4

people to be primitive and child-like and argued that education had to be adapted to this essential fact. The African mentality was 'undeveloped,' he contended, and like the mind of a small child, it must be stimulated into more disciplined and energetic activity by means of handicrafts and manual training. Eye and hand training held to be valuable in developing the motor centers of the brain.¹⁰

Since Orr had a racist educational view that advocated that Africans must proceed from 'sensation to precept to concept', he made the government-controlled elementary schools devote three-fifths of their time to gardening and local handicrafts such as mat-weaving, basket making, and pottery. Orr's goal was to offer Africans skills which would fit the development of rural areas for the ultimate purpose of producing raw materials for British industries.

He acted as if he wanted to secure a suitable education for African needs, but he wanted to prevent Africans receiving professional education. This was revealed when Orr became sceptical of missionary education because of its emphasis on literary training. Orrs' idea of education was oppressive because it was not geared toward the interests of the learner but the interests of the provider. Christians participating in this kind of educational process without trying to bring change would not be right. We cannot glorify God with that kind of education. We must bear in mind that God values souls more than material things. I use the term 'soul' to mean people.

c) *Community Development*

Community development is another powerful tool for influencing society and in manifesting good works that would glorify God. It is only through the help of the Holy Spirit that we can do excellent work to glorify him. We learn from the Bible that creation groans in pain (Rom. 8:22). It is God's will that things should be brought to the state they were in when God created the world. Christians must strive to do excellent work. We are aware that we have weaknesses which might hinder us doing good works, but the spirit of God is there to give us the power to do that which meets his standards.

Since good works are important for God's glory, how should Christians do their work? Every Christian who knows God must do whatever they are doing well with the aim of glorifying God. For instance, if you are a producer of bread, you should produce good bread which people will like. If you are a teacher, teach well. If you are a cook, cook so well that people would like to come to your hotel to eat. If you are the mayor of a city, you should create an environment free from corruption in which people would enjoy doing their business. All that I am saying is, a Christian should do good works, not mediocre works, that will glorify God,.

d) *Salvation and Good Works*

We Christians must take care not to think that we earn our salvation through good works. It is only by the grace of God that we are saved (Eph. 2:8-9). Also, the apostle Paul tells us

¹⁰ Robert L. Tignor, *The Colonial Transformation of Kenya* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton UP, 1976), p. 205

that the quality of our work will be assessed by God with fire (1 Cor. 3:12-14). Paul is talking about spiritual life, but we cannot separate our spiritual life and our daily works. Spiritual people must manifest their spirituality by what they do. Chan describes spirituality¹¹ as a 'lived reality'. To be closer to God is to follow Jesus' footsteps. It is not the best preaching that measures our spirituality (for even a sinner can be a good preacher) but rather the life we live and the demonstration of Christian love for our neighbour. If the Holy Spirit lives in our lives then his fruit should be manifested.

e) Making Restitution

God is involved in restoration of men and women to himself. He wants things to be put right with him. Therefore, Christians should also be involved in putting right the wrongs which sinful acts have produced. Zacchaeus set a good example when he came in contact with Jesus. The Bible does not tell us directly that he did repent of his sins, but Jesus said that salvation has come into Zacchaeus' home. What did Zacchaeus want to do? First, he wanted to share his wealth with the poor. Secondly, he wanted to restore property that he gained through cheating people. These were the two things that brought salvation to his home. These served as a testimony to people who knew him as a corrupt person. Restitution helps one to live rightly with other people in society. This is where the vertical and horizontal the-

ology of love comes into practice. This I believe is a recognition of individual sins. The individual has to bear the responsibility for putting right what they have done wrong.

f) Structural Sins

Every culture has its own sins. Social sins such as racial and sexual discrimination are very dangerous because no one seems to bear the responsibility for them. The church, the community of God's people, must be careful not to fall into this trap. The Pharisees and the priests referred to by Jesus in the gospels seemed to fall into this trap. They thought that they knew God better than anyone else. We do not find anywhere in the Bible that this group ever repented. They were the ones who wanted to have Jesus put to death.

A group of people who view themselves as righteous before God can be dangerous in society. They can be oppressive to those who are ignorant. The church of Jesus Christ should be free from social sins. Today Christians must be specific in pointing out sins just as Paul was. When Paul talked about the sins of the flesh he listed them so that no one could mistake them. Chan tells us that the Bible does not make distinction between small sins and big sins. He states:

The sins of slander and envy, for example, are mentioned along with sins of murder and adultery because they all come from an evil heart (Mk. 7:21-23).¹²

We have sins which an individual is

¹¹ Simon Chan. *Spiritual Theology* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP, 1998), p. 16

¹² Chan, *Spiritual Theology*, p. 64

more responsible for—for example, sins of the mind (evil thoughts), sins of attitude (hatred, envy), sins of the tongue (slander, gossip), and sins of action (theft, deceit). These can be turned into collective sins once a group works closely with each other and builds close relationships with each other.

g) Revival Meetings

Some churches have revival meetings in which God is expected to speak to every individual who is present so that they may correct their ways. It is a time designed for individual examination. This of course should bring repentance and restitution after we become aware of the sins that affect ourselves, God, and other people. Ministers of the gospel also are included. There is a wrong assumption that the pastor, the ordained leader, the missionary, and church are saints. History shows that the most vulnerable of all are those deemed to be the best preachers of the word. Church leaders should view revival as if it is designed for them also. The missionaries also should view themselves as vulnerable to sin. The scholars of the word are also in this category. Attitudes of hatred, jealousy, and greed, for example, can be hidden before people but not before God.

When attempting to contextualize biblical teachings, it is important to list the sins of the culture that the Bible ought to address. God is against the sins but not the culture of the people. This is very important in doing missionary work. Often missionaries transmit their own cultural sins to other cultures. When people

are converted, the Holy Spirit must be allowed to work in the hearts of people and bring conviction in their lives. It is the Holy Spirit that changes people. It is important for every Christian to embrace a certain rule which will remind them of God and how they should do their work in the secular world. It is important to encourage Christians to build good, honest businesses. There is nothing wrong with a Christian acquiring wealth honestly. The church should encourage this, particularly in Third World countries where people are so needy for material things.

This is where the theology of restitution is very important. Again, we learn from Zacchaeus, a tax collector. At first, he was not a good model for Christians in business because he was a greedy, dishonest person who sought to acquire his wealth through the wrong means. But when he was saved he sought to rectify all that he had done wrong. Christians should also be encouraged to seek professional training in areas of good works that can serve as a witness and a Christian testimony. Paul, though he was called to be a missionary, worked as tentmaker to support himself so that he would not be a burden to anyone and could be free from human subordination (often brought about when you are reliant on others for material things).

h) Land Issues

The question of our attitude to land is discussed in the Bible, especially the Old Testament. Christians have to live on earth while waiting for the return of our Lord Jesus Christ. No one 'owns' land because we did not create

it. We can't take it anywhere, either. The problem that we are facing is that the concept of land ownership in Africa today was introduced by Europeans. This form of land ownership has created landless people.

What did Jesus say about land? Jesus did not deal with this issue very much. However, when he was asked by Peter what would those people who have given up everything and follow him get, Jesus answered him by saying that as well as eternal life they would receive double what they left behind. Land is included among these things (Matt. 19: 27-30). The answer was given in the context of a community which believed that wealth was a sign of divine favour. This will happen at the renewal of all things. If those things were not important, then Jesus would not have promised to restore them. Everything that we use comes from the land which God himself has created.

To build a strong church and society, Christians must be taught the good use of all natural resources. Jesus did not condemn wealth, but rather greed for wealth. If we are to be effective in Christian ministry, we must practise what we preach. For example, missionaries who come from developed countries cannot preach against wealth and expect people to believe them, because they are talking about something that is not practised in their lives.

4 The Christian and the Business World

a) The Church and Business

Today's world is defined by the mar-

ket economy. Work has become the means of survival. To get work one must have the skills to do that work. Professional training is necessary for one to earn a living today.

What about the church? It should do the same. To pretend that we don't need money to organize church functions is not being realistic or truthful. Churches need resources to carry out their ministries. Some churches and Christian missions oppose the idea that Christians can involve themselves in business. They say, 'Doing business will lead to immorality.' However, the same people will go to church and ask for financial support for their ministries. This group would view the church's activities as not in any sense of the word a business. They generalize that businesses are conducted in a worldly way and not God's way.

Before Christian leaders prevent their congregation from doing business, they should know that there are business aspects to their ministries which are the same as those of any profit or non-profit organization. Christian enterprises are not in the business of making a profit, but all are in the business of making money. For any Christian work to succeed it must keep to the basic principles of management, namely, planning, organizing, staffing, supervising, and controlling. Whether the organization has two people or two thousand, each of those functions must be carried out in order for the organization to be successful. For Christian workers to be effective, they must be trained in areas of management. Church ministries

have sometimes suffered because training is mediocre.

It is also important to bear in mind that when one becomes a Christian or is ordained, that does not mean that one makes more moral decisions. Most Christians in leadership and administrative positions are not trained in the areas of ethical decision making or even business methods. The malpractice of Christian business people has led to the destruction of the church and Christian workers.

b) A positive view of Business

Some Christians have argued that when Jesus told the rich young man to sell his possessions and give to the poor, he implied that the accumulation of wealth is an hindrance to earning salvation. The picture of a camel struggling to enter the eye of a needle is equated to a rich man who finds it difficult to enter the kingdom of God because of his riches. Jesus' sermon in Matthew chapter 5 does not seem to paint the job description of a salesman! Studies have shown that students selecting business careers are more money-minded, security-oriented, and less concerned in helping people than those students who are select careers in teaching, science, medicine, and engineering. Business students are interested in raising their social status. This behaviour is certainly difficult to reconcile with Christian faith.

However, others believe that it is possible for one to be both a Christian and a business person. When we turn to the biblical view of creation, we learn that God created both heaven and earth. The biblical view is not

that the things of the spirit or of heaven are good and the things of earth or material are evil. From the beginning people were commanded to use the material of the earth and rule the earth.

Harold L. Johnson tells us that Paul's writings sometimes have been used to argue that Christianity sets material values over against spiritual values by making a distinction between 'flesh' and 'spirit'.¹³ He points out that on the surface it appears that 'flesh' referred to the material aspects of life while 'spirit' refers to such matters as worship, meditation and communion with God. However, most Christian scholars agree that the concept of the flesh relates to the totality of human behaviour and personality stemming from a non-Christian philosophy. The term 'flesh' is connected with the short-comings of the spiritual nature—for instance, enmity, strife, jealousy, selfishness, dissension, envy, and party spirit. The term 'spirit' is connected with love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. These approaches to life did not necessarily suggest a low standard of economic well-being.¹⁴

So the creation perspective does not treat the material world as inherently evil and the world of business as irrelevant for Christian living. It is sad to say that some western missionaries have preached against material-

¹³ Harold L. Johnson. *The Christian as a Businessman* (New York: Association Press, 1964), p. 40

¹⁴ Johnson, *Businessman*, p. 40

ism in Africa, but from the African point of view, the missionary is the most materialistic person they have ever seen because they possess so much. Therefore there is a great need for African Christians and churches to develop a better understanding of the world of business as a ministry.

c) Service to the Neighbour

God is interested in providing good services to people. Jesus demonstrated this by washing his disciples' feet. Jesus took the cultural services that were known by the Jewish people and used them to get his point across. People followed Jesus because of what he provided for them. Jesus provided services that were holistic in nature. For the church to be influential in our societies she must follow the pattern that Jesus set.

Serving others with production of goods is not wrong as long as the product is beneficial to the neighbour, and does not exploit them. The doctrine of creation and incarnation points to the value of production and the use of it. This means that to provide services people need is a ministry. There are different types of services. There are services which empower people to gain skills that will help in earning a living, such as providing good education. There are services that are oppressive and exploitative such as providing training that will serve the interest of the provider only

The church is supposed to make some contribution to human welfare. Christians in business should be motivated by altruistic concern for

their fellow humans rather than by profit. Physicians, teachers and ministers provide humanitarian services but through them they earn a living. Christians in business provide services needed by people in their communities. If the business person produces something that people want and if the product is good for the people, then they are helping to meet the needs of the people. For instance, a farmer who produces corn, finger millet, wheat, vegetables, cotton, bricks or timber, will help in meeting the needs of the people.

There are many other services that are humanitarian in nature. Christians should be encouraged to equip themselves for these activities. Christian higher learning institutions should provide programmes that incorporate a variety of skills which Christians can use to serve God. Providing inferior training for Christians will make the church powerless. Medicine is the most influential tool today for evangelism because it provides something that the people need.

Christian ethical awareness and ethical analysis must be incorporated into the logic of business decision-making and problem-solving procedures. This would mean that after a problem has been identified and analysed, the alternative solutions that are formulated should be based on Christian ethical judgement. Courses offered in business administration should be taught using approaches of Christian ethics. It is right for a Christian to make a profit justly and to use means that are within the biblical norm of justice.

d) *The way things ought to be*

When we go back to the story of the Garden of Eden we read of the original righteousness by which humanity was expected to live. In Genesis 2:15 we are told God took the man he had created and put him in the garden to work it and care for it. The man was not going to stay in the garden idly; he had to work. The woman was created to be a helper in this work. Working to produce materials for living is the proper thing to do, because humanity was in harmony with nature. After the Fall, nature became non-cooperative. We have to be careful so that the world of business will not mislead us. Troeltsch once stated:

...the world itself is a mixture of good and evil, so the whole social order, with its pleasure and its labor has its good points. On the other hand, it is also full of danger: its bad side is manifest in its tendency to distract the hearts of men from the one thing needful.¹⁵

e) *Unrealistic Beliefs in the Church*

The belief that material things do not matter and do not influence the church in decision making is unrealistic. The modern church suffers from this problem, particularly the churches in developing countries. The church should aim to provide parental care to the orphan, to be a husband to the widows, to help those who are ready for marriage, to encourage business people to create work for the unemployed, show mer-

cy to the handicapped who are unable to work, provide food for the hungry, visit the sick and the prisoners and to defend the defenceless. To say that the church does not need material things and trained personnel to do these ministries is unrealistic. It is a mistake for the church or any Christian organization to ask for charitable funds and services to build personal merits or merits for the organization. The aim of charity is not to heal social evils or remove poverty but to demonstrate the spirit of God's love. There is often a great lack of this in Christian ministries today.

This approach calls for humble living and not human pride. Troeltsch tells us that the spirit of restraint and simplicity of life should not be given up but rather this spirit should be encouraged in those who are giving and those who are receiving.¹⁶ This humble spirit has to be the work of God and not the result of human effort.

f) *Working for a living*

Can Christians work for a living? When Jesus called his disciples, they were fishermen by profession. They were working for a living. Everybody works for a living. No one would like to be a beggar. All material things come from God, and they were intended to be used by people whom God created. God established the pattern of work as the means to acquire these goods.

Christian workers such as pastors and evangelists also work for a living.

¹⁵ Ernst Troeltsch, *The Social Teaching of the Christian Churches* (Westminster: John Knox, 1992), p. 58

¹⁶ Troeltsch, *Social Teaching*, p. 135

They must be paid by the people they serve. The church is making a big mistake if they use the services of an individual without payment. An evangelist has a right to earn a living through the church. Paul the apostle mentioned this, except that he found his own means of earning a living through tent-making so that he would not be a burden on the church.

g) God's People and Money

Money can be defined as a tool which is used to motivate people to work. It is like a receipt for selling your labour to somebody who wanted it and after finishing they give you a receipt which will prove to another person that you deserve what you want to get in exchange for that receipt. The Bible tells us that the love of money is the root of evil (1 Tim. 6:10). It is not the money that is evil, but the love of money. The evil is within the person not within the money. This can be said about wealth also. Wealth in itself is not evil; the person who possesses it is the problem. Wealth can be used to build the kingdom of God. Condemning wealth without condemning the possessor is very misleading. Money should not dictate our Christian life or the church activities. Church activities have sometimes suffered because they have been allowed to be dictated by funds.

5 Conclusion

In conclusion, I am saying that Christian ministry is very broad and has many implications. It is not enough to bring people to Jesus Christ, but we must continue building them spiritually, economically and intellectually. We have to prepare Christians to know how to live here on earth and prepare them also for the next kingdom.

In Africa, where the majority are not educated, and resources are undeveloped, a rural development programme should be part of Christian education curriculum. Therefore, the missionaries who are needed today in Africa are those who are trained in medicine, rural development and modern technology such as computers, business, buildings and agriculture. Even Christians who are road engineers have a contribution to make.

Evangelism and missionary work must go hand in hand with social work. In Africa, we are able to preach the gospel to our people. Adequate and holistic training is what African people need. The Church in Africa has grown spiritually, but it needs to respond to its own cultural context instead of being adversely affected by western cultural values.

Philippine Tongues of Fire? Latin American Pentecostalism and the Future of Filipino Christianity

George W. Harper

Keywords: Hispanization, missions, Church growth, Roman Catholics, Protestants, comity agreement, modernism, Pentecostals, indigenous Philippine Pentecostals, Americanization

Introduction¹

Christ...came to America. Journeying from Bethlehem and Calvary, He passed through Africa and Spain on His long westward journey to the pampas and cordilleras. And yet was it really He who came, or another religious figure with His name and some of His marks? Methinks the Christ, as He

sojourned westward, went to prison in Spain, while another who took His name embarked with the Spanish crusaders for the New World, a Christ who was not born in Bethlehem but in North Africa. This Christ became naturalized in the Iberian colonies of America, while Mary's Son and Lord has been little else than a stranger and sojourner in these lands from Columbus's day to this.²

These strong words were written

Dr Harper is an ordained minister in the Presbyterian Church (USA) serving with Action International Ministries at Asia Graduate School of Theology-Philippines where he is Professor of Christian History and Thought and Associate Program Director. Dr Harper holds degrees from Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary (MDiv) and Boston University (PhD) and previously taught at the Alliance Biblical Seminary, Quezon City, Philippines. He has contributed to the *Dictionary of Asian Christianity*, Eerdmans, 2001 and the *Blackwell Dictionary of Evangelical Biography: 1730-1860*. (Blackwell, 1995). An earlier version of this article appeared in the *Journal of Asian Mission* 2:2 (September 2000), pp. 225-259.

¹ I wish to thank Randall Gleason, of the International School of Theology-Asia, for his suggestion that I turn my ideas on this topic into an article. I appreciate the assistance of Anne Kwantes, of Asian Theological Seminary; Wonsuk Ma, of Asia Pacific Theological Seminary; Pat Mariano, of the Christian and Missionary Alliance Churches of the Philippines; Eric Smith, of Philippine Challenge; Stephen Smith, of Gordon College; and especially my friend Averell Aragon, of Alliance Biblical Seminary.

² John A. Mackay, *The Other Spanish Christ: A Study in the Spiritual History of Spain and South America* (New York: Macmillan, 1932), p. 95.

by the young John Mackay, fresh from over a decade's service as a missionary in Peru, Uruguay, and Mexico. Mackay went on to serve for many years as president of Princeton Theological Seminary, during which time he earned a reputation for unusual openness towards other Protestant denominations and even towards the Roman Catholic Church.³ Of course his early reaction had been not to Catholicism as such but to the particular strain of Catholicism associated with Spanish spirituality, and especially to the hybridization of this Hispanic Catholicism with the primal religions of Latin America to yield what is commonly described as folk-Catholicism.⁴

Mackay's argument was that the Christ born in Bethlehem, i.e., the Christ of the Bible, might finally escape from his Spanish prison and come to Latin America through the efforts of such 'contemporary religious thinkers' as Gabriela Mistral, a liberal Catholic, Jose Zorilla de San Martin, a more traditional Catholic, and non-sectarian Christians like Ricardo Rojas and Julio Navarro Monzo. If he had written his book forty years later, doubtless he would have cited the work of liberation theologians such as Gustavo Gutierrez and Leonardo Boff.

Mackay did devote a chapter to Latin American Protestantism, but from his perspective the most impor-

tant Protestant 'landmarks' were medical missions, educational institutions, and other agencies that gave 'permanent expression to the spirit of Christ'.⁵ He dealt with Pentecostalism very briefly, referring to its rapid growth in Chile and noting with approval the high morality of its adherents. Although he commented as well on their 'incandescent religious passion' and 'zeal to save other lives', he claimed that over time '[e]xtravagant phenomena [had] tend[ed] to disappear from [their] gatherings' and that they had 'become more normal in their emotional experience and more disposed to co-operate with fellow-Christians of other groups in the interests of the common cause'.⁶ The irony is that it is these Pentecostals who have brought the Christ of Bethlehem to the masses of Latin America, and that they have done so, Mackay to the contrary notwithstanding, while remaining as passionate and fractious as ever.

Recent literature discussing the rise of Latin American Pentecostalism includes landmark volumes by sociologist David Martin (*Tongues of Fire: The Explosion of Protestantism in Latin America* [Oxford: Blackwell, 1990]) and anthropologist David Stoll (*Is Latin America Turning Protestant? The Politics of Evangelical Growth* [Berkeley, CA: University of California Press,

³ John A. Mackay, *Ecumenics: The Science of the Church Universal* (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1960), pp. 16-18 and 207

⁴ Even in *Ecumenics*, pp. 42 and 124-31, Mackay essentially recapitulated his earlier assessment of Spanish and Latin American Catholicism.

⁵ Mackay, *Other Spanish Christ*, p. 242

⁶ Mackay, *Other Spanish Christ*, pp. 247-8

1990)).⁷ The question I wish to address in this article is whether the Philippines may also be turning Protestant, or at least whether this nation, whose culture, like that of Latin America, has up to now been defined by the norms of Hispanic Catholicism, may be approaching the time when its culture will be partly redefined by the norms of global Pentecostalism. Might the day have finally arrived when being Filipino and being Protestant are no longer seen as contradictory or even somewhat incongruous?

At first glance this thesis seems implausible. After all, the fifth (1993) edition of Patrick Johnstone's *Operation World* states that Protestants make up only 7.5% of the population of the Philippines, with evangelicals accounting for about two-thirds of that figure (5.1% of the population) and Pentecostals accounting for just over half of all evangelicals (2.8% of the population).⁸ But according to the second (1978) edition of *Operation World*, as recently as 1976

Protestants made up only 5% of the population, and the first (1982) edition of David Barrett's *World Christian Encyclopedia* estimates that in 1970 Protestants made up scarcely 3% of the population.⁹ In fact, the ratio of Filipino Protestants to Catholics today is broadly similar to the ratio in Brazil and Chile thirty or forty years ago.¹⁰ Might it be that the ratio of Filipino Protestants to Catholics in another thirty or forty years will be similar to the ratio in Brazil and Chile today?

Lending plausibility to this speculation are the numerous historical and cultural parallels between Latin America and the Philippines. Spain did colonize both regions, after all, and the colonizer's culture overlaid, permeated, and ultimately transformed the pre-existing cultures to yield an amalgam that even today preserves traditional values while giving them a special 'spin'.¹¹ For example, both Latin American and Philippine cultures continue to lay great stress on the family unit, taking

⁷ For recent discussions of this phenomenon, see C. René Padilla, 'The Future of Christianity in Latin America: Missiological Perspectives and Challenges', *International Bulletin of Missionary Research* 23:3 (July 1999), pp. 105-12; and Lynda K. Barrow, 'Mission in Mexico: An Evangelical Surge', *The Christian Century* 118:7 (28 February 2001), pp. 22-3.

⁸ Patrick Johnstone, *Operation World: The Day-by-Day Guide to Praying for the World*, 5th ed. (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1993), p. 448. Patrick Johnstone and Jason Mandryk, *Operation World: 21st Century Edition* (Carlisle, U.K.: Paternoster Lifestyle, 2001), p. 521, describes evangelicals as constituting 16.7% of the population of the Philippines, but because this latest edition of *Operation World* no longer treats evangelicalism as a category of Protestantism, its data are not directly comparable to those in earlier editions.

⁹ Patrick Johnstone, *Operation World: A Handbook for World Intercession*, 2nd ed. (Bromley, England: STL, 1978), p. 124; David B. Barrett (ed.), *World Christian Encyclopedia: A Comparative Study of Churches and Religions in the Modern World, A.D. 1900-2000* (New York: OUP, 1982), p. 562

¹⁰ Barrett, *World Christian Encyclopedia*, pp. 186, 226

¹¹ See the discussion of the Filipino cultural 'onion' in Arthur Leonard Tuggy and Ralph Toliver, *Seeing the Church in the Philippines* (Manila: OMF, 1972), p. 8. For a discussion that grounds contemporary differences between Philippine and Latin American cultures in differences between these regions' pre-conquest societies, see John Leddy Phelan, *The Hispanization of the Philippines: Spanish Aims and Filipino Responses, 1565-1700* (Madison, WI: University of Wisconsin Press, 1959), pp. 26-7.

the extended family as the basic building block of society.¹² More generally, both Latin American and Philippine cultures are relation- rather than task-oriented, so that, for example, continuing a significant conversation takes precedence over adhering to a strict timetable.¹³ One result of this is that both Latin American and Philippine cultures tend to deprecate the complex of values commonly referred to as the Protestant work ethic.¹⁴

Related to this is the observation that in both Latin America and the Philippines, religion and ethics are commonly de-coupled, with liturgy and daily life seen as having little direct connection.¹⁵ In addition, the rites most characteristic of folk-Catholicism as practised in both Latin America and the Philippines focus on Mary and the saints, with

relatively little concern for Christ, God the Father, or the Holy Spirit.¹⁶ What attention Christ does receive is usually as an infant, the Filipino 'Santo Niño', or a corpse, the Filipino 'Santo Entierro', both of these figures being obviously weak and thus presumably vulnerable to the devotee's manipulation.¹⁷ Such manipulation is most often attempted not in the church, at its public altar, but in the home, at its private shrine. One extreme example of this sort of behaviour, the 'punishment' of an image of the Santo Niño perceived to have failed to deliver on the supplicant's request, is common to both cultures.¹⁸

Yet another shared practice is that of penitential self-scourging, especially during Holy Week, often understood as a means of atoning for one's sins. On Good Friday, processions of so-called 'flagellantes' can be found at shrines throughout the Philippines, across Latin America, and even here and there in the

¹² Francis Fukuyama describes Spain, Latin America, and the Philippines as 'low-trust' societies that lack 'spontaneous sociability' and therefore require the family to carry the sort of cultural weight that in 'high-trust' societies like the US and Japan is carried by voluntary organizations such as the church and the joint-stock corporation. See his discussion in *Trust: The Social Virtues and the Creation of Prosperity* (New York: Free Press, 1995), especially pp. 49-67.

¹³ Mackay, *Other Spanish Christ*, p. 18; Paul G. Hiebert, *Anthropological Reflections on Missiological Issues* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 1994), pp. 141-3.

¹⁴ Max Weber, *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*, Talcott Parsons (tr.) (New York: Scribner's, 1950); R.H. Tawney, *Religion and the Rise of Capitalism: A Historical Study* (New York: Harcourt, Brace & World, 1926); Ernst Troeltsch, *The Social Teaching of the Christian Churches*, Olive Wyon (tr.), 2 vols. (New York: Harper, 1960), 2:644-50; S.N. Eisenstadt (ed.), *The Protestant Ethic and Modernization: A Comparative View* (New York: Basic Books, 1968); Mackay, *Other Spanish Christ*, pp. 7, 29; Fukuyama, *Trust*, pp. 43-8.

¹⁵ Mackay, *Other Spanish Christ*, pp. 37, 102

¹⁶ Mackay, *Other Spanish Christ*, pp. 13-14, 53, 112, and passim; Raul Pertierra, *Religion, Politics, and Rationality in a Philippine Community* (Quezon City, Philippines: Ateneo de Manila University Press, 1988), pp. 140-1.

¹⁷ Mackay, *Other Spanish Christ*, pp. 96-8, 102, 110-11, and 113; Benigno P. Beltran, *The Christology of the Inarticulate: An Inquiry into the Filipino Understanding of Jesus the Christ* (Manila: Divine Word, 1987), pp. 116-24. For a discussion of a Latin American counterpart to the 'Santo Entierro', the 'Cristo Yacente' venerated by the inhabitants of a town in southern Peru, see Curt Cadorette, 'Christ in the Night: The Missiological Challenge of Andean Catholicism', *Missiology* 25:1 (January 1997), pp. 51-60.

¹⁸ Mackay, *Other Spanish Christ*, p. 54; Beltran, *Christology of the Inarticulate*, p. 120

American Southwest.¹⁹ The list of such cultural congruencies could be extended almost indefinitely. This close similarity strongly suggests that since Latin America has proved a fertile medium for Pentecostalism's propagation, the same may be true of the Philippines. However, whether this is in fact the case, and indeed whether it may already be taking place, can be determined only by taking a closer look at the specifics of contemporary Philippine religious life. Such will be the focus of the next section of this article.

1. Philippine Roman Catholicism

Any consideration of the Philippine religious 'pie' must begin with an evaluation of the largest 'slice' of that pie, the Roman Catholic community. Catholicism arrived early, with friars in the company of the Spanish explorer Magellan celebrating the first Mass on Philippine soil in 1521. Although the friars went on to baptize Rajah Humabon of Mactan, a number of other Cebuano princes, and thousands of their vassals, later that year Magellan and many of his men were killed and the survivors

had to flee for their lives, taking with them such vestiges of institutional Catholicism as had already been implanted.²⁰

Catholicism finally gained a permanent foothold in the Philippines with the arrival of Miguel Lopez de Legazpi's expedition in 1565.²¹ Legazpi brought with him five Augustinian friars, and over the next four decades these were joined by representatives of the Franciscan, Dominican, Jesuit, and Recollect orders. With the passing years, as Spain slowly consolidated its control of the Philippine lowlands, these five orders pursued the Christianization of the ethnic-Malay inhabitants.²² Although such efforts were at first slow to bear significant fruit, by the early seventeenth century the friars had baptized approximately 500,000 converts and their children, effectively laying the foundations of Filipino Catholicism.²³

Yet the form of Catholic piety practised by most Filipinos, then as now, would have seemed strange even to a fellow Catholic from north-

²⁰ T. Valentino Sitoy, Jr., *A History of Christianity in the Philippines*, Vol. 1, *The Initial Encounter* (Quezon City, Philippines: New Day, 1985), pp. 36-63. For primary documents related to Magellan's voyage, see James Alexander Robertson and Emma Helen Blair (eds.), *The Philippine Islands, 1493-1898*, 55 vols. (Cleveland, OH: Arthur H. Clark, 1903-1909), 1:247-337.

²¹ For primary documents related to Legazpi's expedition, see Robertson and Blair, *Philippine Islands*, 2:75-329.

²² Sitoy, *Initial Encounter*, pp. 130-38, 228-45; Pablo Fernandez, *History of the Church in the Philippines, 1521-1898* (San Juan, Philippines: Life Today, 1988), pp. 19-27

²³ Phelan, *Hispanization of the Philippines*, p. 56; Arthur Leonard Tuggy, *The Philippine Church: Growth in a Changing Society* (Grand Rapids, MI: Erdmans, 1971), p. 29

¹⁹ Mackay, *Other Spanish Christ*, p. 34; Beltran, *Christology of the Inarticulate*, p. 115; Lorayne Ann Horka-Follick, *Los Hermanos Penitentes: A Vestige of Medievalism in Southwestern United States* (New York: Tower, 1969); Silvia Novo Pena, 'Religion', in *Reference Library of Hispanic America*, Nicholas Kanellos (ed.), 3 vols. (Detroit: Gale, 1997), 2:269-70. For a discussion of the function served by such corporal discipline in Hispanic Catholicism, see Maureen Flynn, 'The Spiritual Uses of Pain in Spanish Mysticism', *Journal of the American Academy of Religion* 64:2 (Summer 1996), pp. 257-78.

ern Europe. Spanish stress on God's absolute transcendence, coupled with the animist concept of a single supreme deity (Tagalog *Bathala*) who had created the world but now took no interest in it, yielded to the folk-Catholic concept of God as one who generally took no interest in the world but was nevertheless open to persuasion. Spanish veneration of Mary and the saints, coupled with the animist concept of a myriad of lesser deities and spirits and the sociological concept of the 'go-between' (Tagalog *tagapamagitan*), yielded the folk-Catholic practice of reliance on Mary and the saints as advocates who might indeed persuade God to take an interest in the devotee's case. Spanish fondness for crucifixes, images, relics, and other such outward trappings of Catholicism, coupled with the animist use of similar trappings and the Filipino love of pomp and ritual, yielded the folk-Catholic dependence on charms and fetishes (Tagalog *anting-anting*) as means of manipulating Mary and the saints in order to gain their advocacy on the devotee's behalf.²⁴

The great strength of folk-Catholicism in the Philippines today is eloquently attested by the enormous masses of people thronging the plaza around the parish church at Quiapo, in the old city of Manila. Many of those in the crowd are waiting to file past the famous statue of the Santo Entierro, the 'Black Nazarene', displayed in the church's

entranceway, as they do so perhaps rubbing a handkerchief or scrap of cloth on its exposed foot in order to take with them some of its spiritual power. Before leaving, they may pause for a moment to shop among the vendors' carts lining the plaza, hoping to purchase a fetish for protection from an enemy's curses or for inflicting on an enemy curses of their own. They may even buy a black candle to be used in conjunction with a special novena said at the church's high altar in order to cause an enemy's death.

But the same plaza at Quiapo that testifies to the great strength of folk-Catholicism also testifies to the surprising weakness of institutional Catholicism. On the very doorstep of the Quiapo church, along with *anting-anting* and black candles, vendors offer abortifacients, palm and Tarot card readings, and even the chance to communicate with the spirits of dead loved ones. The fact that such practices are emphatically forbidden by scripture and canon law alike carries no weight with the practitioners or their many customers.²⁵ Unfortunately, most Filipino Catholics have no idea what their church teaches about such things because they have no exposure to its magisterium that might bring them into contact with the Bible, let alone the creeds, the catechism, conciliar documents, or papal encyclicals.²⁶ Strikingly, only about 5% attend

²⁴ Peter G. Gowling, 'Christianity in the Philippines Yesterday and Today', *Silliman Journal* 12:2 (1965), pp. 10-11

²⁵ I determined this for myself during a visit to the Quiapo church in June of 1998.

²⁶ Gowling, 'Christianity in the Philippines', p. 10

church regularly, a figure comparable to that prevailing in post-Christian Europe.²⁷

In 1995, during Pope John Paul II's visit to the Philippines, he issued a challenge to a vast crowd gathered at the Luneta in old Manila: 'You must be the light of Asia!' Yet the Philippine Catholic Church cannot provide enough priests to meet even its own needs, let alone the vast requirements of the Asian mission field. The ratio of priests to parishioners in the Philippines is 1:20,000, among the worst in the world, and even today one-third of all Catholic priests serving in the Philippines are missionaries from other countries.²⁸

A final pointer to institutional Catholicism's weakness lies in the political realm. Of the Philippines' five most recent presidents, only two, Corazon Aquino and Gloria Macapagal Arroyo, have been observant Catholics. Of the other three, Ferdinand Marcos was a member of the Iglesia Filipina Independiente (IFI), Fidel Ramos is a member of the United Church of Christ in the

Philippines (UCCP), and Joseph Estrada is a flamboyantly non-observant Catholic who supports at least a dozen children by five 'wives'. Although Jaime Cardinal Sin, Archbishop of Manila and Primate of the Philippines since 1974, promoted his own presidential candidates against both Ramos and Estrada, these candidates fared poorly, with Estrada even winning by a landslide. The bottom line is that although most Filipinos respect Cardinal Sin, they often pay little attention to what he has to say.

Such surprising institutional weakness provides the context for David Barrett's conclusion that although the number of Filipino Catholics continues to increase, their rate of increase is considerably lower than that of the general population. Consequently Barrett estimates that the percentage of professing Catholics in the Philippines will have declined from 85% in 1970 to only 78% in 2000.²⁹ Peter Brierley estimates that the average annual growth rate (AAGR) of the Philippine Catholic community will decline from 2.1% (1995-2000) to 1.8% (2000-2005) and 1.6% (2005-2010).³⁰ With the AAGR of the general population somewhat less than 3% and only slowly declining, the problem is bound to become even more press-

²⁷ Johnstone, *Operation World: Day-by-Day*, p. 448; Ralph Tolliver, 'The Philippines', in Donald Hoke (ed.), *The Church in Asia*, (Chicago: Moody, 1975), p. 534. Pertierra, *Religion, Politics, and Rationality*, p. 146, states that regular church attendance averages less than 6% among the adult Catholics of one rural community in northwestern Luzon.

²⁸ *Philippine Star* (Manila), 4 May 1996, citing figures released by the Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines (CBCP). The article quotes Fr. James Reuter, speaking for the CBCP, to the effect that 'there are many dioceses where there is one priest for 25,000 to 30,000 people' and in some dioceses the figure is closer to one for 40,000. For similar data from an earlier period, see Gowing, 'Christianity in the Philippines', pp. 9-12.

²⁹ Barrett, *World Christian Encyclopedia*, p. 562.

³⁰ Computed from figures in Peter Brierley, ed., *World Churches Handbook* (London: Christian Research Association, 1997), p. 677.

ing.³¹ This steady shrinkage of the Catholic slice of the Philippine religious pie has other consequences that will be examined below.

2. Philippine Protestantism

As the Catholic slice of the pie has shrunk, the Protestant slice has grown, though its pattern of growth has been neither uniform nor even unbroken. For the first decade after the initial deployment of Protestant missionaries in 1898, their work

brought an impressive response.³² Some of them even claimed to foresee a day when Filipinos might embrace Protestantism as they had previously embraced Catholicism. For example, in 1900 Eric Lund, a Baptist missionary, exclaimed that the island of Negros stood on the brink of a mighty Reformation.³³ Four years later Methodist missionary Homer Stuntz, reporting a total membership of 6,842, predicted 500,000 members within twenty years.³⁴ He enthused, 'Such ripeness for evangelism has never been seen in any Roman Catholic field.'³⁵

This unbridled optimism was one of the factors prompting many missionaries to divert the bulk of their energy from evangelism and the planting of new churches to ecumenism and the building of new institutions, these latter often broadly

³¹ Print estimates of the annual population growth rate of the Philippines have varied widely. For example, see Johnstone, *Operation World: Day-by-Day*, p. 448; Edythe Draper (ed.), *Almanac of the Christian World* (Wheaton, IL: Tyndale, 1990), p. 130; George Thomas Kurian, *Atlas of the Third World* (New York: Facts on File, 1983), p. 304; George Thomas Kurian, *Encyclopedia of the Third World*, 3rd ed. (New York: Facts on File, 1987), pp. 1612-13; and Brian Rajewski et al. (eds.), *Countries of the World and Their Leaders: Yearbook 1998* (Detroit: Gale, 1998), p. 983. Web sites offer figures that are more up-to-date but just as varied. For example, see the site maintained by the Philippine government's National Statistics Office, <http://www.census.gov.ph/data/sectordata/c2k_highlights.html>, and the US Central Intelligence Agency's World Factbook 2000, accessible at <<http://www.cia.gov/cia/publications/factbook/geos/rp.html#People>>. Aiming to err on the side of caution, this article will assume an average annual population growth rate for the Philippines beginning at somewhat less than 3% in 1990 and decreasing to somewhat less than 2.5% in 2000. Denominations whose growth rates consistently slump below these figures will be taken as failing to keep pace with the growth of the general population, thus constituting a declining percentage of that population.

³² Tuggy and Toliver, *Seeing the Church*, p. 29. For discussions of the earliest period of Protestant missionary activity in the Philippines, see Kenton J. Clymer, *Protestant Missionaries in the Philippines, 1898-1916: An Inquiry into the American Colonial Mentality* (Urbana, IL: University of Illinois Press, 1986); Anne C. Kwantes, *Presbyterian Missionaries in the Philippines: Conduits of Social Change, 1899-1910* (Quezon City, Philippines: New Day, 1989); and Mariano C. Apilado, *Revolutionary Spirituality: A Study of the Protestant Role in the American Colonial Rule of the Philippines, 1898-1928* (Quezon City, Philippines: New Day, 1999).

³³ Tuggy and Toliver, *Seeing the Church*, p. 44
³⁴ Clymer, *Protestant Missionaries*, p. 194;
 Tuggy, *Philippine Church*, p. 103

³⁵ Homer C. Stuntz, 'Past and Present in the Philippines', *Missionary Review of the World*, ns 17:7 (July 1904), p. 492

ecumenical in scope.³⁶ One unintended consequence was an abrupt slowing of growth, on which they themselves commented. For example, Congregational missionary Frank Laubach observed: 'While the curve [of membership growth] seems to rise in a satisfactory manner for the entire period [through about 1920], it should be noted that the last half of the period is not nearly so good as the first.... In general that first fine speed which had characterized the earlier years had ceased.'³⁷ For Methodists, Presbyterians, and most other Protestants, the period from about 1910 to the mid-1930s was a time of slow growth and structural consolidation. Another brief surge of membership in the late 1930s was abruptly terminated by World War II and the Japanese occupation.³⁸

The post-war years brought fragmentation as well as further consolidation. This means that today, rather than a single Protestant slice of the Philippine religious pie, we must

share several distinct Protestant slices, ranging from liberal conciliarism through conservative evangelicalism to traditional as well as indigenous Pentecostalism. Each of these slices merits closer examination.

2.1 Conciliar Protestantism

The conciliar Protestant movement in the Philippines includes the UCCP, the United Methodist Church, the Convention of Philippine Baptist Churches, and other denominations that have affiliated with the National Council of Churches in the Philippines (NCCP), founded in 1963.³⁹ Since considerations of space preclude a close examination of each of these bodies, the UCCP has been selected as the NCCP's most appropriate representative.

The post-war years brought the process of denominational consolidation to a climax in 1948 with the coming together of Presbyterians, Congregationalists, United Brethren in Christ, and several other groups to form the UCCP.⁴⁰ Unfortunately, this new denomination failed to break with the laggardly pattern of growth that had been set by its precursor bodies, thus casting a pall over

³⁶ See Tuggy and Toliver, *Seeing the Church*, p. 29; and Averell U. Aragon, 'A Study of the History and Development of the Philippine Council of Evangelical Churches and Its Contribution to the Growth of Protestantism in the Philippines' (ThM thesis, Asia Graduate School of Theology-Philippines, 1999), pp. 7-19.

³⁷ Frank Laubach, *The People of the Philippines* (New York: George H. Doran, 1925), p. 368f., quoted in Tuggy and Toliver, *Seeing the Church*, p. 29. For a very different perspective on this plateauing of Protestant growth, see Apilado's chapter, 'Identity Crisis: The Protestant Churches, 1908-1914', in *Revolutionary Spirituality*, pp. 108-58.

³⁸ See the membership charts in Tuggy and Toliver, *Seeing the Church*, p. 28 (Presbyterian), and in Tuggy, *Philippine Church*, p. 107 (Methodist) and p. 114 (Convention Baptist).

³⁹ Barrett, *World Christian Encyclopedia*, p. 565; T. Valentino Sito, Jr., *Comity and Unity: Ardent Aspirations of Six Decades of Protestantism in the Philippines, 1901-1961* (Quezon City, Philippines: NCCP, 1989), p. 128.

⁴⁰ The best discussion of the UCCP's origins is T. Valentino Sito, Jr., *Several Springs, One Stream: The United Church of Christ in the Philippines*, vol. 1, *Heritage and Origins, 1899-1948* (Quezon City, Philippines: UCCP, 1992).

the prospects of Philippine Protestantism as a whole.⁴¹ For at least its first decade of existence, its leaders continued to be preoccupied with questions of organization, leaving few resources for evangelism and church planting.⁴² After the initial period of assimilation, rising tensions between the denomination's new ecumenical spirit and its continuing evangelistic vision led first to the latter's subordination to the former and then, in many parishes, to its outright abandonment.⁴³ The UCCP has emphatically rejected biblical or confessional particularism, embracing instead a lowest-common-denominator approach to doctrine based on nothing more than 'the basic belief: "Jesus Christ, the Son of the Living God, our Lord and Saviour"'.⁴⁴ One result has been the slow ebbing away of its vitality.⁴⁵

This malaise is reflected in the United Church's membership figures. As with other such 'mainstream' denominations that maintain a low threshold of commitment,

these statistics can be quite slippery. For example, the Philippine government's 1990 census found 902,446 people claiming membership in the UCCP, considerably more than are credited to that denomination by any other source.⁴⁶ Presumably this reflects the number of Filipinos who think of themselves as members of the UCCP, even though most of them have never formally joined the church and relatively few even attend services regularly. It is broadly comparable to Brierley's estimate of the size of the UCCP's 'community' as 733,000 in that same year.⁴⁷ More reasonably, Brierley presents the UCCP's actual membership as having climbed from 119,347 in 1960 to 211,053 in 1970, 270,000 in 1980, 350,000 (rather than 900,000!) in 1990, and 385,000 in 1995. He projects membership as continuing to rise, reaching 447,000 in 2010.⁴⁸ This represents an AAGR cresting at 8.2% between 1965 and 1970, ranging from 2.4% to 3.5% between 1970 and 1985, then declining to 1.8% between 1985 and 1990, 1.9% between 1990 and 1995, 1.1% between 1995 and 2000, 1.0% between 2000 and 2005, and only 0.9% between 2005 and 2010. (For more details, see table 1 opposite, columns 2 and 3.) Such a statistical sketch of the UCCP would seem quite plausible, especially given the

⁴¹ Gowing, 'Christianity in the Philippines', p. 32

⁴² Tolliver, 'Philippines', p. 528; Donald A. McGavran, *Multiplying Churches in the Philippines* (Manila: UCCP, 1958), p. 60, quoted in Tuggy and Toliver, *Seeing the Church*, pp. 27-9

⁴³ Tuggy and Toliver, *Seeing the Church*, pp. 30-33; James H. Montgomery and Donald A. McGavran, *The Discipling of a Nation* (Santa Clara, CA: Global Church Growth Bulletin, 1980), p. 46, 156

⁴⁴ Ans J. van der Bent (ed.), *Handbook: Member Churches* (Geneva: WCC, 1982), p. 97

⁴⁵ Donald A. McGavran, *Understanding Church Growth*, rev. ed. (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1980), p. 118; Lorenzo C. Bautista, 'The Church in the Philippines', in Saphir Athyal (ed.), *Church in Asia Today: Challenges and Opportunities* (Singapore: Asia Lausanne Committee for World Evangelization), p. 185

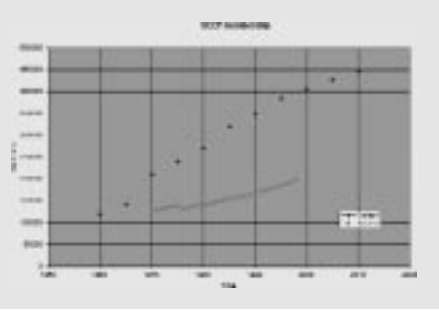
⁴⁶ Philippine Department of Household Statistics, '1990 Census of Population and Housing', p. 22

⁴⁷ Brierley, *World Churches Handbook*, p. 683

⁴⁸ Brierley, *World Churches Handbook*, p. 683

Table 1: UCCP membership and annual growth rates

	Brierley/WCH Membership	Brierley/WCH AAGR	Smith/PC membership	Smith/PC AGR
1960	119,347			
1965	142,405	3.6%		
1970	211,053	8.2%	127,196	0.8%
1971		2.6%	128,246	0.8%
1972		2.6%	130,691	1.9%
1973		2.6%	132,480	1.4%
1974		2.6%	135,821	2.5%
1975	240,000	2.6%	137,564	1.3%
1976		2.4%	129,390	-5.9%
1977		2.4%	133,969	3.5%
1978		2.4%	136,606	2.0%
1979		2.4%	138,287	1.2%
1980	270,000	2.4%	139,027	0.5%
1981		3.5%	141,824	2.0%
1982		3.5%	144,677	2.0%
1983		3.5%	147,589	2.0%
1984		3.5%	150,888	2.2%
1985	320,000	3.5%	155,592	3.1%
1986		1.8%	158,588	1.9%
1987		1.8%	159,549	0.6%
1988		1.8%	160,164	0.4%
1989		1.8%	163,989	2.4%
1990	350,000	1.8%	166,705	1.7%
1991		1.9%	172,128	3.3%
1992		1.9%	174,620	1.4%
1993		1.9%	178,084	2.0%
1994		1.9%	180,820	1.5%
1995	385,000	1.9%	184,275	1.9%
1996		1.1%	189,318	2.7%
1997		1.1%	193,181	2.0%
1998		1.1%	197,124	2.0%
1999		1.1%		
2000	406,000	1.1%		
2005	427,000	1.0%		
2010	447,000	0.9%		



above discussion of its history. However, Brierley himself describes all his membership figures after those for 1970 as estimates.⁴⁹ My own belief is that he has seriously underestimated of the problem of nominalism in this denomination.

More reliable numbers are available from Eric Smith, Field Director of Philippine Challenge, a mission agency that conducts research into this and other such topics bearing on church growth. Smith's figure for UCCP membership in 1970 is 127,196, in general agreement with figures found in several other sources.⁵⁰ He presents UCCP membership as having reached 139,027 in 1980, 166,705 in 1990, 184,275 in 1995, and 197,124 in

⁴⁹ Brierley, *World Churches Handbook*, p. 683. He describes his method of computing membership estimates for such low-commitment denominations in *World Churches Handbook*, p. 10, and in Peter Brierley, *Future Church: A Global Analysis of the Christian Community to the Year 2010* (London: Monarch, 1998), pp. 169-90.

⁵⁰ Eric Smith, e-mail to author, 27 October 1999. For other estimates of UCCP membership, see the charts in Tuggy and Toliver, *Seeing the Church*, p. 25; Tuggy, *Philippine Church*, p. 149; and Montgomery and McGavran, *Discipling of a Nation*, p. 44.

1998.⁵¹ This yields a fluctuating pattern of AAGRs without any clear crests or troughs. (For more details, see table 1 on p. 67, columns 4 and 5.) With annual growth rates (AGRs) oscillating wildly, between -5.9% and +3.5%, it does seem much more realistic than Brierley's sanitized estimates. But even if the raw numbers themselves remain somewhat open to question, the basic shape of the curve they define can be taken as reasonably accurate.

That shape, specifically the slope of the curve, describes a denomination that is growing at a rate either somewhat or substantially below the rate of growth of the general population. Brierley's membership figures are larger than those of Smith, but the decline in AAGR he estimates is steeper than the decline in AGR that Smith seems actually to have documented. Ironically, the UCCP depicted by Smith's data appears to be in somewhat better shape, though smaller, than the UCCP depicted by Brierley's data.

Whichever is more nearly correct, though, the UCCP is obviously quite ill. If it cannot regain its precursors' early vigour, if it cannot return to the high growth rates of the early twentieth century, it is doomed to play an ever-decreasing role in Philippine religious life and even in the life of the Philippine Protestant community. Much the same is true of another founding member of the NCCP, the IFI, which has been hobbled by decades of slow growth, no growth,

and even precipitous decline.⁵² The implication is inescapable. Among Filipinos as among Americans, the so-called Protestant 'mainstream' is no longer the Protestant majority.

2.2 Classic Evangelicalism

Not all Protestant denominations sending missionaries to the Philippines in the early years of the century participated in the drive to consolidation that led to the establishment first of the UCCP and then of the NCCP. For example, the United Methodists and Convention Baptists chose not to follow the Presbyterians and Congregationalists into the UCCP, though they did join the NCCP. Although the Christian and Missionary Alliance (CMA) had participated in the initial comity agreement that assigned responsibility for specific areas of the Philippines to designated US denominations, it joined neither the UCCP nor the NCCP. The Seventh Day Adventists, who had not been signatories to the comity agreement, kept clear of both umbrella organizations as well.

Especially after World War II, many conservative evangelical and Pentecostal denominations and independent mission agencies from the US and other Western nations began new ministries in the Philippines. These organizations, too, had little interest in co-operating with Philippine denominations and

⁵¹ Smith, e-mail, 27 October 1999

⁵² Clymer, *Protestant Missionaries*, p. 194; *Handbook: Member Churches*, p. 95; Philippine Department of Household Statistics, '1990 Census of Population and Housing', p. 22; Eric Smith, telephone interview by author, 11 November 1999

church councils related to US denominations and councils with which they would never have cooperated. Their scruples on this point were understandable. Although Filipino Christians had experienced nothing quite like the Fundamentalist-Modernist controversy that so devastated American churches during the 1920s and 1930s, by the 1960s, as we have seen, the Modernist spirit had found a home in the churches of the NCCP.⁵³

Those who saw Modernism as a threat to the gospel nevertheless conceded the importance of cooperation among churches such as the NCCP was intended to foster. This implied that an alternate organization was needed, one for which the upholding of orthodoxy would not be subordinated to the gaining of unity. Such an organization was the Philippine Council of Fundamental Churches, established in 1964, which four years later became the Philippine Council of Fundamental Evangelical Churches and in 1969 changed its name yet again to the Philippine Council of Evangelical Churches (PCEC).⁵⁴ From the outset the PCEC has deliberately defined itself as a theological alternative to the NCCP, upholding what it sees as

Christianity's historic essentials. Its statement of faith, adopted in 1965, affirms basic doctrines such as the inerrancy of Scripture, the Trinity, the deity of Christ, the depravity of fallen humanity, and salvation by grace through faith apart from works.⁵⁵ Among its member denominations are traditional evangelical bodies like the Christian and Missionary Alliance Churches of the Philippines (CAMACOP) and the Alliance of Bible Christian Communities of the Philippines as well as Pentecostal bodies like the Assemblies of God (AoG) and the International Church of the Foursquare Gospel. Again, considerations of space preclude a close examination of all of the PCEC's members, hence CAMACOP has been selected to represent its non-Pentecostal denominations. (Pentecostal denominations will be considered separately below.)

The first missionary representing the US CMA arrived in the Philippines in 1900.⁵⁶ In accordance with the terms of the Comity Agreement of 1901, the CMA initially restricted its evangelistic efforts to southern Mindanao and the Sulu Archipelago, both territories largely inhabited by the Islamic Moros. Although Muslim converts were few, the CMA eventually won a following among Filipinos who had immigrated to Mindanao from other parts of the country.⁵⁷ After a slow start, with only 800 bap-

⁵³ For example, see above on the UCCP's theological basis. For a discussion of earlier theological clashes in the Philippines between conservative ('Fundamentalist') and liberal ('Modernist') missionaries belonging to denominational agencies whose daughter churches would later be subsumed in the UCCP, see Apilado, *Revolutionary Spirituality*, pp. 195-7 and 208-13.

⁵⁴ Aragon, 'Philippine Council of Evangelical Churches', pp. 20-7

⁵⁵ Aragon, 'Philippine Council of Evangelical Churches', pp. 23-4

⁵⁶ Clymer, *Protestant Missionaries*, p. 6

⁵⁷ Tuggay and Toliver, *Seeing the Church*, p. 73

tized members to show for 25 years' effort, the CMA experienced moderate growth in the period leading up to World War II.⁵⁸ During the Japanese occupation its ranks were decimated and its faithful members forced to endure great suffering.⁵⁹ In 1947 the US parent granted independence to its Philippine offspring and CAMACOP was born. During the 1950s this fledgling denomination experienced a substantial influx of new members, but during the 1960s, like many other Philippine Protestant bodies, it endured a prolonged period of slow growth and thus steady decline as a percentage of the general population.⁶⁰ The situation began to change only in the late 1960s and early 1970s as CAMACOP put greater stress on church planting and broadened the focus of its efforts to encompass not just its traditional areas but the entire nation.⁶¹ The denomination developed a nation-wide network of Bible colleges as well, and eventually a graduate-level seminary. Today CAMACOP is one of the Philippines' most robust evangelical denominations, having provided key leadership to the PCEC from its inception and even to the World Evangelical Fellowship.⁶²

⁵⁸ Montgomery and McGavran, *Discipling of a Nation*, pp. 46-7

⁵⁹ Tuggy and Toliver note in *Seeing the Church*, p. 73, that the CMA's pre-1941 records, kept at its headquarters in Zamboanga City, Mindanao, were destroyed by fire during World War II.

⁶⁰ Tuggy and Toliver, *Seeing the Church*, p. 74; Montgomery and McGavran, *Discipling of a Nation*, p. 47

⁶¹ McGavran, *Understanding Church Growth*, pp. 118, 409-10

CAMACOP's excellent overall health is reflected in its membership figures. Brierley presents CAMACOP as having had 15,638 members in 1960, 21,898 in 1970, 64,822 in 1980, and 90,000 in 1990, and he projects that in 2010 it will have 102,000 members.⁶³ This represents an AAGR starting low, only about 0.5% in the early 1960s, rising to 6.5% in the late 1960s and 7.2% in the early 1970s, cresting at 15.9% in the late 1970s, declining to 6.0% in the early 1980s, and plummeting to 0.8% in the late 1980s, 0.7% in the early 1990s, and 0.6% in the years after 1995. (For more details, see table 2 opposite, columns 2 and 3.) That such strapping figures for the period from 1965 to 1985 are followed by such calamitous figures for the period from 1985 to the present and beyond is hard to understand, especially for those who have had any direct exposure to CAMACOP. But closer examination of Brierley's material shows that, as with the UCCP, his later data points (here all those after 1980) are only estimates.

Again, as with the UCCP, more reliable membership statistics for CAMACOP are available from other sources. Eric Smith gives figures for 1970, 1975, 1980, and 1985 that are quite comparable and in one case identical to Brierley's figures for those years. After 1985, though, Smith diverges from Brierley, at first only

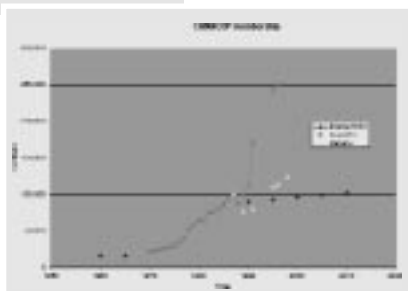
⁶² Aragon, 'Philippine Council of Evangelical Churches', pp. 28-9, 44, 53

⁶³ Brierley, *World Churches Handbook*, p. 681

Table 2: CAMACOP membership and annual growth rates

	Brierley/WCH membership	Brierley/WCH AAGR	Smith/PC m'ship/AGR	Mariano m'ship/AAGR
1960	15,638			
1965	16,000	0.5%		
1970	21,898	6.5%	21,947	
1971		7.2%	22,527/2.6%	
1972		7.2%	24,478/8.7%	
1973		7.2%	25,654/4.8%	
1974		7.2%	26,830/4.6%	
1975	31,049	7.2%	29,470/9.8%	
1976		15.9%	34,022/15.5%	
1977		15.9%	39,298/15.5%	
1978		15.9%	51,629/31.4%	
1979		15.9%	58,734/13.8%	
1980	64,822	15.9%	64,822/10.4%	
1981		6.0%	64,822/0%	
1982		6.0%	74,126/14.4%	
1983		6.0%	74,126/0%	
1984		6.0%	80,230/8.2%	
1985	86,600	6.0%	86,057/7.3%	
1986		0.8%	94,026/9.3%	
1987		0.8%	102,559/9.1%	102,259
1988		0.8%	86,635/-15.5%	-13.3%
1989		0.8%	99,365/14.7%	76,880/-13.3%
1990	90,000	0.8%	112,094/12.8%	2.5%
1991		0.7%	170,947/52.5%	80,847/2.5%
1992		0.7%	9.2%	8.1%
1993		0.7%	9.2%	8.1%
1994		0.7%	9.2%	8.1%
1995	93,000	0.7%	243,200/9.2%	110,538/8.1%
1996		0.6%	249,500/2.6%	113,430/2.6%
1997		0.6%		5.0%
1998		0.6%		125,168/5.0%
1999		0.6%		
2000	96,000	0.6%		
2005	99,000	0.6%		
2010	102,000	0.6%		

slightly but eventually by a factor of more than 100%. He describes CAMACOP as having had 112,094 members in 1990, 243,200 members in 1995, and 249,500 members



in 1996, the last year for which he has data.⁶⁴ (For more details, see table 2 on p. 71, column 4.)

Some of this growth reflects merger; for example, in 1995 the Highland Evangelical Christian Association joined CAMACOP, bringing with it 28 member congregations.⁶⁵ Some of the growth probably reflects the renewed focus on church planting that characterized Valmike Apuzen's tenure as president of the denomination (1989-1997).⁶⁶ As it happens, Apuzen's election to that position came in the midst of turmoil and even schism, with a group of disgruntled pastors and their congregations having broken away to establish Philippine Christian Alliance Ministries, led by Josue Galal.⁶⁷ Presumably this accounts for the short but steep dip in Smith's membership figures from 1987 to 1988. Much of the growth, though, and specifically the dramatic surge in his figures for the late 1980s and early 1990s, apparently reflects CAMACOP's shift at that time to a more 'inclusive' measure of reported membership.⁶⁸ Although CAMACOP's own count of baptized members for 1987 is 102,259, almost identical to that of Smith, and although its 'inclusive' figures for subsequent years continue to track with Smith's figures, its count of baptized members for 1989 is just

76,880, rising to 80,847 in 1991, 110,538 in 1995, and 125,168 in 1998.⁶⁹ (For more details, see table 2 on p. 71, column 5.)

Smith's statistics yield AGRs ranging as low as -15.5% in 1988, at the time of the Galal schism, and as high as +52.5% in 1991, reflecting CAMACOP's change in reporting guidelines and possibly another denominational merger. For most years, though, his AGRs are confined to a narrower range of values, only rarely exceeding 15% and just as rarely dipping below 5%. (For more details, see table 2 on p. 71, column 4.) These yield an AAGR of 8.5% from 1970 to 1990, at the point of the artificial bulge noted above, and an AAGR of 7.9% from 1991 to 1996. This shows remarkable consistency. CAMACOP's own statistics yield AAGRs of 2.5% from 1989 to 1991, 8.1% from 1991 to 1995, 2.6% from 1995 to 1996, and 5.0% from 1996 to 1998, with an overall AAGR of 5.6% from 1989 to 1998. (For more details, see table 2 on p. 71, column 5.) The bottom line is that neither Smith nor CAMACOP itself corroborates the dramatically lower AAGRs Brierley projects as having prevailed from the mid-1980s to the present and on into the future.⁷⁰ We should certainly expect a further slowing of the

⁶⁴ Smith, e-mail, 27 October 1999

⁶⁵ Pat Mariano, e-mail to author, 9 November 1999

⁶⁶ Averell Aragon, e-mail to author, 15 November 1999

⁶⁷ Averell Aragon, e-mail to author, 4 November 1999; Mariano, e-mail, 9 November 1999

⁶⁸ Mariano, e-mail, 9 November 1999

⁶⁹ Pat Mariano, e-mail to author, 3 November 1999

⁷⁰ Stephen Smith has pointed out to me that Brierley's estimates of CAMACOP membership after 1985 involve nothing more than adding a nearly-constant amount (3,400 from 1985 to 1990, 3,000 thereafter) every five years. This cautious approach, which uses an arithmetical progression, presumes rather than proves a constantly declining growth rate.

denomination's growth rate as it continues to expand, but even if the AAGR declines to no more than 4.5% over the next decade, this means that by 2010 CAMACOP's baptized membership will still be well over 200,000, more than double Brierley's projection for that year. With its growth rate considerably above the declining growth rate of the general population, its slice of the Philippine religious pie will surely continue to grow as well.⁷¹

By extension, the same outcome can be expected for the Philippine evangelical community as a whole. Not all members of the PCEC have shown such consistent growth as CAMACOP. For example, between 1970 and 1998 the Philippine Baptist Mission, affiliated with the US Southern Baptist Convention, could muster an AAGR of just 3.2%, barely keeping pace with that of the general population. Quite a few smaller denominations have grown even more rapidly than CAMACOP, though. For example, between 1970 and 1998 the Free Methodists kept up an AAGR of 6.7%, the Church of the Nazarene sustained an AAGR of 10.1%, and the Wesleyan Church achieved an AAGR of 13.0%.⁷² This

line of argument strongly suggests that over the coming decades the evangelical community will become increasingly prominent in Philippine society, just as it has already become quite prominent in the societies of Latin America.

2.3 Classic Pentecostalism

Since the Latin American evangelical community's rise to prominence has been driven by the growth of Pentecostal denominations, it is important to take a closer look at Pentecostal denominations in the Philippines. These will be considered under two headings. First are classic bodies like the Assemblies of God and the International Church of the Foursquare Gospel; second are indigenous bodies like Eddie Villanueva's Jesus Is Lord (JIL) Church.

The Foursquare Church's first missionary to the Philippines only arrived in 1949, but by that time Filipinos moved by the ministry of Foursquare founder Aimee Semple McPherson had already planted congregations in Cavite, Iloilo City, and elsewhere.⁷³ Just as McPherson's ministry had centred on Angelus Temple in Los Angeles, early Foursquare ministry in the Philippines centred on Calvary Foursquare Church in Manila. By the time of the denomination's first national convention in the early 1960s, workers had established 80 churches nationwide. Philippine Foursquare minis-

⁷¹ On the other hand, that slice will surely not grow as rapidly as was suggested by CAMACOP's 'Two, Two, Two' plan, apparently adopted in the late 1980s, which set a goal of two million members in 20,000 congregations by 2000. See Jim Montgomery, *DAWN 2000: Seven Million Churches to Go* (Pasadena, CA: William Carey Library, 1989), pp. 146, 219.

⁷² Computed from membership data in Smith, e-mail, 27 October 1999. More recent membership figures and annual growth rates for the Church of the Nazarene are given in 'The Nazarene Church Church [sic] Growth Experience, 1995 to 2000', *Philippine Challenge* 21:3 (October 2000), p. 7.

⁷³ Joseph R. Suico, 'Pentecostalism: Towards a Movement of Social Transformation in the Philippines', *Journal of Asian Mission* 1:1 (March 1999), p. 12

ters participated in another important event of that era, the founding of the PCEC, and in 1973 they gained their independence from the American denomination.

The 1960s and 1970s were a time of rapid growth, both numerical and institutional, with Foursquare leaders establishing a number of Christian schools and Bible colleges.⁷⁴ Although the denomination apparently went through a time of turmoil in the 1980s, it continues with an aggressive programme of evangelism and church planting known as Harvest Plan 2002. Reflecting this longstanding commitment, the number of Foursquare congregations has grown from 80 in the early 1960s to more than 200 in 1972, 568 in 1982, and 1343 at present.⁷⁵ The Foursquare Church is certainly one of the most prominent classic Pentecostal denominations in the Philippines today.

The Foursquare Church's great vitality is reflected in its membership statistics. Brierley presents the denomination as having had 6,000 members in 1960, 13,500 in 1970, 29,900 in 1980, and 43,300 in 1990, and he projects that it will have 70,100 members in 2010.⁷⁶ This reflects a high initial AAGR, between 6.2% and 10.8% over the

interval from 1960 to 1985, followed by a plunge to negative average annual growth from 1985 to 1990, followed by a return to positive though much smaller AAGRs from 1990 to the present and beyond, beginning at 2.9% and slowly settling towards 2.0%. (For more details, see table 3 opposite, columns 2 and 3.) Again, though, almost all of Brierley's figures after 1980 are estimates. As with the denominations examined previously, hard numbers are available from Smith, though with the Foursquare Church the discrepancy between estimate and observation is relatively small. In Smith's reckoning, there were 12,350 members in 1970, 32,372 in 1980, 42,212 in 1990, and 57,752 in 1998.⁷⁷ AGRs have been quite erratic, soaring as high as 40% and plunging as low as 43%, with some of the former probably the consequence of mergers and much of the latter doubtless the consequence of schisms. Nevertheless, for the entire 28-year interval the AAGR has been 5.7%, very similar to the AAGR of 4.9% over the 30-year interval from 1970 to 2000 yielded by Brierley's membership estimates. (For more details, see table 3 opposite, columns 4 and 5.)

The one point on which Brierley and Smith diverge significantly is Brierley's assumption that average growth rates peaked in the late 1970s and early 1980s, then

⁷⁴ For a discussion of the Foursquare Church's aggressive programme of expansion during the 1960s and early 1970s, see Jim Montgomery, *New Testament Fire in the Philippines* (Manila: Church Growth Research in the Philippines, 1972).

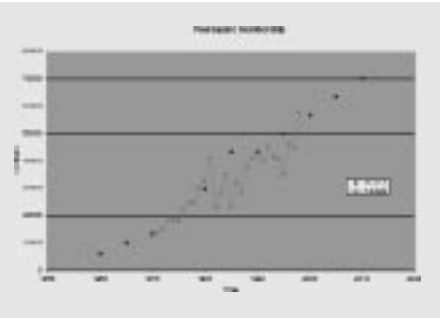
⁷⁵ Montgomery and McGavran, *Discipling of a Nation*, pp. 119-121; Wonsuk Ma, e-mail to author, 6 November 1999

⁷⁶ Brierley, *World Churches Handbook*, p. 679

⁷⁷ Smith, e-mail, 27 October 1999. For 1998 both Brierley's and Smith's figures are in broad agreement with Wonsuk Ma's estimate that in 1999 the Foursquare Church had 60,700 members; Wonsuk Ma, e-mail to author, 6 November 1999.

Table 3: Foursquare membership and annual growth rates

	Brierley/WCH Membership	Brierley/WCH AAGR	Smith/PC membership	Smith/PC AGR
1960	6,000			
1965	10,000	10.8%		
1970	13,500	6.2%	12,350	
1971		6.4%	13,963	13.1%
1972		6.4%	15,232	9.1%
1973		6.4%	17,878	17.4%
1974		6.4%	18,409	3.0%
1975	18,409	6.4%	18,409	0%
1976		10.2%	22,283	21.0%
1977		10.2%	24,590	10.3%
1978		10.2%	25,097	2.1%
1979		10.2%	30,273	20.6%
1980	29,900	10.2%	32,372	6.9%
1981		7.7%	41,100	27.0%
1982		7.7%	23,129	-43.7%
1983		7.7%	28,329	22.5%
1984		7.7%	34,731	22.6%
1985	43,401	7.7%	22,844	-34.2%
1986		-0.05%	32,197	40.9%
1987		-0.05%	28,362	-11.9%
1988		-0.05%	37,834	33.4%
1989		-0.05%	40,899	8.1%
1990	43,300	-0.05%	42,212	3.2%
1991		2.9%	40,091	-5.0%
1992		2.9%	45,311	13.0%
1993		2.9%	41,563	-8.3%
1994		2.9%	40,690	-2.1%
1995	50,000	2.9%	35,095	-13.7%
1996		2.5%	46,545	32.6%
1997		2.5%	44,590	-4.2%
1998		2.5%	57,752	29.5%
1999		2.5%		
2000	56,700	2.5%		
2005	63,400	2.3%		
2010	70,100	2.0%		



entered a long decline. Instead, Smith finds very high average growth rates in the late 1970s, late 1980s, and late 1990s somewhat counterbalanced by negative average growth rates in the early 1980s and early 1990s. Brierley's prediction of slower growth in the recent past and the immediate future seems to have no basis in reality. In fact, if the denomination only maintains the average annual rate of growth it sustained from 1970 to 1998, by 2010 membership will have passed 112,000, 60% more than the membership Brierley predicts for that year. The Foursquare Church's perseverance in a healthy overall pattern of growth in spite of the fissiparous tendencies of some of its members strongly suggests that, like CAMACOP, it is destined to play a leading role in the Philippine Christian community.

A classic Pentecostal denomination that has been even more prominent in the Philippines than the Foursquare Church is the Assemblies of God. The first AoG missionaries arrived in 1926, though health problems forced their early departure.

More missionaries soon followed, though again the lead in planting churches was taken not by expatriates but by Filipinos who had accepted the Pentecostal message while in the US. In 1940 the Philippine District Council of the Assemblies of God was established under the aegis of the US AoG, and in 1953 the District Council was chartered as the Philippine General Council of the Assemblies of God, thus gaining its autonomy.⁷⁸

Like the Foursquare Church, this denomination has been concerned to co-operate with other evangelical bodies wherever possible, its ministers also having taken part in the establishment of the PCEC.⁷⁹ It too has devoted considerable resources to theological education, supporting a seminary and a network of Bible colleges. But most importantly, it has always had a passion for evangelism and church planting, making frequent use of revival meetings and outdoor crusades. A period of slow growth in the years immediately after World War II was followed by an explosive expansion between 1953 and 1955 that has been called the 'Philippine Pentecost'.⁸⁰ By 1969 the number of AoG congregations had reached 320.⁸¹ An ugly schism in 1973 and the lengthy ensuing court case absorbed energy that oth-

erwise might have gone into outreach.⁸² Even so, by 1979 there were 383 AoG congregations, by 1989 there were 1,329, and at present there are 2,357.⁸³ As these numbers attest, the Assemblies of God are to Philippine Pentecostalism what CAMACOP is to non-Pentecostal evangelicalism.

The AoG's vigour is demonstrated by an examination of its membership statistics. Brierley presents the denomination as having had 12,022 members in 1960, 30,500 in 1970, 50,000 in 1980, and 70,000 in 1990, and he projects that it will have 117,000 members in 2010.⁸⁴ This reflects high initial AAGRs, reaching even 10.0% between 1960 and 1965, but a general downward trend that would yield AAGRs of 1.9% between 1980 and 1985, 4.9% between 1985 and 1990, 3.5% between 1990 and 1995, 2.6% between 1995 and 2000, 2.3% between 2000 and 2005, and only 2.0% between 2005 and 2010. (For more details, see table 4 opposite, columns 2 and 3.) These figures imply that the A/G will be doing well just to maintain the place it currently holds in Philippine society. If Brierley is correct, more likely it will represent a slowly declining percentage of the population and even of the evangelical community. Yet again, though, most of his figures after 1970 and all of them after 1985 are estimates.

⁷⁸ Suico, 'Pentecostalism', pp. 11-13

⁷⁹ Aragon, 'Philippine Council of Evangelical Churches', p. 22

⁸⁰ Tuggy and Toliver, *Seeing the Church*, p. 79

⁸¹ Eric Smith, telephone interview by author, 12 November 1999

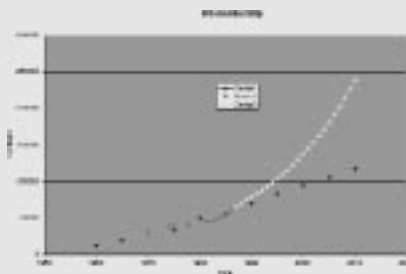
⁸² Montgomery and McGavran, *Discipling of a Nation* p. 115.

⁸³ Smith, interview, 12 November 1999; Ma, e-mail, 6 November 1999

⁸⁴ Brierley, *World Churches Handbook*, p. 679

Table 4: AoG membership and annual growth rates

	Brierley/WCH Membership	Brierley/WCH AAGR	Smith/PC membership	Smith/PC AGR
1960	12,022			
1965	19,382	10.0%		
1970	30,500	9.5%	30,500	
1971		1.8%		5.3%
1972		1.8%		5.3%
1973		1.8%		5.3%
1974		1.8%	37,500	5.3%
1975	33,300	1.8%	40,000	6.7%
1976		8.5%		0%
1977		8.5%		0%
1978		8.5%	40,000	0%
1979		8.5%		4.1%
1980	50,000	8.5%		4.1%
1981		1.9%	45,078	4.1%
1982		1.9%	45,738	1.5%
1983		1.9%	46,662	2.0%
1984		1.9%	50,266	7.7%
1985	55,000	1.9%	52,272	4.0%
1986		4.9%	59,136	13.1%
1987		4.9%	67,056	13.4%
1988		4.9%	(70,878)	(5.7%)
1989		4.9%	(74,918)	(5.7%)
1990	70,000	4.9%	(79,189)	(5.7%)
1991		3.5%	(83,702)	(5.7%)
1992		3.5%	(88,473)	(5.7%)
1993		3.5%	(93,516)	(5.7%)
1994		3.5%	(98,847)	(5.7%)
1995	83,100	3.5%	(104,481)	(5.7%)
1996		2.6%	(110,436)	(5.7%)
1997		2.6%	(116,731)	(5.7%)
1998		2.6%	(123,385)	(5.7%)
1999		2.6%	(130,418)	(5.7%)
2000	94,400	2.6%	(137,852)	(5.7%)
2005	106,000	2.3%	(181,881)	(5.7%)
2010	117,000	2.0%	(239,973)	(5.7%)



Unfortunately, Smith's membership figures for the AoG are incomplete, missing entries for several years and breaking off entirely after 1987. His figures from 1970 to 1987 are broadly comparable to those of Brierley, yielding 30,500 members in 1970, 45,078 in 1981, and 52,272 in 1985.⁸⁵ But where Brierley describes AAGRs as trending downward after 1980, Smith finds growth rates beginning to rise again in the mid- to late 1980s, the point at which Brierley's hard data end. Smith finds growth rates reaching as high as 13.3% between 1985 and 1987, the point at which his own data end.

Unfortunately, the AoG's Philippine General Council has no current or recent membership data that could be used to extend Smith's figures and assess Brierley's projections.⁸⁶ As noted above, though, several sources give fairly reliable counts of the number of AoG con-

⁸⁵ Smith, e-mail, 27 October 1999

⁸⁶ Felipe Acena, telephone interview by author, 11 November 1999

gregations. These yield a congregational AAGR starting at 3.7% between 1969 and 1979, surging to 28.3% between 1979 and 1989, and holding at 12.1% between 1989 and 1999. The first figure is more or less in line with Brierley's membership AAGR of 5.1% between 1970 and 1980, but the latter two figures are very difficult to reconcile with his estimated membership AAGRs of 3.4% between 1980 and 1990 and just 3.0% between 1990 and 2000. As with CAMACOP and the Foursquare Church, it is my belief that Brierley has seriously underestimated the AoG's growth over the past decade or more and its likely growth over the coming decade and beyond.

Starting where Smith's figures stop, if we credit the AoG with an AAGR of just 5.7%, the same average rate of growth the Foursquare Church apparently maintained over the entire span from 1970 to 1998, it would have had 79,189 members in 1990, 104,481 in 1995, and 137,852 in 2000. By 2010 its membership would be approaching 240,000. (For more details, see table 4 on p. 77, columns 4 and 5.) The fact that the computed membership figure for 2000 is in close agreement with the AoG's current membership as estimated by Won-suk Ma lends support to my contention that here as elsewhere Brierley has seriously misconstrued Philippine denominational trends.⁸⁷ Again, it seems likely that in coming

years the AoG will play an ever-increasing role in Philippine society.

2.4 Indigenous Pentecostalism

One last evangelical slice of the Philippine religious pie remains to be examined, that of indigenous Pentecostal denominations and near-denominations like the March of Faith, the Bread of Life Fellowship, and the JIL Church. A stroll through any working-class neighbourhood or even a simple perusal of the telephone directory will attest that this is by far the liveliest sector of the Christian community.⁸⁸ Storefront chapels dot the streets, the names on their signboards indicating their pastors' theological proclivities: the Jesus Loves You Full Gospel Church, the Victory in Jesus Christ Congregation, and even the Church of World Messianity (sic!). Newspapers often feature articles about and interviews with celebrities belonging to one or another of these groups. Banners promoting their rallies and crusades festoon the streets, and their leading evangelists make extensive use of radio and television as well. Without a doubt the best known of these evangelists is Eddie Villanueva, and the most visible of the Philippines' many indigenous Pentecostal bodies is his JIL Church. Thus JIL will be taken as representative of other such groups that cannot be

⁸⁸ It is significant that Oscar Baldemor's ThM thesis, 'The Spread of Fire: A Study of Ten Growing Churches in Metro Manila' (Fuller Theological Seminary, 1990), considers three classic evangelical congregations and seven Pentecostal or Charismatic congregations. Most of the latter are indigenous.

⁸⁷ Ma, e-mail, 6 November 1999

treated here individually for reasons of space.

Villanueva himself has led a fascinating life. After spending some years as a university professor, political activist, and committed Marxist, he experienced conversion in 1973. Five years later he began a Bible study for his students that quickly blossomed into the Jesus Is Lord Fellowship. As numbers grew, he held meetings in a series of borrowed facilities, each larger than the last, culminating with an open-air amphitheatre capable of accommodating tens of thousands. This led to JIL's nickname, 'the church without a roof'. At the same time, he and his associates planted satellite congregations first throughout metro Manila, then across Luzon, next around the Philippines, and finally spanning the globe, focusing especially on cities like Hong Kong and Singapore that have large expatriate Filipino communities.⁸⁹ Today there are 478 of these congregations, including 72 overseas.⁹⁰ An electrifying public speaker, Villanueva has long had a television ministry that is now broadcast by his own TV station. He himself was one of the most prominent participants in the ceremony held in 1998 at the Quirino Bandstand in Rizal Park, Manila, to mark the hundredth anniversary of Protestantism

in the Philippines.⁹¹ Today JIL is the dominant voice in the Philippines for Jesus Movement, a Pentecostal umbrella organization.⁹² With its explosive growth, with its evolution in just twenty years from a single fellowship into a fellowship of fellowships and finally into a fledgling denomination, JIL's sheer size is likely to lead to steadily increasing visibility.

What exactly is that size? Unfortunately, it is impossible to give a precise answer. JIL's current claim to upwards of two million members world-wide may be taken to indicate two million sympathizers or perhaps two million regular viewers of Villanueva's television programmes, but it cannot refer to active members of JIL congregations, since this would mean that those congregations must average around 4,000 each in attendance. If such were the case, JIL would be a fellowship of mega-churches!⁹³ Brierley is no help in resolving the question, since JIL is not one of the denominations for which he presents statistics. This is not surprising, given that he seems to have gathered no hard data at all on the Philippines beyond the early to mid-1980s, when JIL would still have been quite small. Nor has Smith been able to go beyond the group's own claim of 600,000 members in 1988, one million in 1991, and two

⁸⁹ Michael Wourms, *The J.I.L. Love Story: The Church without a Roof* (El Cajon, CA: Christian Services Publishing, 1991); Eddie C. Villanueva, 'Jesus Is Lord Church', in C. Peter Wagner (ed.), *The New Apostolic Churches* (Ventura, CA: Regal, 1998), pp. 257-70

⁹⁰ Ma, e-mail, 6 November 1999

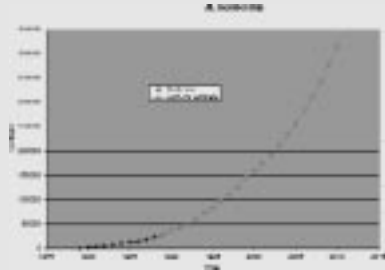
⁹¹ Program, 'The Centennial of Biblical Christianity in the Philippines, Grand Celebration, August 15, 1998'

⁹² Averell Aragon, e-mail to author, 29 October 1999

⁹³ Villanueva, 'Jesus Is Lord Church', p. 262

Table 5: JIL membership and annual growth rates

	Baldemor	AGR	Author's estimate	Assumed AAGR
1979	30			
1980	2,000	6567%		
1981	3,300	65.0%		
1982	4,800	45.4%		
1983	7,500	56.2%		
1984	11,000	46.7%		
1985	13,000	18.2%		
1986	14,000	7.7%		
1987	18,000	28.6%		
1988	23,000	27.8%		
1989	29,000	26.1%		
1990			34,800	20%
1991			41,760	20%
1992			50,112	20%
1993			60,134	20%
1994			72,161	20%
1995			82,985	15%
1996			95,433	15%
1997			109,748	15%
1998			126,210	15%
1999			145,142	15%
2000			159,656	10%
2005			257,128	10%
2010			414,107	10%



ing to 11,000 in 1984 and 29,000 in 1989. (For more details, see table 5, columns 2 and 3.) This yields AGRs averaging 365.7% from 1979 to 1984 and 21.4% from 1984 to 1989. All other things being equal, it seems likely that JIL's AAGR will have continued to decline as its numbers have grown. If we assume that the AAGR was 20% from 1989 to 1994 and 15% from 1994 to 1999, this yields a membership for the latter year of 145,142, which is in fairly close agreement with Ma's estimate of 150,000.⁹⁵ (For more details, see table 5, columns 4 and 5.) The implication is that although JIL is not nearly so numerically dominant in the Philippine Pentecostal and evangelical communities as it claims, it certainly deserves a place alongside such long-established denominations as CAMACOP and the Assemblies of God. If it can maintain an AAGR of even 10% over the coming decade, by 2010 it will have a membership of over 400,000, which is truly remarkable for such a

million, as already noted, in 1998.⁹⁴

The only plausible source of such information that I have been able to identify is Oscar Baldemor's thesis cited above. Drawing on JIL's own in-house statistics, Baldemor gives the group's membership as just 30 in 1979, the year after its founding, ris-

⁹⁴ Eric Smith, telephone interview by author, 11 November 1999.

⁹⁵ Ma, e-mail, 6 November 1999.

young denomination.

New indigenous Pentecostal groups are constantly springing up in the Philippines, and as with JIL, their growth rates are generally highest early in their life cycles. For example, Love of Christ Ministries sustained an AAGR of 53.9% over the first eight years after its founding in 1981, attaining a membership of 4400 in 1989.⁹⁶ Bread of Life Fellowship expanded even more rapidly, having been founded in 1982 and sustaining an AAGR of 65.0% over the next seven years to reach a membership of 4,000 in 1989.⁹⁷ This enumeration might be extended almost indefinitely. The point is that such fellowships represent the youngest and hence the most dynamic, rapidly growing sector of the Philippine evangelical community. JIL may not have millions of members — yet! — but Villanueva and those like him lead churches with an aggregate membership already in the hundreds of thousands. No one who has spent much time in the Philippines would doubt that they now have a large slice of that nation's religious pie, nor that over the coming decades their slice will likely continue to grow.

Conclusion

The time has come to draw some conclusions. Borrowing a phrase from David Stoll, is the Philippines 'turning Protestant'? And is the form

of Protestantism to which it seems to be turning predominantly Pentecostal? In short, can we expect to see a reprise of Latin America's recent religious transformation in this nation on the far side of the Pacific Ocean? The answer, I believe, is a qualified yes.

It must be conceded that collecting accurate membership statistics for most indigenous Pentecostal and Charismatic bodies is simply impossible, and that collecting such statistics even for established denominations like CAMACOP and the Assemblies of God is very difficult. This means that even the most conscientious scholar cannot offer a comprehensive demographic 'snapshot' capturing every detail of the Philippine religious scene as it is now, let alone as it may be twenty or thirty years in the future.

Still, the data assembled here strongly suggest that Filipino Protestantism may finally be on the verge of the mass movement some missionaries expected almost a century ago. The vigorous growth exhibited by denominations like CAMACOP, the Foursquare Church, the Assemblies of God, and JIL is entirely consistent with the picture of evangelical expansion in the Philippines already noted. Let us take as a baseline *Operation World's* estimate that in 1990 5.1% of all Filipinos were evangelicals, and let us assume that the population of the Philippines will continue to increase at an average rate of 2.5% per year (probably high) while the Philippine evangelical community will continue to increase at an average rate of 5% per year

⁹⁶ Calculated on the basis of figures taken from Baldemor, 'Spread of Fire', p. 120.

⁹⁷ Calculated on the basis of figures taken from Baldemor, 'Spread of Fire', p. 73.

(possibly low). The implication is that by 2000, evangelicals will have constituted 6.5% of the population, reaching 8.2% in 2010, 10.5% in 2020, 13.4% in 2030, and 17.0% in 2040. Such an outcome would be comparable to the situation in Chile today, where evangelicals make up between 15 and 20% of the population.⁹⁸

This is not to say that Philippine religious developments will precisely duplicate those in Latin America. The two regions have many things in common, but there are many things that set them apart as well. For example, Filipinos showed more resilience in the process of Hispanization than did the Aztecs, Incas, and other aboriginal American peoples.⁹⁹ Furthermore, although the US has long practised 'Coca-Cola colonialism' in the lands south of the Rio Grande River, it never exercised direct political control over those territories in the way that it exercised control over the Philippines after the signing of the Treaty of Paris in 1899. Americanization is certainly a factor today in Latin America, where young people wearing jeans and sneakers eat fast-food hamburgers while listening to the latest hip-hop musicians. However, American culture has been much more of a magnet for Filipinos who spent half a century under American sovereignty.

Perhaps this helps to explain why non-Pentecostal evangelicalism has done almost as well in the Philippines

as classic and indigenous Pentecostalism. Pentecostals and Charismatics probably already constitute a majority of the Philippine evangelical community, and their lead over non-Pentecostal evangelicals will likely grow in the coming decades. Yet denominations like CAMACOP seem positioned to continue indefinitely as major players, unlike similar Latin American bodies. For all its similarities to Latin America, the Philippines is a unique cultural and religious environment.¹⁰⁰

What does this augur for the future? What new challenges will Filipino evangelicals face in coming years? What new opportunities may present themselves?

First, it seems very likely that inter-religious tensions will rise as the Catholic community continues to suffer relative numerical decline and the evangelical community is made to bear the blame for this. Already the Philippine Catholic hierarchy has issued a series of statements warning the faithful against the blandishments of so-called 'Fundamentalists'.¹⁰¹

¹⁰⁰ In this respect the Philippines stands apart from the rest of East Asia as well. David B. Barrett, in 'Annual Statistical Table on Global Mission: 1989', *International Bulletin of Missionary Research* 13:1 (January 1989), p. 20, estimates that 80% of East Asian Christians are Pentecostal or Charismatic.

¹⁰¹ For example, see 'Pastoral Statement on Fundamentalist Groups', in Abdon Ma. C. Josol (ed.), *Responses to the Signs of the Times: Selected Documents [of the] Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines* (Quezon City, Philippines: Claretian, 1991), pp. 348-53. This document, originally issued in 1989, clearly differentiates between so-called 'Fundamentalists' and members of 'main-line Churches like the Lutherans, Episcopalians, Methodists, and the United Church of Christ in the Philippines' (pp. 348-9). A number of mass-market tracts issued by Philippine Catholic publishing houses have amplified on its warning.

⁹⁸ Martin, *Tongues of Fire*, p. 51.

⁹⁹ Phelan, *Hispanization of the Philippines*, p. 26.

During John Paul II's visit to the Philippines in 1995 he sounded a similar note of alarm, much as he has done during his visits to Latin America, rather than striking the more ecumenical posture he generally takes during his travels across western Europe and the United States. Of course this is a two-way street. Philippine evangelicals have been slow to see anything good in developments like the rise of the Catholic Charismatic Renewal and other forms of what might be called 'evangelical' Catholicism. Perhaps they fear the competition of Catholic organizations like El Shaddai, founded in 1984 by layman Mariano ('Mike') Velarde, and Couples for Christ, established in 1981 and more closely aligned with the Catholic hierarchy. Although these groups today claim more than a million members each, it seems that their rise has not greatly affected the concurrent rise of Protestant evangelical and Pentecostal denominations.¹⁰² Still, most Filipino evangelicals remain sceptical about co-operative ventures with Catholics that are coming almost to

be taken for granted in the US.¹⁰³ That scepticism seems unlikely to wane in the near future.

Second, as evangelicalism's slice of the Philippine religious pie continues to grow, it will be challenged to move beyond the 'Christ against culture' paradigm that was natural when its numbers were much smaller. With greater size will come greater influence, and from this will flow greater responsibility to address social problems that could previously be ignored or blamed on the failings of the folk-Catholic cultural backdrop—problems that institutional Catholicism has failed to address adequately.

For example, the Catholic magisterium has always taught that abortion is wrong, yet it remains an extremely common practice in the Philippines, with at least 150,000 and possibly as many as 750,000 abortions being performed every year.¹⁰⁴ In the countryside one woman in six admits to having had at least one abortion, and half of these women believe it to be permitted by church law.¹⁰⁵ What do evangelicals

¹⁰² Ma, e-mail, 6 November 1999; Melinda Joy Magdayao, 'The DWXI-PPFI El Shaddai: Is This the Work of God?' (Paper submitted for course, 'Theology and History of Church Renewal', Alliance Biblical Seminary, Manila, Philippines, 3 August 1995). Neither group keeps attendance records, so their claimed membership figures are likely at least as inflated as those of Villanueva; see Smith, e-mail, 27 October 1999.

¹⁰³ The best example of this is the Philippine evangelical response to the document, 'Evangelicals and Catholics Together: The Christian Mission in the Third Millennium'. For example, see Agustin 'Jun' B. Vencer, Jr., 'Comments on Evangelicals and Catholics Together', *Evangelicals Today and Asia Ministry Digest* (April 1995), p. 7; and Agustin 'Jun' B. Vencer, Jr., 'An International Perspective on Evangelical-Catholic Cooperation', *Evangelical Missions Quarterly* 31:3 (July 1995), pp. 278-9.

¹⁰⁴ Florentino Timbreza, *Bioethics and Moral Decisions* (Manila: De La Salle University Press, 1993), p. 70.

¹⁰⁵ 'Pastoral Letter on the Life of the Unborn Child', in *Responses to the Signs of the Times*, p. 219.

have to say about this?¹⁰⁶

Again, Catholic teaching emphatically rejects divorce, hence in the Philippines there is no legal provision for it, yet spousal abandonment is endemic, and the result is that, as in the US and other countries where divorce is permitted, millions of children are being raised in broken homes. What do evangelicals have to say about this?¹⁰⁷

Then again, in recent years Catholic teaching on economics has undergone a fundamental shift, recognizing the market economy's great potential for good. However, many aspects of Philippine culture remain hostile to the capitalist entrepreneurship needed to generate jobs, boost income, and raise the nation's masses out of their accus-

tomed poverty.¹⁰⁸ What do evangelicals have to say about this?¹⁰⁹

Clearly most Filipinos have yet to meet the Christ who speaks of the sanctity of work, of marriage, and indeed of life itself. This is 'the other Spanish Christ' of whom Mackay wrote, the Christ eventually brought to Brazil, Chile, and the other nations of Latin America by Protestant Pentecostals and Charismatics. This may also prove to be 'the other Philippine Christ' brought to Luzon, the Visayas, and Mindanao by Pentecostal and non-Pentecostal evangelicals.

¹⁰⁸ See Pope John Paul II's encyclical, *Centesimus Annus*, issued in 1991, and recent works by Michael Novak, including especially *The Spirit of Democratic Capitalism* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1982). For a grudging concession that Philippine folk-Catholicism's values do indeed pose a major obstacle to economic development, see Romeo J. Intengan, 'Are We Poor Because We Are Catholics?', in *Go and Teach: A Festschrift in Honor of Joseph L. Roche, SJ* (Quezon City, Philippines: Ateneo de Manila University Office of Research and Publications, 1997), pp. 149, 156.

¹⁰⁹ Suico, 'Pentecostalism', p. 17.

¹⁰⁶ I have heard only one Filipino evangelical address abortion in a sermon, and his attack was on the situation in the US rather than that in his own country.

¹⁰⁷ Suico, 'Pentecostalism', pp. 15-16.

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Shaping Theology in a
Postmodern Context*

Reviewed by Garry Harris
Martyn D. Atkins
Preaching in a Cultural Context

Reviewed by Margarethe Sparing
Alan Dundes
*Holy Writ as Oral Lit: The Bible
as Folklore*

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Kwok
Alston, Wallace M. Jr. ed..
*Theology in the Service of the
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Thomas W. Gillespie*

Book Reviews

ERT (2002) 26-2, 181-184

0144-8153

**Beyond Foundationalism:
Shaping Theology in a
Postmodern Context**

Stanley J. Grenz and John R.
Franke

Louisville, Kentucky: Westminster
John Knox Press, 2001
ISBN 0-664-25769-0
Pb., xi + 298 pages

*Reviewed by Amos Yong, Assis-
tant Professor of Theology, Bethel
College, St. Paul, Minnesota*

Three types of readers (among oth-
ers) will give two types of responses

(among others) to this book. On the one side are those who may leave with the feeling of dissatisfaction. These would include convinced liberals who do not believe that the authors have gone far enough in their critique and reformation of traditional theological method, and (ironically) staunchly conservative evangelicals who are suspicious that they have instead capitulated entirely to the contemporary postmodern *zeitgeist*.

On the other side, however, there are those who will come away sensing that Grenz and Franke have in this volume modelled the valiant

struggle that seeks to chart a middle way through the various tensions besetting theology 'beyond foundationalism'. It is for those either already in this second camp or who are searching for such a middle road—what the authors, following Hans Frei, call a 'generous orthodoxy', or, what could also be referred to as a centrist position between liberalism on the left and conservatism on the right—that *Beyond Foundationalism* is especially written.

Theological method for a generous orthodoxy has to acknowledge its betwixt and between position in the contemporary world. Grenz, a well-published theologian at Carey Theological College and Regent College (Vancouver, British Columbia), and Franke, professor of theology at Biblical Theological Seminary (Hatford, Pennsylvania), are up front about this throughout the book. Theology should be viewed as a complex, multi-party conversation, a continual dialogical and dialectical interaction of terms, categories and realities which are neither identical nor ever completely detached. Thus the gospel defines culture, and vice-versa; Scripture defines tradition, and vice-versa; ecclesiology defines community, and vice-versa; theology defines epistemology and methodology, and vice-versa; eschatological hope directed toward the impending kingdom of God defines hope as a universal feature of human existence, and vice-versa. Grenz and Franke proceed through these various issues with remarkable sensitivity to the various conversations in the present situation on the one hand,

even while being faithfully committed to their Christian identity and witness on the other.

At its centre, this volume is not, however, purely commentary on epistemology and culture in a post-modern world, although it certainly confronts both sets of questions head on. Rather, *Beyond Foundationalism* seeks to articulate a theological method that is at the same time a methodological theology. Thus two triads structure the book's argument. The first (Part Two, chapters three through five) concerns the methodological question and explicates the sources of theology: Scripture (as norming norm), tradition (the interpretive trajectory), and culture (the embedded context). The second (Part Three, chapters six through eight) concerns the focal motifs central to Christian theology: Trinity (the structural motif), community (the integrative motif), and eschatology (the orienting motif). Throughout, the authors display a breadth of erudition, a depth of discernment, and a subtlety of rhetorical argument in negotiating the pitfalls of foundationalism on the one side and relativism on the other.

This is an important book about which any summary would do injustice. I want to pay tribute to the authors by entering the conversation they insist theology partakes in, and do so by posing three sets of questions. First, in light of the global readership of this journal, I wonder about how non-western Christians see the issues that divide mainline from evangelical churches in the West. Do the concerns that motivate this vol-

ume mean much to non-western Christians? I am optimistic about the answer precisely because much of the worldwide church is not polarized between liberalism and conservatism but is rather living out the centrist position of generous orthodoxy. Further, the communitarian and eschatological motifs are certain to strike chords with non-westerners who do not understand western individualism and are focused missiologically on the work of the kingdom.

Second, what exactly is the role of the Holy Spirit in theological method? The Spirit appears at key places throughout the discussion of theology's sources, whether that be as the formative power of the world through the Scriptures, as the authority behind both Scripture and tradition, or as the power through whom culturally embedded Christians live faithfully in but not of the world. But if in fact, as Grenz and Franke maintain, the Bible is never read in a vacuum, and both comes already culturally embedded and is engaged by readers and communities who are similarly culturally located; if in fact gospel and culture are always already interacting rather than two terms which need to be correlated *à la* Niebuhr or Tillich; and if in fact the Spirit speaks through Scripture, tradition, and culture; then how do we hear the word of God in its purity? How do we read the scriptures truthfully and yet critically and how do we discern the ideological forces which are at work in all cultural constructions and artifacts? At the practical level, what gives one Christian community the

right to say that its reading of the Scriptures is inspired of the Spirit over and against that of other Christian communities with whom they disagree?

Finally, a question that evangelicals are concerned about: the notion of Scripture as a source of theology, even if it is the norming one. On the one side, the previous question obtains regarding how to legitimize one reading of Scripture against another, an issue of real concern among evangelical communities with disagreements, sometimes fundamentally so, on matters doctrinal and theological. On the other side, however, perhaps the even more complex question pertinent to a non-foundationalist theology and theological method needs to be posed. If, as Grenz and Franke argue persuasively, tradition, culture, and community are all social constructions constituted by a multitude of particularities, how can Scripture itself serve as a norming norm when it is itself a socially/ecclesially constructed abstraction that refers to sixty-six books? How can this be justified not only in the postmodern anti-foundationalist context, but also in the wake of extensive argument about the early Christian construction, following the Jewish paradigm, of a 'house of authority' (Edward Farley, who Grenz and Franke do not engage) displaced from the person of Jesus Christ toward the scriptural canon?

To return to the concerns of the hypothetically dissatisfied readers in the opening paragraph of this review, are Grenz and Franke finally moderate evangelicals who uphold

the normative priority of Scripture over tradition and culture, or are they generously orthodox in their desire to uphold Scripture and community together? If the former, how so, since, in the postmodern context, other communities would also need to be given the right to similar claims regarding their sources of authority, and this would lead to a relativism of scriptural traditions? If the latter, what separates this centrist position from that of Anglicanism, Catholicism and Eastern Orthodoxy?

Alternatively, might Grenz and Franke be truly open to a radically nonfoundationalist pneumatological—what they might call ‘interactionist’—method whereby Scripture, tradition and culture are equally vehicles of the Spirit, at one point any one of the sources being normative, at another a second source providing a corrective, and at a third, the other two sources being set in a new situation and frame of reference, and so on (reflecting their insistence on theology as eschatologically oriented)?

If these questions are at all valid, they point to the richness and suggestiveness of this book. If they are not, they perhaps reveal my misreading of Grenz and Franke. But the only way you can determine which is which is if you take the time, which will be well rewarded, to carefully read and reflect on *Beyond Foundationalism*.

ERT (2002) 26-2, 184-186

0144-8153

Preaching in a Cultural Context

Martyn D. Atkins

Foundry Press, Peterborough,
2001. ISBN1-88852-185-8. Pb
92pp

*Reviewed by Garry Harris, Santo,
Vanuatu*

For those grappling with the implications of postmodernism for preaching, this volume is a welcome gift. Articulating the characteristics of the postmodern world-view, it exposes the limitations of a system that elevates subjective experience to the role of final arbiter.

The postmodern proclivity for ‘...fragmentation, micronarratives, mini-stories, especially our own stories about personal choices...’ (p.29) suggests that it is a product of the late twentieth century’s indulgence in self-absorption. At times the unabashed ego-centrism of this framework is disquieting: ‘Does it work for me?’ Atkins asserts, is the key criterion for accepting or rejecting knowledge and information. ‘If it works, it’s good. If it makes sense of our experiences, it must be true’ (p.34).

The author demonstrates how apostolic preaching was characterized by cultural sensitivity. Alluding to the speeches of Peter and Paul, he suggests that their rhetoric was intentionally crafted to accommodate the diverse frames of reference of Jewish, Greek, and Roman audiences. These examples serve to illustrate the author’s thesis that gospel

proclamation must be coupled with an adroit sensitivity to the broad cultural context in which the preaching event occurs.

This volume notes that the preacher's perception of the culture invariably finds expression in the sermon. Allusion is made to Andrew Walls' contention that Christian history reflects the tension between two competing gospel principles. The 'Indigenous Principle', typified by the church's immersing itself in a culture is contrasted to the 'Pilgrim Principle', which emphasizes the transient nature of earthly existence. In the latter, Christians are depicted as 'God's refugee people' whose citizenship is in heaven. Historically there has been periodic oscillation between these two diverse expressions of Christianity.

The church's accommodation of this most recent worldview seems untenable, since the linguistic relativism of postmodernity reduces language to an insubstantial tool of communication. The impact of this mindset upon preaching is apparent. Words are now deemed as incapable of referring to any objective reality outside themselves. Atkins exposes the poverty of this philosophy: 'Put starkly, language has no ultimate meaning and is, therefore, able to mean whatever the reader...wants it to mean' (p.31).

The folly of this position is further demonstrated by Alister McGrath's perceptive observation: '...linguistic relativists apply the principle of relativity to all words except those making up their own contract of employment. Suddenly, when dealing with

salaries and conditions, words mean exactly what they say' (p. 74). This wry comment suggests that linguistic relativism may be an interesting diversion for academy, but is incapable of commanding substantive commitment from even its staunchest advocates.

The author alerts readers to the irreconcilable conflict between linguistic relativism and historical critical methodology, the foundation of much biblical scholarship and expository preaching. He also counters allegations that Christianity is authoritarian and elitist by insisting that '...attempting to produce a better public level of knowledge about Christianity ... is better than colluding with ignorance and superstition which is real tyrannical authoritarianism' (p.78).

Atkins crystallizes the quantum paradigm-shift that has occurred in contemporary thinking and details its impact for preachers. He observes:

From a postmodern perspective Christian preaching is at best impossible and at worst immoral....It presents the Christian faith as a metanarrative, a good news story applicable to all people of every time and place. It presents this 'big story' in terms of truth and ultimate reality, refusing the preferred way of provisionality and relativism (p.45).

Demanding serious reflection on the meaning and function of language, this volume assumes an apologetic dimension. Noting post-modern parallels to Gnosticism and mystery religions, which were resoundingly rejected by the early church, it urges a similar repudiation by contemporary Christendom.

Despite its shortcomings, the

author affirms the positive contributions of this new worldview. 'Post-modernity puts spirituality...firmly back on the agenda of life. It reconnects thinking and feeling, seeing them as profoundly interwoven....' (p.53).

This work happily observes that 'authenticity, relationality and personality' have been refocused as significant issues for the sermon. This has allowed a more holistic view of preaching to re-emerge where vocal and kinesic issues are again acknowledged as significant in the preaching event.

Martyn Atkins has well served the church with this undertaking. Acutely aware of the perils of sinking into the amorphous netherworld of relativism, he cautions: 'Expository preaching... must continue to be a part of any Church wishing to remain securely biblical....The alternative...is an anchorless, shapeless, insubstantial Christianity' (p.78). The gravity of the situation is reaffirmed by allusion to David Adam's sobering words: 'Without the Bible the remembered Christ becomes the imagined Christ' (p.78).

All who appreciate the study of language and any involved in the proclamation of the Christian faith will appreciate this timely contribution.

ERT (2002) 26-2, 186-188

0144-8153

Holy Writ as Oral Lit: The Bible as Folklore

Alan Dundes

Lanham, Maryland: Rowman and

Littlefield Publishers, 1999

ISBN 0-8476-9197-7

Pp. XII + 129

Reviewed by Margarethe Sparing Chavez, SIL, Peru

Can one consider the Bible as folklore and still revere it as the 'holy' writ? This is the question Dr. Alan Dundes, Professor of Folklore at UC Berkeley and one of the world's leading folklorists, attempts to answer in his well researched and interesting book. One could also rephrase the question as follows: Is one justified to call Scripture 'folklore' without curtailment of its truth value?

In his Acknowledgements Dundes claims: 'This book combines a lifelong love of the Bible with a career in the study of folklore.' And in his Conclusion he reiterates his main thesis:

1. Folklore is characterized by multiple existence and variation.
2. The Bible is permeated by multiple existence and variation.
3. The Bible is folklore.'

Furthermore he underlines his conviction that the Bible indeed is folklore by assuring the reader of his belief that, 'Jesus would have understood my arguments'.

As a former student of Professor Dundes, I as reviewer of this book, appreciate his honesty and straightforwardness, especially from my experience as a translator over many

years in the Amazon jungle of Peru, working with the Amahuacas. Among other Amahuaca folk wisdom, we learned their language, assisted in developing an alphabet, analyzing the grammar, collecting their folklore, helping the people establish a bilingual (Amahuaca and Spanish) school system, and in translating portions of Scripture into their mother tongue.

Despite all this, the question remains, can anyone who is taking the Bible to be the infallible Word of God, go along with calling the 'Book of books' folklore? The answer of course, lies primarily in the definition of folklore, oral literature, and written folklore. Isn't the term 'Oral Literature' an oxymoron? What happens when folklore is written down? Does it retain its flexibility to be moulded by its environment? Does labelling the Bible folklore say anything about its truth value? Wasn't the Bible written down years ago? Didn't God himself write the Ten Commandments with his own hand? These are the questions Dundes is trying to grapple with in his study.

In his discussion 'What is Folklore?' he puts to death the phrase: 'That's just folklore', by contending that folklore for the professional folklorist 'is not synonym with error or fallacy'. It is in this context that he develops his thesis about the nature of folklore and the biblical accounts, contending that all genres of folklore, oral or written, 'are characteristic of multiple existence and variation which may be reflected in such details as different names, different numbers, or different sequences of

lines'. All three of these types of variations are, of course, found in the Bible and people are often puzzled by them. Dundes compares a large number of examples of the Old as well as New Testament.

For example he compares the account of Jesus' healing the blind man/men in Matthew 20: 29-34 with Luke 18: 35-43 and Mark 10:46-5. Matthew refers to two blind men and Luke and Mark to one. Also there is a discrepancy between the verbs of entering and leaving the city of Jericho. What does one make of it? The answer is simple: It is folklore. The stories have been handed down from generation to generation and some details got changed. When they were written down, they were considered sacred and the writers did not dare to adjust them.

Speaking about the 'infallibility' of the Bible as seen by Christian critics Dundes summarizes the discussion with 'The governing paradigmatic syllogism' by Geisler and Howe, (1992:11)

God cannot Err.

The Bible is the Word of God.

Therefore, the Bible cannot err.

He then proceeds with an enlightening discussion on 'harmonizing' the Gospels, duplicate texts in the Old Testament, and the 'authentic words of Jesus' in the New Testament. The researchers of the 'authentic words of Jesus' formed the so-called Jesus Seminar in 1985 and tried to distinguish between what Jesus said from what they term 'common lore' in their book entitled: *The Five Gospels: The Search for the Authentic Words of Jesus*. In

their volume *Acts of Jesus* they try to separate the acts Jesus really performed from fictitious ones. According to Dundes these researchers continue in the footsteps 'of the "folklore in the Bible" tradition.' He distances himself from that tradition. Rather than separate the 'goats from the sheep,' i.e. separate the folkloristic elements from the non-folkloristic ones in Scripture, he 'takes the bull by the horns' and claims that 'the Bible is folklore,' it is 'codified oral tradition'.

In the process of his investigation the author gives ample examples of different genres of folklore, so that the reader does not only have the benefit of being enriched through the examples, but in addition is getting a crash course in the nature and genres of folklore. All that is included in the price of the book. Most of his examples are not only amusing, but also give the reader an inkling on how sayings are slanted to make them politically correct for socialist, communist, fascist, and many other forms of government.

The chapter entitled 'Previous Studies of Folklore and the Bible' is a helpful review of the most important research done so far on this topic and shows that scholars have always tried to keep the two apart. They attempted to prove that Scripture is not folklore. Dundes certainly sympathizes with scholars of the Bible who dared to 'recognize or acknowledge its folkloristic nature' by citing a great number of them who lost their credibility and jobs for being too *avant garde* in their writings.

Dundes boldly contradicts these

scholars, however, in that he makes a clear case for the *Holy Writ* being folklore because of its tradition of being oral literature. This he substantiates with many examples that show different numbers, names, sequences of events, repetitious events, and a few other elements in the accounts of the Bible that point to irregularities. At no point does he question the truth value of Scripture.

The one disappointment that I discovered in the book is the following: The subtitle of Chapter I is: 'All Scripture is given by the inspiration of God' (2. Tim. 3:16), yet nowhere does the author discuss or qualify this point. Granted his book is not a theological discussion; instead its strength lies in the folkloristic end of it. Yet given such a subtitle, the reader — at least this reader — expects some reference to it. Otherwise one wonders why the subtitle is mentioned at all.

In summary, *The Holy Writ as Oral Lit* is a very worthwhile book. It is enlightening, convincing, entertaining, and familiarizes the reader with the most important research done on Scripture and folklore. In addition, it gives the reader a bird's eye view on the nature and genres of folklore. The actual 'stumbling block' for the Christian reader might be the subtitle: 'The Bible as Folklore' due to the fact that everyone has his or her own preconceived notion of the meaning of 'folklore'.

It would certainly be profitable for this book to be translated into a number of languages, particularly those that already have research done on the subject under discussion.

ERT (2002) 26-2, 189-190

0144-8153

**Adolescents in Crisis. A
Guidebook for Parents,
Teachers, Ministers, and
Counselors**

G. Wade Rowatt Jr.

Louisville: Westminster John Knox
Press, 2001

ISBN 0-664-22334-6

Pb, 188 pp, bibliog., index

*Reviewed by Ross Farley, Scrip-
ture Union and TEAR Australia*

Many books on youth ministry tend to repeat what earlier books have said but Rowatt does not just rework previous material. This book makes its own valuable original contribution to ministry with adolescents.

The first four chapters, dealing with foundational issues and general principles, are quite easy to read: *Adolescence in Crisis, Understanding Developmental Issues and Crises, Principles of Caring and Guidelines for Intervention*. The last six chapters address the specific issues of *Family Problems, Sexual Problems, Peer and Academic Pressures, Youth Violence, Depression and Suicide and Substance Abuse*, and require a lot more concentration without being too technical for the average reader.

A useful feature of the book is the way sections in most chapters are specifically directed towards *parents, teachers, ministers and counsellors*. This recognizes that not everyone is in the same position with respect to adolescents, or has the same skills and opportunities. Rowatt has given considerable

thought to the specific ways parents, teachers, ministers and counsellors can help. This will make the book helpful most of all to ministers, teachers and parents (but not light-weight readers).

The author is Director of The St Matthews Pastoral Counseling Center and former Professor of Pastoral Care and Psychology of Religion, Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Louisville, Kentucky and he has been a counsellor of young people for more than thirty years. A counsellor wrote this book and his main readership is ministers, teachers and parents who are not trained counsellors. It is useful for people like this, whose training is in Christian ministry or education but who find themselves helping troubled adolescents

Trained counsellors may find that the book covers some old ground but they will also find plenty of valuable information. In particular, counsellors will find useful the author's insights on the strategies they can employ in working with ministers, teachers and parents

The chapter on developmental issues and crises is refreshing because, while it appeals to the established theories of adolescent development, it is not another exercise of summarizing those theories. Rowatt explains the subtle differences between early, middle and late adolescents in a way that exudes years of experience. A wealth of wisdom and some very useful strategies are to be found in the chapters on *Principles of Caring and Guidelines for Intervention*.

The chapter on family provides a helpful analysis of the ways the relationship between parents influences the behaviour of adolescents. The major internal stresses on the adolescent's family are identified as dependence versus independence, distance versus closeness and dysfunctional parents while the major external stresses are illness, death, divorce, and roles and expectations.

The chapter on Peer and Academic Problems is particularly enjoyable. Rowatt highlights the importance of academic performance and explores the causes and responses to failure. He points out that academic performance is closely related to the adolescents' relationships with their peers. Making and keeping friends is a high priority for adolescents. Many have genuine difficulties in this area while others imagine that everyone else has plenty of friends and they are the only ones left out, when in reality they are as popular as everyone else.

The influences driving sexual activity are explored in the chapter on sex. The experimental behaviour of younger adolescents is distinguished from the more serious shift in values that often accompanies sexual activity in older adolescents. There is also plenty of useful material on such issues as promiscuity, pregnancy and abuse. Other sections of the book, including those dealing with violence, depression, suicide and substance abuse (which includes food abuse as well as drugs), all go together to make this volume one that is highly recommended.

ERT (2002) 26-2, 190-192

0144-8153

Theology in the Service of the Church. Essays in Honor of Thomas W. Gillespie

Alston, Wallace M. Jr. ed..

Grand Rapids: Wm B. Eerdmans, 2000

0802838812

281 pages, Hb.

Reviewed by Dr. Benedict Hung-biu Kwok, Assistant Professor of Theology, Alliance Bible Seminary, Hong Kong

This book consists of 25 articles without sub-division, covering the nature, structure and content of theology, ethics, contextual theology and ecumenics. The arrangement of the essays is according to the alphabetical order of the authors. The intention of the editor is to keep the plurality and diversity of the articles. I agree that it is hard to reach logical consensus among 25 different articles. However, I don't think that it is impossible to find reasonable thematic grouping. In this book review, I would like to divide the articles into four groups: the nature of theology, the construction of theology, the content of theology and particular contextual issues.

Regarding the nature of theology, Wallace M. Alston Jr. reminds us that theology has ecclesial and public dimensions, while Peter J. Gomes point out that theology is the servant of the church, and the preacher is the church's servant theologian. Both of them highlight the minister as pastor theologian. Leanne Van Dyk follows George Lindbeck and

Alistair McGrath's understanding and focuses on the communal nature of biblical narratives and Christian experience.

Gerhard Sauter elaborates the dialectical structure of theology. Theology is totally dependent on God's coming and his presence, and then comes the human response. Therefore, the dialectical movement is asymmetrical. He avoids defining theology either by subjective projection or by objectifying God as part of the world. Ellen T. Charry points out that theological knowledge is transformative. The knowledge of God persuades our personal desire for God's truthfulness, goodness and beauty. Due to the crisis of authority and knowledge, theology after Calvin was no longer sapiential but logical and systematical.

Bruce L. McCormack reflects the genuine Reformed understanding of dogma as both theoretical and practical. He regards theology as transformative knowledge from God in ecclesial context. Robert Wuthnow discusses the function of social science for public theology and implicitly mentions the need to deal with theological issues not only within a particular tradition, but also ecumenically. Thomas F. Torrance reminds us that in evangelization should be included the transformation of the mind of the church and society. Edward Idris Cardinal Cassidy shares the view that theology serves the church by serving ecumenism.

In the material dealing with the construction of theology, Michael Welker proposes that biblical theo-

gy is part of an interdisciplinary theological programme. The historical-critical exegesis could protect systematic theology from over-interpretation of the biblical text. John H. Leith reminds the theologians and the pastors that the history of doctrine connects us with the ecumenical church. E. David Willis links biblical studies together with historical and systematic theology in the interests of proclamation. Historical theology concerns about God's revelation in the historical process and systematic theology brings the dialogue between Christ and Culture in the past to the process of proclamation in the present.

For the content of theology, Robert W. Jenson approaches the issue of the historical Jesus from biblical and doctrinal perspectives. Eduard Schweizer defends the view that the metaphor of expiatory sacrifice symbolizes the love of God towards suffering mankind. Jong Sung Rhee thinks that *logos*, *pathos*, *ethos* and *mythos* are four spheres of human existence. He regards Augustine and Jesus Christ as examples and argues for the construction of a balanced anthropology. David F. Wright reminds us of the importance of infant baptism. Robert M. Adams suggests that both stewardship and generosity models are valid theologically, but generosity has deeper theological meaning which is an aspect of *hesed*, generous forgiving from God.

There are also articles dealing with particular contextual issues. Don Browning deals with gender issues, and H. Russel Botman focuses on

South African Public Theologies. Yasuo Carl Furuya lets us know about the Presbyterian Church in Japan. Gustavo Gutiérrez reminds us of the need to discern the issue of poverty not only socially, economically, but also globally. He argues for a commitment to the preferential option for the poor as the mission of the church. David B. Watermulder points out that the church should always ask critically how to live in the Holy Spirit together with the established ecclesial order. Károly Tóth represents the Hungarian voice.

From my point of view, there are

some issues worth further discussion. The idea of pastor-theologian is meaningful for the Chinese Christians because we always tend to separate piety from theological reflection. The idea of theology as ecclesial and public is also stimulating. It is a basic question for the aims of theological education and also a question of the self-understanding of theologian and pastor. Moreover, the idea of the integration of biblical studies, historical and systematic theology for preaching is a very challenging task for theological education.

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ABSTRACTS/INDEXING

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

It is also indexed in the *ATLA Religion Database*, published by the American Theological Library Association, 250 S. Wacker Dr., 16th Flr., Chicago, Illinois 60606-5834 USA, E-mail: atla@atla.com, Web: www.atla.com/

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