



"This world is not my home, I'm just a passin' through"—is that good enough for today?

Ralph D. Winter



Dear Reader,

This time we have a very delicate issue. Dealing with it here are three very different articles.

The issue has dogged the tracks of earnest Christian workers for the last 100 years:

What is God's Mission?

- Is it to "declare" His glory in all the nations?
- Does that mean to "tell" or to "portray" or both?
- And, are we to *command* His will?

The issue has been expressed in countless different ways:

- Word versus deed?
- Preach versus do good works?
- Minister to the body or to the spirit?
- Do evangelism or social action?
- Get people to heaven or help them now in this life?
- Teach them truths or command them to obey all that Jesus taught?
- Is it to seek for His will to be done on earth as it is in heaven?

You can easily think of other ways to describe the issue.

The three different articles are

1. My own
2. One by Steve Saint
3. An excerpt from Christopher Wright's *The Mission of God*.

- » Mine tries to explain where Evangelicals have been historically and where we are heading right now—a new thesis.
- » Steve's is a gripping personal true story of the merger of the two—as only he can tell it!



Ralph D. Winter is the Editor of Mission Frontiers and the General Director of the Frontier Mission Fellowship.

» Wright's is biblical, disturbing, and truly cogent, as well as personal.

The 1st Article (R. Winter)

My thesis is (read carefully) that *Evangelicals are quite different from what they were in Lincoln's day* not because of a change of theology (which was the effect not the cause), but *because of a loss of social power*.

People can still talk about heaven even if they are powerless on earth. That has happened.

My lengthy article describes in some detail how the Evangelicals who founded and ran this country for a hundred years (1776 to 1876, roughly) had bold, society-wide ideas of how God's will ought to work out in this life, in our society and in our world. They enforced honesty in both public life and business (inventing Dunn and Bradstreet). They created coeducation, banned liquor and slavery, urged use of whole foods, and a hundred other things. They even sang of "alabaster cities gleaming ... undimmed by human tears."

But then an immigration avalanche occurred. Between 1876 and 1930 an inundation mainly from southern Europe *tripled our population*, and removed Evangelicals from leadership.

Meanwhile, literally millions of new, socially-powerless Moody converts became the vibrant, groping mainstream of the Evangelicals. Now they sang "This world is not my home, I'm just a passin' through, my treasures are laid up somewhere beyond the blue."

Now, they backed away from major social problems and labeled those who did not do so as *liberals* (they often were). They banned the very word *Kingdom*. Prophecy conferences, "last days" talk became prominent.

They no longer expected our national "good to be crowned with brotherhood," which was written by a

devout school teacher in 1900 reflecting the previous era.

For us latter-day Evangelicals, this world was hopeless and was getting worse by the second. "Let's wait for Jesus to return," we said. From 1900 to the 1970s we only gradually emerged from an underground movement dominated by 157 Bible Institutes.

Those schools eventually adopted standard practices and their graduates began showing up in the professions, as mayors, as congressmen and senators. Carter made it to the presidency in 1977, etc. Today this increased visibility of other-worldly Evangelicals sends shock waves of fear through many non-church people. They seem to have appeared out of nowhere.

But our rising social power has only gradually recreated extensive commitment to solving the problems of this world. Increased attacks on religion, and on fundamentalists (and Christians) in particular, point to the general lack of prominence of Evangelical organizations in the spheres of social and commercial leadership nor in fighting corruption, disease and poverty.

We say "That's for Bill Gates." Alternatively, many Evangelicals are gravitating into an increased religious firepower of healings, prosperity and the miraculous, all dominated still by a focus on the next world not "thy will be done *on earth* as it is in heaven."

But this is only a thumbnail sketch of many more details in my long article (which is an excerpt from a still longer one).

The 2nd Article (Steve Saint)

Steve is the instigator and promoter of the movie *End of the Spear*, and the truly brilliant writer of the even more exciting book by the same title.

His much shorter article here, written for this issue, bristles with gut-wrenching reality. He too believes that we must not separate God's love into word and deed, and that they complement each other.

He gives just a hint of the calamitous background of his own upbringing in the jungle and now the astonishing combination of word and deed among one of the most isolated and savage tribes on the face of the earth.

Evangelicals today are quite different from what they were in Lincoln's day—not because of a change of theology (which was the effect not the cause)—but because of a loss of social power.

The 3rd Article (Chris Wright)

What we print here is a small excerpt from a ponderous "magisterial" work of many years. *The Mission of God, Unlocking the Bible's Grand Narrative*, (Intervarsity Press, 2006). Who would be better able to attempt a nearly 600 page book on that subject? Missionary, professor, Principal of the superb All Nations Christian College in England (see the web site www.langhampartnership.org/chris-wright/biography/).

What we have excerpted is spell-bindingly crucial—and disturbing. He describes his own pilgrimage from earlier thinking. He describes thoughts from John Stott (with whom he now works closely as the new International Director of John Stott Ministries).

Okay, we have gotten over the idea that a faith in certain truths with no practical outworking in daily life is not the kind

of biblical faith that saves. In the Bible there is no artificial distinction between true heart faith and heart obedience.

Faith in certain truths concerns reconciliation with God. Once saved, the question this book raises becomes urgent: What is the Mission of God? What is life supposed to be like for the saved individual? Is it to be a life filled with good works? "Let your light so shine before men that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in Heaven (Matt. 5:16)," and "We are God's handiwork created ... to do good works (Eph 2:10)."

And doesn't the Gospel of the Kingdom entail the declaration of *the commands of God* (Matt 28:20) *not just the truths of salvation?*

Massive structural changes have taken place around the world due to missions. Education, medicine, politics and industry are radically different because of

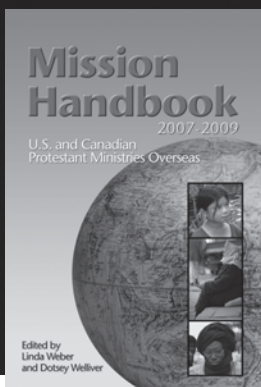
thousands of creative missionaries. At this moment mission agencies are carrying an immense load of responsibility in all of these areas.

Missions to the Rescue, and Rescuing Missions

National Geographic highlights the work of the little Kaleen Mission Hospital in Zambia. Both Johns Hopkins and the Gates foundation assist a tiny mission hospital in Zimbabwe. Missions have led the way. But donors sometimes don't want to hear about such efforts.

Enormous Evangelical wealth of skill and funds are being frittered away on relative trivialities, lacking a clear theology of demonstrating God's glory in this world.

Others are losing their faith because it would appear that our God has no Enemy who is destroying God's creation—that lets God take the blame for our inactivity at the front line. 🌐



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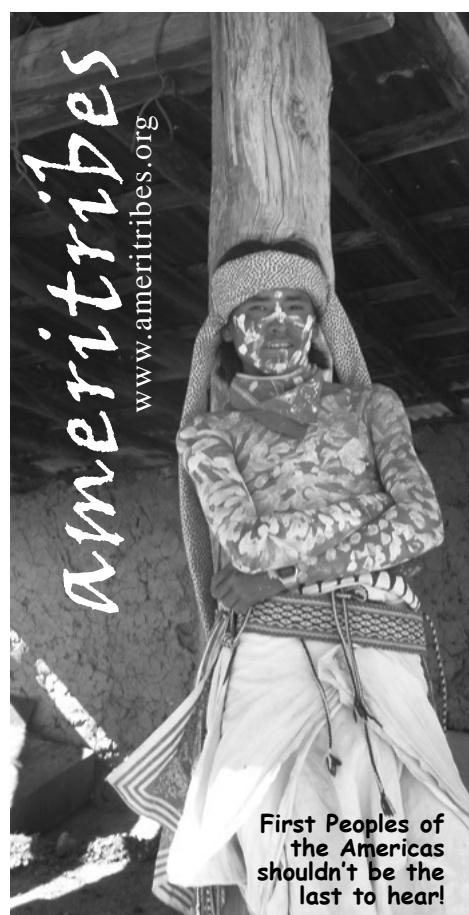
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The Future of Evangelicals in Mission

Will We Regain the Vision of Our Forefathers in the Faith?

By Ralph D. Winter

A great deal of the future of the Evangelical movement and its mission vision can be deduced by looking closely at its roots. Evangelicals have a rich heritage of faith and works that can again inspire and instruct us as we seek to bring a complete gospel to every tribe and tongue.

Evangelicals? Who Are They?

The word *evangelical* in the Catholic tradition refers to those people who take the four *Evangelical* gospels very seriously—specifically, the members of Catholic orders. Later, in the Protestant tradition, the word *evangelical* came to refer to a political party where the *evangelici*, adhering to the authority of the Bible, were opposed to the *pontifici* who supported the authority of the Pope.

However, at the time of the Reformation other things were going on besides the tensions between two parties. There were the Anabaptists and later on the Pietists and still later a still different kind of “Evangelical,” namely Quakers, and eventually, the Methodists, who became a world force.

As a broad generalization, all of these additional “third force” movements came to understand the word *Evangelical* to mean more than correct belief. It began to refer to those individuals who had had a personal “evangelical experience,” by which they meant that something real had happened in a person’s heart and life not just a purely mental assent to a certain intellectual creed.

The concept of a “born again” experience was almost entirely unknown at the time of the Reformation, but much later came into its own, in a sense, when a university trained Anglican, John Wesley, in 1738, in a little Moravian chapel on a street called Aldersgate, sensed the *warming of his heart* as he listened to a verse being read out loud from Paul’s letter to the Romans in a commentary by Luther. The verse spoke of people being “saved by faith.”

It was not long before the idea of a need for a personal heart-warming “faith” *experience* was followed by a concept of an even deeper work of grace, a “second blessing,” “entire sanctification,” “infilling of the Spirit,” or “baptism of the Spirit.”

An Overview: Two Kinds of Evangelicals

What later ensued is a complex picture. It would seem helpful to distinguish between *First-Inheritance Evangelicalism* and *Second-Inheritance Evangelicalism* (my terms). For this article we can define—as in the diagram on page 14—the First as that which was characterized by a broad dual social/personal spectrum of concern ranging from foreign missions to changing the legal structure of society and even war. The Second Inheritance focused mainly on the personal.

The Evangelical Awakening in England as related to Wesley displays the same heady dual emphasis of *earthly and heavenly, social and personal*. This dual emphasis is seen in America where in the 1700s a simultaneous awakening occurred called the Great Awakening, which both exploded church member-

ship and led to the Declaration of Independence, and where, later, in the 1800s a Second Great Awakening brought thousands more into the churches, drastically overhauled society and led to the Civil War. These major “awakenings” are far more significant in American history than our secularized school books reveal. Even the remarkable book of a secular Nobel Prize winner, Robert Fogel, *The Fourth Great Awakening*, recognizes the foundational importance of four spiritual awakenings in American history.

To generalize, this First Inheritance Evangelicalism ran from, say, the earliest glimmers of the Great Awakening with Theodorus Frelinghuysen in 1721 in the Raritan Valley in New Jersey, to the onset of D. L. Moody’s enormous influence in, say, 1875. This period was significantly characterized by Evangelicals *in a position of civil leadership*. This, I conclude is the main reason they could readily believe not only in a profound transformation of individuals, but also in a wide range of different aspects of social transformation and God-glorification.

However, this First Inheritance, after, say, 1875, gradually branched into two “reductions,” each concentrating on one of the two elements in the former concept of a Biblical Christian service which emphasized both personal holiness and social transformation—heaven and earth, spiritual and material.

One reduction after 1875 continued to be social concern, that is, God’s will *on earth*, with a reduced emphasis on personal faith, and was, accordingly, less likely to call itself Evangelical. The other reduction continued the emphasis on sin and salvation, and, specifically, on the necessity (and supposed sufficiency) of a *personal experience* coupled with an other-worldly focus, *on heaven*.

First Inheritance people had commanded the upper levels of society. They had found it quite possible to tackle widespread evils and change social structure. But they also emphasized conversion of the heart. However, eventually many upscale college people, became a social gospel reduction, a relatively small stream *outnumbered greatly by a surge of non-college people*. Meanwhile, the followers of the personal reduction became the main stream I am calling Second Inheritance Evangelicals. They were mainly non-college masses swept into faith by popular evangelists—D. L. Moody, Billy Sunday, and many others. But *not being in a position of social*

influence they tended to turn away from the very idea of transforming society at a macro level. This, to me, is a very key point.

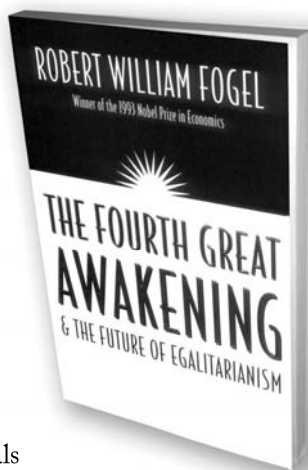
This *Second Inheritance Evangelicalism* soon became the Evangelical mainstream due to two forces.

One was the impact of massive immigration from the Catholic parts of Europe. U. S. population jumped from 44 million to 106 million between 1875 and 1920. As a result leading families of First Inheritance lost influence and gradually slipped in both faith and political standing. Secondly, the first and second World Wars seemed to shatter all optimism for a new world order prior to the coming of Christ. Thirdly, D. L. Moody and others impacted millions of non-college Americans who, even after conversion, were extensively isolated from both civic leadership and college education but became the majority in the Evangelical stream.

The latter new Evangelicalism-of-the-masses, characterizing the Second Inheritance, significantly boosted church attendance in the United States and also created Bible Institutes, new denominations and non-denominational churches. However, it had little stake in politics or social action tending to suspect as being “liberal” (which by then was often the case) the smaller number of continuing, socially upscale college-educated Evangelicals from the First Inheritance who became the social reduction. Post-Moody Evangelicals in the non-college stratum tended to react against social schemes and even to banish the word “kingdom” from their vocabulary, thus tending to undergo a second type of reduction, this time, to a primarily “personal” Christianity emphasizing a theology of “this world is not my home, I’m just a passin’ through.” This produced an opposite pole from the other reduction to primarily social action.

Thesis: A Recovery of First-Inheritance Evangelicalism

My prediction in this article is that the non-college groundswell, by gradually gaining social prominence throughout the 20th century as the mainstream of Evangelicalism in the USA (and of Evangelical missions in particular) will hopefully recover an electrifyingly broader perspective of its mission. This new vision will mean moving from what has been dominantly a heaven-and-personally focused Second Inheritance to a rediscovery



John Wesley

of the earlier full-spectrum of the “First Inheritance” tradition., which possessed a theology combining both personal “salvation” with vast social responsibility. This will increasingly mean a concern for the glorification of God in both individual and social transformation. Note that earlier perspective does not see evangelism and social action as two entirely different things.

We can see that kind of integrated strategy in the very character of all truly effective mission history. We can see that unity in the Bible itself where Jesus validated, illuminated and empowered His words by His deeds. This type of virile wide-spectrum faith, without very often being given much credit in either secular or religious circles, contributed enormously to the development of America. Hopefully it may become the new mainstream of global Evangelicalism with the same effect.

Undoubtedly not everyone will embrace the healed polarization. Two dangers can be anticipated. One danger will be that a “Second Inheritance” avoidance of social transformation may endure in some circles—because there are still more disenfranchised masses in America to be won. The opposite danger will be a renewed focus on social transformation stripped of an adequate emphasis on the individual transformation that is, ironically, so very essential to any significant social transformation.

Hopefully, the full spectrum of recovered First Inheritance Evangelicalism I am talking about will go beyond a “holism” that often merely does many good things but leaves a “hole” where evangelism should be. Holism risks the assumption that our “battle” is merely to benefit humans, a suspiciously humanistic angle of view.

By contrast in Heaven’s war against Satan our priority is to recruit soldiers, freeing people from “the dominion of Satan,” (Acts 26:18), by winning their allegiance to a supreme deity whose attributes are portrayed definitively in Jesus Christ. But even that is a priority which is merely “prior” if we are going to accumulate active, *effective* soldiers. Obviously, recruitment before battle is a *priority*, but merely a priority. As these new soldiers, with their transformed lives, then seek along with Christ and by the empowering grace of God to “destroy the works of the Devil” (1 Jn. 3:8), their good deeds will, as in Matt. 5:16 “glorify their Father in heaven.” These “communicating” deeds will then validate and empower further evangelism that will be able to gain still more recruits for the battle of the kingdom. But note: ***merely recruiting and not battling does not win wars.***

Note also that this perspective is no longer a tension

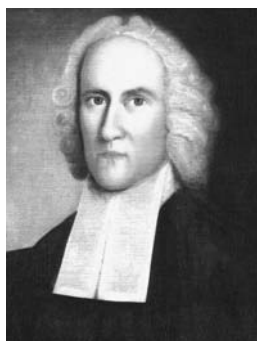
between God and Man, as our Reformation heritage tends to portray it, but is a much larger war between the Kingdom of God-plus-His-people against the Kingdom of darkness. However, seeking to destroy the “dominion” of Satan must not be confused with the tendency to seek the “dominion” of society by the saints through worldly power, which is sometimes called “Dominion” philosophy.

Let’s go back and look more closely at the earlier synthesis.

PART I: First Inheritance Evangelicals

The Great Awakening

In the United States in the early 1700s, Jonathan Edwards in Boston, and Theodore Frelinghuysen in the Raritan Valley in northern New Jersey—the latter bringing over some Pietism from the old country—are given credit for being precursors to the widespread and powerful “Great Awakening of the Middle Colonies.” That profound movement was then stirred up further by George Whitefield, a friend of John Wesley who came from England to do powerful outdoor preaching. His major impact from Boston to Charleston built upon those earlier events. Whitefield had emerged alongside the Wesleyan movement in England, part of the larger “Evangelical Awakening” which transformed English society more than any other movement in English history.



Jonathan Edwards

This new form of personal-experience Christianity was so significantly different that, in the colonies, long before the North/South division during the Civil War, it split the majority group, the Presbyterians, right down the middle for a number of years, one side reflecting the more intellectual Reformation requirements and the other side emphasizing an experiential and identifiable “work of grace.”

As surprising as it may be to most Evangelicals of the Second Inheritance (since 1900), the key point of this article is that the earlier “First Inheritance” Evangelicalism of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries was by no means oriented only to personal experience and the next world. In contrast to the almost exclusively personal-salvation oriented Evangelicalism of the Second Inheritance, it engaged in a mountain of social reforms parallel to Wesley’s profound social impact in England. The Great Awakening in the Middle Colonies was a powerful movement that actually forged a democratically governed church structure ranging from Boston to Charleston and, with this pattern of rule in the context, gave crucial impetus to the Declaration of Independence, the Constitutional Convention and a single government over all the colonies. Without this

democratically governed inter-colonial model, the birth of the new nation wouldn't have occurred in the way it did. The crafting of the U. S. Constitution was done one block away from meetings redrafting the Presbyterian Constitution. Many of the same men were involved in both meetings. Many of the same phrases occur in both documents.

Just as Evangelicalism today is becoming more politically aware and active, so in addition to the spiritual fervor of the Great Awakening the whole idea of breaking away from England was also associated, pulling into the scene many people, such as Tom Paine, who had no formal connection to the church at all.

Among America's leaders the initially Christian vision for wholesale social change became so widespread that it was easy for many (whether, as with Tom Paine, spiritually alive or not) to be enthused by a this-world cause. Thus, by the time of the American Revolution, the spiritual roots of the Great Awakening became paradoxically overshadowed in public life—virtually snuffed out—by the political and military events going on between the Declaration of Independence in 1776 and the conclusion of the War of 1812 in 1815.

The Second Great Awakening

Many scholars refer to certain events of roughly 1815-1840 as the Second Great Awakening, which was at least a renewal of the earlier Great Awakening. In this second awakening we see the contribution of Charles Finney, an attorney who found Christ, and who very definitely believed in a "second work of grace." Much of the USA saw the impact of his ministry as well as that of the "camp meeting" phenomenon, plus other itinerant preachers and many local revivals. It is significant that these spiritual events did not ignore social transformation but fueled it, providing, incidentally, the moral outrage which underlay many of the events leading to the Civil War.

In many respects the most prominent event of the early 1800s in America was the unexpected outcome of the War of 1812. Unexpectedly for the Americans, when the war was not lost but went to a draw in 1815, this amazing turn of events popped the balloon of fear of inexorable British reprisal. This euphoria of freedom, this sense of ownership for the first time of a vast land of their own (never mind the Indians), gave life to all kinds of radical experiments—social, political and reli-

gious—and it very dynamically sparked the imagination, vision and even the rethinking of the Christian religion itself.

Oberlin College could be a case study. Established with the encouragement of Charles Finney and the financial resources of the wealthy Tappan brothers, it was both a fruit of the spiritual revival and also socially upscale. Oberlin was the first interracial school, the first co-educational school, the first vocational school, the first school to teach music, the first anti-slavery school, first temperance school, and so forth. No holy reform was outside their purview. For example, students believed that God would help them improve the efficiency of the Franklin Stove, and so was invented the Oberlin Stove. The entire period represented incredible ingenuity, innovation, and—most specifically—attention to what today we would call *social transformation*. In this mix Evangelicals were the main leaders—not the reluctant followers of secular initiatives.

It would be impossible to overstate the significant changes of direction of both the Christian movement and our nation between 1815 and 1850. By 1850, for example, virtually all of the states had banned alcoholic beverages. It was even true that vast numbers would not drink tea or coffee, so extensive was the counter-cultural application of Christian faith to everyday life. Dozens of reform movements sprang into life—ranging from the temperance movement, and the movement for the abolition of slavery, to a movement urging use of the whole grain in wheat flour (Graham flour—preached by a minister named Sylvester Graham), etc.

Both the Mormon and Adventist groups peeled off at this time. They differ greatly in theology but today equally represent museum pieces of the typical revival concerns about food and health, which had become part and parcel of the mood of that revival period. If the Mormons and Adventists could not change society in general they could at least invent new societies!

For globally-minded people, good works must go beyond just personal good deeds to *organized* good deeds which will

include, for example, the deliberate discovery and exposition of the glories of God's creation (Ps 19:1-4) as well as serious concern for global slavery, poverty and disease. Otherwise we Evangelicals will misrepresent the character of God and our proclamation activity will lack both credibility and authenticity.



George Whitefield



Charles Finney



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March 31–April 4

Christian Mission and a Global Culture of Violence. Dr. Caleb O. Oladipo of Baptist Theological Seminary at Richmond (Virginia), a senior mission scholar in residence at OMSC, finds in theological and political currents within post-apartheid South African Christianity signs of faith, hope, and courage that are significant for the future of the wider Christian community. Cosponsored by Trinity Baptist Church (New Haven) and United Methodist General Board of Global Ministries. Eight sessions. \$145

April 7–11

Women, Evangelization, and Mission: The Roman Catholic Experience Since the 1500s. Dr. Angelyn Dries, O.S.F., Saint Louis University, a senior mission scholar in residence at OMSC, draws upon the experience of Roman Catholic women's communities active around the world, finding in them renewed insight into mission theology and practice. Cosponsored by Episcopal Church/Anglican and Global Relations, and Franciscan Missionaries of Mary. Eight sessions. \$145

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April 28–May 2

Jeremiah: Prophet for Our Times. Dr. Christopher J. H. Wright, Langham Partnership International, London, interprets the text of Jeremiah missiologically, showing Jeremiah to be a prophet to the nations with perennial relevance to the international scene. Cosponsored by Black Rock Congregational Church (Fairfield, Connecticut). Eight sessions. \$145

May 5–9

Personal Renewal in the Missionary Community. Rev. Stanley W. Green, executive director, Mennonite Mission Network, Elkhart, Indiana, and Dr. Christine Sine, Mustard Seed Associates, Seattle, Washington, blend classroom instruction and one-on-one sessions to offer a time of personal renewal, counsel, and spiritual direction for Christian workers. Cosponsored by Episcopal Church/Mission Personnel, Mennonite Mission Network, and Presbyterian Church (USA) World Mission Program Unit. Eight sessions. \$145

See also: OMSC Student Seminars on World Mission: www.OMSC.org/january.html

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PART II: Second Inheritance Evangelicalism

Remember that, as defined, the period of the First Inheritance can be seen as a period in which Evangelical leaders at levels of national influence (as well as common people who followed them) uniquely worked within a window of awareness which made the transformation of society feasible—*something which was within their grasp*.

Of all unlikely people, Moody—from the back woods of Massachusetts—won millions of non-college people (as well as key college students). Thus, Evangelicalism for the first time became, in America, predominantly a lower-class movement. The families of the leading citizens of the earlier Second Awakening were now a tiny minority. Yet, the Evangelical movement as a whole had burgeoned amazingly both within the ranks of the immigrants, and also the uneducated stratum of society. And, *it was no longer true that people of faith ran the country*.

It was somewhat of a lingering anomaly that 100,000 up-scale college students could be caught up in the Student Volunteer Movement for Foreign Missions and provided leadership to the famous World Missionary Conference in Edinburgh in 1910. Very few of these college-level “student volunteers” came from the mainstream of Moody's converts even though Moody himself, somewhat accidentally, had significantly helped to spark both the upper-class “Cambridge Seven” in England and the Student Volunteer Movement in America.

The Evangelical Divide and the Emergence of the Second Inheritance

The last fling of the wide-spectrum First Inheritance Evangelicals was arguably the Prohibition era, but the cleavage between college people and Bible Institute people, already emerging by 1900, had by the 1920s for better or worse become a major feature of the Evangelical movement, a veritable culture war within Evangelicalism. Upper-class people who were still thinking in terms of social reform were more and more often labeled liberal due to their social reform intuitions, whether or not they were liberal in their theology.

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Meanwhile, the newer, less-educated Evangelicals had never had a chance to elect one of their own as a mayor. Their Bible Institute graduates did not nourish the professions or the universities. They were for the most part not college people at all. To these non-college people (as with slaves and their “negro spirituals” that focused purely on heaven) the very idea of reforming society seemed utterly impossible, theologically unexpected, and therefore evangelistically objectionable. Out of date by the time it was written, just after 1900, a school teacher would write the words to “America the Beautiful” still reflecting the earlier vision of a Gospel that allowed the words “alabaster cities gleam, undimmed by human tears” and “Crown thy good with brotherhood,” in short an approaching millennium.

From its beginning this Second Inheritance Evangelicalism displayed a reduced goal of reforming society and in its place a belief in a world getting worse and worse leading to a coming tribulation preceded by a pre-tribulation rapture. The goal of reforming individuals while properly considered basic was often improperly considered all that was needed. At the same time there was to be seen commendable but merely “intuitive” (and relatively modest) good works lacking theological guidance.

The Moody Bible Institute tradition, developing 157 Bible Institutes all following in this new perspective, to a great extent typified the Second Inheritance type of Christianity that was generally antagonistic to the earlier First Inheritance brand of Evangelicalism. The socially influential remnants of the First Inheritance soon became regarded simply and objectionably “liberal.”

Thus, the dominant force of Second Inheritance Evangelicalism essentially went socially “underground” for 60 or 70 years while those Bible Institutes, one by one, became Bible colleges, then Christian colleges and many eventually Christian universities. Then, as a result of this gradual reemergence of culturally-standard educational patterns, even Congress and the White House itself became once more populated by people of Evangelical convictions. Furthermore, however, this increased social influence was unaccompanied by a theology corresponding to such new opportunities.

The Bible Institute stream thus constituted the backbone of the Evangelical movement for a lengthy period, and its eventual remarriage with the ethos of the college cultural stream was a long time in coming. The delay in a recovery of the wide-spectrum sense of mission of the First Inheritance was not so much because 20th century Evangelicals couldn’t think. but

because they were a different group of thinkers. They may not have continued to think of major reforms in society as did their socially upscale forebear. But, despite intuitive good works as mentioned, they did develop all kinds of new and creative ideas about the Bible

Typical was their emphasis on eschatology, the Rapture, and the Second Coming of Christ. Such ideas for many years characterized this Second Inheritance brand of Evangelicalism, to some extent following J. N. Darby, Lewis Sperry Chafer and reflected in the Scofield Reference Bible (perhaps the most widely used study Bible of all time). The Moody Bible Institute may have led the way but virtually all Bible Institutes took part. Prophecy Conferences abounded. Social reform seemed illogical if only because the world was predicted to get worse and worse until true believers were raptured out of it. A “social gospel” became anathema.

On the other hand, to its credit, within this non-college stream in the first half of the 1900s there was a science-and-the-Bible movement which understood science to be preeminently the *friend to faith*, issuing eventually in Irwin Moon’s spectacular “Sermons from Science” films under the auspices of the Moody Institute of Science. (Moon was a Bible institute graduate who had gone on for his Ph.D. in Physics at UCLA.) At their peak missionaries were showing those films 2,000 times a day. By contrast today a new twist within a good deal of the Evangelical tradition has posed science as the great *foe of faith*.

Soon within this Second Inheritance Evangelicalism we see a diminishing of the goal of reforming society and in its place a belief in a coming tribulation preceded by a pre-tribulation rapture.



D. L. Moody

PART III: The Recovery of First Inheritance Evangelicalism

As Evangelicals today work their way into social and even political influence many other changes will take place in the context of mission. But mission theology will lead and follow the growth of the civil stature of the Evangelical movement, forcing into existence a recovery of older interpretations of the Bible in regard to the use of that vastly increased influence.

Thus, the future of Evangelicalism and Evangelical missions is likely to involve a difficult and painful shift away from decades of polarization between “so-

cial action” and a “spiritual gospel.” This shift, which is already taking place, has brought new opportunity and responsibility, but shares the dangers to which the children of the First Inheritance Evangelicals eventually fell prey. As the 20th century wore on, many outstanding evangelicals ranging from John Stott and others in the Lausanne Movement tried very hard to point out that there can be no real dichotomy between faith and good works, despite a continuing Reformation-triggered bias in that realm.

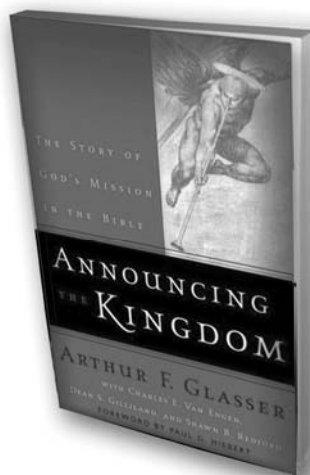
One example of this, already mentioned, is the simple fact that the word *kingdom* was almost totally banned from Evangelical literature for at least 50 years. Only recently has this word, so prominent in the NT, been recovered as some expositors have written books about the Kingdom of God and tried to bring it back into the fold (for instance, *Announcing the Kingdom*, by Arthur Glasser). But the word is still suspect in many Evangelical circles.

In the sphere of missions the polarization is reflected by the fact that on the social action side there is one entire association of over 50 agencies, the Association of Evangelical Relief and Development Organizations (AERDO), which includes a number of very strong Evangelical mission agencies, such as World Vision, World Concern, the World Relief Department of the National Association of Evangelicals, Food for the Hungry, and so on. Their social activities have gained quite a following, or it wouldn't be possible for World Vision to achieve an annual half billion-dollar budget.

Yet until recently (in Bryant Myers' books) World Vision has not vigorously advanced a *theological basis* for what it is doing. Fortunately many Evangelical donors have obviously felt *intuitively* drawn to what World Vision is trying to do. This is in some ways a non-theological recovering of one aspect of First Inheritance Evangelicalism, focused primarily on helping human beings even though it is not as yet as concerned for social transformation in general (e.g., eradicating disease, fighting global slavery, rehabilitating science as a domain of God's glory, etc.).

Meanwhile, in the first five years after the Second World War, when 150 new mission agencies jumped into being, most of the new agencies were characterized as “service agencies” adding muscle to existing missions—technology like airplanes, radio, or literature to the already existing mission movement. This meant that all of this new vigor merely emphasized what was already going on, that is, the preaching of an intellectual and emotional gospel plus an emphasis on a restoration of indi-

vidual fellowship with God. If it had not been for the informal theological *intuition* of thousands of loving missionaries it would not have resulted in such extensive “good works” but merely in the evangelism of still others mainly oriented toward the next world—“an emphasis on the eternal not the temporal.”



In other words, the reason Second Inheritance Evangelicalism is a complicated phenomenon is that, confusingly, the most extensive and the most influential social transformation-as-mission activity even in the 20th Century was actually accomplished (much of it not adequately reported to donors) across the world by the older Evangelical mission agencies established before 1900. This was true because of First Inheritance momentum in the main-line denominational missions and the great interdenominational mission agencies like Sudan Interior Mission or the Africa Inland Mission, as well as the work of the smaller Evangelical denominational missions. All of this,

however, employed *an intuition not undergirded by formal theology*.

These forces have made tremendous contributions to the entire educational framework of whole countries like China and Nigeria. The western hemisphere's largest technical University was founded by missionaries in Sao Paulo, Brazil. Asia's largest agricultural university was founded by missionaries in North India. The university system itself was taken to the field explicitly by Evangelical missionaries in the first half of the 20th century. We think of projects like “Yale in China.” However, this was in part the residual momentum of the First Inheritance, some of it carrying over into the 20th century, lasting longer in the realm of missions than in the home churches. But it became mainly the keen intuition of sensitive missionaries.

It was understood back in the 19th Century and within these major missions that there was no rift whatsoever between learning and gospel, or good works and gospel, or schools, hospitals, vocational schools, and the planting of churches. Nevertheless, today, as far as donors are concerned, the enormous impact of social

transformation arising (intuitively) in the work of standard church planting mission agencies is widely under estimated or even opposed. Indeed, the scope of this societal influence is virtually unknown in certain spheres, in part due to an intentional downplaying of this effort in reports to donors who want to hear only of spiritual conversions. This is incorrectly rationalized as a tension between the so-called liberal and conser-



vative perspectives, when in fact it is largely due to the inherently different influence of some and the new era of social impotence among most Evangelicals in the 20th century. Rising exceptions like Charles Colson, an influential civil leader, have no trouble envisioning sweeping changes in the whole world's prison systems, nor any hesitance in helping to resurrect the powerful social/political example of William Wilberforce.

Empowered Evangelism

Obviously there is a theological problem here. We, of course, need to take seriously the fact that Jesus was concerned with handicapped people, sick people, children, women, Greeks, etc. and that His ministry embraced and encompassed those things. When He responded to John the Baptist, who wondered if He was the one to come, He sent back descriptions, not the text of His message, but simply a report of the good works He was doing. This He did, not only as an authentication of His divinity, but as a demonstration of God's character. His ministry was congruent with His own statement, "Let your light shine among men in this way—that they will glorify God when they see your good works (Matt 5:16)." In the Synagogue in Nazareth Jesus quoted Isa. 61:1,2:

The Spirit of the Sovereign LORD is on me, because the LORD has anointed me to preach good news to the poor. He has sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim freedom for the captives and release from darkness for the prisoners,

Does that apply to 27 million men, women and children held as slaves in the world today? This is more than twice the number who were bartered during four centuries before slavery was (supposedly) "abolished" by Wilberforce. Does that apply to the lifting of the burden of 45 million man-years of labor annually destroyed in Africa alone due to the malarial parasite?

It has been said that *because the gospel is a message of hope, the poorest must see some concrete reason for hope before they can understand the gospel.* Words themselves have no power if they do not refer to reality. Jesus' words were constantly accompanied and informed by the actions to which His words referred. Thus, just as faith without works is dead, so evangelism without works is dead. Unless words refer to works, to reality, they are worth nothing. Just as it is a Reformation myth that faith can be separated from works, so it is meaningless if words are separated from the reality to which they were meant to refer.

It would seem, then, that just as we believe that works

ought to *follow* faith in the sequence of salvation in the life of believing individuals, it is equally true that in our outreach to unbelievers those very works displaying God's glory better *precede*. We see this clearly when we recognize that the usual way in which in-

dividuals come to faith is primarily by viewing the good works of those who already have faith—that is, by *seeing good works* that reflect the power and character of God. Immediately after speaking of His followers being salt and light in the world Jesus spoke this very key verse we have already quoted, "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven. (Matt. 5:16)." *That is how people can see God's glory and be drawn to Him.* Those who may be drawn by mere desires to be blessed personally will have trouble with Jesus' plain statement that "For whoever wants to save his life will lose it, but whoever

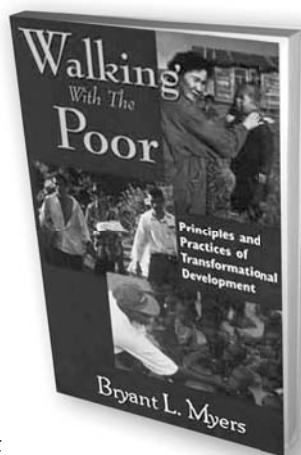
loses his life for Me and for the gospel will save it (Mark 8:35)." Evangelicals today often ignore this.

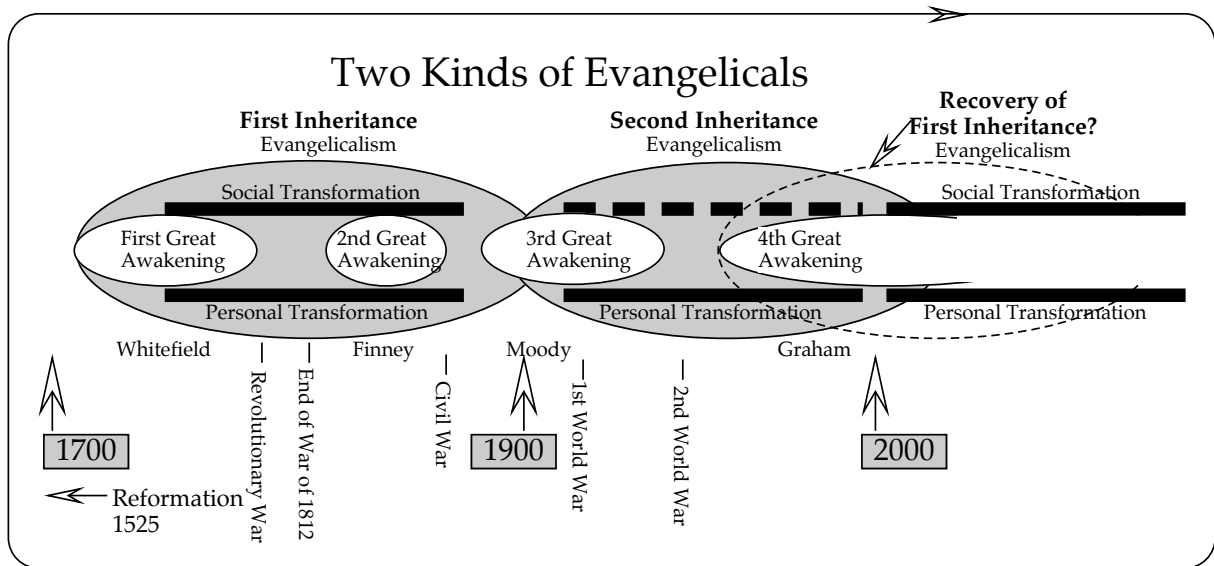
Thus, in order for people to hear and respond to an offer of personal salvation or a ticket to heaven, it is paramount for them to witness the glory of God in believers' lives—seeing the love and goodness in their lives and deeds, and their changed motives and new intentions. That is the reality which gives them reason to turn away *from* all evil and *against* all evil as they seek to be closer to that kind of God and His will in this world.

It is of course perfectly true that personal salvation alone can still be a glorious transformation of people who may never arise from a sickbed or from poverty, knowing that God loves them and wants them to love Him. At the same time, many believers are not poor, and have time and energy to do things other than simply talk to people about the next world. For them, a concept that is very hard to avoid (because it is happening throughout the whole Bible) is the concept that works are necessary to authenticate and demonstrate the true character of God. That is the true basis for *empowering* evangelism.

This potent continuity of word and deed is, furthermore, the mainstream of mission history. It may not have been so large a factor among up-and-out people in, say, Japan, but in much of the world, the stunning

It was understood back in the 19th Century and in these major missions that there was no rift whatsoever between learning and gospel, or good works and gospel.





achievements of medicine and healing have demonstrated to potential converts not only the love of God for them, but also the power of God that is on their side against the forces of darkness.

Paul the apostle spoke of delivering people from *the dominion of Satan* (Acts 26:18). Peter summed up Jesus' ministry by speaking of "how God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and power, and how he went around doing good and healing all who were *under the power of the devil* because God was with him. (Acts 10:38)." This kind of demonstration of the person and the power of God certainly should not be considered antagonistic to evangelism. In most cases it is, again, the very basis of an empowerment of evangelism.

However, by taking a quick glance at the current record of "missions of good works" it is perfectly obvious that thus far no great dents in world poverty have been achieved by missionaries of Jesus Christ, even though their intentions and even their record is highly respectable. Recently, more and more high-minded young people have shown themselves willing to go and live among people in extreme poverty. This, too, is good. But most poor people need more than another apparently poor and powerless person to come and live among them.

It is true that once individuals find faith, they have often pulled themselves up by their bootstraps—through their honesty, abandonment of liquor and drugs, and their ability to build businesses of good will that would succeed. This has gradually lifted them up out of the poverty category into the middle class category, not just in England in the 18th century, but also in America and in many parts of the world. This kind of individual "salvation" is the primary focus of Evangelical missions today even though it may not be the whole picture.

However, without even studying the past, it is apparent that there is a crescendo of concern for the serious problems of our world. The AIDS crisis has thrown us into a lot of confusion, but also into serious contemplation about what can or should be done. It would seem embarrassing that Jimmy Carter, a Sunday School teacher, not a theologian, a mission executive, nor a missiologist, has actually done more than anyone else in arousing world opinion to the need to *eradicate* diseases, not just extend *health care* after people get sick.

But it's unfortunate that Carter has not been able to get substantial backing from Christian churches and missions for this activity. But that kind of vision is not, at this stage of history, something that can be credited either to Christian theology or to missiology, but rather to the energy and *intuitive* theology of a past president of the USA who happened to be well known on a world level. Missions and churches have vitally helped but they cannot claim the initiative.

Thus, in all of our commendable haste to get to the ends of the earth and to the last group which has never heard the gospel, we may be overlooking the fact that the vast bulk of the Western world no longer believes in the Bible and no longer follows our faith—partly because believers in general have not been at the forefront of efforts to defeat evil. Does that mean our immense overseas achievements are going to be only temporary? Are we preaching a "relapsing" Christianity?

PART IV: The Future of Evangelical Missions

"Teaching them to OBEY everything that I commanded you"

So what is the future of the Evangelical mission

movement? I believe that the mission movement—more so than the church movement and considerably more so than the secular world—holds the key to a great new burst of credibility which could win new millions. An unexpected trend of current philanthropy clearly indicates the potential assistance of people in high places who grow up in a highly Christianized society, even if they haven't regularly gone to church. But what is crucially true is that they need to understand that their efforts will ultimately be dismayingly ineffective without a certain minimum of transformed individuals whose character is essential to their major efforts. They need to realize that missions have a virtual monopoly on transformed individuals who can be trusted.

I yearn to see Evangelical missions be able to give more direct, credible credit to Jesus Christ for the impetus behind the social transformation that they have been doing, are doing and should be doing. Practically none of the major religions, by comparison, has any similar contribution to good works, small or large. Islam has the giving of alms as one of its five pillars, but there is absolutely nothing in the entire mammoth global Islamic movement that compares even remotely to the hundreds of major Christian mission agencies, or the thousands of ways in which the Christian movement has reached out with love and tenderness to those who are suffering. Islam also has a near vacuum of “non-government agencies,” although both in Pakistan and Bangladesh are some outstanding exceptions. But in general the West has thousands of NGOs which are not explicitly Christian. Islam has only a few.

The work of Christ in the gospels, Christ's references to the coming of the kingdom of heaven, and the present outworking in this world of the “Thy will be done” phrase of the Lord's Prayer are actually echoed by the Great Commission itself. Looking closely at Matt. 28:20, it isn't just the *teachings* that Jesus commissions His disciples to pass on. It is the actual enforcing, so to speak, of *obedience to those teachings*, “teaching them to *obey* everything I have commanded you.” This implies the conquest of evil when the Lord's Prayer is read in this light: “Thy will be done *on earth*.”

We hear later in the New Testament about people who do not “obey” the gospel. Obviously the gospel is not just mere information in the way of good advice. We see both authority and commands from God in the real Biblical Gospel. This is the clear meaning of the Great Commission of Matthew 28. There Jesus sends his disciples out to bring about “obedience to the things I have taught you.”

As I have suggested, the older missions with roots in the 19th Century have in actual fact been doing exactly what Jesus did, both demonstrating the love of God and inviting into eternal life all who yield to

that love and that authority. The trouble is that the fact of this breadth of mission has not been as clearly theologized to the point where we would plan to tackle some of the bigger problems such as the wiping out of Guinea worm or malaria, problems which have existed under the very nose of missionaries for over a century. Nevertheless *such extra breadth must not be seen to be a divergence from the preaching of eternal life, but rather an empowerment of the message of a gospel of a kingdom, which is both here and hereafter*. This is the gospel of Jesus Christ. It is the gospel of the kingdom. It is the announcement of a “rule and reign of God” which must be extended to the whole world and all of creation. We must stand up and be counted as active Christian foes of the world's worst evils. This is the biblical way, the way more than any other, in which missions have in the past and now even more so in the future can more powerfully and extensively than ever demonstrate who God is and what His purposes are. This is what the superb Transform World movement is leaning into.

This more extensive influence will come if agencies will simply take the practical conclusions of their missionaries' magnificent local *intuition* up into national levels and into international campaigns to drive out those things that not only cut their own lives short but also causes hundreds of millions of people to go to bed at night with severe suffering and pain. Otherwise all such unaddressed evil is blamed on God and His “mysterious purposes.” This new, expanded influence may thus measurably help us re-win the West to “a faith that works,” and to a God Who is not doing bad things for mysterious reasons but a God Who opposes the Evil One and all his works—and asks us to assist Him in that campaign.

Evangelicals are increasingly again in the position of social influence. Yet, are still mainly in the business of giving people a personal faith, a faith that does not include much of a mission beyond the idea of converts converting still others. However, a return to a full-spectrum gospel could mean an enormous change. Doors will open. Attitudes about missionaries will change. It will no longer be the case of missionaries thinking that they have to use adroit language to cover up the “real purpose” of their work. Their real purpose will be to identify and destroy all forms of evil, both human and microbiological and will thus be explainable in plain English without religious jargon. This will provide very solid common ground in almost any country.

In that event there is no doubt in my mind that the future of the Evangelical mission movement will be very bright indeed. As Adoniram Judson said, “The future is as bright as the promises of God.” We must not forget that God is the one who asked us to pray, “Thy kingdom come, *Thy will be done on earth* as it is in heaven.” 🌐



Social Action & Evangelism

Don't Compete, They Complement

By Steve Saint

“**T**he threats are growing. For now they just throw stones and tell us to leave them alone, but soon they may decide to actually kill us!” The young pastor was explaining the reaction of zealous followers of a major ‘eastern’ religion to the evangelical efforts of a group of young Christian pastors attempting to introduce Christ’s teachings in their communities.

I was in that particular country with a group of North American Christians trying to find ways to help people devastated by the terrible “Christmas Tsunami” that had killed thousands of people and left tens of thousands homeless and disoriented.

With the young pastor’s words in mind, the obvious question that came to my mind was, “aren’t there other communities that you could visit; after all, even Jesus told His disciples to shake the dust off their feet if the people were not receptive, right?” (Mt. 10:14) “We are sometimes fearful of going to these communities” the young pastors’ group leader told me, but we are compelled to go because they do not have the Gospel. We may die but we must obey.”

I soon discovered that the pastor was not just updating me about the circumstances in which he and his colleagues found themselves. He wanted something from me. He had heard about a group of pastors in West Africa who had learned to do

dental work as a ‘door opener’ to Christ’s Gospel in areas dominated by another radical and militant religion. The African pastors had, in turn, heard about the possibility of laymen learning to provide dental services from a story they had heard about several Waodani in the Amazon jungle learning to provide those services to their own people.

They had heard my name associated with the effort to teach jungle nomads to offer dental services to hurting people in the jungles and figured, “If they can do it why can’t we?” The pastors wanted to know if I would teach them how to give anesthesia, to extract teeth too far gone to save and to fix those that could be saved. They were confident that if they showed compassion for the felt needs of the people, it would open the door to their hearts and they would be able to offer these same people Christ’s cure for the spiritual epidemic that was sure to kill them all – for ever.

Before going any further, I have a confession to make. If I was running for office this confession of flip-flopping on a major ‘Evangelical concept’ might cost me the election. I was, not so very long ago, what Ralph Winter would term a “Second Inheritance Evangelical”. I subscribed to the Biblical mandate of Christ to take His offer of salvation to everyone everywhere. I also subscribed stoically to the idea of expendability; “We must go out, we don’t necessarily have to come back.”

I whole-heartedly believed that it was useless in the spiritual emergency room to suture a shallow wound or set a bone while the patient was bleeding to death spiritually. Evangelism was the ‘End’,

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everything else was merely a means.

It was the people who killed my Dad, Nate, who taught me that acts of compassion can be an 'End' in themselves. When my Aunt Rachel died, those Waodani who had made me as much a part of their family as they could, considering the difference of skin color, culture and language barriers, insisted that I needed to teach them skills that only 'Outsiders' had, so that they could care for their own people. "Fixing the people's teeth," they said, "the people see the foreigners well – but all the foreigners can fix is their teeth." I wondered what that had to do with me. "But you teaching us how to fix teeth, the people will see us well, and then we will tell them how Waengongi (the Creator) can fix their hearts so they can live forever."

The Waodani God Followers' logic took me half the way to seeing the need for demonstrating Christ's compassion as well as His saving grace to hurting people. Mending hurting people's felt needs is a door opener for the Gospel.

The Waodani's strategy for using Christ-like compassion to plow the hard ground of dark hearts works. I was quickly won over to that point of view when I saw Waodani reaction to the simple medical helps that I learned to offer them. The second half of the journey toward seeing the value of combining works and faith came through simply seeing Christ's compassion toward the people around Him in the Scriptures.

I always just assumed that Jesus did His first recorded miracle because the people at a wedding were thirsty. But if thirst was the problem they could have just drunk the wa-



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ter that Jesus turned into wine. Not only did Jesus care about their 'felt needs' He did His first public miracle to meet their 'unrealized needs'. That is the kind of reaction we doting earthly parents have for our kids. We care about their hurts just because they hurt, and because we love them. (Jn. 2)



ITEC's back-packable, portable dental systems.

In another earthly demonstration of Jesus' heavenly power, He healed a paralytic. I don't think there is any doubt that what the boy and his four friends brought him to Jesus for was to have his body healed so he could walk like normal boys. But Jesus knew he had a much more fatal problem.

Like any good emergency room doctor, Jesus healed the young man's fatal spiritual disease, sin. But then, He healed his paralyzed legs too.

The reason the people believed that Jesus could heal the boy's sin disease was the healing of his paralyzed legs. The reason people will listen to our explanation

of Christ's Gospel is usually because we have met some other need that they can actually see.

Meeting people's felt needs is a means to an end, true. But Jesus makes it an end in itself too. I missed this for a long, long time. I listened to Christian culture more closely than to what the Bible says. Jesus said in Matthew, "The Son of Man will separate the nations like a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats. To one group He will say, 'Come, you who are blessed of My Father, inherit

the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world. For I was hungry and you gave Me something to eat; I was thirsty and you gave Me drink; I was a stranger and you invited Me in; naked and you clothed Me; I was sick and you visited Me; I was in prison and you came to Me.'"

This would have been a good time for Jesus' audience to 'leave well enough alone'. But they were so

surprised that they had to ask, "Lord, when did ...we do all these things for you?" Jesus gave the King's answer, "Truly I say to you, to the extent that you did it to one of these brothers of Mine, even to the least of them, you did it to Me." And Jesus also pointed out that to the extent we won't do these things to 'the least of these', we deny that compassion to Him on His part.

Getting back to my original story; the pastors wanted to learn how to offer temporal care for the people with whom they wanted to share Christ's Gospel with in order to earn a hearing for the message that could save their lives. But they asked me an additional favor that I thought I could not grant. They wanted me to go with the dental training team from Itec (the Indigenous People's Technology and Education Center) so that I could take 'Grandfather' Mincaye (the Waodani warrior, become God Follower who helped kill my dad and then 'adopted' me into his family) to help train them. They were afraid that they would not be able to learn to be Lay Dental Technicians. But, they reasoned, if they saw Mincaye, who can't even read and write, do it; then they could do it too.

To make a long story short, Mincaye and I did go with the dental training team. We took ITEC's back-packable, portable dental systems (PDS's) with us and set out to make pastors on the other side of the world into Lay Dental Technicians.

Mincaye played exactly the role the pastors expected. Our primary training dentist asked Mincaye to pull an especially tricky tooth that was beyond the pastors' skill level. Mincaye not only pulled her tooth, but he showed that he understood that what we were doing was not primarily about pulling or fixing teeth. It was about showing hurting people Christ's compassion for their felt needs in the hope that they would consider His remedy for their sin-darkened hearts.

After Mincaye pulled the hurting woman's abscessed tooth, he gently held her head in his hands and prayed that God would heal her heart. I had been holding the woman's jaw in hopes that my added support would help Mincaye keep from breaking her jaw. When Mincaye held her face to pray, his hands were covering my own.

I looked at those gentle hands and realized that those were the same hands that once drove spears into my precious Dad's body. I love those hands transformed, like my own, by the touch of the Master Surgeon's hands.

Social services without the Gospel are like pain killers for cancer. But the Gospel without the offer of loving compassion will frequently meet only a rejection of God's love which they have not yet seen, and consequently locked doors. 🌐



Steve with Mincaye, the Waodani warrior who became a God-Follower after helping to kill Steve's father.



The Mission of God:

Unlocking the Bible's Grand Narrative

By Christopher J.H. Wright

Evangelism and social involvement: Chicken or egg? Another way the issue is sometimes framed is this: Surely the best way to achieve social change and all the good objectives we have for society on the basis of what we know God wants (justice, integrity, compassion, care for His creation, etc.) is by vigorous evangelism. The more Christians there are, the better it will be for society. So if you want to change society, do evangelism. Then those who become Christians will do the social action part. I have often heard

**Is Evangelism a safe
long-term exit strategy
from this world?**

this as an argument for prioritizing evangelism over social action, and it sounds very plausible, but it has some serious flaws. Again, let me emphasize that what follows is in no way intended to deny that evangelism is utterly vital but rather to deny that it can carry the weight of obedience to the rest of the Bible's commands regarding our social responsibilities in the world.

First (and I think I owe this point to John

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Stott), there is flawed logic in the assertion that says, if you are a Christian, you should not spend time doing social action. Instead give all your time to evangelism because the best way to change society is to multiply the number of Christians. The logic is flawed because (1) all those new Christians will, following the same advice, give time only to evangelism, so who is going to be engaging in the social engagement side of mission? And (2) you ought to be engaging in social action since you yourself are the product of someone else's evangelism. So by your own logic you should be the one to get involved in the social activity you are so readily transferring to the fruit of your own evangelistic efforts. In other words, the argument becomes an infinite regress in which real social engagement as part of Christian mission in the world is conveniently postponed from one generation of converts to the next, with each one feeling a spurious justification for passing the buck.

Second, this view overlooks the importance of example. We all tend to imitate those who have most influenced us. If someone comes to faith through the effort of a Christian or church that endorses only the evangelistic mandate and has a negative and nonengaged attitude to all things social, cultural, economic or political, then the likelihood is that the new convert

will imbibe, consciously or otherwise, the same dichotomized attitude. We teach as we were taught. We reflect the kind of mission that moved us into faith. Evangelism that offers a safe long-term personal exit strategy from the world rather than a missional engagement with the world, is likely to produce Christians and churches that have little cutting edge in the surrounding culture and little incentive as to how or why they ought to have such things anyway. Evangelism that multiplies Christians who are only interested in more evangelism but who are not wrestling with the challenge of being salt and light in the working world around them may boost church growth statistics. But we should not pretend that it is an adequate way, let alone the best way, to fulfill the rest of our biblical obligations in society.

Third, and tragically, this view is simply not borne out in the history of Christian mission. Now of course there is such a thing as conversion uplift. That is, the fact that when people become Christians from very poor and deprived backgrounds, they tend to shed some harmful habits (e.g., squandering resources on gambling, alcohol, etc.) and acquire some positive ones (such as a new sense of personal worth and the dignity of work, caring for others, providing for their family, honesty, etc.). The effect can contribute to an upward social drift and can certainly benefit a community if enough people are affected in this way.

However, there are other instances where rapid conversion of whole communities to a pietistic gospel that sings the songs of Zion to come but demands no radical concern for the social, political, ethnic and cultural implications of the whole biblical faith here and now has led to massive and embarrassing dissonance between statistics and reality. Some of the states in northeast India, such as Nagaland, are held up as outstanding examples of the success of late-nineteenth- and early twentieth-century evangelism. Whole tribes were converted. The state

is recorded to be around 90 percent Christian. Yet it has now become one of the most corrupt states in the Indian Union and is riddled with problems of gambling and drugs among the younger generation.

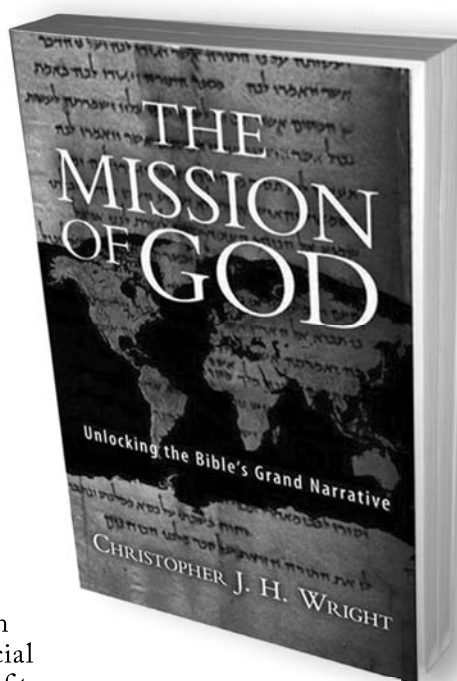
Naga students at the Union Biblical Seminary, where I taught in the 1980s, would tell me this as proof of the fact that merely successful evangelism does not always result in lasting social transformation. Others will point with desperate and baffled sadness at the tragic irony of Rwanda—one of the most Chris-

In my Protestant Evangelical culture the zeal for evangelism was equal only to the suspicion of any form of Christian social action.

tianized nations on earth and birthplace of the East African Revival. And yet whatever form of Christian piety was taken to be the fruit of evangelism there could not stand against the tide of intertribal hatred and violence that engulfed the region in 1994. The blood of tribalism, it was said, was thicker than the water of baptism. Again, successful evangelism, flourishing revivalist spirituality and a majority Christian population did not result in a society where God's biblical values of equality, justice, love and nonviolence had taken root and flourished likewise.

I write as a son of Northern Ireland. That has to be one of the most "evangelized" small patches on the globe. As I grew

up, almost anybody I met could have told me the gospel and "how to get saved." Street corner evangelism was a common feature of the urban scene. I took part in it myself on occasions. Yet in my Protestant evangelical culture, the zeal for evangelism was equal only to the suspicion of any form of Christian social concern or conscience about issues of justice. That was the domain of liberals and ecumenicals, and a betrayal of the "pure" gospel. The result was that the de facto politics of Protestantism was actually subsumed under the gospel in such a way that all the political prejudice, partisan pa-



triotism and tribal hatred was sanctified rather than prophetically challenged (except by a very brave few who often paid a heavy price). So the proportionately high number of the evangelizers and the evangelized (in comparison with any other part of the United Kingdom) certainly did not produce a society transformed by the values of the kingdom of God. On the contrary, it was (and sadly still is) possible to hear all the language of evangelistic zeal and all the language of hatred, bigotry, and violence coming from the same mouths. As James would say, "this should not be" (Jas 3:10). But it is. And it is one reason why I beg to dissent from the notion that evangelism by itself will result in social change, unless Christians are also taught the radical demands of discipleship to the Prince of peace, are seeking first the kingdom of God and His justice, and understand the wholeness of what the Bible so emphatically shows to be God's mission for His people.

(In Northern Ireland) It is possible to hear all the language of evangelistic zeal and all the language of hatred, bigotry, and violence coming from the same mouths.

Holistic mission needs the whole church. A final question that is often raised in the context of teaching holistic mission arises from unavoidable personal limitations. "You are saying that Christian mission involves all these

dimensions of God's concern for total human need," someone will say. "But I am finite, with finite time, finite abilities and finite opportunities. Should I not then stick to what seems most important—evangelism—and try not to dissipate myself over such a broad range of otherwise desirable objectives. I can't do everything!"

No, of course you can't. The same thought doubtless occurred to God, which is why He called the church into existence. Here is another reason why our ecclesiology must be rooted in missiology. The mission of God in the world is vast. So He has called and commissioned a people—originally the descendants of Abraham, now a multinational global community in Christ. And it is through the whole of that people that God is working His mission purposes out, in all their diversity.

Of course every individual cannot do everything. There are different callings, different giftings, different forms of ministry (remembering that magistrates and other government of-

ficials of the state are called "ministers of God" in Rom 13, just as much as apostles and those who organized food aid). Individuals must seek personal guidance from God regarding the particular niche in which they will engage, in whatever sphere of mission God has called them. Some are indeed called to be evangelists. All are certainly called to be witnesses, whatever their context of work. The apostles in Acts recognized their own personal priority had to be the ministry of the Word and prayer. But they did not limit their ministry to such work (as Philip's evangelistic encounter with the Ethiopian shows), but it does show that the overall work of the church requires different people to have different gifts and priorities.

The question is, is the *church as a whole* reflecting the wholeness of God's redemption? Is the church (thinking here of the local church as the organism effectively and strategically placed for God's mission in any given community) aware of all that in which God's mission summons them to participate? Is the church, through the combined engagement of *all* its members, applying the redemptive power of the cross of Christ to *all* the effects of sin and evil in the surrounding lives, society and environment?

The ringing slogan of the Lausanne movement is: "The whole church taking the whole gospel to the whole world." Holistic mission cannot be the responsibility of any one individual. But it is certainly the responsibility of the whole church.

In conclusion, I can do no better than endorse the fine conclusion of Jean-Paul Heldt's article:

There is no longer a need to qualify mission as "holistic," nor to distinguish between "mission" and "holistic mission." Mission is, by definition, "holistic," and therefore "holistic mission" is, de facto, mission. Proclamation alone, apart from any social concern, may be perceived as a distortion, a truncated version of the true gospel, a parody and travesty of the good news, lacking relevance for the real problems of people living in the real world. On the other end of the spectrum, exclusive focus on transformation and advocacy may just result in social and humanitarian activism, void of any spiritual dimension. Both approaches are unbiblical; they deny the wholeness of human nature of human beings created in the image of God. Since we are created "whole," and since the Fall affects our total humanity in all its dimensions, then redemption, restoration, and mission can, by definition, only be "holistic." 🌐

in memory

Airline CEO & Missions Aviation Advocate Bruce R. Kennedy Completes His Last Flight

By Rick Wood

Bruce Kennedy, former CEO of Alaska Airlines and advocate of Christian missions, died June 28th in the tragic crash of his Cessna 182 in Cashmere near Wenatchee in Eastern Washington.

In 1991, after 32 years with Alaska Airlines, the last 12 years as the CEO, he shocked the corporate world by taking early retirement to devote his life to Christian service. He continued to serve on the board of directors of Alaska Airlines until his death.

He was credited with building Alaska Airlines into a world class airline with routes into California and Mexico, and retired at the very peak of his career. It was one of the strongest periods in Alaska Airline's history.

Bruce was an elder at John Knox Presbyterian south of Seattle and served the national church as a member of the General Assembly Council. He was in high demand for service on the boards of directors of national Christian agencies, and served with distinction on a number of them including Mission Aviation Fellowship (MAF). He served MAF as Chairman of the Board from 1991 to 1998 and helped them expand their role in technology and initiate numerous international partnerships.

MAF president Kevin Swanson said, "Kennedy didn't separate his faith from his professional, civic or

personal life. His spirituality and the rest of his life were integrated, not compartmentalized. He was open about his faith, not forcing it on others, but was bold enough that people knew what – or more precisely, Who – he stood for. When he could have lived what he once called the 'blue-chip lifestyle,' Kennedy and his family lived in the same modest house for years. He didn't own a boat. He didn't have

a summer home. He gave time, talents and treasure to others."

Kennedy's final pursuit, says Swanson, combined his two greatest passions – his faith and his love of flying.

"He was at the forefront of the creation of Quest Aircraft Co. (www.questaircraft.com), a faith-based, donor-funded enterprise to design, build and certify the Kodiak, what many deem to be the next generation of bush plane for flying missions in remote areas of the world. MAF has been working closely with Quest in developing the Kodiak and placed the first order for 10 of the new aircraft," said Swanson.

The Kodiak is a 10-seat plane designed to carry heavy loads and land on short, rough landing strips. The biggest feature, however, is that it has a turbo-prop engine, so it can burn jet fuel (similar to kerosene) which is readily available most everywhere in the world and is reasonably priced. The high-octane aviation fuel, which all small airplanes use, is often very expensive or unavailable in remote areas of the world where mission planes fly. The Kodiak has recently been certified by the FAA and delivery of the first planes will begin this fall.

Every plane that Quest sells for commercial use will subsidize the cost of another plane for the mission field, so that MAF, New Tribes and other mission agencies can buy the planes at a reduced price.

The mission world has lost a real giant. When he retired from Alaska Airlines he said, "I wanted to move from success to significance." I think he did just that. We extend our condolences to all who knew and loved this great man and pioneer in aviation and Christian service. He is survived by his wife Karleen and their children Kevin, Karin and their families. You can learn more at his memorial website at <http://brucekennedy.memory-of.com/>

MAF quotes taken from an article by Michael Ireland of ASSIST News Service 🌐



Bruce R. Kennedy 1938–2007

Editor's Note: At Mission Frontiers we want to recognize the significant achievements that business people around the world are making every day in building the Kingdom of God. If you have a story of how business leaders are contributing to missionary work, outreach and social and economic development, please send your story to Rick Wood at rick.wood@uscwm.org.

I Meet Two Kinds of People in



Africa

By Glen Schwartz

I recently crisscrossed Africa visiting nine cities in three weeks with another week in Asia on the way home. I keep bumping into two kinds of people in Africa. One kind believes in the capability of the continent to help itself, and the other does not.

In Nairobi I spoke with a driver at the guesthouse where I was staying. As we chatted, I learned that in addition to working as a driver, he is a church planter. (He was actually working as a driver on two twelve-hour shifts back to back at the time we met.) His business card indicated that his title is "bishop". He said he had twenty-three pastors in his care with churches throughout the Nairobi area. His business card also had something on it about a "rehabilitation center." When I asked about that, he said that their churches minister to needy people in the poorer areas of Nairobi. He said, "You know, street children."

I asked where the support comes from for the pastors, the congregations and the rehabilitation center. "It comes from local resources," he said. When I asked how much help comes from overseas, he dismissed the idea of getting assistance from outside Africa.

I went from Nairobi to Lusaka, Zambia and was met at the airport by a well-dressed businessman in a suit and tie. As we chatted on the way into town he told me about a congregation he and his wife started in their home several years ago. They outgrew the living room, then the garage, and now they are meeting in a tent beside the house. The walls of a permanent building are being built around the tent. (The tent will be removed eventually which I found to be creative.) The congregation now has 200 people in

attendance, and they have hired their own full-time pastor and pay him completely from local resources. When I asked how much comes from overseas he also scoffed and said, "None, of course."

I mentioned that there are two kinds of people in Africa. Back at the guesthouse in Nairobi I spoke with several North Americans who were in East Africa on short-term missions. Several said they brought along resources for the projects on which they were working. One woman said she had several suitcases of used clothing to give away in a poor part of the city. Ironically, it was the same community where the bishop's rehabilitation center is located. She also said she brought along some money "just to give away" (her words). I wish I could have introduced her to the Kenyan bishop and the Zambian businessman mentioned above. How I wish those short-termers knew some people like that. But maybe it would take some of their joy away if they found people in Africa standing on their own two feet.

Think about it. Some people believe Africa can do it with local resources and others do not. Both may be looking at or working in the same communities. What strikes me is that it is most often local people who believe that Africa can manage without outside assistance. That idea simply escapes many well-meaning outsiders who feel "called" to Africa. How do you see it? It is worth some reflection. 🌐

I keep bumping into two kinds of people in Africa. One kind believes in the capability of the continent to help itself, and the other does not.



Glenn Schwartz is Executive Director of World Mission Associates, based in Lancaster, Pennsylvania. The author welcomes interaction by e-mail at glennschwartz@msn.com.

*For further information about the issues of sustainability, see the website www.wmausa.org. Also Glenn's book, *When Charity Destroys Dignity: Overcoming Unhealthy Dependency in the Christian Movement*, is available on that website. Special bulk pricing is available.*



THE Jesus FILM PROJECT

CONQUERING NEW FRONTIERS IN PARTNERSHIP AND EVANGELISM

By Rick Wood

In the history of the modern mission movement, few organizations have succeeded as brilliantly as The Jesus Film Project. Started in 1980 as an evangelistic effort of Campus Crusade for Christ using a recently released film called the Jesus Film, which chronicles the life of Christ from the Gospel of Luke, its efforts have gone from simply amazing to astounding and earth shaking.

For at least a decade or two it has remained the most translated and viewed film in the history of film making. When we featured the Jesus Film and its mind boggling goals in the November-December 1997 issue of *Mission Frontiers*, they had translated the film into 419 languages and had exposed the film to over one billion people. Now as of the end of

June 2007, they have translated the film into over 1,000 languages and achieved the incredible milestone of exposing over 6.2 billion to the film with some having seen it more than once. The one million speakers of the Lanka Kol language of India are the recipients of the 1000th translation of the Jesus Film.

Even more significant is that over 201 million people have committed their lives to Christ as a result of viewing this film and hundreds of thousands of new churches have been established.

Even more significant is that over 201 million people have committed their lives to Christ as a result of viewing this film and hundreds of thousands of new churches have been established. See the chart on the next page for a list of their other amazing accomplishments. Steve Steele, formerly of the DAWN Movement which promotes church planting has said, "Of the 1 million churches started in the last decade (1992-2002) 75 percent used the Jesus

Film strategically in its startup or the growth of the congregation." Hundreds of mission organizations partnering with the Jesus Film Project have been instrumental in helping start and grow these churches with those people who have made decisions for Christ after watching the film.

It took 17 years from 1980 to 1997 for the Jesus Film Project to reach 419 translations and one billion viewers. In just the last 10 years they have completed over 581 more translations and reached an additional five billion viewers. This is just the beginning of their plans to plant churches and expose as many as possible to the life saving message of the gospel of Christ.

In terms of translations, their ultimate goal is to translate the film into the heart language of every person. But their intermediate goal is to translate the Jesus Film into every language with over 100,000 speakers. There are currently around 1,500 such languages, so the Jesus Film is two-thirds of the way towards that goal. With a new translation completed almost once a week, they should reach this goal within the next 10 years.

The Key to Their Success

The accomplishments of the Jesus Film Project are not theirs alone. They would be the first to admit that. Their success has been largely due to the strategic partnerships that the Jesus Film Project has built with hundreds of mission and church organizations around the world. Currently they have active partnerships with 1,500 organizations that are using the Jesus Film in their evangelism and church planting efforts. The film is shown to people around the world in some of the most remote locations by thousands of teams of missionaries and volunteers. The success of the Jesus Film is really the success of the global church in coming together to use an effective media tool.

Introducing New Versions

In recent years the Jesus Film Project has introduced new versions of the film in order to reach new audiences. In 2000 they released, *The Jesus Film for Children*, designed to appeal to a younger audience. To produce this film they interlaced clips of the original Jesus Film with new footage portraying children in Jesus' time to create a new storyline.

They have also released a new film this year, *Magdalena, Released from Shame*, which is currently being shown outside the US and will be released in the US this fall. Again by interlacing original Jesus Film clips with new footage they have created a unique new film designed to appeal to women. The film portrays five women from the life of Christ, such as Mary Magdalene whose lives were changed by Christ. The film is being shown in theatres in various countries. In more restrictive countries, the film may be distributed on DVD by way of the informal private networks of individual women. Its use will depend on the country and the cultural contexts of the peoples they are seeking to reach.

The Jesus Film has also been adapted to an audio format for use on radio, cassette tapes or CDs. Narration and sound effects are added to the audio clips from the original film to describe action that can only be seen on the film. Currently around 400 translations in this format have been completed.

As the Jesus Film approaches the end of its third decade of ministry, its leaders recognize that they need to adapt the film to the needs of an increasingly sophisticated media audience, especially in Western countries. The younger generation of 15-25 year olds will likely need new versions of the film in order to communicate the message of the gospel to them in a meaningful way. This will involve the creation of completely new films in order to reach this and following generations of young people. The focus is not on the Jesus Film itself. It is merely a tool. The focus is the development and distribution of the most effective media tools to communicate the gospel to various types of audiences. One size or tool does not fit all.

Jesus Film Statistics 1997-2007 as of July 1, 2007

	1997	2007
Translations	419	1004
Viewers	1.1 billion	6.2 billion
Decisions	57 million	202 million
Ministry Partners	686	1500
Film Prints in Circ.	8605	17,715

One foray into this arena of new tools and resources is the new DVD, *Jesus, Fact or Fiction*. It is an innovative new evangelistic tool that uses cutting edge interactive multi-media technology to provide compelling answers to some of life's toughest questions. It includes dramatic real life stories along with answers from expert scientists, Biblical scholars and apologists such as Josh McDowell, Lee Strobel, Ravi Zacharias, Paul Maier, Kelly Monroe and many others.

The DVD presents the facts, history and evidence that support the claims and teachings of Jesus. A person with questions and objections can watch the DVD and get thoughtful Biblical answers. The DVD includes a full length version of the Jesus Film along with interactive apologetic features and full length audio commentary by Paul Eshleman. A PC DVD for use in

a computer is also provided with articles for further research on various subjects. This new tool is designed to be used in various contexts from home Bible studies to evangelistic outreaches to church planting. More information on this resource and others can be found by going to www.jesusfilm.org

Moving into the Future

The Jesus Film Project is always looking for new ways to convey the message of the Jesus Film and the gospel. Currently, the Jesus Film is available to view online in any of 800 different languages. You can also download segments of the film onto your iPod for on-the-go viewing. As technology and the mission of the Church around the world advances, you can be assured that the Jesus Film Project will be actively involved in helping to bring the good news of Jesus Christ to every tribe and tongue. 🌐

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further reflections

Disruptive Missiology Part 2

Greg H. Parsons



Last issue (*MF* July-August 2007), I wrote about *Disruptive Missiology* a concept derived from the idea of *Disruptive Technology*. Even though I used illustrations from current technology (created by companies like Apple, Microsoft and Google), the idea of disruptive technology has been around a long time. Other examples include the shift from horses to tractors or cars, mechanical to digital watches, etc. Each of these displaced, to some degree, earlier technologies or industries.

In the business world, competition and survival are major factors driving change. Often, in the church or mission world, similar forces can be involved, as well as the motivation to do something helpful and good. Ministries can keep themselves alive with minor tweaks along the way, yet in the process, lose their way.

Just this week, a staff member mentioned to me the struggles he has seen going on in church after church he's visited recently. In the last two years, three of the churches that back my family's ministry here at the USCWM have had to reduce missionary support for various reasons.

These may be a symptom of the disruption within the church in the West, with which I and other missionaries must deal. But dealing with those issues will require a different approach than dealing with issues as the followers of Christ are established among the unreached. Do we take with us a model of church which—effective or not here in the West—will not be sustainable in new places?

One *MF* reader, replying to part one of my discussion of Disruptive Missiology, noted that missionaries usually are all for “contextualizing” or “adjusting” the way they do church when they go overseas. They may suggest that people sit on the floor; sing some songs written by the people, instead of *Amazing Grace*; or even meet on Fridays at noon in Muslim contexts. Is it enough just to tweak some patterns, or might the whole approach need a fresh look? We need two different things for two different situations:

1. **Here**, or wherever the church is already established, we need to look afresh at the Bible, and

continually consider if what we are doing is biblical.

2. **There**, or wherever the church is not yet established, we need to let them look at the Bible and continually consider if what we are doing is biblical. They understand their culture as well as the people and relationships in ways that we outsiders will never fully grasp.

Of course, they need deep, prolonged exposure to God's Word, as we do. Increasingly I believe we have short-circuited that process by feeding them instead of teaching them to feed themselves.

So, where the church exists: We need to continually submit our lives and churches to the authority of the Scriptures. We may not change our theology often or at all, but we always need to examine how we live out our faith in our family, neighborhoods, communities, businesses, etc.

And, where there is no church: We must let the new developing fellowships determine what their patterns should be. Encourage them to look deeply into the Scriptures, not to the West or established historical patterns. Resist the temptation to tell them how you did it back home or even in a nearby city. Look at the Scriptures.

Naturally, that can make us uncomfortable for several reasons. It can make us feel like what we have been doing in church or mission work was wrong, useless, or even harmful. If we think that way, we will likely be slower to change our approach. Yet merely because we have all failed in some ways and we realize our models are not perfect, we must not let that put us on the defensive and keep us from thinking clearly about important issues.

All this feels disruptive. But, it is at that point that we can hope that enough change will take place so that we can see ourselves and His church grow and go into frontier areas to make God's Name known. Ultimately, success is up to God, and we all want to be on board with what He is doing. 🌐



Rev. Greg Parsons is General Director of the U.S. Center for World Mission. He and his wife have been on staff at the USCWM since 1982.