

The Unfolding Drama
of the
Christian Movement

by
Ralph D. Winter

William Carey Library
Pasadena, California

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These are transcriptions of lectures given by Ralph D. Winter, Ph.D., at Fuller Theological Seminary, School of World Mission, 1979.

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Ralph D. Winter

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Winter Chapter 1

The MEANS of World Evangelization

Our first topic to chew into is called, “The Means of World Evangelization.” The word *means* intrudes itself upon the pages of human history at a certain “locus classicus” in the case of William Carey’s famous little book, the brief title of which is “An Enquiry into the Obligations of Christians to Use Means for the Conversion of the Heathens.” The longer title I don’t recall. The key word in this title is the word *means*.

Carey’s little 97-page book covers three things:

- 1) It talks about previous efforts in history.
- 2) It talks about the remaining task. In the second part it presents quantitatively a series of tables and tabular materials which incorporate Carey’s own best estimates of what was left to be done. Now by *estimates*, I really mean estimates! Take the island of Borneo—all he knew was the rough area in square miles. This is back in 1790, and he had no idea how many people lived there, so he estimated. He said, “Well, there are probably so many people per square mile and therefore the population of Borneo is so large.” And probably these people are mainly non-Christians. Perhaps there are a few papists (as he called the Catholics) and a few Mohammedans” (as he called the Muslims).” His guesswork, however, provides the basis of all the tables which constitute the second part of that book.
- 3) Thirdly, Carey refers to the word *means*. In this case he introduces the idea of a mission society, and finally we understand what he means by the “means” of world evangelization!

Now, lest you think that all this is some little obscure reference, off to one side in the backwater of history, let me say that in my opinion, beyond the Bible itself, the impact of Carey’s small book on history is greater than any other document in regard to the fulfillment of the Great Commission. William Carey is often thought of as the first Protestant mis-

sionary. He was not the first Protestant missionary; he was merely the first Protestant missionary *who wrote a book on the theory of missions*, and who specifically proposed that mission societies were a legitimate *means* for the fulfillment of the Great Commission.

Today most of us take mission societies for granted. We are so completely unaware of the issue of their existence—that is, whether or not they *should* exist—that in our field work overseas and around the world, almost without exception it has never even occurred to us that *we have needed to start mission societies within the national churches*. The very idea just doesn’t even come up. I’ll bet that for half of you what I’m saying is unintelligible; you probably did not even catch what I said because you have never even thought that there should be a mission society composed of the national church people themselves.

But lately such mission societies are more and more talked about, and they are sometimes referred to as “Third World Missions.” Not missions *to* the Third World, but missions *from* the Third World. Not missions from the Third World to the U.S., although that is certainly legitimate, but simply mission structures that are composed of, and directed by, Africans or Koreans or Christians from the Third World.

Unfortunately, this hiatus in mission history is so serious that there are almost no effective Third World mission societies as yet (in 1979). At this point there are at least 200 in existence. If you go around and count everything that moves, every shadow, every glimmer, you can get even more on the list. But many of these societies are perhaps inner city missions in the city of Seoul, Korea, or some kind of boat mission down in Korea’s Incheon Harbor. Very rarely do they work outside the cultural traditions of their own people. They are often not “cross-cultural.” Not what we call “foreign” mission societies.

I am not going to stand up here and deny the word *missions* to such structures. This word

is free for people to use any way they wish. I have no lock and key on the word *missions*. But I would suggest that for the most part the word is used more specifically in the foreign mission tradition and usually refers to going where there is *not yet* a church, not merely going *out from* where there is already a church.

Let me try to draw a picture of what I mean. As you all know by now, in McGavran's terms, the phrase *the mosaic of human society* consists of different human subcultures not different countries. In India, instead of being strewn out separately, they pile up like a stack of pancakes since they are very often sandwiched with each other in layers in a given town or city. Although there may be fifty layers in the same town, each layer is nevertheless a different culture—missiologically.

If there are well-established churches in one or two of these different layers, then working within those particular cultures to found other churches is certainly mission of a sort.

To cope with such details I have actually tried, somewhat unsuccessfully, to get people to think in terms of various kinds of church growth. *Expansion growth* is what happens when the existing churches grow bigger. *Extension growth* refers to the multiplication of existing churches within the same culture. But *bridging growth* is perhaps the least recognized because a bridge is built when the churches within one culture go over to some other culture where there is not yet a culturally relevant church movement. As far as I personally am concerned, I would prefer to use (or even reserve) the word *mission* for the *bridging* type of church growth, and I would call these other types of growth simply *evangelism*. I prefer this not because one type of church growth is better or more important than the others but because *mission*, as I am defining it here (using the term *bridging*), requires many more specialized skills and training. And, by definition, it can't be done without involving an outsider, since there is no Christian movement within that culture as yet. And, obviously, it is the kind of thing you cannot pay someone within the culture to do.

Since not very many others differentiate the types of church growth in this way, I myself probably won't be very consistent in how I use the two words *mission* and *evangelism*. Since I speak ordinary English most of the time, I will probably use these two words like everybody else does for all kinds of purposes!

In any case, the *means* to which William

Carey referred was very specifically a mechanism—a social mechanism, an organizational structure, if you wish—which was designed for *bridging* church growth. Although the terminology here may seem a bit clumsy, the activity to which I refer is *the specific the attempt to go from one culture where there is a church to another culture where there is no culturally relevant church movement*.

There might be what could be called an *enclave* church. Suppose, for example, in Iran one or more of the various subcultures may already have an "enclave" church of its own. But this church, we note, in no significant way relates to culture in which it is immersed. In the same way, to say that there is no church in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia is to speak imprecisely. There is a church, perhaps several, in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, but there is no *indigenous* church within that overall cultural tradition. I think you understand what I mean. To go from a subcultural enclave out to the main culture of Saudi Arabia would therefore be *missions*, not *evangelism*.

However, note that this kind of missions from an enclave is probably the least successful to succeed—because over the years (or perhaps centuries) very high *prejudice barriers* have been built up between the majority culture and the Christianized sub-culture or enclave.

That is why it is actually easier for someone from a distant culture to do missions in that situation than for the local Christians within the enclave church to break out their situation and try to witness to the culture that may have long resented them for other reasons than just their witness of Christ. This problem represents one of the most serious misunderstandings in mission strategy today. We can call it "the problem of the proximate culture."

But, so much for definitions of the word *means*. Let me go back for a moment to the astounding hiatus in mission strategy which has allowed mission activity to go on and on in the Protestant tradition for nearly 200 years without any clear-eyed, intentional strategy of founding mission societies in the foreign soil.

When I say things like this in discussion with others, I find that they are often groping for some explanation for this astounding hiatus. Why haven't missionaries helped the national church leaders set up indigenous mission societies? I sense that those with whom I talk feel uneasy about this whole question. They feel that there must be some

logical reason for this hiatus, and, of course, some of the reasons which they suggest in our discussion are, “Well, you have to start a church first before you can start a mission society.”

Well, for the sake of argument, let me refer you to Alexander Rhodes. A century or so ago he was a missionary to Vietnam, but was kicked out sixteen times. Reg Reimer, a missionary with the Christian and Missionary Alliance in Vietnam, has done research on Alexander Rhodes. He says that the largest body of Christians in Vietnam today is the result of what Rhodes did, even though he was often removed from the scene. Actually his total length of time in Vietnam was not very lengthy, but it was effective.

What is interesting to note is that *he didn't plant churches*. I realize that it's heresy in any kind of a church growth group to say that Rhodes succeeded fabulously even though he didn't plant churches, but it is true.

The thing that McGavran is most concerned about, however, is that we not be content with simply winning *individuals* to Christ. And in order to counteract that inadequate approach, McGavran stresses the necessity of incorporating those new believers into a permanent fellowship. Isn't that right? It should not be too hard to understand then that to incorporate believers into a *mission society* is simply another form of incorporation. So although McGavran doesn't state his objective this way, I don't think he would object if someone said, “It's true that we're not planting churches, but we are planting mission societies to plant churches.”

I wonder just how many of you have ever read an article on how to plant a “younger mission?” We talk all the time about younger churches. But have you ever read a paper on the planting of “younger missions?” There is a chapter on this subject in a book entitled *Crucial Dimensions in World Evangelization*. [Relate to something more recent.] You really should read that.

Back to Alexander Rhodes. Each time he was kicked out, he left behind a little cadre of younger men who were pledged to the planting of churches. They worked as a team, just like Paul and his co-laborers worked as a team. Paul, you know, was basically operating within a church planting team. He was in the business of planting churches, wasn't he? However, the organization within which he worked was neither a church nor a synagogue;

it was a mission. It was, if you wish, a travelling synagogue. It had all the authority of a travelling church. It appointed elders, just like a non-travelling church does.

In the same way, we can consider the “means” of William Carey, the mission of Alexander Rhodes, the team of the apostle Paul (in each case) a “travelling church.” Of course, I don't really like to do that. But I insist that it had the authority and some of the functions of a travelling church, and was as *legitimate* as a travelling church would be. But it was not a church in the normal sense of that word because an individual could be baptized *by* that group but not be baptized *into* that group. An individual could be baptized into a synagogue—a Gentile or maybe a Jewish synagogue—and from there be selected by, or volunteer to a mission team. But it would take a combination of volunteering and selecting in order for anyone to get on that specialized team. Nobody could get on it automatically the moment he became a Christian. It always took a *second step*, a voluntary *additional step* beyond church membership, for him to become part of this special ministry.

It was well understood, I believe, in the period of the New Testament church that the team within which Paul worked had the same structure as the Pharisaic missionary bands that “traversed land and sea to make a single proselyte.” In other words, the structure of missions which Paul employed was basically the same as the structure that for 150 years had already been in use by the Pharisees. The Pharisaic missionary band was already utilizing that kind of a structure, and Paul merely borrowed it, just as he borrowed the synagogue. He didn't invent a new kind of a thing called *church*. Anyone who reads the New Testament and thinks that God let down from heaven a new blueprint for what is called a church and thinks that it is different from a synagogue simply doesn't understand the situation. Paul made no attempt to create a new kind of synagogue. There was a new message within that synagogue, but the structure was the same. Paul went around splitting synagogues; he was a church splitter, a synagogue splitter. He was not so much a church planter as a synagogue splitter. He didn't intend to split synagogues. But he went there with the gospel of Jesus Christ, the gospel of redemption, the gospel of grace, the gospel of circumcision of the heart, which we read about in Deuteronomy and Jeremiah.

Paul got the pattern he used from Alexandria, where the synagogues were already bypassing the requirement of circumcision for Gentiles coming into their midst. Paul pressed this pattern hard, so hard that he alienated many of the Jews in the front rows. In Acts 13 they finally popped up and cursed at him and blasphemed, it says in the text. Obviously he didn't stick around after that second Sabbath there, but walked out, taking with him many of the Gentile believers in the back rows. With these and a few Jews he started a new synagogue, which is more often called by the Greek name *ecclesia*, which refers to any kind of a meeting. There is nothing holy about the word *ecclesia*. And because the structure he used was already well established, Paul didn't have to give a whole lot of new rules. The New Testament contains a few references which, you may recall, reminds the people how to set up a church. But basically, Paul is not carving out and establishing a brand new structure. Rather, he's making sure that these people understand the old structure, the synagogue, which had been invented in Babylon during the Diaspora. The synagogue was a very valuable kind of non-temple fellowship which involved accountability and worship and teaching, and it really hasn't been improved upon to this day. Instead, it's been ruined; it's been degraded. Any church that's over 200 members is already going down hill in terms of internal accountability, and thus does not correspond to the average synagogue. Nevertheless, the church as we know it in the New Testament is basically a synagogue. It was borrowed from the Jewish tradition just like the missionary band concept was borrowed.

Now what does this mean? It does not mean that God is canonizing for all eternity those two structures that you find in the New Testament. What He is doing is showing us missionaries how to borrow structures to work with, and to work within. Paul never had to teach anyone how to do it because he was borrowing structures that already existed. Wherever we can in our missionary work, we need to do the same.

Let's take Ethiopia, for example. Throughout Ethiopia there is what is called a *mahaber*. A "mahaber" is a men's group, sort of like a Masonic lodge, that is a structure already there. I have thought that that structure could become a Christian structure if it were invaded and utilized in the right way. I don't know of

any missionary to Ethiopia that has tried to do this, but at least in terms of missionary strategy, it would be worth thinking about.

Now, to go back to the two structures we have just discussed, I'd like to refer you to an article entitled "The Two Structures of God's Redemptive Mission." That article surveys the last 2000 years, and points out different types of examples for each of these structures. Let me just point out here that there are two ways to go at new ideas. You can either use old words and continue to explain to people that you are not really saying what they think you are saying, or you can use a new word they've never heard of, and try to put it over, defined from scratch. I'm choosing the second of these two paths, when I speak of a *modality*.

The word *sodality*, however, is a word from the Roman Catholic tradition which Latourette, the well-known church historian, picked up and used in some of his writings. Anthropologists also have used this word to refer to a voluntary structure within a society. It's a structure that isn't complete by itself because it does not have old and young and male and female in its midst. Thus, it cannot reproduce itself biologically.

A church, a *modality*, is a complete community characterized by the fact that it has children born into it who become members almost automatically. Now, if you are a Baptist, you will say, "No, sir, they don't become members automatically." And I will reply, "Yes, sir, in most Baptist churches they do." The truth is that you will not find much difference between a Lutheran church which confirms people at puberty and at the Baptist church which baptizes people at puberty. Functionally, those two ceremonies are the same. Neither of them usually has a very severe selection process. And the normal church, whether it's Lutheran or Baptist, is a structure which gives the benefit of the doubt to the children born into it. Thus, normally, it is biologically self-perpetuating.

Thus, rather than using a word already in use for a certain type of structure, as I have done with the word *sodality*, I have been a bit more daring and have chosen the word *modality* for the church kind of structure.

What all this means is that a mission society is a sodality. You don't get born into a mission society. There is only one mission society that I know of where a very high percentage of the members were born into it, with perhaps half

of the members being children of previous members. I don't believe this is true of SIM International. I don't think that there is any Mennonite mission society where half their members were children of previous members.

A good example, however, is the Salvation Army. Until recently the Salvation Army was a mission society with perhaps more than half of its members born within the society. But when it got to the point where more than half of its members were children of previous members, it began to lose the character of a mission society. That is why the Salvation Army has to some extent given up mission society characteristics and become more like a church denomination.

Let me refresh your mind on this subject, because it is very germane to this whole thing. The Salvation Army was a home mission society for many years. You didn't just join it. You had to know what you were doing to become a member because it wasn't just a cozy little Bible study fellowship, like the average church. To be a member of the Salvation Army, you had to get out there actively as a missionary in the slums of London or New York. In those days it was very much a mission society structure. Its members won people to Christ, but most of those they won to Christ joined existing churches.

The Salvation Army, thus, was not a *church* in the sense that I am using the word. Not then! But it got along very nicely and began sending missionaries to India and to Korea and to various other places in the world. Today there are more Salvation Army people in India than in the United States. And in the last few years the Salvation Army membership in the United States began to say to themselves, "How is it that we're growing faster in India than in the U. S.?"

Well, the reason was that in India they were a *church*, while in the United States they were a *mission society*. How did that happen? In India, when they won people to Christ, there were no churches to which they could send the new converts. So they incorporated all these people into the structure they had planted; and they ended up immediately with a whole string of churches, just like a denomination. The ultimate result was a Salvation Army *church* in India and a Salvation Army *mission society* in America.

The same thing happened in Korea. The work got very strong over there, and they said,

"Well, what's wrong back in the United States? We're growing; why aren't they?" So gradually people in the United States began to say, "Well, what are we doing? Why is it we don't take people we win to Christ into our fellowship. Why don't we do that? Everybody else does. Why don't we?" Well, the answer is that just like any other mission society, you don't take your converts into the mission society. If you did, it would no longer be a mission society. There has to be a much stricter method of selection, which is true for a church fellowship.

Anyway, for better or for worse—and in this case I think it is for worse—more and more they allowed their converts to join them. This was very nice of them, but in so deciding they made the colossal shift from a mission structure to a church structure. And today they are the fastest growing church structure in the United States.

That's fine. But there goes a very stalwart mission society that for many, many decades had a very specialized, valuable work to perform. I'll give them twenty years before they will be mainly out of that work.

Now, there is nothing wrong with starting a church, but you have to know what it is you're trying to do for the given situation. That is why there really needs to be two kinds of structures. Rather than call them *missions* and *churches*, I would prefer to call them *sodalities* and *modalities*, since these latter terms have wider meanings, which enables parallels to secular society—towns are modalities, private enterprises are *sodalities*, as are the military structures. Both structures are necessary, just as both a checking account and a savings account are necessary. One is an active structure and the other a relatively passive structure. We like to think that churches are an active structure, and in America they are. In fact, many a denomination that is born in America with, say, a new congregation here or there, has all the characteristics of a sodality for the first generation. But you show me any local church in the United States today that has been going for five generations and I will show you a church that is not actively evangelistic. Such churches are maybe pledged to evangelism—they believe in evangelism—but they're not really actively evangelistic unless, perhaps, they've recently been taken over by a new pastor and all the old members have left and a new group of people have come in. But that's not what I'm talking about.

What I am saying is that within only twenty years you might have an entirely different type of situation simply because of the biological factor. When your children replace your generation, the result is a new generation; and when their children replace them, that's a new generation. That process has a non-selective basis. You see, when the structure itself is non-selective and is perpetuated biologically, you no longer have that selection which allows the high focus in the specific, penetrating purposes of a sodality. While sodalities are not everything that God wants, they are a different kind of a structure from that of a church or denomination; and as such, they are very, very useful.

In some people's minds, I am classified as the proponent of sodalities. Well, I hate to be thought of as one-sided. But whether I believe it or not, or whether you believe that I believe it or not, I want to say that I think we need both structures. Both are very, very important and have different capacities.

I will now compromise what I have just said by adding that if you had to choose between the two structures, it would be better to choose the sodality. I say this because I have the evidence, as we shall see later on, that for about 200 years there were no really effective modalities in Western Europe; there were only sodalities, like Intersarsity-type groups. These were the durable carrier vehicles of the Christian movement during that entire period. When talking about terminology, I would replace the word *church* with the words "Christian movement" and in that case the Christian movement consists of both sodalities and modalities. You see both of them right in the New Testament. And by the way, you also see them in every human society. They are not necessarily spiritual structures. For example, the city of Pasadena is a modality, and a local dry cleaning company is a sodality.

The movement that resulted when the Antioch church set apart Paul and his band for work all over the Roman Empire did not eventuate in Antioch but rather at Pentecost. That movement contained two kinds of fish swimming around, one serving the other, but they very much needed to work together. One was a modality and the other was a sodality. There were synagogues (modalities) and there were missionary bands (sodalities), and both structures were important. The missionary bands produced synagogues, and the syna-

gogues fuelled and provided members for the sodalities. But the missionary bands did more than just that. They not only produced a reproducible structure, but in so doing, they produced an immensely influential movement.

The church people (the modalities) were witnessing to others, as we certainly hope they are doing today. But notice this, even if the church people are witnessing, it doesn't mean they are sending missionaries—and I mean sending them to places untouched by the gospel in any sense. In order to do that, they have to do something that is a little more organized than just sending an individual out. Paul and Barnabas did not go out as just individuals. They had a well-recognized and long-established structure behind them to help them know just what to do in any given situation. Today, especially in the Third World, many churches are sending people all over the world to serve as missionaries. But in Hong Kong and Korea, for example, they are often sending them out as individuals without a mission society backing; and as a result, they are getting no place.

Another example would be the Mormons. They also send individuals out (usually two college students together), and they also have no mission society structure on the field to guide them. And because they don't have veteran missionaries on the field to tell them what to do, in most cases they accomplish very little. What a tragedy it would be for standard mission agencies if the the Mormons were ever to read William Carey's *Enquiry* and find out about mission societies, because then we would really have a formidable opponent in the Mormon church! Their lack of a mission society doesn't mean that the Mormons aren't expanding. They are, but doing so by the witnessing process within the cultures where their churches are already to be found. But breaking into a new place where there is no church is something which usually does not result from the work of individuals witnessing, gossiping the Gospel, and so forth. Yes, the Mormons have more missionaries than any other group, but far less to show for it per missionary. What they have is basically only a short-term program.

I would say that the church in the New Testament is basically a movement, rather than a structure. And in that movement, the people of God are rightly conceived of as the church. But that movement contains these two different structures.

Now, I'm not really saying anything so very spectacular when I say that in anthropology, every tribe you study is a modality, and that within every tribe known to man on the face of the earth there are also sodalities. That's why anthropologists have borrowed the term *sodality*. So for me to say that God's people are found in both kinds of organizational relationships is not to say anything very provocative or spectacular.

But there is a problem: all too often church people call this second structure a *para-church* structure—be it a mission agency, a women's society, Intervarsity, Campus Crusade for Christ, or whatever. I do not like that term because it implies that somehow these structures are secondary and subservient to the churchly structures. I would just as soon call the churches *para-missions*. I feel that the very word *parachurch* downgrades this kind of structure. I recognize the term; we all know what it means. I'm willing to use it, but I'm not very happy about it. In my understanding of the Biblical situation in Acts, with Paul's missionary band, what so often today is called a "parachurch structure," has all the authority of a "travelling church," if you wish. It doesn't lack *any* of the authority of a church; it just doesn't take any of its children, as children, into its membership. Therefore, it's more durable.

I say once more, and you can test this out to see if it's true: I don't know of any local church or denomination that's been going for five generations that still carries the specific, sharp focus and concern with which it was founded. But I do know of many, many sodalities that have lasted for hundreds of years, that still have a very narrow, sharp focus. You take for example, the IFMA missions or the Sudan Interior Mission (now SIM International). Here's a mission that for over a hundred years has carried the gospel overseas without any compromise whatsoever. You show me a denomination that's done that.

Some may argue that the reason churches sometimes look down on *para-church* structures (not my word) is because the churches feel that they are illegitimately performing the functions of a church. Campus Crusade for

Christ and Intervarsity Christian Fellowship don't see it that way. My little pamphlet, "The Two Structures," is being purchased by the hundreds of copies by both those organizations. What I have written and what I am saying here today seems to make legitimate the Intervarsity, Campus Crusade and Navigator type of structure. Although I didn't start out believing this—even ten years ago—I believe today with all my heart that such structures are every bit as legitimate as any church sitting on a corner. They are just as biblical, just as authoritative, just as legitimate and just as essential to the health and vitality of the Christian movement as is the congregational form of the church of Jesus Christ. They are not emergency "band-aids" that are necessary only because the church has failed. Paul, in his missionary work, was not working the way he did because the Antioch church had failed. Not at all. The New Testament does not conceive of Paul's activities as a stop gap because the churches were failing. It was their normal mechanism—let's use the word "means"—it was their normal means of outreach, especially, cross-culturally.

Now, what I've done is present a fairly provocative point of view. I have said in effect that parachurch structures are the chief means of world evangelism. You now need to study for yourself and see the extent to which the sodalities of history have been the cutting edge of the growth of the Christian movement. That doesn't mean that the men in those sodalities are more holy than the leaders of the churches; you just might have to be a lot more holy to be a pastor than to be a missionary. It just means that we can see these two structures working together down through history; and when the Christian movement breaks down, it's usually because one or the other of these two structures is not functioning correctly, or because the two of them cannot understand each other well enough.

In modern Protestantism I feel that these two structures are not acknowledging each other's validity, and are not working together the way they ought to. That's the crisis in the present period with regard to the very *means* of world evangelism.

Winter Chapter 2

The Unfinished Task of World Evangelization

Before we get into our subject—the overall story of God’s redemptive work on earth—I’d like to make two comments on the wording: first, the concept of an “unfinished task.”

The very phrase, “unfinished task,” is probably an inadequate phrase. It isn’t as though redemption in the biblical narrative or in subsequent history is just a job to be done, like naming the animals or naming the plants, and that the job is not finished. It is not merely an unfinished task. The only reason to use that phrase is because it is so traditional, it seems to communicate better than others.

Yes, the task we are talking about is much more urgently to be performed than the word “unfinished” would imply. Compare, for example, the two words “creation” and “redemption.” Creation is an activity on God’s part which is taking place over a long period of time and does not inherently involve any special hurry. Nothing is necessarily going wrong in a creativity process. It is like an artist in a studio working on a painting. If he has no no deadline and nothing goes wrong, it does not matter very much if it takes him an extra hour or an extra day to create his painting. That is why I don’t really like the term, “unfinished.” The task is not a job that is simply unfinished; it is a task that is inherently a crisis. It is an emergency kind of a task. It corresponds, not to creation, but to redemption. The word redemption by its very nature implies a crisis. When an ox falls in a ditch you don’t say, “Well, one of these days in the next few months, we’re going to have to pull the ox out of the ditch; it’s one of our unfinished tasks.” When a car goes off a cliff, or when someone is at the point of drowning in a swimming pool, you don’t say, “Well, now, one of these days we’ll have to see to this situation.” No! You can’t do that, because it’s an emergency! The emergency itself contradicts the usual priorities. It cuts

across the routines and conventionalities of ordinary societies. Thus, I think it would be a grave mistake to accept the phrase, “the unfinished task,” without noting the absence of an emergency element built into it.

Secondly, as we look at it, the phrase involves a non-optional dimension. It isn’t possible for us to say, “This isn’t for me;” or “This is for someone else;” or as I—and no doubt you—have heard it said, “The need is not the call.” But I would ask, “If the need is not the call, then what under the sun is the basis of the call?” What we mean by “a call” is not a mere invitation. The fact is, we are not the arbiters of whether or not there is an emergency. God is the one who has judged man a fallen creature, and His analysis of the problem is not up to us but to Him. Therefore, our human evaluation of our response is not the source of our decision making; God is! He is the One who, in contrast to His creative endeavors, is pointing out to us a redemptive task which devolves upon us no matter what we might wish. Obviously, this way of thinking calls for an adjustment in the way we usually look at things.

The necessary adjustment that a young couple have to make when they get married is similar. Beforehand, they are free to follow their own desires and instincts, but now their individual freedom is to be radically and permanently abridged by another person. Decision making is no longer the option of either one alone; they are now bound by an unavoidable new dimension of responsibility. This is especially clear when the first child is born. It is not possible in the middle of the night when the baby starts crying to say in desperation, “Well, now, one of these days we’re going to have to do something about that.” Rather, it is a question of who’s going to get up, you or I? And, of course, that gets into culture-distinctions of role, which are too profound to be discussed

here. But that's the nature of the task. A young married couple with a tiny baby goes through a bruising process of readjustment to the external demands of real life. It's a real trauma to some people, and some really can't take it. In fact, this is the reason that 300,000 babies are severely beaten every year in this country—six times the death rate that we see on the highways—and often by the mother. That happens because the new situation with an infant is a process requiring a major adjustment.

Thus, parallel to the nature of the task being not creative but redemptive; it is also an obligation, not an option. There is no possibility of a church saying, "Well, that's for the other churches to be concerned with." And there is no possibility of any individual Christian saying, "That's for someone else to worry about." No matter what you call it, "foreign mission work, overseas mission work" (if you live on an island), the only possibility of a person turning down this kind of a call is if he has some other call which is equally decisive and equally urgent and equally of God. In other words, you have to be called to stay home. In my mind there is no possibility of any other way of looking at the so-called problem of guidance.

We recognize in the Bible a similar kind of situation. The elder brother didn't understand why the return of his younger brother—the "prodigal son"—introduced an emergency element into the situation. The elder brother didn't sense the gravity and his own responsibility for that which was lost. Prior to the story in Luke 15 Jesus was essentially asked "Why do we have to be bothered by this redemptive task? Why can't we just go on living creatively?" Is this attitude familiar?

In the average Christian bookstore today you actually find great support for that attitude. In fact, it seems as if the only verse in the Bible that some Christians today think about is, "I have come to give you life abundantly and even more abundantly." Many, many books in the bookstores appeal to people's hunger to develop a more sparkling personality, or more this or more that—"Be all that you're meant to be!" or whatever. That theme is very creative when cast theologically. To be what God created you to be is perfectly legitimate. I'm not casting any aspersions on the legitimacy of our getting a good meal, of being physically healthy, being disciplined, being beautiful people. Ann Orland in her book, *The Disciplines of a Beautiful Woman*, says that God wants women

to be beautiful. I believe that is legitimate. But, notice, you can't walk into a Christian bookstore today and find a book with a title like "How to Bleed, Suffer and Die for Jesus Christ." The book wouldn't sell. Nobody is prepared for an emergency, once peace has been around for a period of time.

And though I hate to say this, one value of war in the history of our nation is that it disabuses the populace of the assumption that the mood of "peace where there is no peace" is not to be questioned. When there are no major problems, it is easy to assume that God wants us to enjoy richly and abundantly all the good food and cable television and all the luxuries that American life today affords us. We have this zany process at work whereby if we can save ourselves enough physical labor, we can actually allow our veins to plug up faster!

In fact, the most extensive menace to human life in the United States is physical inactivity; and we have gained this achievement, this menace, by hard work and by keen "Christian insight." As the result of our "dedicated and disciplined" endeavors to put ourselves out of work physically, we are actually caught up in a whole set of diseases that have never been known before.

In very few countries in the world is alcoholism a problem, although it almost always is in relatively wealthy societies. In very few countries in the world are the luxuries of divorce a problem; in only a few is it possible, for economic reasons, to get divorced.

You have to be a wealthy country to develop all of the degenerative diseases that plague the American people. It is another, different list of diseases that plagues the people in the so-called non-Western world. A recent article by a medical doctor simply gave two lists of diseases; and not being a medical expert, I can't remember these in detail even though I copied them down at the time. He said something like this: that you've got tuberculosis, dysentery, malaria, and many other diseases that are epidemic in the less affluent world, but in the wealthy countries you have a different list of diseases that are just as damaging to the civil body politic as those in the first list. It seems that the great achievement of our affluence is simply that we have exchanged one list of diseases for another.

But, of course, the Bible isn't talking about a peaceful, unruffled situation. When there is a sheep that is lost, the pastor goes after the one

lost sheep, leaving the ninety nine behind. That's his normal, conventional routine; his obvious, stated responsibility. The pastor doesn't send a hireling or somebody else to search for the lost sheep; he is the one who leaves. In Antioch in the book of Acts, the two most respected and mature pastoral leaders were the ones sent off or released by the church for a missionary role. There is no biblical example for what we do in America today when we recruit our young people as missionaries.

I was in a conference recently in the Philippines composed of Chinese Christian leaders, including a number of wonderful evangelical pastors. I remember trying to make this same point, namely, that God could ask pastors to leave their flocks behind and go and try to win the lost cultures into his kingdom; they really didn't need to worry about the flock they were leaving behind (you can't imagine how fast potential pastors mature in the absence of the pastor who was there). Churches have enormous leadership resources, which will never be used if the pastors are not constantly being sent off to the mission field; but that is not the way we do it, even though it is, I think, a biblical pattern.

In the New Testament, curiously, it is people that are not normally considered important who are the object of God's primary favor and attention. During the last few months I've been reading through the entire Bible in the *Living* translation. I got up to the New Testament and into the gospels and half way through the book of Mark before something began to dawn on me—something I'd known before but hadn't really felt. You know, there's a difference between knowing and feeling. Well, I began to realize that in the book of Mark, the sensitivities of Jesus were almost always startling, surprising to everyone, even to the disciples. They seemingly couldn't anticipate what Jesus would be interested in. (Are we like that?) He was not interested in seeking out the affluent, the up-and-outs, the righteous, the beautiful people. If He came to Pasadena, apparently He wouldn't be seeking out the chief evangelical leaders and pastors, and sitting down with them and having a wonderful time sharing in the Word together. He would be looking for the sick and the despised people.

Do you remember when He returned to Capernaum and got off the ship He was met by a leader of the synagogue? The function of the leader of the synagogue in that context is very

nearly that of a mayor. Anyhow, Jesus steps on shore; and here comes this synagogue leader in terrible torment of soul because his little daughter is on the verge of death. "Can you help?" he pleads. So Jesus heads in the direction of his home. Instantly, His disciples exchange knowing looks because if Jesus can heal this little girl, the daughter of such an eminent man, He will really "have it made." And a tremendous crowd follows along to see what will happen.

Then, suddenly, something slows down the procession, and He stops and looks around and asks, "Who touched me?" Even the disciples are shocked by His question. "What do you mean," they ask uneasily, "in a crowd like this, who hasn't touched you?" And they are a bit irritated when they spot, right close to Him, a woman that everyone in town knows is ritually unclean because she has been hemorrhaging for years. And they all shudder, wondering if perhaps by accident they might have bumped into her and become ritually unclean themselves.

It is very distressing for the synagogue leader to wait while all this is going on. His daughter is dying! The disciples also are restless. They are thinking, "Doesn't He realize that He may be blowing the best chance He will ever have to be accepted by those who really count?" You can almost imagine them leaning close and hissing through their teeth, "The daughter, Jesus, the daughter..." They may have thought, "There he goes again—off on a tangent again! How are we ever going make him a success?"

Jesus ignores all this, even when messengers from the ruler's house come running with the news that the daughter has died. He glances at the agonized face of her father, then reaches out and touches the defiled woman, who has fallen at his feet in tears. "My daughter," He says, "go in peace; your faith has made you whole."

Well, that behind Him, He finally turns to the father, goes with him amidst the jeers of the bystanders, and—now that it is too late—enters the house with only the parents and Peter, James and John. And He doesn't just heal the man's daughter; He raises her from the dead—a much more impressive feat.

What is moving to me about this episode is the fact that Jesus would call this unclean woman His *daughter*. The big point here is—often true with Him—there is a clear and sur-

prising difference between His sensitivities and those of His disciples, and between His and those of all the people in the town, and between His and ours.

Further on in Mark, a blind man beside the road starts shouting, “Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me!” All the people following along behind Him say, “Shut up!” (That’s what the *Living Bible* says, “Shut up!”) The implication is, “Jesus doesn’t have time for you.” But He does!

Or when little children come, and the disciples blurt out “Get away, get away; this is *Jesus!*” But conversely, Jesus says, “I want to talk to those little children.” All too often there is a great discrepancy between our understanding of what God is concerned about and the very reality of Christ in our midst. The startling, surprising nature of His concern really has to be taken into account. We must not be complacent in our understanding of what, the emergency—what, the redemptive task God has given us—really is.

The most horrifying thing of all is the fact that, after being with Jesus day after day for so very long, the disciples still do not catch on. When Jesus explains to them again and again what’s up, their own agenda is written with such large letters that they cannot understand how His agenda could be different from theirs.

For example, on three occasions He explains to them that He is going to be assassinated. And for one reason or another, in each of those three situations, they miss that point because they obviously have something else on their minds. They’re convinced that with His wonder-working power, He’s going to run the show pretty soon. In the third instance, He spells it out in much more gory detail than on either of the two earlier occasions, detailing to them that He is going to be tortured, betrayed and killed, then rise again on the third day. (Unlike us, they knew what torture means.) But instead of reacting in horror and really hearing what He is saying, they, James and John in particular, are so eager to pop the question about the kind of authority they seek to wield in His new kingdom, that they aren’t even listening. “Are you through with your paragraph, Jesus?” they say, in effect. “Listen, it’s not a big thing; but would you sign this little sheet we have prepared? All this is, is merely to put one of us on the left hand and the other on the right. You can do that, certainly?”

What a divergence between their concerns and His! A few days later they pooh-poohed even the idea that he would be killed. In fact, the first time that Jesus brings up that He is going to be killed, Peter censors Him, “Hey, you shouldn’t talk like that. You’re going to run down the morale of the team.” They’re critical; it doesn’t even dawn on them that what He’s saying is true. And then in the upper room when He tells them that one of them is going to betray Him and that the rest will desert Him, they scoff. They all vow that this just isn’t going to happen. Yet it does happen in just a few hours. In the Garden of Gethsemane He asked them three different times to pray with Him. And they failed each time. In addition, Peter, who vowed to protect Him no matter what it took, just a little later in the high priest’s courtyard, turned around and denied him with curses, saying that he never even knew Him.

The disciples simply did not understand, neither the scope, the grimness and the reality of the redemptive task, nor their unpreparedness for it. This ignorance continues to be true even after the cross and the resurrection.

Once again they are together, and sure enough (Acts 1:6) they say, “Now, Jesus, these have been great events that have happened. We’re checking our schedules. Just how soon is the big day going to come. You know, we’re just curious—nothing special—but how soon are you going to set up Your kingdom?” (They said nothing at all about power or positions. They had apparently learned that such concerns upset Him.) His answer, as always, is unexpected. He says, “Listen, that is none of your business. You’re in sales. I’m in management.” (That quote’s not original with me, but it’s even worse than that. He’s not even in management.) He says, “We have nothing to do with these things. For you and me there is another agenda.” It’s as if he’d said, “Okay, okay, if it’s power you want (and instantly they said to themselves, “Didn’t we try to steer clear of that word?”) you will finally get the power you want—once you get going to the ends of the earth.” And once again He reminds them of a vast, unfinished, urgent redemptive task involving the ends of the earth. Apparently it takes something far more than all their daily experience with Christ for them to apprehend the truth, the reality and the urgency of that redemptive task.

Now, this is why I feel it is necessary, in

our churches and in our preaching and speaking around as we deal with Christians, to assume that the challenge of the Great Commission involves a second decision beyond that of accepting Christ. We can say to people, “You have accepted Christ. Have you accepted His commission?” And in most cases they would say, “What do you mean?” They might answer, “No” or “Yes,” but more likely they wouldn’t even know what you are talking about. When James and John asked for the positions on His right and left in His kingdom, He answered, “You’re asking for something which is not mine to give. But one thing I will assure you of, is that you’re going to have to drink of the same cup that I am going to have to drink. Are you ready for that?” And their childish answer was, “Sure.” They didn’t even hesitate. They just wanted to get back to that signature they thought they needed. So here it is again: James and John couldn’t quite accept that the torture

and pain could ever apply to them—or to Him, for that matter.

I think this problem of perspective is true of most Christians today. Logically and theologically, when a person accepts Christ as his Savior, he is accepting a person who is much more than Savior, but who is Lord of the Great Commission as well. That’s logical and it’s theological, but it is not psychological. The average Christian today is no more consciously committed to the Great Commission than were the disciples—up through Acts chapter one.

So, for the most part, the challenge of the unfinished task of world evangelization is not in the heart of the average believer today, any more than it was for the disciples before Pentecost. I don’t care whether you’re speaking of Christians in the United States or in Nigeria or Singapore or Hong Kong. This looming fact is why the task is still both urgent and unfinished.

Winter Chapter 3

Penetrating the Last Frontiers

We are going to discuss various distinctions in this particular lesson, distinctions that could have been taken up in another class—in anthropology, theology or Bible. What we will be talking about is not uniquely history. As a matter of fact, there's nothing that is uniquely history, and there is nothing that is not at least partially history. That's the very nature of the word history. The reason, however, that we are plowing into these various distinctions is simply to be able to define more carefully just what we understand to be the "unfinished task."

Speaking of the word history, I must remind you that there has been an evolution of my own understanding and thus in the materials I have written and that none of my charts or diagrams has dropped out of heaven full blown. So, in getting started, I want to quickly gesture at some of the developments that brought me to the present.

The article "Seeing the Task Graphically" was written in 1973. In it I divided the world into four parts—Chinese, Muslims Hindus, and others—and estimated the number of missionaries working with each group. The "other" group is smaller than the rest, numbering less than 500 million. But, I pointed out, a large proportion of missionaries are dealing with this "other" group, compared with a very small portion working with any one of the three major groups.

I admit this was an early and rather simplistic analysis. One thing wrong with it was that there are actually in these other groups some Christians. So unless you put all of the Christians in the "other" category, you run into problems. So I was delighted when at Lausanne I was given another opportunity to describe the situation in the world more effectively. For that occasion I produced a fancier chart where the Christians and non-Christians are more carefully distinguished. I forget now how it all worked out exactly. But that was my second try.

In a third try I made a four-fold distinction within each of these groups. For example, when I drew a picture of the Chinese, I drew a large circle representing all the (Han) Chinese and within it I put a smaller, dotted circle showing the Chinese that were culturally in reach of the Christian gospel, then a smaller circle representing the total number of Christians of any sort, and finally inside that circle I put a much smaller circle representing those Chinese that were actively Christian.

On the pie chart we have a slightly different approach to those same four categories. Instead of drawing a line down between all these circles with the non-Christians on the right and the Christians on the left, this time I put the whole world population in a single large circle with a piece of pie, so to speak, for the Americans and the Canadians, and other pieces for the rest of the non-Western world: for the Chinese, for the Hindus, for the Asian Muslims and the African Muslims.

There are two other groups that remain. These are what I could be called "residue" categories. In the African section, you have the African Muslims but also the other Africans which are not Muslims. Likewise, in the Asian band, you have the Asian Muslims but also the other Asians, mainly Hindus and Chinese which are found mainly in Asia. So the next category in our diagram are the Other Asians. Altogether, now, that gives you eight pieces of pie. This is my most recent attempt to describe the nature of the world's population from a missionary point of view.

Now, within each of these four major pieces of pie I have made other distinctions—that is, how many of them are Christians, and of those, how large a group are active Christians and how many are basically nominal Christians. You also have an additional distinction between reachable non-Christians or beyond-the-reach (or culturally-distant) non-Christians.

This is an evolutionary set of diagrams. None of these is final; all of them grapple with

basically the same distinctions. I must confess, however, that I think that another more recent approach is better still. What I want you to understand is that the distinctions are the same, the mathematics are the same even though the graphics demonstrating them may be different.

You are probably thinking, “Wait a minute. Not even the mathematics are the same.” But look carefully at the statistical table in this chart, which is the same as in the back of the *Once More Around Jericho* book (William Carey Library, Pasadena, 1977), and you will find that both of them are newer than the one in this “Grounds for a New Thrust in World Evangelization,” (a printed booklet containing a talk I gave to the EFMA in 1975.)

That’s true. The chart in the *Jericho* book is based upon figures for July, 1977, but the table that goes along with this last chart shows that its figures are from July ‘78. And if you don’t think the world is changing, then stop and think again!

There is one other distinction which I’d like to quickly make. (I’m trying as much as possible to give you the historical background to the various things which I am discussing.) At the Conference on World Evangelization in Lausanne, Switzerland in 1974 the organizers of the conference introduced, or should I say reintroduced, the word “evangelization.” One hundred years earlier that same word had been used in a slogan that became very famous. It was the slogan of the Student Volunteer Movement for Foreign Missions (SVMFM) which spoke of the “The evangelization of the world in this [their] generation.” To my knowledge, no one I have ever read has made a distinction in print between the words evangelism and evangelization. Harold Lindsell told me that he was the person who pressured Billy Graham to use the phrase “world evangelization” instead of “world evangelism.” A little earlier David Howard had written a book (avoiding the term), *Student Power and World Evangelism*, a very good book telling about the growth of the Student Volunteer Movement, the Haystack Prayer Meeting, etc., which we will be discussing later. But Harold Lindsell said, “Hey, don’t say evangelism, say evangelization!” He maintains that it makes a great difference which of these two words you use.

I’m not sure but that he would say the same thing about my insistence that, Biblically defined, a missionary is one who goes where there is no church. After all, around the world

there was not as large a national church in his day except in Catholic areas.

The point is that classically a “missionary” is one who is going out where no evangelism has ever been done. That is, and has always been, the basic motif of missions. However, by the time J. Hudson Taylor founded the China Inland Mission in 1865 a rather different picture had developed. By this time the missionaries that had gone out earlier could, at least, be said to have stuck with it—give them credit. They didn’t just go and almost immediately return like a rolling stone; they stuck. They dug in and established a beachhead. They stayed. They were not here today and gone tomorrow.

But there comes a time when it’s time to move on. Eventually, in order for a church to gain full maturity it has to be untrammelled by foreign experts and advisors and counselors and comforters and aids and helps—even foreign money. We see the same thing in the young people’s societies in our churches here at home. They will never get up on their feet if there are always a lot of adults present. (This is the disaster of the Christian Endeavor movement being replaced by hired youth pastors.) And people who go out from countries where there is a long development of church tradition always tend to tyrannize the people who grow up and establish their own, different tradition.

The classic case is in Sumatra where the Batak church got started. The first missionaries there were from both the Reformed tradition (Calvinist) and the Lutheran tradition. As it turned out, it was the Lutheran missionaries who stayed there longer, and thus the resulting church was always assumed to be a Lutheran church. But as time went on this Batak Lutheran church (as it has often been called) grew bigger and bigger. When the Lutheran World Federation came into being the question arose as to whether the Batak Lutheran Church should become a member of the Lutheran World Federation.

Now, that seems like a relatively minor issue, but it isn’t, because the Bataks said, “Well, are we Lutherans? Why are we Lutherans? Why aren’t we just Bataks?” And there was a nervous silence.

“But back home we’ve always called you the Batak Lutheran Church,” the people from Geneva answered. Of course, in any case the English phrase is not the Batak’s phrase, but they essentially said, “All you have to do is to sign your adherence to the “Non-altered Augs-

burg Confession” and you’re in. It’s no big deal; just sign this document here.”

“Well,” the Bataks answered, “Just what does the fine print say?” Actually, the fine print on the document consisted of what is called the “Non-altered” Augsburg Confession.

So they took out their pens and were ready to sign. But as they stopped for a moment, they began to think, “Just what are we really doing? Are we submitting ourselves to some foreign cultural influence at this moment?” So they put their pens back in their pockets and said, “Let us think this over for a while.”

So they took a copy of the document, and in succeeding months translated it into their own language, and paragraph by paragraph worked it over. By the next visit of the officials from afar they had their own shortened version, and said, “Well, we’re all ready to sign, but we have our own version of this.”

The Lutheran World Federation officials were aghast. “Your own version! And a shorter one at that? How can we let you sign that?”

So there was a big crisis, and to make a long story short, later the men back in Geneva were very wise and decided that they would make an exception in the case of the Batak church. You’ll notice that I didn’t call it the Batak Lutheran Church any more, because their official name is now the Batak Christian Protestant Church or something like that. Whatever. Anyhow, they successfully avoided being labelled by a European division of Christendom. But the question lingers in the minds of many Lutherans today: “Are the Batak believers really a Lutheran church?”

A few years ago I had occasion to talk almost solidly for two days to the members of the mission board of the Lutheran Church in America (LCA), which is one of the three major Lutheran traditions in this country

The LCA and the American Lutheran Church (ALC) later merged in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA). The Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod (LCMS) is still separate.

When I told them this story I suggested that as a matter of fact I heartily agreed that the question of whether the Bataks were truly Lutheran or not was a very important question, but that I felt they probably were truly Lutheran. And, I said that the only substantial reason for believing that they were truly Lutheran was not because they signed, but because they

wouldn’t sign the non-altered Confession!

In other words, if they had signed the original Confession, they could not have been called Lutheran—because Luther was precisely the man who refused to sign someone else’s confession. Isn’t that true? The basic logic of Lutheranism is faith within cultural self-determination. And the Bataks passed that test by the very act of becoming believers whether or not they signed the Augsburg (German) Confession.

Since the Augsburg Confession is tremendously important to most Lutherans, you might wonder if the LCA mission board people were troubled by my perspective. Well, they are a rather sophisticated group of people; I don’t think any of them were offended. In fact I’m not sure it worried them too much either. Actually, I’d have been happier if it had worried them because then I could have been sure they had come to the place where they really understood what I was trying to say.

The point is that when national churches get along that far in their development, they don’t really need foreigners telling them what to do. As I see it, a second stage of missions ensues once a national church has this kind of proper autonomy. As you know by now, I’m having to lean over backward to even label this second stage missions and I only do so because most people think of all stages—so long as the church is overseas—as missions. So, though I’m willing to call it missions, I would just like to make a distinction between first stage missions and second stage missions. Pioneer missions, the first stage of missions, means going where there is not an established church indigenous to the culture, standing on its own two feet. But every time a missionary activity succeeds, we get to the second stage of missions sooner or later. And the sooner the better. So that the famous statement about working yourself out of a job is a perfectly legitimate thing.

The fact is, though, that most missionaries today are falling into a novel situation where new jobs are invented for missionaries that are not pioneering work at all. The average person back home who is still thinking in pioneer terms mainly misunderstands the nature of the mission movement today.

But, here’s the point. Every board of missions I know of has tried for the last 25 years to make it clear to the people back home that missionaries no longer do the same things they used to do. Boards today often try to educate

them not to ask all the time about things that missionaries formerly did. Don't be surprised to hear that missionaries are running tractors and building buildings and doing all kinds of things that they didn't do in the early days. And scripturally there is nothing wrong with all this.

But wait a minute: strategically there is something drastically wrong with this. It's all very well and good to be honest about what is happening, but it is tragic not to go on and ask if this is what ought to be happening. Or, better still, Is this new role enough? I don't want you to believe that I am criticizing what is happening, because, really, I am not. Rather, I am asking whether we ought not be sure to maintain our original pioneering instincts and be sure that we are still concerned to penetrate the frontiers that still remain.

However, for many different reasons, principally out of preoccupation with many things or a sense of loyalty to what's already been done or maybe even principally due to an exuberance that results from success, there is nothing that Western Christians can be more proud of than the outstanding national Christian leaders around the world. I don't know whether Christian leaders around the world realize the extent to which people in the Western countries are really and truly and honestly proud about the results of their mission work. Unfortunately, the national leaders are so often battering against the tyranny and imperialism of foreigners that they may not stop to think very often of how legitimately proud people in the Western countries are of the fact that the national churches are growing up.

But it isn't good enough simply to crow about successes. Paul said, "forgetting those things which are behind..." There in the third chapter of Philippians he was not talking about our mistakes of the past, which probably we shouldn't forget, but he's talking about successes in the past. He's talking about things like being of the tribe of Benjamin, etc., things of which he could have been legitimately proud. He's talking about all the laurels and great achievements. I'm sure it makes sense for us to say things like, "Wasn't Robert Morrison great? Wasn't Judson great? Wasn't Carey great? Wasn't Hudson Taylor great?" But it doesn't do us any good to be proud about the work of previous missionaries. We must forget those things which are past in the sense of taking credit for them, and make sure that we are

equally creditable in our day.

The main problem now is that the national church has grown up like high grass which our missionaries can't see beyond. When you go overseas to see mission work, you fall right into the middle of a bunch of Christians nowadays. Recently I took a camera with me when I went to Brazil because I said, "If I get down there and I'm met by a bunch of Christians, I'm going to take their picture so that when I go back home I can say, 'See! this is what happens when a missionary goes overseas today.'" So I got to the final airport in Brazil, which seemed to me like it was thousands and thousands of miles inland. I got off the plane and looked around and saw quite a mass of people. Finally a couple of men stepped out and came towards me, and I thought, "Well, this isn't a big enough of a welcoming committee for a picture," so I stuck my camera back in my pocket. They shook my hand, and then turned around, and whoosh! There were 15 pastors that came out to welcome me off that plane. I jerked the little camera out again, shoved it in the hands of a young man standing there—and got my picture!

I was down there to be at the tenth annual meeting of the Association of Theological Extension Institutions in Brazil. I had been there when this association had been organized, and they were asking me back so I could see how it had grown after ten years. Well, they took me to a very large room full of tables that were just covered with theological textbooks at every level and on every subject, all of them produced in Portuguese within the last ten years—and especially designed for individual off-campus study. Understandably they were very proud of what they had accomplished, and wanted me to come down for this tenth anniversary meeting. Because of all the things they had done, there were all these pastors to meet me.

That is symbolic of missionary work overseas today. You can't blame the missionaries for going overseas to work with a lot of national Christians; it's so much nicer to go where the people welcome you. But you have to remember that someone else had gone there before. Unlike going into a pioneer area, you're not walking into the lion's den, or into an uncharted wilderness. There is a big difference, as I'm sure many of you know, between going where you are welcomed by many, many Christians and going where no one wants you to come

and there is no welcoming party at all. That is the other extreme.

Let's go back to the 1850s when Hudson Taylor first went to China. He was glad to find a number of Protestant missionaries there already, but after a few years he became very ill and went back to England to recuperate, and started writing a series of articles for a little Baptist magazine as he was convalescing. He drew a map of China on which he marked with little pins all the places Protestant missionaries were working. China seemed enormous and he was pleased that there were now about 70 missionaries there that he knew about.

But lying in bed and looking at the wall and his map, he suddenly realized that most of them were right there on the coast of China. He also knew that there were Jesuits a thousand miles inland—Jesuits who dressed like the Chinese. His official biography doesn't even hint that he was influenced by the Jesuits, but in a more recent book called *Hudson Taylor and Maria* you can find a much more revealing report. This book (which I earnestly recommend to you) is the story of his courtship and marriage as well as the inside story of the founding of the China Inland Mission, now OMF, International.

As Hudson Taylor wrote this series of articles and looked at the map on his wall, he was so stunned that later he wrote in his journal of the "accusing map."

There is a point where academic scholarship meets the road. And I wonder if this diagram, this pie chart with the eight sectors, cannot also be referred to as "those accusing statistics." It seems like that to me because as you look at the chart, the blue areas down below are what you might call the "spiritual have-nots" while the "spiritual haves" are located up above. But there is so much blue area that it becomes an accusing phenomenon, because if we're not responsible—and I mean all of us here—then who is?

Someone involved in missions said to me a while back that he wished I would comment on the statement which insists that "the need is the call." He said he wasn't sure that was true. It seems to me that some things are either self-evident or they aren't. I don't know how to explain that. It seems to me that for Jesus "the need was the call." He came because He was needed.

Of course, there are a lot of "needs," and someone may ask, "How do I decide which

need?"

My answer, I'm afraid, would have to include the concept of "the greatest need." Suppose, for example, we were to take as our maxim Oswald Chamber's challenge that we would do "Our utmost for His highest." And in the case of the parable of the lost sheep, the fact that it was lost, in itself, made that need the call. The helpless lostness constituted the call. Or take the parable of the good Samaritan. The Jewish man was robbed and beaten and wounded, and his need constituted a call to anyone who knew about that and could help. This call rearranged the good Samaritan's priorities. Let's say, for fun, that he was already on his mission field trip to some other field, and here was a call that outranked what he was already doing. Now, the adjustment of our priorities throughout our lives must, it seems to me, deal in terms of the needs such as we define by these statistics and by these charts and by these maps

In any case, Hudson Taylor's decision to start a new mission organization was one of those major decisions in the history of missions, because that decision set off an earthquake tremor that rippled across the entire world of evangelical Christendom. In the process he also set off a new process of support embodied in what is called "The Faith Mission Movement." Actually, what is called "Faith Missions" should really have been called the "Frontier Missions," as I think I have already said. Whatever the movement is called, Taylor began a new era of missions. In William Carey's day every place was a frontier—and missionaries splattered on the coastlands of the non-Western world's continents. But by J. Hudson Taylor's day the frontiers were the interior of China and Africa, and so the China Inland Mission came into being. It was no longer good enough just to go to the coastlands.

Now, I submit to you that there is nothing wrong about going to the the coastlands. There may have still been frontier areas on many of the coastlands. But, obviously, in rough, geographical terms most of the Chinese that had no witness were in the interior. And as the result of Taylor's insight and initiative, a number of new missions sprang into being: the China Inland Mission, the Sudan Interior Mission, the African Inland Mission, the Heart of Africa Mission, the Unevangelized Fields Mission, the Regions Beyond Mission and the like—almost all of these new missions booming into exist-

tence carried a name indicating pioneering because they were dealing with frontiers. That is why I think the so-called “Faith Mission Movement” should have been named the “Frontier Mission Movement.” Note, seen from the home base, it is likely that the so-called “faith” mechanism of support was more visible than the all-important field emphasis on frontiers.

Thus, within just a few years forty new missions came into existence. Some eventually became major missions. For example, the largest mission on the continent of Europe, the German Liebensell Mission in Bad Liebensell (not a bad place—bad implies hot springs in German), came into existence because when Hudson Taylor went through those parts, he didn’t just preach a missionary sermon, he talked in structural terms like William Carey had some 75 years before.

William Carey, remember, wrote a book that not only talked about the need for missionaries but the need for the structural means to meet that need. And Hudson Taylor didn’t just say to those Germans when he was there, “I want you all to be praying about the unreached fields of the world and the possibility that God wants you to be a missionary.” He said, “Why don’t you start a mission society. I’ll tell you how to do it.”

The difference is somewhat parallel to the difference between evangelizing individuals and starting churches. McGavran is the great exponent of not merely evangelizing but also starting churches. I am, in a parallel sense, (he also) a proponent of not merely talking about the frontiers of the world but promoting the idea of setting up the structures and the mechanisms that can do the job. That’s why the phrase “penetrating the last frontiers” involves various strategies. Two new agencies that have responded to the widening concern for frontiers are “Frontiers” and “Pioneers.”

I’ve talked about the Faith Mission Movement and I’ve talked about the fact that we’re in a similar situation today. We need to break through again. We no longer need to go to the geographical frontiers but rather to the cultural frontiers. Isn’t that right? This is our parallel today. And like Carey and Taylor, we are going to do this by means of charts and statistics that will accuse us if we will open our hearts to their reason and to their existence.

Since 1974 I have been trying to define the need. And toward the end of ‘77, a little over a year ago, there was a meeting in New Jersey at

the Overseas Ministries Study Center called the Ventnor Study Group. This was a group of mission executives: Peter Stam of the African Inland Mission, Frank Robins of Wycliffe Bible Translators, Warren Webster of the Conservative Baptist Foreign Mission Society, etc. There were also a number of executives from a large, different type of missions. For example, Leighton Ford of the Lausanne Committee was there, and so forth. The topic announced in advance was the matter of the Unreached Peoples and what to do about them.

Anyhow, I was told, “Ralph, you have been talking all this time about the unreached peoples, now why don’t you propose what can be done?” So I came up with four different strategies which I felt should be pursued. There’s no use writing them down here because they are the strategies defined in a booklet entitled “Penetrating the Last Frontiers.” Right now I’m just giving you the historical context in which this booklet came into being. Also present was a man by the name of Paul Hopkins, and his thesis was that we don’t have any frontiers, that we don’t have any unfinished task, at least nothing that North Americans need to be too worried about. To him this is probably a rather unacceptable summary of his position. But he is a very sincere and sensitive soul and would say that the American church is not qualified to evangelize the rest of the world. Now, that is an interesting observation and I suppose that if we wait until we are fully qualified we’ll wait until the end of history. But, anyway, he was so perturbed by the lack of commitment of the American church that he didn’t feel that we had anything to offer to anybody else in the world. I’m sure that he is right in some ways: many American Christians do not have anything to offer. They themselves need renewal. Let’s not kid ourselves; we have an amazing amount of re-evangelizing to do right here in the United States. There’s no question about it.

Hopkins also believes, it seems—and this goes along with his comments about the U.S.—that there are Christians out there in every place around the world already. Because of his conviction and his presence at the conference, I felt that in my talk I should review some of the statistics about who is yet to be won, and I sort of redefined once more these four categories—the different kinds of people needing to be reached as of the middle of 1977. (This was in December of ‘77.)

But I also outlined four strategies: 1) to re-

build pioneer mission perspective, 2) to rediscover the Unreached or Hidden Peoples, 3) to re-evaluate all previous approaches, and 4) to reconsecrate ourselves to a wartime, not a peace time, lifestyle. Those are the four strategies that are in that booklet. And for each strategy there is at the end of the book a section on tactics. Maybe you don't feel so happy about the difference between strategy and tactics, but anyway the booklet runs over the four strategies a second time in terms of more minute things that can be performed. I've mentioned these things because I wanted you to have a feel for where that booklet came from.

The Unreached Peoples poster—what we call the Circle Chart—is more recent and the statistics on its lower right hand side are from mid 1978 rather than mid 1977. Also, we have added in some extra columns. Every year or two I get some extra minutes to do a little research and so I add a few more columns. Anyhow, I decided that I would figure out roughly (and I want to emphasize that like William Carey's these are rough estimates) how many missionaries are reaching out to the 500, 000, 000 people that are within range of the Gospel and the 2, 500, 000, 000 that are beyond its range. Let me add that I was very, very conservative in my estimates. McGavran and I went over every single row, and we would say, "Well, now, what do we think?"

I talked to David Fraser, one of the key researchers at World Vision. I said, "I grant that these are just estimates, but if they're wrong, correct them. Let's improve the data."

We all agreed that the upshot of the whole thing is that today there are very few missionaries that are doing first stage missionary work, and yet according to our estimates, there are millions and millions of people who need that kind of work.

A missionary to Japan has asked me if I consider that country unreached. (Now, remember, we're not talking in terms of countries but in terms of people groups.) It is true that there are many Christian congregations in Japan. What determines the answer to this missionary's question is whether or not new congregation here or there is an extension within the culture of that same church or not. Now I don't know all that much about Japan, but I am told that within Japan 70% of the people live in one or other of the cultural strata within which there is no church of any kind.

Now if you have a church that is built out

of a certain stratum and they decide to go to a new housing complex filled with professional people of a different stripe socially, economically, or technologically, their attempt to penetrate that new unchurched cultural tradition is an E-2 type of outreach. By contrast, this same outreach for the foreign missionary would be an E-3 outreach because for him it is not only first stage missionary work but is to a culture that is totally different from his own. If the Japanese Christians, however, find in this new housing complex people that will fit into their own church, or would be comfortable in a church like their own, then that would be E-1 type of outreach. (To make this more clear, remember that the E-1, E-2, etc. categories have to do with cultural distances from the Christian evangelist, while first or second stage activity relates to the evangelism attempts and success among that people—that is, the stages of mission success.)

Therefore, for you to help these Japanese Christians, even though you are learning a foreign language, doesn't make you into a missionary, it makes you into a church worker—even though you are working at an E-3 distance, to be sure.

I hope you understand what I am trying to say. Just to be sure, let me give you one more example. I was asked to talk to the Women's Missionary Union of the Southern Baptist Convention. Now the Women's Missionary Union is a powerful, magnificent organization of women. Their regional heads came together in Birmingham, Alabama in March of 1977. I was the only non-Southern Baptist there, and I was asked to give them some kind of a pep talk on missions. So I started out bravely saying that to my knowledge there is only one mission agency of a general sort in the United States that is doing a really effective job, and unfortunately, it is not working outside the United States.

Note that the Southern Baptist Convention has two boards of missions: the Foreign Board and the Home Board. Everyone was sitting there suitably mystified at my former statement, so I went on to say that the mission agency I felt was so very effective in missionary work was the Division of Missions of the Home board even though it did not work overseas. I continued by suggesting that the Foreign Board was not doing any missionary work but merely doing the home-church kind of work overseas.

When we came to the question period, a

lady representing the Foreign Board's work in Brazil stood up and commented, "I don't understand what you are saying. While we ourselves might not be doing missionary work, we're training the nationals to do missionary work."

"Oh, oh," I thought. There goes my theory. But I've got myself in this far, so I may as well go a little further!" So I answered, "Yes, but, what precisely are you training the people to do? Are you training them to do mission work or merely how to evangelize their own people? To my knowledge, and I would be delighted to be contradicted," (I put that in to be safe) "I don't know of a single Southern Baptist missionary around the world who is teaching a national how to do mission work."

So immediately she popped up again and said, very proudly, "My brother in Brazil is teaching a class to Brazilians who are going out as missionaries in the Amazon basin to reach the Indian tribal people there."

"Okay!" I answered. "I'm so glad to be contradicted. That's one out of your 2, 700 missionaries that is doing this. Are there any other candidates for this classification?" Dead silence.

Well, later after the meeting was over, I

could tell that there was a good deal of consternation about this subject. And I was totally surprised when one of the executives of the Foreign board whispered to me that the lady's brother was not a Southern Baptist! So essentially she fudged since we were talking about what Southern Baptist missionaries were or were not doing.

[It is wonderfully true, of course, that the Southern Baptist Foreign Board/International Mission Board has in the intervening years made decisive astounding strides toward very great emphasis on frontiers.]

But this is the situation. Missionaries in general are not any longer in the business of penetrating the last frontiers; we're simply stirring around in old frontier areas which are no longer mission frontiers. It is as if we have rewritten the Great Commission so that it now says "Go ye into all the world and meddle in the national churches." We're doing what George Peters [for many years the one mission professor at Dallas Theological Seminary] calls homesteading missions, getting our roots in deep, producing homesteads around the world where we already have been at work for years.

Winter Chapter 4

The Importance of a Strategy of Closure

I will begin by commenting on the documents you will be reading. They provide a basis for thinking in closure terms.

First, I want you to know the context within which this yellow booklet came into being. In our last class I commented on the document called “Penetrating the Last Frontiers.” That was my answer to people who said to me, “Okay, you’ve made your point about the overlooked peoples. Now what do we do about them?” But getting to that point involved some still earlier thinking. In the appendix of *Crucial Dimensions in World Evangelization* (the precursor to the *Perspectives Reader*) is this article entitled “The Grounds for a New Thrust in World Missions” which you now have in your hands as a yellow booklet.

This material is what I presented as the opening address at the IFMA-EFMA meeting in 1976, a joint meeting of these two organizations which occurs every three years. Since some of you may not be acquainted with these two groups, let me give just a bit of the background of each of these major associations before we discuss the kind of address which I prepared for them—because a strategy of closure, if it is not owned by these associations will practically be born dead.

IFMA stands for the Interdenominational Foreign Mission Association. Note first of all that this oldest association of mission agencies is not the Independent Foreign Missions Association nor is it the Interdenominational Foreign Missions Association. Note especially that the “M” in the IFMA acronym stands for Mission, not Missions.

The first five missions that got together to form that association met in 1917 in the First Presbyterian Church of Princeton, NJ. Of those five the Sudan Interior Mission may be the most easily named among them. And to this day the IFMA members missions have grown until there are about 100 different agencies that are members and about 6, 000 or 7, 000 mis-

sionaries working under those 100 agencies.

Then there is the EFMA. The EFMA is the Evangelical Foreign Missions (now, note, with an “s”) Association. [Later renamed The Evangelical Fellowship of Mission Agencies]. I stress the presence or absence of the “s” because, again, it makes a loaded word—it can mean different things to different people. Do you remember that in the Old Testament certain people were cast out on the basis of how they pronounced certain words? They employed the shiboleth, a single consonant that could not easily be pronounced by foreigners.

The same sort of thing happened in the Second World War; the soldiers would ask a captured person whether he could pronounce the word “click” or “camera” to see if the person was American born or of Japanese extraction.

So it is in the mission world. If you refer to the “Interdenominational Foreign Mission Association” and add an “s” to the word Mission, that’s a shiboleth; those checking to see if you know what you claim to know will be aware instantly that you an outsider, and that you don’t know what you’re talking about!

The same is true with the EFMA. In this case if you don’t add the letter “s” to the word Missions, you just expose the fact that you are ignorant of the actual situation. I point these details out because at the Fuller School of World Mission (note, no “s”) you’re supposed to find out the details.

Same for the U. S. Center for World Mission—no “s”—and the International Review of Mission (which once was the International Review of Missions). I mention this apparent trivia because we will later see it linked with one of the most monumental and ominous transitions in mission perspective in the 20th century.

The important differences, however, between those two organizations are structural. The EFMA is a division of the National Association of Evangelicals, and as such its membership consists of both denominational mission

agencies as well as interdenominational mission agencies. It would be neater if all interdenominational agencies joined the IFMA and all the evangelical denominational agencies joined the EFMA, but the reality is not quite so neat. The EFMA has type D- related as well as type C-, B- and A-related agencies, whereas the IFMA has merely type D-related agencies. If you don't recall what I'm talking about when I say type-D, look again at "Seeing the Task Graphically" and you'll find there this fourfold breakdown of different types of mission agencies.

These two associations together have about 15, 000 or 16, 000 missionaries. The reason why some of the interdenominational agencies in the EFMA had never joined the IFMA (prior to EFMA's founding in 1945) is because the IFMA wouldn't accept them as members for either of two reasons: 1) they might be considered either too young and too dumb, or 2) they were Charismatic or Pentecostal.

Even though there are these two separate associations of Evangelical mission agencies, they get along very well working together. And as we discussed earlier, the fact that they are separate means that they don't have to fight each other as they might if they were disparate elements in a single association of mission agencies. There's no big hair-pulling contest going on between them; indeed they work together very closely, even having a number of joint committees. They jointly publish the Evangelical Mission Quarterly, for example, and jointly sponsor CAMEO (the "Committee to Assist Missionary Education Overseas") and about five or six other committees. IFMA and EFMA even meet jointly every three years.

Now, back to the subject. The document under discussion today, "The Grounds for a New Thrust in World Missions," as I say, can be found in the appendix of Crucial Dimensions in World Evangelization. This document was actually created for delivery as the opening address of the 1976 joint IFMA/EFMA Mission Executives' Retreat. Ordinarily the joint retreat would not have been held until the following year, but for some reason they scheduled this one just two years after the preceding one, perhaps because of the mounting interest in unreached peoples.

Ordinarily, about 400 mission executives from the member agencies attend these joint meetings, making it the largest meeting of mission executives that repeatedly occurs. So to

me it was a very great honor and privilege to be asked to speak to this august assembly of mission executives. I mainly recapitulated what I had said in Lausanne two years previously.

Thus, this "Grounds" document with these different kinds of circles (check its circle chart characterizing that stage of graphics) was presented to this group. However, lest you miss it, there is a section in the back which I call the "dirty laundry section"— which is a little over half of the whole talk—in which I spoke of the obstacles to world evangelization in terms of very concrete and specific maladies that afflict existing mission agencies: sicknesses, weaknesses and problems which must be overcome before the job can be done.

Today we are talking about the essential components of world evangelization. This 12-fold list is at least a related subject, so don't miss it.

I'll mention only one of the twelve obstacles here, namely, the Self-Managing Missionary. In my opinion half of all missionaries are working at 50 percent efficiency because they are not capable of managing themselves. I am merely saying they are incapable of self-management, not guilty of laziness; in fact, they practically kill themselves in overwork. But that's because of bad management. I fall into that category myself. I don't think I'm a good self-manager. And having adjusted my sights to that reality, I've decided that probably a lot of other people aren't either, in fact most people.

I believe the cure is not to put greater pressures on the poor people who can't effectively manage themselves but rather to offer a supervisory structure without which they will probably never accomplish their best. In any case, I'm just pointing to those twelve obstacles at the end of that article. I would be happy if you would at least do some reflection on those points²²²²².

The next thing to mention is another document. A year ago, December 14, 1977, there was a meeting in Atlanta called "The Consultation on Evangelical Futures," or something of that sort, which brought together a very eminent group of people. I felt very honestly that I was the least of all the people in that group and that I didn't really qualify for membership.

Present were such leaders as Pat Robertson, Hudson Armerding, Leighton Ford, college

presidents of all kinds, presidents of major corporations, the president of the CBMC (Christian Business Mens Committe) and Francis Shaefter types—those types of people. Well, Francis Shaefter himself. It so happened that the man who managed the conference happened to be an old friend of mine, and was very pained because it was so difficult to get anything on the subject of missions into the conference.

Just imagine, here were 150 Evangelical leaders in America, perhaps the most influential (I won't say most holy, but at least the most influential) assembly of Evangelical leaders that had ever gathered in American history. They were meeting together for five days with nothing in particular on the agenda except to discuss among themselves the future of the Evangelical movement in the whole world.

They had invited to meet with them all kinds of experts from all over—secular people and everything else—to suggest what these outside pundits would predict about the future. But no one, absolutely no one except for Leighton Ford in a brief comment in his speech, made any reference at all to world evangelization.

I could see in the advance materials that this was likely to happen. So I told Don Hoke, who was working under the auspices of the Billy Graham Center to organize this meeting (although it was to meet in Atlanta), that I just couldn't see myself even attending such a conference. I said, "I have too many other things to do. Anyhow, my exclusive focus is not just missions but frontier missions, so why would I want to go to a meeting like that?"

Hoke, a good friend, answered, "But, Ralph, that's why we need you there." To make a long story short, it turned out that I had another trip that took me right to Atlanta exactly two days prior to that meeting, which meant it wouldn't cost me anything extra. So I actually went to the conference. And I'm glad I did.

While I didn't make a public nuisance of myself, I did at least chirp up meekly now and then. And just being there in that situation and witnessing the travesty of it all! Well, the proceedings of the entire conference are printed in a book entitled *Evangelicals Face the Future*. That's a William Carey Library book, and in it you will not find any more than six lines of print that make any reference, even in passing, to the task of world evangelization.

However, they had another meeting this

year (1979) and lo and behold one of the six major plenary addresses this time was precisely to focus on the future of the church and world evangelization. And guess what? I was asked to give that talk.

Again, let me repeat, I do not fit into that elite group of people. But at least as an outsider coming in to give a talk, I at least fit in on that subject anyway. It certainly is something about which I do most of my thinking. So I went to that meeting and presented my talk. That's what I'm passing out at the end of the class today—"The Six Essential Components of World Evangelization."

What I did was to assume that these people knew utterly and absolutely nothing about missions, which was not a rash assumption. You cannot believe how illiterate Evangelical leaders are today on the subject of missions. Most Evangelical leaders slide easily between evangelism and missions. They don't stop to think about the necessary, crucial difference, or the structure of mission. The task to them is winning people to Christ. They think that everybody is a missionary. Everybody should be winning people to Christ. Everybody is either a missionary or a mission field. You've heard that, but if you talk this way it simply fuzzes up the reality. It prevents you from seeing the priorities and the distinctions in the task. Not that it isn't true that everybody needs to witness for Christ and that we all need to be busy winning people to Christ. This is true, of course. But there's something wrong with this logic if certain of these tasks can be done with no more special preparation than an evangelism seminar but others require linguistics, anthropology and advanced training at a school like this. And if you don't make that distinction and press it home and draw the necessary conclusions from it, then you see we're going to be mishandling the task that is given to us.

Therefore, I felt that I should start from scratch in my talk. In order to do this I used what I call a check list now found in the paper which I presented. I've used this checklist for several years, as have Peter Wagner and several others. In graphics, it's often represented as a six-spoke wheel, implying that if any one spoke is missing, the wheel will be out of balance and will tear itself to pieces before long. Every single one of these spokes is necessary. That is why I have called them essential components of world evangelization. Some are more urgent than others, but all involve certain

emergency and critical, or perhaps even crisis activities.

At this point I would like to introduce two concepts which may often be foreign to our thinking. I want you to read about them in this paper. (I really don't intend to tell you what is in that paper—since reading is a more efficient process than listening.)

Just in general, I personally believe that we have to be more flexible and be willing to read-just our strategy at any point where some emergency, opportunity, or special crisis comes into view. This perspective is perfectly indicated by the case of the good Samaritan.

I am always amazed when I meet people who plan two years in advance and say very proudly, "Well, I'm booked up for the next two years; you'll have to talk to me about the third year down track." It's as if they are assuming that all the priorities in missions have already been established for the next two years. A person of this temperament would allow his schedule to get so full that it would be impossible to make any changes. And that's a great tragedy, if you ask me. It's a kind of poison that enters into our veins and produces what is commonly known as rigor mortis. And it is not an achievement whatsoever!

I remember when somebody, whose name I shall not mention, told me that he was booked up for two years and couldn't come to speak at a certain conference only seven months away. I said, "Well, I'm sure glad Leighton Ford isn't booked up that far ahead because he's chosen to help us on a single month's notice."

The fact is, if in the cause of missions there is any wheel that is squeaking, or any gear missing, or any breakdown in that overall cause—since it is a single cause—then, that is where our attention and our energy should gravitate. We ourselves may not feel it is efficient to move out of our jobs and drop everything, dragging family and children, and go to work on that problem. But at least we can raise our voices and say something about it. We can stir up the consciousness of the Evangelical mission world so that at least somebody gets at that particular task.

The analogy would be that of an automobile where with great care every single part of that entire automobile has been put together and is in working order except for one little thing like a fuel pump, one of the simplest of all the components of the entire automobile. What is the value of even filling the tank with

gas if there is no fuel pump, pray tell? The inter-relatedness of the components of a cause cry out for a strategy that is flexible enough to reach to those places that are hurting. If there is something that is wrong here, and you're all sewed up downtrack, you can't just go on working, saying somehow the Lord will just take care of it.

Let me reach into zoology for an illustration of this syndrome: the trapdoor spider. In the insect world it is not cultural learning but rather instincts that make most of the decisions. There is not very much learned behavior in that low order of life. The point is that where action is based only on instinct, there's less flexibility in decision making. A trapdoor spider digs a hole down in the earth and goes down in that hole, taking out the earth to create it. It's a nice round hole maybe an inch across and running down maybe 12 to 15 inches into the ground. When the spider gets the hole dug, she goes down to the bottom and starts building a web which becomes a conical tube going up to the surface. And when she gets up to the surface, she goes out and finds a little leaf or something else that can function as an unnoticeable doorway, puts a hinge on it and attaches it at the opening of her tunnel. Then she goes out and kills her prey and drops it down to the bottom of the tube, feeds on the prey and bears the new generation, which then is protected by this beautifully designed cocoon-type situation.

However, when the trapdoor spider has dug the hole and built the tube half way up if you then take a stick and jab it into the lower part, destroying the bottom of the tube, what do you think the trapdoor spider does? Does she adjust to the new situation, go back down there, re-excavate and replace the bottom part of the tube? No. She just keeps right on going, right up to the top, goes out and gets the doorway, puts the hinge on it, finds her prey, comes back and falls down to the bottom and dies! She does not readjust to the new situation.

Many human societies are just like that in their old age as they amass their legal structure. You can look out the window here and see that big courthouse where they are constantly piling paper upon paper and redefining and sharpening and improving the legal structure of our society to the point where there will be a day when the legal codes of the city of Los Angeles will be a stack of pages as high as the Empire State Building. At that point the inflexi-

bility will be so complete that we will absolutely be prey to any other nation because there will be no ability to respond in a crisis.

All of this is to say that an element of flexibility on a checklist is very important. You may only be working in one of those six component areas, but I want to assure you (at least I will say it is my own personal belief) that all of us must be more flexible than the trapdoor spider. All of us must be aware of the necessity of being watchdogs, able and willing to keep track of all of the components and be willing to move in the direction of that which is missing.

In this particular document, “The Six Essential Components of World Evangelization,” I was dealing with a particular audience which had very little knowledge of missions. So I didn’t bother them with all the various details and complexities of nationalized churches and things like that. What I did do is that in the section where I’m talking about mission agencies I gave them five examples of alternative mission structures or mission activities. I pointed out those which I consider basic and made the distinction between basic missions and non-basic missions.

For example, I described the situation of a famous pastor who is so caught up in the renewal of church life in this country that he gets to the point where he really doesn’t believe that this is the time to send missionaries overseas. Why, he thinks, if other churches just had the body life or whatever kind of discipleship patterns that he’s developing in his own congregation—Evangelism Explosion techniques or some other special program that has been a blessing in the States—then when missionaries go out to the corners of the earth they would carry with them that new insight into congregational life and structure, and would, thus, be better missionaries.

This I do not question. What I am questioning is, should we wait until all 386, 000 American churches are imbued with that marvelous Coral Ridge spirit and insight before we continue to send missionaries? Once when I talked to Bill Gothard personally he expressed to me his eagerness to give to Christian families all over the world the help that he feels they need so that they become “Gothardized,” so to speak. I don’t speak of that lightly for I’m sure it would be a great blessing to Christian families everywhere to be exposed to his teaching. But we can’t wait for every Christian family of the world to be blessed in that way before

Christian families of the world take up in their daily prayers and their family circle the burden of world evangelization.

In fact, I do not believe that any local congregation in this country, or any Christian family either here or abroad is ever going to be able to become a strong entity, solve its internal problems, unless there is a strong hold on an external challenge. I think it is a law of psychology that a person who wants to find wholeness first and serve society second will never find wholeness. Jesus put it differently, “He who seeks to save his life shall lose it” And the family which wishes to arrive at a certain pinnacle of perfection before it acknowledges the needs of people outside of itself will never arrive. I think that is a spiritual principle.

Now here is another emphasis that you’ll find very extensively treated, probably more than you’re even interested in, and that is what I call the precandidate crisis in this country. I’ll take just a moment to highlight it so that you won’t miss it when you read the “Six Essential Components” article.

In speaking of automobiles, we often refer to the power train. That is the thing that is guaranteed to be dependable over a certain number of years so that if anything goes wrong with the power train they’ll fix it. I think it’s supposed to last at least three years. That, you might say, is the basic guts or backbone of the car. If now you look at the power train of the mission cause, it too has a U joint, an element within that sequence of phenomena which I believe could with a different metaphor be called an Achilles heel. It is the weakest of all the weak spots of the entire mission cause, and therefore, as you can well imagine inasmuch as I am trying to live up to the very ideals I’m suggesting, these days I give a great deal of time to this issue.

The pre-candidate crisis could be defined as what happens when a thousand college students write to Wycliffe Bible Translators but most of them—630 or so out of a thousand—never respond to Wycliffe’s answer. That is, 63% are never heard from again. Ten thousand of the 18, 000 students at Intervarsity’s Urbana conference signed cards stating that they were willing for God to lead them overseas, but very, very few ever went.

In other words, there is a huge gap between those moments of high inspiration at missionary conferences, which continue to occur in

many ways, shapes and forms across America today, and that final moment when the person actually becomes a candidate in a mission agency. There's a great gap there. It is as if the pipeline is ruptured at that point.

In my estimation, the gap results from the fact that young people a hundred years ago didn't have so much to learn to become aware of what was going on in missions. They also did not feel, as they may sense today, that so much has already been done that perhaps they are not needed. That plus a hundred other confusing things may dampen their enthusiasm for going.

Today young people at such a stage are older than they used to be. The average college student today is five years older than he was a hundred years ago. In 1865 you could matriculate at the State University of Iowa at the age of 14, with no previous schooling. It is only recently in American history that you have had to have 12 years of previous schooling in order to go to the university.

So, compared to what they were for most of American history, college students today are, as it were, in middle age before they can get free from schooling. The average age of graduation from college for the first 200 years of our country was 17, 16, and 15. When you hear that Thomas Jefferson was so bright he graduated from college at the age of 17, you need to realize he was a bit retarded.

I was at Williamsburg not so long ago. In the chapel of Jefferson's college located there, one of the guides gave us a lecture on famous things about William and Mary College. In the question period I said to him, "Well, you say that Thomas Jefferson was only 17 when he graduated, thereby implying that he was an intellectual prodigy. Pray tell what was the average age of matriculation at this college in his day?" I knew the answer. I had made a rather extensive study of just this issue. But this lecturer obviously did not know. He fumbled and stammered, and then the time for questions was over so we went to the next room.

In any case, our college students are much more cautious today than ever before. They need proportionately more knowledge before they can make a sane decision. The implication of that statement is that many who decide for missions are making insane, trigger-happy, impulsive, spookily decisions, which are not very sound, and they are using all kinds of pseudo-spiritual decision-making methods. They're

shaky about what they decide, as they ought to be. Furthermore, the complexity of the situation and the limitation of their own knowledge is such that you almost have to conclude that if they were to decide to be a missionary, there must be something wrong with them! Are they running away from something—a broken home or a broken engagement or a bad school experience?

A vast number of people—perhaps, all things considered, the highest quality group in America today—do not decide to become missionaries but nevertheless would probably be willing to do so if they knew more about the situation.

What are we going to do about that? Well, one way to grapple with that problem is to buy a college campus and set up a program to be followed as a model elsewhere and to try to draw out of the state universities and secular colleges of America about 20, 000 students per year.

Do you know how many Evangelical students are in secular colleges right now, year after year? Close to a million and a half. Now, that excludes two-thirds of the Evangelical background students who may not even be truly committed. The committed Evangelical students number well over a million. To get 20, 000 of them per year off the secular campus for a semester and then send them back with a solid biblical, historical and international perspective wouldn't be such a bad idea. You say, "Well, is it necessary?" That's the whole question. You'll have to decide for yourself if it is necessary. But it is if it is essential to the cause.

This month we are hoping to see come together a consortium of leading mission agencies in this country to promote training of this sort for students not yet candidates. Our assumption is that those who are candidates are a very tiny percentage of those who would become candidates if there were better knowledge and understanding of the overall situation.

Everything we have said so far leads to a concept I hope to bring up again and again. It's a new perspective for me, as are most of the things I am telling you. It's a phrase: "The Strategy of Closure." I'm not even sure it's used in this paper, but it will be before the final draft for the book this year. A strategy of closure is one which works in light of the overall task and in view of its intended completion. A strategy of closure is any strategy, no matter

how specific, minute and partial it may be, which is being performed in light of the overall task and the conclusion of that task. Now let me tell you what is not a strategy of closure.

Most good missionary work is not being done as a strategy of closure. In other words, sad to say, most of what the average missionary and the average mission agency accomplish is merely doing good things. No one can say these good things are bad even if the desire is to make them as effective as possible. But, frankly, if you stopped and shook all these good people by the shoulders and said, “Wake up! Look at the whole picture!” they wouldn’t know for sure how their work fits into the whole picture. And if they were to stand back—like they were looking back from the moon—and look at the earth and see the entire world evangelization process passing before them, they would not be able, honestly and sincerely and on the basis of careful research, to say that what they are doing is the most strategic thing that they could possibly do in order to terminate and conclude the mandate of our Lord which is called “the Great Commission.”

I believe that not everyone has the right, the privilege, the potential, the opportunity, and the availability—even if they wish—to be full time in this, but I think every serious believer must at least partake of a strategy of closure. We’ve got to work in terms of the overall picture.

For example, what would happen if a bunch of football players ran out on the field, all of them in great shape physically and ready to go, and with their goals in mind and everything else, but they simply ran with the ball wherever they got it in their hands? They

never huddled together; they never planned, “Well, you go there and I’ll go here, and when they think we’re going there, I’ll go around there....” In other words, there was no overall strategy to finish the game and to make those touchdowns. Obviously, they wouldn’t win the game.

Or what if a bunch of construction workers were to go out to build a great, huge building, each with his own set of blueprints—complete blueprints, mind you (call it their personal interpretation of the Bible, if you wish)—all ready to follow his own blueprint by himself, not one of them comparing his blueprint with any others? Do you think that building would ever get built?

Or, what if a number of Christians were to go out into all the world to preach the Gospel and never comparing notes with each other, never working together consciously within an overall strategy of closure, would they evangelize the world? I don’t think so.

You can name on the fingers of one hand those key people, such as McGavran and a few others as well as a few mission societies, who really are thinking determinedly and enlightenedly in terms of a strategy of closure. I don’t think we are going to get this job done if all we do is to fall into our beds at night exhausted, knowing that we have worked just as hard as we could possibly work.

That’s good old American logic, maybe—to do your utmost in your work—but it is not good enough. God calls us to do our utmost for His highest, and I have to believe that involves being a conscious part of a “strategy of closure.”

Winter Chapter 5

The First Four Hundred Years

The average person in the pew is not just uninformed but also misinformed about missions. The average person would not know, for example, that 85 percent of all the schools in Africa are there because missions founded them. Or that the largest technical university in Latin America is there because a mission founded it. Or that the largest agricultural experiment station in Asia is a mission center. He would not know that the largest experimental hospital in Asia is a mission center and that there are 600 mission hospitals in India. The average person cannot pull all this information together into one place. There is no way for him to get the faintest idea of what the mission dollar does.

Even though Liberation theologians may choose to disagree, the dollar that goes into missions goes further and does more good work than almost anything you could possibly conceive of. The amount of money Americans put into missions, \$700, 000, 000 per year, is a very small proportion of the amount of money that nowadays is raised by the national churches in the mission lands. I don't know of any country, practically speaking, where a mission agency is pouring more money in than the national church itself is raising.

So it is a regenerating process that produces new giving. That new money given in the mission lands does not, of course, come back to the U.S.—sorry about that—but is given to a cause which itself is a very benevolent one. But if these broad realities are not clear, what do you suppose is the knowledge of the average saint today about anything 2, 000 years ago?

Let's take a peek. As you know by now, we have for convenience divided the whole of history into 400-year periods rather than to try to get you to remember what happened in every century. In any event I'm not very interested in getting people to remember unrelated details. I think the ability to remember something is almost useless unless what you remember is tied into some concept. So I would like now to

talk about concepts that relate to this first 400-year period.

First of all—and almost preliminary to any discussion of what happened so far back in history—is the question that could be called historiographic. I'm sorry to disturb you with so long a word. It's a question of how do you know what you know. We say that the Romans did this and the Romans did that. In speaking of his invasion of Gaul, Julius Caesar wrote back from Gaul, "Gallia est divisa in partes tres." How do we know at all that there was a man named Julius Caesar, or that he said that?

One of the most eminent professors in the world today in the field of history is Lynn White, Jr., whose article you'll be reading a little later on. He made the statement that if it were not for the Carolingian Renaissance we would know no more about the ancient Roman Empire than we know about the ancient Maya, which is not very much. Now, what we do know about the Carolingian Renaissance we will be taking up in the second 400-year period, which we'll be talking about it in the next lesson. But it is amazing that, as Lynn White, Jr. tells us, there are only four documents available at this time in history that come directly to us from the era of the Roman Empire. Four physical chunks of paper or parchment as the case may be. Everything else we know results from the literary output of converted savages in the forests of Europe and the Bible study centers they established all over the place. In each center they treated the Bible with great care. Notice, these are the first Bible schools you ever heard of where they not only studied the Bible but other literature—secular literature—as well. They copied and recopied especially the Bible, but also a lot of the ancient Roman literature. Except for those four manuscripts, whatever ancient Greek or Roman literature we have today we got because of that intervening, "Bible school" activity after the fall of the Roman Empire. And this rescue of the literature came just in time before the

Vikings swept in and burned most of it back down to ashes again.

In other words, we're looking back over many centuries and catastrophes—many mountain ranges, leaving valleys of darkness in order to get clear back to Latin Rome. It is really amazing that we know anything at all about anything that far back. It's as though we have to physically go through multiple knot-holes just to reach back to that time.

There is a second dimension of difficulty, however, that isn't just a physical problem. It has to do with blankets of prejudice. Everything we do has that complication. For instance, *The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire* by Edward Gibbon is a very detailed and lengthy set of volumes which scrounges its information from many other documents, most of which are still available. But it is a highly selective, biased and colored account. His whole purpose is to prove that the Christian faith wrecked the Roman Empire. And the fact that he has a hard time proving this is at least one positive thing, but the record he gives is a distortion due to his prejudice. And, as you paddle back through history, you don't uncover a single document that is unprejudiced. The only really unprejudiced book you'll ever find would seem to be the Bible itself, which attacks its own people over and over again. That's one reason people trust the Bible.

It is a fact, however, that for some reason there is less prejudice in the modern era than ever before. Many of the more recent versions of American history written in the last 20 years are less prejudiced (although there are still some that are quite prejudiced as well).

For example, there is the fact that the Roman Catholic tradition with determination and thoroughness has in effect tended to revise and twist the entire story of Christian history in order to make its own church lineage look like one single beautiful, continuous phenomenon. This means that you have to go easy with a Roman Catholic document when it is talking about the Celtic church. And you also can't trust an English document when it talks about the Celtic church because the English church was even more irritated about the Celtic Church than were the Romans down in Rome.

And so everywhere you go you're constantly running into huge prejudices, and the art of the interpretation of history is to a great extent catching on to the prejudices. We're try-

ing to find out what those prejudices are, and then by allowing for them, figuring out what actually must have been true.

Let me give you just one example of what I mean. There was a guy named Pelagius. I'm sure that all of you who have heard of him immediately think of him as a heretic. Augustine was the so-called "good guy" during this period of time (better known as Augustine of Hippo—that's in North Africa; the other church leader named Augustine came decades later and was known as Augustine of Canterbury, a missionary). Augustine of Hippo was the orthodox theologian who argued with Pelagius, telling him and everybody that Pelagius' theology was lousy. To this day church historians usually consider his theology to be a notable heresy. They base their comments to a great extent on Augustine's judgment. Well, you get a man like Latourette looking into the whole affair once more, and he comes out with the statement that Pelagius probably didn't believe exactly what his antagonists said he believed.

That's almost always true in an argument if all you have available are the documents written by one side only. Maybe what the other people are saying is not really what their opponents said that they said. So Latourette comes up with the rather astounding statement that Pelagius probably was not Pelagian! He was at the most maybe a "Semi-Pelagian."

The question that an anthropologist might raise over this whole situation is why were these two fellows arguing in the first place? Because we have in existence today hardly anything that Pelagius himself wrote, we can't simply read the text of his argument and decide for ourselves; all we have are what his accusers said about him. Why was there an argument? That is the most important preliminary question.

Aha—it's not very hard to find out that Pelagius came from the wrong side of the tracks. He wasn't even a citizen of Rome. He came from the Cornwall area—the lower south end of Britain in the Celtic belt where the Roman legions were still in charge. Apparently some of the people there were highly educated but were not first-class Romans. When Pelagius went down to Rome, he already knew Greek and Hebrew and Latin whereas Augustine, a first-class Roman citizen, knew only Latin and couldn't read either Greek or Hebrew. So here Augustine is, upstaged by a guy from the sticks! I'm telling you that to

come from Cornwall is to have come from the “wild and wooly west,” so to speak.

Picture Pelagius walking into Rome, much about him betraying his background from the sticks—he may even have had the wrong color of hair, blonde instead of Mediterranean black—but nevertheless with such sophisticated academic credentials (better than Augustine’s). You can well imagine that this would provoke an argument, no matter what Pelagius believed. And we have two denominations, so to speak, one Celtic Christian and the other Roman Catholic.

Okay, after visiting Rome and (Roman) North Africa, Pelagius went on his way to the Middle East. We next hear about him when he got into Jerome’s sphere, and Jerome called him a “Celtic pig,” not a very scholarly evaluation, I suppose. He not only called him a pig, but actually said, “that stupid pig like all the other Celts,” a comment which gives us insight into the “broad research” Jerome had done.

Then Pelagius disappears from the pages of history except for other occasional references to him in these documents from the period of the Carolingian Renaissance which were faithfully and mechanically copied. These are still available to us, and when we read about Pelagius, we tend to say, “Oh, what a terrible heretic this guy was.” All I’m saying is that when you go back and try to find out what happened, you bump not only into mechanical problems in just getting the data, but you run into cultural factors—enormous prejudices, which may actually cause even more misunderstanding.

One other example which my wife knows more about than I—maybe at a later date she can fill in the details for you. The Venerable Bede, as he is called, was one of the very few historians during the first millennium, and one of the most trustworthy. He wrote a very detailed account of the English-speaking church. Even he had to deal with political correctness. Bede lived in a post-Celtic era after the Synod of Whitby when the English church had supposedly adopted the Roman (Catholic) tradition. Although an Anglo-Saxon, he was educated in a Celtic area but was politically unable to write anything that was pro-Celtic. Thus, all the way through his rather thick and very interesting book, *An Ecclesiastical History of the English Speaking People*, you find Bede constantly taking pains to point out that Celtic scholars were dead wrong about the Easter

date, the “tonsure” (or haircut that monks wore), and other equally “important” things.

However, leaking into the narrative, either subconsciously or very likely consciously, is a steady campaign. According to my wife, if you read the whole book and stop to think about what is really being said you get a different point of view. You can’t just look at the overt message on the page. And what you see coming through is that this man Bede is really quite pro-Celtic. Before the Synod of Whitby, most of the Celts in Britain were followers of Pelagius; indeed many continued to revere him for four hundred more years. In his book, Bede presents these Celtic Christian leaders as humble, godly people. In his detailed story of the exchange at the Synod of Whitby, the Roman church leaders come across as insufferable snobs, even though by a sort of fluke they are the ones who happen to have the correct theology. In other words, Bede bows to the political necessity of following Rome, but you can tell where his sympathies really lie if you read the entire book carefully, being aware of the racial tensions of the time.

So here you have a piece of literature that is superficially prejudiced in order to get published, but is maybe more accurate and sympathetic in its between-the-lines message. These are just examples of how historiography must discover and grapple with prejudice.

One more point under historiography: what is it then that we actually do know? Most of what we know in terms of the phenomenon of Christianity in the first 400 years after Christ comes from only one or two documents. It either comes from the New Testament itself, which is a blazing beacon of truth and light in the early part of this 400-year period, or it comes from one other set of documents, the work of Eusebius, the official chronicler of the Roman Empire.

Once again, most historians are embarrassed to admit that they have to trust Eusebius. When Christianity became officially tolerated, he was asked by the government to pull together a lot of the documents that had survived from the catacombs and the earlier period. So, he put together a massive multi-tomed set of stuff. He quoted from hundreds of documents which are no longer available to us. So when you hear someone say, “Well, Tertulian said,” this may not be Tertulian speaking but Eusebius, supposedly quoting Tertulian. Now you have to ask yourself, “Did Tertulian

really say exactly this?” Probably, in most cases he did. The problem with Eusebius is probably not that he is misquoting those people, because when we do have the original documents from which he quoted, the quotations are fairly accurate. It’s the stuff that he did quote versus the stuff that he didn’t quote. And he quoted what he wanted to quote and didn’t quote what he didn’t want to quote. Thus, inevitably hundreds and hundreds of documents are completely lost sight of except for quotations that come from Eusebius.

This is also true of the editorial work that was done on what we call the Septuagint—the Greek Old Testament. It is a selection from hundreds of other documents, and while every document in the Greek Old Testament is quoted in the Qumran scrolls, they quote at least 400 other documents as well.

Thus, almost always when you’re reading the Early Church Fathers—Clement of Alexandria, Tertulian, and all these greats—you’re reading what Eusebius pulled together. Now that is a rather hair-raising fact, but it is just one last point on the subject of historiography. We are very, very scarce in terms of direct knowledge of this period. And it is just absolutely amazing when you open a modern book on Rome, the Roman Empire, or on the Early Church, how much we actually do know. It is precious little, but it is amazingly much when you take into account the problems of historiography and the heroic work of the monasteries in all this. Now, let’s move on.

We do know the beginning of the period and we do know the end. We know the beginning because it is in the New Testament, and we know the end because a lot of things got written down when Constantine and others allowed Christianity to flourish in the last hundred years of the 400-year period—from AD 300 to 400. At that point a huge number of Christian bookstores—Zondervan Presses, so to speak—rolled into action, and a vast bulk of literature poured out in that fourth century. Thus, we really do know a great deal about the church in the fourth century. But we do not know anything, except indirectly, about the period between the New Testament and the fourth century.

However, let me point out that if you know the beginning of a story and you know the end, that’s a great deal to know. It doesn’t take too much imagination to figure out what happened in between. At least you are welcome to

imagine. Historians are not allowed this liberty. In fact, there is a whole school of historiography that will not allow anybody to make any conjectures whatsoever. That to me is obscurantism.

Let me give you three examples. First of all, we know that at the beginning of this period the gospel was in a stable; at the end of the period it was ensconced in the Lateran Palace of Rome, comparable to our White House. That is, the very palace of the emperors was taken over by the Christian church when Constantine, due to his wife’s deriving from the eastern part of the empire, finally yielded to her wishes (women are often more powerful than men) and moved the headquarters of the empire from Rome to what was thereafter to be called Constantinople. (Can you imagine the influence of a wife?) Anyway, that move left behind this palace which was then turned over to the most reliable people in town, which by that time, even in Rome, happened to be Christians. I say “even in Rome” because when the seat of government moved east from Rome, it ran into a hotbed of Christianity as compared to what was true at that time on the Italian peninsula.

In contrast to the West, Christianity had a sizable slice of the population in the eastern part of the empire. Perhaps as much as 30 percent of Greece was now Christian, for example. By then it was simply impossible to ignore this movement. It is utterly ridiculous to assume that, just because by a fluke Constantine became a Christian, that gave the Christians an unfair advantage. The professor at UCLA (Lynn White, Jr.) to whom I referred earlier has said that whether or not Constantine was converted, Rome would have had to tolerate Christianity anyway because by AD 300 there were so many Christians throughout the empire.

The second example of being able to conjecture because we know about the beginning and the ending is that we know the gospel went from Galilee of the Gentiles to the Goths during this period. The arguments that took place in the fourth century were so virulent and the heretics driven out so systematically that those heretics became reluctant missionaries up in the Gothic areas. As a result, most of the Gothic peoples became at least nominally Christian by the end of the 400 years. That is an end product that we know about. The mechanism whereby they were converted is not very

clear, but we know that they were Christians of a sort by the end of the period. In some cases, the Goths accepted Arians exiled as heretics because they welcomed the heretics as enemies of Rome! Of course, there weren't just "Goths" in middle Europe. We're speaking in general of a whole menagerie of tribes. It seems to me something like saying that "Africans" are becoming Christian.

Thirdly, we know that the gospel went from Galatia to the Celtic (pronounced keltic) peoples. We don't know that it went literally from Galatia to Galicia (in northeast Spain), but we can at least dream. (This is probably the most far-out conjecture that you'll hear from me.) There was probably a connection, I'll suggest, by family, by traders stretching from Galatia of Asia Minor all the way to Ireland—across the northern part of Greece up through what is Yugoslavia today, up to the Celtic peoples in what is still called the "Celtic belt" which stretched across Southern Europe. There was likely some kind of fairly constant communication between the Celtic tribes, either by ship from Asia Minor going west through the Mediterranean and out through Gibraltar, then up into northern Spain, up into what is called Galicia (another Celtic name) in the Northwest tip of Spain, up into Brittany (another Celtic name) in France, up into South Wales and Cornwall or Wales and Ireland. All of this was connected.

For Paul the Apostle to have gone to the Galatians, who were Celtic peoples, or at least to have visited among them and to have implanted the gospel into that Celtic belt gives us the possibility of imagining that that is the means whereby the gospel got so early into Ireland. Otherwise we have no explanation.

Note, I'm not saying that the Galatians of the New Testament were Celts. They could have been. They lived in the Celtic belt, in an area named after the Celts, who landed there 284 BC. Remember that the Greek word for Galatians, *galatoi*, is phonetically parallel to the word *celt*, the three consonants—g/k, l, t—are the evidence.

We also know that the gospel that landed in Ireland was not Western but Eastern. It was not Roman in the Latin tradition of Christianity; it bears strong evidence of Greek and Egyptian Christian background. This, of course, is another tell-tale evidence as to why Celtic Christianity must have come from the eastern end of the empire.

I have been talking about the historiography of a particular situation and how if we at least know the end and the beginning we can do a certain amount of guess work into what happened between the two periods. I have already mentioned that Constantine's conversion was not the main reason why the Roman Empire became tolerant to Christianity. You should realize that Constantine did not proclaim Christianity as the official religion of Rome. That did not happen until over a half century later.

It is interesting that even after it became official, there was a case of a short reversal, something like what happened in Chad when Christianity had pretty much dominated the situation there along with Islam. Do you remember how in Chad in the 1970s there was a reversion to tribal religion when a new president came into office and forced all the government officials to go back through their tribal puberty rites and revert to the earlier animistic religious traditions?

In the Roman situation in the fourth century the emperor Julian tried to get the people of the empire to go back to their pagan tradition. That is why he is still known as "Julian the Apostate." He grew up a Christian, but apparently didn't like the politicization of the Christian religion—not surprising. Also, he had a sort of deep inherent concern for the past, and perhaps Christianity was still not sufficiently indigenized.

So he tried to reinstate the pagan tradition. He ordered the priests in the pagan temples to try to keep up with the Christian preachers. The Christian tradition emphasized helping the widows and the orphans and being kind to the slaves, often even liberating them. He ordered the pagan priests to do the same and to preach to their followers that they should do similar good works. But it was really pretty embarrassing for them. Julian's intended pagan reform just didn't work. It lasted just about three years, and then collapsed when Julian lost his life in a military battle and the next emperor was a Christian.

The interesting thing about Christianity in this period, however, is that as it began to move out of its Palestinian background it didn't carry a Palestinian trait or culture with it. In Paul's hands it was no longer simply a Jewish tradition. To this day across the world Christianity has no homeland; there is no holy place like Mecca to which we turn nor any par-

ticular Christian culture, if we are careful not to canonize a particular tradition. It is the most nearly non-cultural religion in the world. Islam, wherever it goes, has people facing toward Mecca. They believe that their Koran can't be adequately translated, or at least they don't like it to be translated. Christianity is characterized as a world religion. In some respects it is the only world religion—the only multicultural religion—by the fact that it is not held down by a particular ethnic origin. This is why it was able to conquer the Roman Empire and in doing so became a potentially unifying faith among a wide diversity of peoples. It did not represent a particular language or cultural background.

Of course, there were many other reasons why the Christian religion was able to race around the empire. Very crucial was the communication system made possible by the hundreds of thousands of miles of roads paved with stones, which enabled messages to go from the far reaches of the empire to Rome itself in the matter of a few days. Secondly, the Pax Romana, produced a (forced) military peace which stretched across a huge section of the world. Because of this peace and the comparative ease of travel, Christianity could even cross the English Channel to Britain, thereby introducing another phrase, the Pax Britannica, or the Peace of Britain. Centuries later it was possible for the British to rule the seas of the world without fear of pirates because they followed the example of Julius Caesar who had effectively destroyed the ability of pirates to harass ships on the Mediterranean Sea. Except for storms, travel by sea became as safe as on the roads of the empire, making it possible for the faith which had no ethnic origin to expand with linguistic and geographical freedom.

Another characteristic of this early period is the fact that there was no organized missionary work. When Paul was headed for Spain, he was part of a missionary team. But inevitably he went to the synagogues. When he wrote that "all Asia has heard the gospel," he did not mean that he had preached to all the people in Asia Minor, as we now call it, much less what we call Asia today. In those days Asia merely meant a small "county" at the western end of what we now call Asia Minor. Nobody in the Roman era would have referred to Asia Minor, much less to China, as part of Asia. By saying that all Asia had heard the gospel Paul undoubtedly meant that he had been to every

synagogue in Asia, a small eastern section of Turkey, because that was his approach. These synagogues were where he focused because he was trying to find the God-fearers, those Gentiles who had been drawn to the Jewish faith but had not become Jewish proselytes. He was also trying to win godly Jews over to an evangelical faith in Christ.

Only at Lystra and at Athens do we find him really bumping into pagan Greeks, and he did not do so well in those cases because his specialty was working with people who had already become friendly to the Jewish tradition. Of course, he knew about all the various kinds of people: the Jews, the Greeks, the Barbarians and the Scythians. And he was willing to become a Jew to the Jews, a Greek to the Greeks, and, I suppose, a Scythian to the Scythians, although we don't know of any work he did among the Scythians. He just sort of named them as part of his anthropological list.

Although Paul, a Jew who had grown up in a Gentile setting, was not really evangelizing cross-culturally, he was nevertheless doing missionary work because he was planting a church where there was no church in those particular cultural traditions—that is, there was no indigenous type of Christianity there. Later on, Cappadocian prisoners who had come to Christ within the empire witnessed to the Goths to the north, as did the exiled Arian bishops kicked out by the more orthodox leaders. To the east of the empire the so-called "Nestorian" bishops were also forced to leave and carried the gospel further east beyond the boundaries of the empire. Barbarians to the north and the west invaded the empire and captured Christian girls who spoke of their faith and sometimes won their pagan husbands.

For centuries, however, there had been colonies of Jews spread all over the Roman world. In a certain sense they made up what might be called a "missionary compound." Let's take, for example, a synagogue in northern England, say, up toward Hadrian's Wall. That synagogue was not a missionary outpost in the usual sense; it wasn't a mission compound like we think of today. But those who came to that synagogue revered their Bible, which was mostly the same as the one we have in the Old Testament today. And they learned in this Bible that God wanted all the nations to hear the gospel. Although that synagogue didn't have missionary purposes like we would

expect from a mission compound, nevertheless, it did have a missionary function because the Godfearers (Gentile believers) were drawn into that synagogue and hundreds of others like it scattered all over the Roman Empire. For all we know, way up in Britain, it was the synagogues that preceded the witness to Christ and in that sense actually had a very valuable function.

As a matter of fact, it is very likely, prejudices being what they are, that Christians all down through history looking back at their origins have failed to realize the mighty contribution of these thousands of Jewish synagogues which for centuries radiated the light of God and paved the way for a faith that would eliminate almost entirely the Jewish cultural vehicle which they unconsciously embodied. There may have been one million of these Godfearers associated with the ten million Jews in the empire. And ten million Jews is about 10% of the Roman citizenry.

It should be difficult to ignore the missionary significance of this fact. In all of subsequent history Jews have been upright, industrious, family-loving, God-fearing people. That they could have consciously or unconsciously attracted a million Gentiles to their Bible (and maybe 100, 000 Gentiles to convert completely over to their culture—called proselytes) is likely something Christian historians have tended to overlook. We may have tended to write off the vast Jewish diaspora as a purely legalistic and non-functional faith, meanwhile thinking, superficially, that the Gentile version of that faith—later to be called Christianity—was pure and not itself also a mixed multitude.

But we don't really know about everything that far back in history. This first 400-year period is very, very dark and much of it very discouraging in some ways. Yet we do know that those years ended up with a blaze of glory by the year 400 (what I have named The Classical Renaissance) simply because the world's most powerful empire up to that point in history had been taken over by the faith of our Lord.

But before Paul ever set to work, the Jewish diaspora was in place. Peter said that "in every city Moses is preached" (Acts 15:21). What this means is that the husky presence of believing Jews throughout the Roman Empire was a de facto missionary movement to which we see an amazing parallel in the diaspora of Western

Christian culture today. Today, then, the Biblical faith is also to be found "everywhere," but mainly in the garments of a particular (Western) cultural tradition. Only to the extent that it can put on other clothes will it ever become a truly universal faith.

In the era of the Roman Empire the Biblical faith was found "everywhere" within that empire in the enculturated form of the Jewish diaspora, and to a much less significant extent beyond its boundaries. We hear of Jewish Synagogues in India and Korea, for example.

Today, however, the Biblical faith is to be found "everywhere" this time, while found in many forms, it is nevertheless to a great extent in an enculturated form called Christianity. And, like the Jewish diaspora it is unevenly leavened by true faith. There are masses of purely wooden "followers" of this faith crowding the ranks of Christians just as there were the equivalent within the Jewish diaspora, which Paul at times downgraded harshly as a legalistic deadness. In other cases he insisted that faith was still to be found in that diaspora—that "not all Israel is Israel" (Rom 9:6).

We would have to say the same about the modern expansion of Christianity around the globe. It is a mixed movement, not just a pure faith. Millions of "Christians" East and West are mere nominal followers. The true faith is found only partially but nevertheless vitally.

Thus, the question is not whether Judaism or Christianity are, in part, faith communities but whether either of them are candidates for a universal faith. Both of them are enculturated vehicles of true faith—fairly specific cultural vehicles. The mission task is apparently then not to extend either of these vehicles but to extend the Biblical faith, preaching Christ, not Christianity, preaching the Bible, not all the twists and turns of our enormous theological tradition. And we return to our earlier conclusion: only to the extent that our faith can put on other clothes can it ever become a truly universal faith.

[But this is happening before our eyes. Africans have taken the ball and run with it—in the enormous AIC movement. The same thing has happened in the phenomenal Chinese house church movement, and in the "Churchless Christianity" movement to faith in Jesus Christ in millions of Hindu homes. Added 20 years later.]

Winter Chapter 6

The Second Four Hundred Years (AD 400–800)

Now we come to the “Barbarian invasions.” Shortly after the year 400 we find a great deal of chaos—the beginning of the first of the two Dark Ages. Looking at the chart of the Five Renaissances, we see the year 400 and the year 800. Where are the two Dark Ages? You can shade in the hundred or so years after each of those two dates. Those are the two Dark Ages. The first was just after 400, when the so-called Barbarians—the Germanic tribes—swept into Rome and Southern England. The second Dark Ages occurred just after 800 when a new and different type of barbarians, the Vikings, swooped down from Scandinavia upon the by-now Christianized earlier kind of Barbarians. Between those two Dark Ages, however, you have the marvelous Carolingian Renaissance, named for Charlemagne. (Carol refers to Charles or Carl—it’s all the same word—and Charlemagne is simply another version of the same word with the magne suffix, which means great.) Once again, now at the end of the 400-800-year period, there was a blaze of glory far, far brighter in many ways than the parallel blaze of glory at the end of the first 400 years. Thus, although there were two Dark Ages, there were also two Light Ages. There was an age of Light between 300 and 400, and another Light Age, renaissance, between 700 and 800, beginning actually a little before 700).

At least one historian has noted that what was “dark” for the Roman world was actually the dawning of a great light for the Barbarian world. No matter how you look at it, the time between 700 and 800 was a period of consolidation and scholarship, and Bible transmission and Bible study, etc.

It is possible to observe that in the four hundred-year period between 1200 and 1600 a third Dark Age occurred. This was not due to a military invasion so much as to the widespread devastation of the Bubonic plague in the mid-

dle of the 14th century. The plague, which might be called a bacteriological invasion, was far more destructive than either of the two earlier invasions.

Now, with this rough canvas before us, let’s go back and pick up some of the traces of the Celtic tradition. Although I’ve already told you a great deal about this in different ways, the Celtic tradition is usually passed over in our history books. Why? It is partly because this period of the Celtic tradition does not have any modern advocates. We’re dealing once more with the phenomenon of prejudice. In fact, not for at least a thousand years do you have any group of people who were eager to tell about and to preserve a recollection of the Celtic church. And there hangs a very, very unique series of events.

As I implied in the first lesson, in 410 and after, everything was cut to ribbons by the Germanic tribal peoples, who took over Rome itself. The result was such chaos that the people in Rome began to lose the ability to speak Latin. During the fifth century the only outpost of peace and quiet was in Ireland. Even England was under tremendous stress because with the fall of Rome and the withdrawal of the Roman legions from Britain, other Barbarians—the Angles, the Saxons and the Jutes—had invaded England from across the channel. Simultaneously, the Celts (by and large still semi-pagan) of Ireland and Scotland also invaded from the west and north. But St. Patrick and other Christians who had been captured in Britain brought the Gospel to them early in this period. And they responded almost en masse.

Eventually it was from Ireland that the Gospel came en force. Scholarship came, the Bible came, documents came. At this point there was no Celtic church as such, just monastic centers, which were both scholarly and missionary outposts. To them, the transmission of the Bible

and the transmission of the faith were one and the same. These Celtic monks knew not only Latin but Greek and Hebrew. Thus, the people of the city of Rome, now dominated by Gothic invaders, asked for teachers from Ireland to come to teach them how to speak Latin again.

What an amazing twist! It is as if the Chinese were to invade the United States, and after a hundred years everyone was speaking half Chinese and half English and didn't know which was which; so U.S. government officials had to go to Nairobi to bring some Oxford-accented Africans to come and teach us English in the United States. That's exactly parallel to the situation in Rome. Because of the chaos of the invasions, the aqueducts no longer brought fresh water to the city. Indeed, the whole city was practically a malarial swamp. They forgot skills they had known, and for a long, long time things really ran down hill. This is the "fall of Rome"—the city of Rome, not the seat of the Roman empire, which long before had been shifted to Constantinople.

But the Irish "church" (that is, the Celtic Christian movement which was more like a network of Youth with a Mission bases) was a different kind of a structure. Nevertheless it was a "church" of a sort which retained and extended the faith wherever it went. The Celtic Peregrini, or "wandering monks" of which Latourette writes, went all over England and Europe, spreading the Gospel.

However, as you read the usual church history texts, you really have to look hard for even hints about Celtic Christianity. Until recently the only decent book on the subject was a University of Chicago book called *The Celtic Churches* by John T. McNeill. The subtitle of that book is the most electrifying thing about the whole book. I was truly amazed when I first saw it when the book came out in the mid '70s. The entire title read *The Celtic Churches, a History 200-1200*. I was staggered and delighted that a man of McNeill's stature as a scholar would press home the point that the Irish Christian tradition actually began as early as 200 and was not snuffed out significantly until 1200. In light of most of earlier scholarship, McNeill's audacity is an act of academic courage because only in the last 20 or 30 years has research on the Celtic church begun to be significant. It's a big reversal of the study of Western civilization to uncover the vitality and the power of this Celtic movement. And more than any other single book McNeill's book tells

the story. I can't demand that you all get it; you can look it up in the library.

I wish I could say that Latourette does a good job in this area—and he goes a long way—but at the time he wrote, he simply didn't have the data available to him.

But, until almost the eighth century the Celtic Christians in general were well beyond the Mediterranean sphere of things, like Pelagius, whom Augustine of Hippo and others in the early fourth century considered a heretic outsider. Thus, some might ask if the theology of these Celtic Christians was orthodox. Well, they were somewhat orthodox in the technical sense of the word, if you mean Greek or Eastern Orthodox, since from the East is where their faith originally came. They were certainly more nearly Orthodox than Catholic.

But were they sound, you might wonder? Sure, they were sound. After all, the basic book for them was the Bible, revered above all others, and that's a pretty sound book. They were a bit bizarre; all of us in our cultural traditions are a bit bizarre. Some people, you know, regularly eat worms; "one man's meat is the other man's poison," as they say. And if you stop and think of it, if you look at us from the vantage point of some other culture, we also in our culture do absolutely ridiculous things. Thus, okay, the things that some of these Celtic monks did probably seem a little screwy to us.

Nevertheless, here's this monk by the name of Cuthbert up in Northumbria in Northern England. He's standing out there on the seashore surrounded by the mist and the fog in his early morning time of meditation. As the waves go back and forth, back and forth, he's meditating on the grace of God. Only a few years before, this person's forebears were head-hunting savages, and you wonder what transforming power has come into his life. You just cannot avoid the conclusion that it is the Gospel of Christ.

But like every other tradition, when the people in their first blush accept the Gospel, they still have all kinds of strange things floating around in their world which gradually get sluffed off. Irish were drinking out of skulls as late as the 16th century.

When my daughter was doing some research last year for her senior thesis at Caltech, she uncovered the fact that in the Celtic area, in the 1850s (a long time after the Revolutionary War and shortly before the Civil War), a number of industries went broke because of the re-

vivals that were taking place. One industry that blinked out was the one that produced glass eyes. Before the revival period they were producing thousands and thousands of glass eyes. Why? Because it was a very common thing in brawls in bars for people to punch out the eyes of other people. Everyone knew that you must not gouge out both eyes; after all, we were real Christians about it, weren't we? But to gouge out just one eye was a respectable way to leave your mark on the other man, and the practice of doing this was so common that making glass eyes was a major industry.

Now, that tradition—eye gouging—did not come out of the Bible, nor was it the result of the Gospel nor did the Gospel instantly eliminate it. Rather, it was a feature that still remained of the social culture that was there before the Bible came, before the revival and the preaching of the Gospel really pressed home to those people. But where did they get this satanic wicked evil? You can't explain such things apart from a "god of this world" whose ends are destruction. And to root that kind of evil out of a society takes a long time.

When you look at the Celtic churches and monastic centers way back in the 400-to-800-year period you must, as good missionaries, take into account the background of these people and try to understand how far they had come from where they were before the Gospel got to them.

Harold Cook in his excellent book, *Historic Patterns of Church Growth*, has an excellent chapter on the Celtic church. I read it before he sent it to press and suggested that he take into account McNeill's book which he had not yet seen, and so he did refer to it. Although I can't remember all the details, I feel that he did a very good job on the Celtic Church. I wasn't the one who suggested that he include the Celts in his book; he already knew quite a bit about them when he sat down to develop a series of lectures to present at the School of World Mission. Those lectures then became his book. On his own he decided to include the Celtic church. I felt it was a surprising and wonderful thing that a professor from Moody Bible Institute would choose the Celtic church as an example of early missionary passion even though many theologians would consider their Christianity not "balanced" nor truly sound. But don't ever let me say that any form of Christianity is balanced, because no form of Christianity truly is. Sound? Yes! Authentic?

Yes! Balanced? No!

As I have already said, the early evidences of Celtic Christianity are so hazy that it is an audacious thing for McNeill to start his book out with the year 200. But there are evidences of the early existence of Christianity in southern Britain when Constantine became the emperor of Rome and turned the lights on, making it legal to be a Christian. That's what happened in 312 in the edict of Milan when Constantine declared that there would be no more persecution of Christians. Christianity was already deeply entrenched, though still greatly persecuted in the east. But Western scholars have not in general realized just how many Christians there already were in Britain by the year 200.

When Constantine took over and sensed just how widespread Christianity was, he convened a council in 314 in a little place in southern France called Arles. Three bishops—Celtic Christians—are recorded to have come to this council from southern England. Evidently Christianity was already flourishing in Britain because the Celtic church there already had at least three bishops!

Later in that same century Pelagius showed up in Rome. Remember? He was a highly educated and sophisticated Celt even though he came from the wrong side of the tracks. But culturally, he was quite different from the Christians in Rome and North Africa. Even more difficult for them was the fact that his theological stance was not considered proper, being much closer to that of the eastern end of the empire than it was to that of Augustine of Hippo and the church in Rome in the West. Whatever is true about his theology, we know that the followers of Augustine of Hippo had monumental arguments with Pelagius. In fact all we know about him is what some of his opponents said of his thinking.

Now, I'm not trying to boost Pelagius or his theology at this point. I've already done that. I'm only stressing the fact that here was a highly sophisticated scholar coming out of southern England, way out in the western sticks in Cornwall, the point that juts out into the Irish Sea. His scholarship and Biblical knowledge show that even in the fourth century there was a relatively advanced kind of Christianity in England in a situation which today might be called a mission field.

After the fall of Rome to the Ostrogoths in 410 and the resulting invasion of somewhat-

Christian England by Barbarians from the continent a few decades later, things were entirely different.

I want to mention some things that you just won't believe. In 432 Patrick went to Ireland. His autobiography is a fascinating story that fortunately has come down to us today from that time.

Frankly, it is perfectly possible, and many of the books admit this, that Patrick was not the first missionary to Ireland. Some historians believe that there was a lot of Christianity in Ireland before Patrick ever went there. Not all scholars are even sure that there was a man named Patrick. But there are some documents attributed to him that are breathtakingly beautiful, high-minded and spiritual. Obviously someone wrote them.

The only catch is, in terms of Patrick, when you go on down through 500, 600 and 700 and get down to 730, there you find Bede. Now the Venerable Bede was the Eusebius of the second Era of Light. Remember that in my approach, you have periods of Light—one toward the end of the first 400 year cycle (300 to 400) and another toward the end of the next 400 year cycle (700 to 800). In the first period of Light, or renaissance, Eusebius was the historian. The Venerable Bede was the historian in the second period of Light.

Although most readings give the impression that Bede was very critical of the Celtic Christian movement, you will recall that both my wife and I feel that when Bede wrote the Ecclesiastical History of the English Speaking People he was in fact pro-Celtic, as you can see if you read between the lines. Interestingly, however, for our point here, he doesn't say anything at all about Patrick. Here is the most complete narrative of the story of Christianity in the British Isles, and there is no reference whatsoever to Patrick, not even negative. That is a very, very confusing and mysterious situation.

Bede must have used all the documents available to him at that time. And, of course, he was writing much later than both Patrick and the time represented by the Arthurian legend, which probably occurred shortly after the Roman legions withdrew from Britain to protect Rome from the Gothic invasions. King Arthur, who may have lived in the period of the Anglo-Saxon invasions in England—a type of Barbarian invasions shortly after 410—was apparently pushed over into western Britain. Of

course, Arthur came into existence in a literary sense centuries later.

So we're looking back through history all the time, and it's very hard to find out the truth about the Celtic Christian situation. But one thing we can perceive comes from the effect they had on the pagans they evangelized. We do know that the Celtic Christian monks certainly had a lot of Christian vitality.

Around the year 500, Columba, the second son of an Irish chieftain and a member of a Celtic order, started the first missionary training center in history. At that time Scotland was totally pagan, so Columba discretely set up his community on the island of Iona, just a few miles off the coast of Scotland. Later on, a similar missionary training center was established on the other side of Scotland just below the point where it joins England. Once again it was on an island, at least when the tide was up, but otherwise a peninsula of sorts. This second outpost was called Lindisfarne. Both of these training centers began sending missionaries not only into Scotland but down into England, which was now mainly occupied by the pagan Angles, Saxons and Jutes. They also began sending missionaries across the English channel. Columban, not as well known as Columba, went to the continent in the late 500s. He traveled all over the place, ricocheting and reverberating as far down as northern Italy. Down there the various other kinds of Christians—mainly those who had followed Augustine of Hippo and called their theology catholic—were as mad at him as the Jews were at John the Baptist. To try to bring some resolution to the argument, Columban ended up writing scholarly epistles to the pope, telling him that he had the Easter date wrong, and so forth.

There were many Celtic missionaries, and they established monastic missionary centers in so many places both in the British Isles and on the continent that finally the pope (of what is now called the Roman Catholic church) decided that his "catholic" brand of Christianity ought to get into the act. So in 596 he sent up to England Augustine of Canterbury (not to be confused with Augustine of Hippo, whose disciples 200 years before had argued theology with Pelagius).

This later Augustine timidly settled in Canterbury, a small peninsula jutting out into the English channel in the south of England and as close to the continent as it was possible to be and still be in England. There he converted the

king and queen of the area and established the Roman Christian tradition.

To this day there are two archbishops in the English church—the Archbishop of York who represents the Celtic tradition and the Archbishop of Canterbury representing the Roman tradition. The fact that the Archbishop of Canterbury is considered in a popular sense the top leader of the Anglican church shows that eventually the scales tipped very slightly in favor of the Roman tradition. But, the fact that, technically, the Archbishop of York is equal to the Archbishop of Canterbury (the latter is “first among equals”) shows you that in actuality the Celtic tradition held very strong.

York is in northern England, where the Celtic tradition held on the longest, and Canterbury is in southern England where Augustine first landed. To this day in the English church the Archbishop of York by his vestments represents the Eastern form of Christianity and the Archbishop of Canterbury, with vestments derived from the Latin Roman secular magistrates, represents the Western form of Christianity. Is it any wonder that Eastern Orthodoxy and Western Catholicism eventually split?

The Celtic tradition, as we have seen, originally derived mainly from the eastern part of the Roman Empire, revealing this fact by their slightly different theology, their tonsure (hair cut of the monks) and their method of calculating the date on which Easter was celebrated. (The Celts celebrated it the first day of spring according to the solstice, whether or not that was on a Sunday. In this custom they again followed what had been the pattern of the church in the east.)

Thus, in 597 Augustine of Canterbury was sent as a missionary to England by Pope Gregory, the first pope of any significance and one of the most revered of all popes since. Since the very title pope was invented later, Gregory was simply known in his era as the bishop of Rome. But he was a very dynamic and godly man, a product of the Benedictine monastic tradition. Even as many of our presidents have come out of military experience—for example, Eisenhower and Kennedy—most of the best early popes came from the monastic tradition. This has continued to be true for most of Roman Catholic history.

This second Augustine, the missionary, was not in any sense as capable as Gregory the Great. And he didn't have the same sense of

missionary calling as was true of the Celtic missionaries who wandered all over England and the continent. Augustine had not been trained as a missionary. He really didn't want to go to England and try to evangelize the pagan Angles and Saxons. He was afraid of them. He went only out of obedience to Gregory.

It is interesting to read some of the letters written by Gregory to Augustine which Bede 150 years later preserved in his writings. It seems that when Augustine and his fellow monks got as far as the coast of France across from England, he wrote back to Gregory, essentially asking, “Are you sure we should cross the English Channel? Isn't there a better way?” But Gregory said, “No! I want you to cross! To evangelize those people, you need to be there.” That became the beginning of Western or Roman Christianity in England, long after—note—Celtic Christianity had been well established.

One might ask, why did the Angles and Saxons respond to the Roman missionaries more than to the Celtic ones from the north? Well, they responded to both. They responded best when a missionary lived among them. It is also true that when they had invaded England after the withdrawal of the Roman legions, the people they fought with to take over the land were all Celts, whom they pushed over into the western seaboard of present day Cornwall and Wales. Taking over the religion of a conquered people, remember, isn't a shoo-in. Also, Celtic Christianity stressed humility and a simple lifestyle. Again, by contrast, Roman Christianity loved ceremonies and had behind it the love for pomp and ceremony. It also had the status of the immensely prestigious, although now quite defunct, Roman Empire in the West (still alive in the East).

So, at this time the picture of Christianity in England was mainly Celtic except in the south-east near Canterbury in Kent. Celtic missionaries from the West and North had already penetrated deep into middle England, setting up and reestablishing monastic houses wherever they went. But coming mainly from the two missionary training centers, both in the north, they had not yet really established themselves strongly in the south. Augustine landed at the right place.

Thus it was that the clash begun two hundred years earlier with Augustine of Hippo and Pelagius came to a head with Augustine of Canterbury and Aidan and other Celtic abbots

from Lindisfarne, Iona and the many monasteries they had founded. Augustine's assignment was not just winning Angles and Saxons, but turning heretical Christians (Celts, followers of Pelagius) into Catholic Christians. He was successful to a certain extent, especially in winning the king and queen in the area of Kent to Roman Christianity.

Also, when the king of Northumbria, King Oswy, was converted by Celtic missionaries to their brand of the faith, he looked around for a suitable Christian bride and chose the daughter of the king down in Kent. It wasn't long before the couple recognized how awkward it was for him to be Celtic and for her to be Roman in her faith, especially as it related to when to fast or feast for Lent and Easter. So in 664 King Oswy called a council to be held at the Celtic monastery of Whitby, more or less in the north-central part of England. Whitby, incidentally, was a double monastery with both men and women sections, but headed by a woman.

Bede gives a detailed account of what went on there—the arguments to and fro, and the outcome of it all. From a very young age, Bede had lived in a monastery founded by Celtic missionaries. But the decision at Whitby changed it into a Benedictine (Roman) house, so he now wrote with the Roman Catholic viewpoint even though one who reads his account carefully, as mentioned earlier, can't help but notice the respect and appreciation he has for the genuine humility and faith of the Celtic monks who came to the Synod of Whitby.

This Synod is considered by Roman Catholic historians, and to some extent by Protestants as well, to be the great watershed of the conflict between the Roman and (as both Protestants and Catholics might say) "true Christianity."

As we have already pointed out, the Celtic church at this time was probably truer to the faith of the early apostles than was the Roman church. The final outcome of the Synod of Whitby supposedly hinged on which brand of Christianity was more true. Rome's followers claimed as their founder the Apostle Peter who, they said, was given the "keys of the kingdom" by Christ himself. The Celts followed the Apostle John, probably because of their long-standing connection with the Christianity of the Middle East where John resided for so many years. King Oswy, it seems, was

partially persuaded by the matter of "the keys of the kingdom," though he had great respect and love for the Celtic missionaries from Lindisfarne.

Today, if in a book on church history you come to a section that talks about the conversion of the English and Augustine of Canterbury is praised, you know that you are reading a Roman Catholic perspective, even if it is a Protestant textbook. Such a book has a distinct Roman Catholic bias obvious from the fact that the great missionary work of Celtic Christianity is rarely mentioned, if at all. And yet, except for the very minor work done by Augustine in Kent, missions in England at this period did not come from the south but from the north, not from Rome but from Iona and Lindisfarne. Latourette makes this clear once and for all in his seven volume *History of the Expansion of Christianity*.

It is also true that even the Synod of Whitby is overblown by the Roman tradition. This may not be the place to go into that, but Theodore of Tarsus—from the East—was the man who arrived from Rome shortly after that Synod and essentially rescued it from oblivion. We'll come back to this in a minute.

Although Ireland and Wales did not have such well-known missionary training centers like Iona and Lindisfarne, Celtic Christians from there also reached out to the admittedly pagan Anglo-Saxons in central and even southern England. Indeed, the Celtic peregrini (which means wanderers and refers exclusively to the Celtic missionaries) evangelized and set up monastic houses not only on the continent and in eastern Europe, but clear down into Italy, up into Iceland, and on the Faro and other islands to the northwest of Ireland. There are even some possibly questionable evidences that Irish missionaries may have arrived in Greenland or in some of the northern areas of the United States. All told, Celtic Christianity and its missionary movement in particular was very virile. Ireland can be said to be the only nation in the first thousand years of Christian history that was a truly "missionary" nation.

I want to comment just a bit more about the possibility of Irish missionaries coming to the U.S. hundreds of years before Columbus "discovered" America. Twenty years ago people laughed at the idea that not only Celtic voyagers but also Canaanites had visited our shores way back in history. But archeologists have

found Canaanite and Phoenician inscriptions in Massachusetts. And there are early but very rare signs of Celtic influence as well. Such evidence really disrupts all of our previous ideas, but the fact is that this Celtic church went far and wide. Although in Latourette you'll find a very significant Celtic Christian movement discussed, much more data has come to light since he wrote his books. Today, scholars studying the situation tend to be from France, Scandinavia and Germany with a few from England (mainly women) and recently a few from the U.S.. Among the Anglo-Saxon English there is still, as you know, a real bias against the Irish and anything pertaining to them historically.

What are the missionary lessons we can learn from the invasion of the pagan Anglo-Saxons into England in this second 400-year cycle after Christ? We know that the Anglo-Saxons who invaded and conquered Britain (a Celtic name) were completely pagan, whereas those they conquered, the Celtic peoples, were to some extent Christian. Here's a case where pagans conquered Christians. It's usually very hard for the conquerors to take the faith of the people they have conquered. It is easier the other way around. Therefore, despite my seeming anti-Rome upbringing, I have to admit that it was a good thing that the Romans arrived—they were culturally more acceptable to the Anglo-Saxons.

Likewise, it's a good thing today for another denomination to arrive if the Christians who are already in a given place represent a different ethnic or cultural tradition from the people you are trying to win. Let me give you a modern example. It would be much easier for, say, Southern Baptists to win the Turkana people of Kenya than for Presbyterians to try to win them. Why? Because the Presbyterians of Kenya are mainly Kikuyus, who, for many generations have been enemies and have despised the Turkana. Therefore, in evangelizing the Turkana, it is better for some other denomination to take on that task than for the Turkana not to become Christians at all. Unfortunately, the Southern Baptists don't happen to be involved in reaching the Turkana.

Well, I'm just giving you a modern illustration of what happened in England in the 500s and 600s. Thus, for the Romans to arrive with a different form of Christianity, which was not all that good but also not all that bad, was missiologically a good thing. It was useful because then the Anglo-Saxons could become Chris-

tians without saying that they were now becoming Celts.

Today for the same reason some of the Brahmins and middle caste peoples of India need to become Christians without having to imply that by so doing they've become untouchables. To me this parallel is very close to what happened so long ago in England.

Also there is another parallel. In contrast to the general lack of missionary passion in the Roman tradition back then, where did Celtic Christianity get theirs? Every Celtic monastery had a scriptorium where they copied the Bible day in and day out. I can only conclude that as they copied and lovingly illustrated these scriptures, they also read them and understood the Bible, even the Great Commission. There is no other reason on earth that I can figure out why the Celtic Christians were so avidly missionary. This is why the Roman church feared that without a Roman missionary presence in England the Celtic tradition would win over the Anglo-Saxons and thus expand the non-Roman Celtic base that was already there. I have to assume that that was a major part of Gregory's concern.

Legend says that Gregory had seen some blonde-haired boys being sold as slaves in the slave market in Rome, and had asked, "Where do these people come from?" When told they were Angles from then-called England, he was very interested and said, "Maybe we should send some missionaries over there, Angles to reach the Angles." Whether this story is true or not, at least that's the tradition. But believing as they did that Celtic Christianity was heretical, inevitably, he also must have reflected that if the church of Rome didn't send their Roman brand of faith up there, those Anglo-Saxons would become Celticized.

You can see the parallel here, say, to some Presbyterians worrying that a more recent outfit like, say, the Assemblies of God might move into a vacant portion of an area which had long been considered Presbyterian mission territory. In the 20th century it has sometimes been a case of a mission trying to move in with what it considered to be a superior theology rather than missionaries simply going where there was no faith at all.

Perhaps I should also comment a bit more on my statement about how difficult it is for conquerors to accept the religion of the people they have conquered. There are a few cases of this. The Romans conquered the Greeks, but

eventually took over a great deal of the Greek culture. It was certainly true that the Vikings, which we will talk about in the next lesson, took over the Christianity of the people they conquered.

But where this has occurred historically, the conquerors were usually crude savages coming out of the forest into a more sophisticated situation. And it isn't too hard to imagine that they were eventually overawed by what Christianity had produced rather than by the kind of faith that the Christians possessed.

Let me point out another little missiological technique here. The Romans were not so dumb. Remember the surface differences between the Celtic Christians and the Roman Christians at Whitby? (By the way almost always the differences between cultural traditions come out in the form of tug-of-wars over trivialities.) What were they arguing about? The Easter date and the way they cut their hair and the type of monastic order they had. You say, "Well, why if they were brothers in Christ would they argue about things like that?" Well, they were aware of about 150 other little cultural details that were different. Culturally antagonists, they irritated each other (today we call it culture shock) and latched onto those surface issues, saying, "Ah, these are important." Practically all the theological arguments down through history resolve down to trivialities which hide much more significant and deep-seated prejudices as well as ethnic differences.

Now in the situation that they then faced, what did Pope Gregory the Great do? Here's a major missiological insight. It was an act of unbelievable wisdom for the Romans to eat humble pie, go over into the eastern part of the empire to nowhere else but to Tarsus. Tarsus, you know, had to be very significant, not only for anyone who reads the Bible (after all, that's where Paul came from), but for those Celtic Christians whose Christianity harked from the eastern end of the Mediterranean.

So they latched onto a monk there who was kind of on the skids, already 66. But Theodore was a good man, a solid customer, loyal to Rome. Note that they deliberately chose a man from that end of the Mediterranean whose haircut, being Eastern, was the same as the Celtic tradition, and asked him, "Will you be the Roman church representative to the Celts in England?" And they made a deal with him. This was sort of like the Jerusalem council go-

ing to Cypress to get Barnabas due to his Greek/Hebrew background.

I imagine he said, "Ummmm, yeah!" So they sent him first to Rome and then up to England. Yet throughout history he is called Theodore of Tarsus. It was a very strategic move to send him into that situation because he came from the East, which the Celts trusted. But they had him stay in Rome long enough for his hair to grow out so that it could be combed like the Roman tonsure.

Coming from his background, he could now tell the Christian Celts, "Look, I used to cut my hair just like you do. I used to celebrate Easter according to the solstice of the sun, just like you." But now, here he is, a respected senior, coming from the right place but wearing Roman garments. The Roman strategists rightly calculated that Theodore was the kind of a guy who would be acceptable to those Celtic people, mollify them and perhaps even win them to the Roman faith. And he did, to a considerable extent. This was in the 7th century just after the Synod of Whitby in 667. When he got to England he could talk sympathetically with both traditions and amazingly was able to accommodate Roman ideas of ecclesiastical structure to the dispersed independence of the Celtic monastic centers. In this structural process, the young Wilfred, the proud and often heralded Roman hero of Whitby, had his immense diocese whittled down into pieces by the elderly Theodore. Sparks flew, and Wilfred had to yield.

A possible reason for Roman scholars not often recognizing Theodore's strategic contribution is his suspect Eastern background. In fact, after he had been invested with authority by Rome, Rome apparently felt it had to send another man named Hadrian along with him to England just to make sure he didn't stray from the Roman tradition.

But let's not fail to apply the missiological lesson here. In your mission field you are trying to win people who like everyone everywhere have certain predispositions and prejudices. Use a little bit of wisdom as to whom you use to be a missionary to any one group.

Suppose you're working in South India with a certain kind of a group (and I shouldn't even name anything specific because I want this to be a principle and not a specific illustration). And suppose you are able to discover that there may well be someone from some place other than America who would be a bet-

ter missionary for that certain kind of a group.

Wouldn't it be better in that case to go to that other country and get the man or woman, pull him in and train him and send him out there and use him? This was the strategy of the Romans in getting Theodore. And all down through the history of the church anybody who has any common sense has been willing to try and figure out which cultural terms would make the most sense, be the most acceptable in that situation.

Frankly, if you're in a former British colony

like Ghana, don't get people from France to witness there. But if you're in Niger or Gabone, well, you better not get all your missionaries from the Anglo-Saxon background. You'd better poke around in France and get somebody who can represent the French tradition because in Francophone Africa they don't particularly like the British or the Americans. We have to use the simple wisdom of the ages when we go to win people to Christ. Their predispositions must be taken into account.

Winter Chapter 7

The Third Four Hundred Years (AD 800–1200)

Each time as we push on to the next 400 year period we see more and more happening. In this third period, just like in the second period, you start out with a massive Dark Ages of intrusion of invaders from outside—the “Second Dark Ages.” This time it is not pagan Anglo Saxons but pagan Vikings pillaging newly Christian Anglo Saxons. Toward the end of this period as in the previous period you have again a period of peace and quiet, productive outreach, scholarship and Bible study on the part of the Christian movement in the West, a flourishing of faith, in a word, a “renaissance.”

However, this period of peace toward the end of the second period started a little earlier than the last 400 year period, starting considerably before 1100. If you were to diagram those two Dark Ages followed by the two *Light Ages*, or *renaissances* as they are called, you would find a striking parallelism. We have already referred to the Second Dark Ages being the result of the Scandinavian invasion. As in the First Dark Age, you find a great deal of persecution of Christians in the early years, followed then by this period of peace and quiet called by historians, the *Carolingian Renaissance*.

Although it is almost impossible for me to say this because I respect Latourette so very much, in my estimation, the biggest single mistake that he ever made in his writings is that he down-plays this Carolingian Renaissance more than he should have. Because of that he doesn't talk in terms of two Dark Ages, as many of the more recent scholars do.

But, before we move on into this third period, let's speak about Charlemagne a bit.

Two generations before his reign, the Muslims had started moving up from North Africa into Spain, and Charlemagne's grandfather, Charles Martel (the “hammer”) had stopped them at the Battle of Tours, just north of the Pyrenees Mountains which separate present-day

Spain from France. Charles Martel had become a Christian of sorts—rather rough and ready—but now his grandson was a literate, scholarly statesman and an outstanding humble Christian.

One thing he is notorious for is his treatment of the Saxons. He was convinced that the only way to protect his territory was to make the Saxons (still living and constantly raiding to the north of France where he ruled) into real believers. There was still pressure from the Muslims in Spain and increasing pressure coming down from the north with the Vikings. All the more, Charlemagne—Charles the Great—had to keep his eye on unpredictable dangers from the Saxons, who were still pagans in Europe and right on the very border of his territory.

He sent over to England and Ireland and imported thousands of Celtic monks (by now perhaps quite a few were Benedictines) to come and set up schools all over his domain, which included the Saxon territory. He urged the monks not only to teach about Christ but to teach the people to read the Bible.

But politically the Saxons hated the Franks and refused. They killed some of the missionaries, and eventually Charlemagne threatened them with extermination if they did not get baptized—at least so the story goes. And he very nearly did, although thousands were forcibly transplanted to the area today called Saxony, in Eastern Germany.

It has been thought that Charlemagne was illiterate. But some recent research merely indicates that he couldn't read Latin, Greek and Hebrew, or perhaps not the Germanic script. He typically moved around the countryside in monk's robes, followed by his (I believe) ten daughters. In his private correspondence, he signed his name *David* after King David in the Bible and tried to emulate his piety and life,

even to the point of having more than one wife.

Some historians claim that during a thousand year period, he stood head and shoulders (both literally and politically) above every other ruler on earth. Truly a great man. He wanted to rebuild the Roman Empire with all its benefits but without its vices, thus requesting the pope to crown him emperor of the *Holy Roman Empire*, which was done in the year 800, the symbolic year when the Vikings began to invade from the north. But the renaissance which he brought about in learning, Biblical studies, manuscript reproduction—all because of his importation of learned Celtic and Benedictine monks from England and Ireland—worked to preserve to a great extent what peace there had been until the Vikings came, and he set a significant pattern to follow.

Starting, then, around the year 800, we're in this third period with the Second Dark Ages opening with the increasing invasions of the Vikings. Pictures of the Vikings have a certain lurid reality about them and tend to bring memories to mind. Whether you have any Viking blood or not, Churchill's series of books called *A History of the English Speaking Peoples* contain a chapter on the Vikings which you will find very exciting. Churchill himself was an Anglo-Saxon, so he doesn't have any sentimental attachment to the Vikings, but he does have a powerful gift of description. In his chapter entitled "The Vikings" he talks about the effulgence of the gospel ultimately dazzling and holding captive these marauding tribals.

He uses a very arresting phrase in the very first page of that chapter. He describes the Viking ships in their sleek beauty and balance and gaudy color and ends up the sentence by saying, "but there was a scent of murder about those ships." He talks about the Vikings as "the cruelest pirates that ever roamed the seas." He must have forgotten about the Carobs, those Indians that terrorized the Caribbean Sea, captured people and actually fed them in cages like animals until their legs and arms were ready to be cut off one at a time to be eaten. I don't think the Vikings were quite that depraved but they were pretty close to it.

Let's face it gentlemen and ladies, our gentleness is not native to our fallen nature. Whatever gentleness we have is purely the grace of God. To unsnarl the unbelievable complexities of Satan's power over mankind and the darkness and the distortion of his purposes and be-

ings is impossible apart from the grace and the power of the gospel. In any case Churchill's is an exciting chapter.

There is another equally exciting chapter on the Vikings in a book by Christopher Dawson called *Religion and the Rise of Western Culture*. Unfortunately, the book is out of print and apparently hard to find on reserve in the library as someone is always borrowing it. But it is a very outstanding little paperback if you ever get your hands on it. I hope that Doubleday will reprint it some day. It has a whole chapter on the Second Dark Ages; Dawson is one of the historians who uses that phrase. The picture of the Vikings as he tells it is a very ugly and gruesome picture. And he points out that the difference between the Vikings and the barbarians who invaded 400 years before was in part because the Vikings were not Christians at all. They slaughtered the people in the churches with an almost special gusto. They tore the churches down with a venom that really stems right back to Satan himself. They burned the Bible; they did almost everything you could think of to eliminate the Christian faith.

But the Christian tradition they were eliminating was by then a Christian faith that was sitting back on its haunches and taking it easy. And in a certain sense—let's face it—the Vikings were not the only bad guys. As far as Biblical perspective is concerned, if the Bible had been extended by the inspiration of God to cover this period, I would conjecture that God's true judgment would not fall upon the Vikings but upon those Christians who failed to reach out to the Vikings, who didn't send any missionaries to them. And because of this, in their ease and religious splendor, they eventually had to suffer the invasions of these exceedingly rude, crude and vicious savages.

In this period a lot of interesting things happen.

One of the most significant missiological developments was that in the confusion the lines of communication were cut—what today would be all telephone lines and the transatlantic cables as well as the satellite communication centers. Thus, it was not possible for Rome to maintain its hold even tenuously upon the churches of England. But once again God brought to the fore a man to salvage the situation—Alfred the Great, the second son of the Anglo-Saxon king down in southwestern England. Alfred had intended to go into a monastery and spend his life in devotion and scholar-

ship. But his brother, after becoming king, was killed in a Viking invasion and Alfred had to take over.

The most famous story, of course, is that once after he had just lost a major battle against the Vikings, he took refuge in a swamp and from there crawled into a little village where he asked a woman for some food. Not knowing who he was—since kings in those days were just chieftains—she said, “Well, look, if you’ll watch these cakes so they don’t burn, I’ll give you one.” I suppose these “cakes” were either like pancakes or tortillas—something simple no doubt. But even so she should have been a little more polite and she surely would have had she known with whom she was dealing. Anyhow, the legend says that Alfred sat there musing on having lost the battle. And when she returned to the fire, she found that all the cakes had burned, and she scolded him something terrible.

Is that story true or not? We don’t really know. But we do know that Alfred eventually defeated the Vikings. They conquered every other place in England, but they never really conquered Wessex, King Alfred’s area, the most southwestern part of England.

In the first of the two Dark Ages, the Anglo-Saxon forebears of Alfred had come in from the south, but in this period the invaders, the Vikings, came in from the north. Not only that but many centers well fortified against land invasion were totally exposed to sea invasion. And the Vikings came by sea! These are the Scandinavians—the Danish, the Swedish and the Norwegians. The Danes were evidently the most visible at first because wherever they extended their domain it was called the “Danegeld,” meaning that’s where the Danish invaders demanded tribute in terms of gold (“geld”) just to go away and leave the Christian people in peace.

But Alfred was able to push them back. Consequently they never quite triumphed over the southern part of England. So much for the politics and military.

The fascinating thing is Alfred himself. He was a studious sort of a guy, in some ways almost like Charlemagne in his religious, scholarly and military characteristics. He decided—and this was very rash at the time—that he would start translating the Latin scriptures and the various ecclesiastical documents into Anglo-Saxon. I say “rash” because at this time in Western (Roman) Christianity Latin was the

only acceptable language, and Roman Catholicism the most respectable form. But due to the simple isolation of England from Rome the vernacular language began to break through in worship.

Today, Wycliffe Bible Translators would, of course, be overjoyed. They could have named their organization the Alfred the Great Bible Translators instead of the Wycliffe Bible Translators. I know at one point they were thinking of creating a new group called the Tyndale Bible Translators.

Now, by the way, they have started five different Bible translator organizations representing different Christian traditions that couldn’t all be in the same organization. There’s the Evangel Bible Translators, which is charismatic, and the Logos Bible Translators, which is Roman Catholic, and a couple more whose names I don’t remember, representing Christian traditions that couldn’t easily be merged into the same organization.

Anyway, the Alfred the Great Bible Translators never arose, but King Alfred and his crew did begin translation work. This is in curious contrast to the work of Cyril and Methodius up in eastern Europe. As a matter of fact, it was already perfectly normal for Cyril and Methodius to use the Slavonic language. They are the ones who produced what today is known as the Cyrillic Script, named after Cyril. We find here this curious contrast between the patterns of western Europe—what I have called “uniformitarian”—and eastern Europe with its permitted diversity—what has been called “autocephalic,” which allowed each cultural tradition to have its own patriarch and its own equally legitimate form of Christianity. The autocephalic type resulted in a large diversity of different kinds of Christianity in the East, while in the West you had a single tradition (the Roman Catholic). Later we’ll observe that this is one reason that there had to be a Reformation in the West and there didn’t have to be one in the East. Let’s leave the emergence of the vernacular in Alfred’s situation.

Back now to the Vikings. For over 250 years you never knew when the Vikings were going to show up. They arrived unexpectedly. There were no citizen’s band transmitters available in those days to warn the next village down. But possibly due to the very terror of the circumstances there was another fascinating development in this period.

It was the appearance of the Cluny renewal

in the monastic tradition. *Cluny* is now the name of a Scotch whiskey, an angry fact which clashes with the wonder and the beauty and the worship that developed in the original Cluny movement in France—with no connection to Scotland. What is there about the Cluny movement which was so influential?

First of all, it was the beginning of the flourishing, the renaissance that welled up toward the end of the period. It was the beginning of a reformation within the monastic tradition itself. Things had gone from bad to worse, mainly due to creeping affluence. Just as it is true today in many of the Korean churches, affluence overtook these outposts of Bible study. Amazingly, if you give a group of people who are godly, hardworking, abstemious, peaceful and productive time and space, and you let them go on recruiting other people for a hundred or two hundred years, pretty soon they are fabulously wealthy. Then as a result of their wealth they become targets for vandalism and robbery. You can easily imagine why this is so. That is why Francis of Assisi many years later wandered around with nothing to his name. He wasn't afraid of robbers because he had nothing to rob.

By contrast, the monastic centers soon became the place where wealth accumulated. As a result the secular chieftains roundabout began to cast greedy eyes upon them. And very often these chieftains would simply get up a bunch of horsemen and soldiers and just ride into one of those places and take it over. Maybe one of these chieftains would put his son in as the abbot—a curious clash with the tradition that was already there. As a result, these monastic centers often went down hill faster than they had gone up hill. In other words, the wealthier they became, the more likely they were to be subjugated.

Probably the most far-reaching example of that very syndrome of wealth leading to downfall was what is called the “dissolution of the monasteries” in later history. I'm only referring to it here by way of parallel. When King Henry VIII decided to divorce Catherine, his main reason was not because he wanted to become a Protestant or even to divorce his wife and marry again, but simply because he needed money. And the money was in the hands of the monasteries. According to Luther, who lived about the same time, the monasteries were not valid. So King Henry VIII found it very desirable to dissolve all the monasteries in England

and to seize their wealth as a political maneuver. This as much as any other reason was what made Henry VIII into a Protestant.

But it certainly was the wealth that became the downfall of the monasteries. Roland Bainton said that “the whole history of the monastic tradition is the story of their unsuccessful attempt to stay poor.”

This is why I, no longer a field missionary, am still living on a missionary salary and even promoting in America an organization which will welcome any serious believer into its membership and allow him the privilege of living on a missionary's salary. It is called *The Order for World Evangelization*. This order simply enables a person to choose a mission society and to adopt the salaried level of a furloughed missionary as his own lifestyle level. All the rest of his money then is made available, by his own decision, to the work of the Lord. This seems to me a perfectly logical way to fight affluence.

I'll admit that we haven't had a massive number of people charging in to become members. I have often thought that while many missionaries, to their credit, simply suffer along with their missionary salary level, if for any valid reason they could get out of the harness they wouldn't feel bound by that type of lifestyle level. If, however, you would like a little encouragement to stay with this kind of lifestyle, then join the Order for World Evangelization. We are trying to combat the difficulty of staying poor by this approach. It is a conscious reference back to this situation.

The Cluny Reform also occurred just at the point when so many monasteries were being taken over by civil powers that this movement raised the issue of what later came to be called the *investiture controversy*. While that may be a very distastefully opaque term, it has to do with who's going to put on the garment? Who is going to “invest” monastic leaders with authority, and thus put on the vestments of authority in a monastery? It is eminently clear that they did not think the members of the monastic community ought to elect their leaders. Would it then be a local bishop who would appoint an Abbot, a bishop who might well be subject to the string-pulling of the local chieftain? Or should it be the chieftain himself? Just who is it going to be? Will the Abbot himself choose the new abbot at some point when his powers began to wane, as had always been the case? Or would somebody else have power

over that monastic center?

Now this portrays a wholesale clash between the diocesan (parish) tradition and the monastic tradition in Christendom. What resolved the clash is, in a way, the single largest power play in the history of the Christian movement. It clearly established a new pattern, which is not what it seems to be. For example, the Duke of Aquitaine (the area of the first Cluny house) simply said, “Look, I’m going to establish a monastery at Cluny and this monastery is not going to be subject to me or to any civil power or to any local bishop. Instead it will be subject to—well, who? Well, let’s see—the pope? Yes, the pope!”

I have playfully put it that way because frankly, in what resulted, the pope had no real power whatsoever over the monasteries. It was a sanctified subterfuge. It was a power play. It resolved the age-old tension over the question of who appoints a new abbot essentially restoring to the monastic center self rule.

Aquitaine is in southwestern France, in those days that was a long, long way from Rome. And even at our late date in history today there is no real possibility of the pope having any great influence over the monasteries. But notice, by saying that the pope was in charge, they were saying that the bishop was *not* in charge, the local chieftain was *not* in charge. See what I mean? This new appeal to the pope was a declaration of independence, so to speak. However, it wasn’t so independent that it made that monastery a unique isolated island.

The Cluny Movement had tremendous spiritual power. It began to find other monastic centers asking (so to speak), “Hey, come on over and tell us how you do it there at Coral Ridge, Florida, or at the Peninsula Bible Church. Tell us how you do it, Pastor Getts of Dallas. ...”

This type of movement caught on everywhere pretty fast. Pretty soon two, then five, then ten, then twenty, then thirty, then eighty and then eight hundred other monastic settlements pledged their loyalty to Rome alone (which meant they pledged their loyalty to nobody local) and adopted the lifestyle of the Cluny movement. This was called the Cluny Reform.

Notice there are two or three things happening here. First of all, Cluny established once and for all down through history the fact that the investiture of an abbot is not subject to the

power of a local bishop. This eliminated any claim to power there might have been of a bishop over the leadership of a monastic center. Secondly, it established for the first time a connectional development within the monastic tradition.

Now, what do I mean by connectional? I just mean what the word implies—that there was a connection between Cluny, which was the mother house, and the various daughter houses, although each of them had a certain amount of their own authority. The daughter houses submitted themselves to the mother house. Just like they said they were submitting themselves to the pope in Rome. But in many cases they didn’t know or care who the pope in Rome was. As a matter of fact, the pope at this particular moment was one of the least qualified in the entire history of the papacy, an absolute scoundrel, a violent, murderous man.

One point we must not overlook is the fact of the connectional development. I don’t want to overemphasize this, but as a result of this Cluny reform, you now had a connectional tradition developing within the monastic movement itself. And to this day virtually every monastery in the world in the Roman Catholic tradition is part of a connectional group.

Such clusters of monasteries today are called—in the Roman Catholic vocabulary—“congregations.” This sounds strange to Protestant ears. It seems like every key word the Catholics use, the Protestants also use but in a different sense! A *congregation* in the Catholic world is usually a reference to a subdivision of one of the major orders. In other words, maybe ten or 15 monasteries in a certain region will be called a *congregation*.

Then in Rome you have the *Superiors General*. The superior of an order who is general or leader over the whole thing, over all the various congregations, may have his office in Rome. Then, because there are so many different Catholic orders, there is a whole group of Superiors General who live in Rome. Incidentally they have a committee on missions. I know a Columban father, an Irishman although an American, who is a member of the modern order of the Columban fathers. He is now in Rome doing his doctorate and he told me that he hobnobs with the members of this mission committee of the Superiors General group in the Vatican.

Well, so much for the Cluny Movement. It is just something to keep your eyes on. Latour-

ette describes the Cluny Movement with some care, and it is worth looking at. In my own opinion the Clunys went overboard on the idea of worship, which I feel they stressed too much. I know that it's hard to imagine anyone stressing worship too much, but it does seem to me that when they gave up working with their hands and decided just to pray, they were now parting ways with Benedict himself. I don't think they did this intentionally because in their own minds they were still Benedictines, of course. But Benedict was very balanced, and I feel the Clunys lost some of that balance. The Benedictines had a saying that "to labor is to pray."

The Cluny Movement was established in 910. But after a relatively short time that movement itself became so opulent with beautiful buildings and chapels and paintings, and everything else, that another renewal movement arose called the "Cistercians." I have a much higher regard for the Cistercians than I do for the Clunys.

Latourette says that the Cistercians had five chief characteristics, all of which I think are really attractive. (You can read them beginning on page 423 of Latourette's *History of Christianity*.) For one thing, the Cistercians went back out into the swamps and started all over from scratch. They were determined not to get rich. They built their monastic houses either in the swamplands or on the steep hillsides. About the only thing they could possibly do to make a living would be to graze sheep on the hillsides and to drain the swamps. They often did such things and in the process created vast, huge areas of new and high quality pasture land. And what do you know? Here we go again: after a hundred years the Cistercians had unintentionally cornered the wool market of Europe. That is the story of the Roman Catholic monastic movement again and again and again.

Cluny started at Cluny, whereas Citeaux is the place where the Cistercians got started. The Cistercians were a magnificent bunch of people. And if you want to jot down some page numbers to read about the Cistercian *canons regular*, you'll see them on pages 426-427. The five characteristics developed by the Cistercians are really very significant developments.

One other phenomenon in the flourishing of this period that I can only refer to in passing is the development of the scholastics. I mentioned previously that long before 1200—even

before the year 1000 really—you began to see more Christian scholars. Anselm is one of the first scholastics and Abelard perhaps the second. Overlapping him was Maimonides, who was not a Christian scholar but Jewish and who did a fantastic job of fusing the Jewish Semitic cultural tradition with the knowledge and the philosophical tradition of the Greeks. That fusion then gave rise quite possibly to Thomas Aquinas' work; he's the most famous of all the scholastics and lived right around the year 1200. His work cast a long shadow into the future reconciling Christian thought with Aristotelian thought, just like Maimonides had done for the Jewish tradition.

This scholastic movement wasn't really the Bible-studying movement of the earlier monastic scholars by any means. These were now more nearly philosophers than simply Bible scholars. But we need to mention them as well as the development of the universities of Europe during this period. The Crusades also began during this period, to which we have already referred.

In the final flourishing of this period, "The Twelfth Century Renaissance," cathedral building becomes a fad. Almost all of the major cathedrals of Europe were begun during a faddish fifty-year period—many taking centuries to complete. The universities also appear as a significant phenomena. But far and away the most significant development missiologically is perhaps the most important—the appearance of the friars. Most of their work is in the next 400-year period, which we will pick up on in the next lesson.

Finally, you should know that towards the end of this third period the Vikings, once they became Christians, themselves literally became crusaders. All of the major crusades were led by former Vikings, the so-called *Northmen*. They had a great perception of distance and the ability to navigate and to travel. They also still had that lust for war. Even though they were now Christians, they still retained this rather unfortunate warring bent. As crusaders, they destroyed many Christian communities in their rampaging as well as Jewish.

We need to keep track of these major developments toward the end of this third period because things are really getting exciting now. We are heading into the period when we know far more than we ever knew about things happening before. And it's not just that we know more about things, but because more things

were happening. The population in Europe by then was four, six, or ten times what it had been. And we will see that population growth

is also one of the indirect effects of Christianity. So much for today.

Winter Chapter 8

The Fourth Four Hundred Years (AD 1200–1600)

As we plunge into this next period—1200-1600—it gets even more exciting. The period starts out with the pinnacle of Papal power in the “high middle ages,” about 1200, and ends with the permanent breakup of that Spiritual empire in the Reformation. Barbara Tuchman wrote a book on just the 14th century which my wife and I were reading through recently. She feels that today is another 14th century. The 14th century was the time of the Black Plague, a rather ominous time, but as she studied the 14th century Barbara Tuchman felt that the way Europe fell to pieces as a result of the impact of the plague was very similar to the falling to pieces of the Western world as a result of the impact of the two world wars and the threat of a third—the rivalry, the cold war, the fantastic expense on duplicate armaments and so forth, enough to drive every Western nation into bankruptcy, she implied. She thought there were a lot of parallels, and I think there are. She started to study only about the plague, but then she realized that the whole 14th century was just a mirror of our time, perhaps. The title of her book is *A Distant Mirror, the Calamitous Fourteenth Century*.

Between 1200 and 1600 there is a type of suspension bridge. The year 1200 itself was a year of a pinnacle of ecclesiastical power. That was the year that Innocent the III put all of France into an *interdict*, which means that the pope obviously had the power to prevent every Frenchman in France from taking communion. Today that would be no problem at all. Far fewer would pay any attention. But it was a real problem then, showing an amazing contrast in the temper of the times. It also shows the kind of papal power that Protestants have always assumed to have existed, but has very rarely existed.

When I was a fairly young kid, I remember that Pope Pius XII commanded that all the con-

templative monasteries in the world should open their doors and require every single member of those communities to minister one day a week out in a nearby town. And I remember that of the some 400 such houses around the world, very, very many of them simply ignored the pope’s command. That was my first tiny keyhole glimpse into the difference between what the Protestants think is true and what is the actual authority structure in the Catholic church.

In any case, this period is noted for the apex of papal power, the tremendous power of the Crusades, the movement to build cathedrals (all the major cathedrals in Europe were started within a 50 year period), the university tradition, but above all the emergence of the friars.

In 1210 at the Lateran Council, the papacy finally approved Francis of Assisi and his work. In 1205 they had allowed him provisionally to operate. Now they granted him full ratification. They did this for more than any other reason because they rued the day a few years earlier when they turned Peter Waldo down. Too late they realized that that decision had been a great mistake. Waldo was a much tougher, more stable, competent, businessman John Wesley-type of leader and even though they turned him down, they just couldn’t get rid of him. Francis of Assisi, by comparison, was not the kind of a guy that would, humanly speaking, ever do anything great. He was the kind of man whose thoughts were in the clouds all the time. But that made him less of a threat and control of primary, apparently. Also, his home base was much closer to Rome than Waldo’s. Assisi is a little bit north of Rome, and somehow the powers in the papacy thought perhaps they could keep him under control, so gave him tentative approval.

Meanwhile, also in 1210, Dominic came

down from France, and he saw Francis there in the Vatican with only a rope around his waist, not a fancy leather belt. So Dominic pulled off his nice black belt and cast it aside, and from then on the Dominicans and the Franciscans wore the same kind of rope for a belt. However, Dominic was a very different kind of person from Francis, a tough minded, theological scholar who was determined to stamp out the Albigenses (Cathari) in southern France by theological argument. He made sure that in every one of the Dominican houses, the communities of friars had a resident theologian. They also were the forerunners of the Inquisition. They were determined to purify the church by power and occasionally violence. Their excesses are much overblown by Protestants, whose own excesses in controlling the newly freed slaves in the USA by thousands of lynchings is a whole lot worse.

Francis, on the other hand, was very different from Dominic. He was not inclined to read books—like Dawson Trotman, founder of the Navigators, was furious if any of his followers were attracted to the universities—but was very much of a mystical person whose followers had no written rules to follow until he was on his deathbed and then it was too late. As a result there were many, many different splinters in the Franciscan movement even before he died. Today there are about 35 Franciscan groups, most believing they are closer to Francis than the others although some basically disagree with him.

But the Dominicans have not splintered; they are a disciplined, carefully organized group—egg heads, would be the term we might use. I often think that there was a certain similarity between the Intersivity movement and the Dominicans. The Intersivity Movement, with its Intersivity Press and piling up huge, thick theological tomes on all subjects, is very much of an egghead movement by comparison to Campus Crusade, which until recently did not even have a publishing arm and was more of a Franciscan type of operation.

By 1250, forty years from the time Francis was given official full recognition, the pope very wisely required Francis to have a written rule or *regula* which his followers patched together rather hurriedly but was not complete enough or soon enough to forestall splintering. This requirement shows the very practical wisdom of church authorities who actually tried to help the Franciscans at that point.

Anyway, these two movements started out very differently. One was anti-intellectual and wouldn't go near the universities; the other was highly intellectual and lived within the university world. However, in the long haul, by looking at each other across the decades, they eventually began to try to keep up with each other. And by now they are very similar. I think that Campus Crusade, now with its own seminary and its own publishing company, will be moving more and more into an academic emphasis. They have even planned to have a graduate university.

The point is that the way a movement starts has little to do with where it ends. If you look back twenty years, it's kind of breathtaking to think where Campus Crusade might be twenty years from now. I know Bill Bright well; he and I used to go jogging together at Princeton Seminary forty years ago. I'm sure that neither of us then had any conception that Campus Crusade would become the largest Protestant sodality in the world at this point. It is a very amazing organization. I think that some groups have sort of looked down their noses at Campus Crusade because of the simplicity of the ideas it is promoting, and because of its hierarchical structure. But I urge you not to underestimate the potential of that movement. Intersivity is also flexing its muscles, moving in different directions. There's a new breath of fresh air in Intersivity and today Intersivity is almost as strong on the campuses as Campus Crusade. The only difference is that Campus Crusade is doing seventy others things as well, and Intersivity is still primarily a campus movement.

Navigators could be mentioned as a parallel to the friars. Some of them have preferred to think of themselves as the Jesuits of the present time. That probably is a little bit strange to say considering that the Navigators until recently have had very little academic emphasis—as already mentioned, the founder, Trotman, like Francis, had no use for academia—but it is a very fine organization. I was very much involved in the Navigators in the early days of its development. I helped to find the verses for the third memory set back in 1941-42. It was very exciting to see that movement grow. In the house where I'm living right now in South Pasadena, we met together every week for two and a half years with Lorne Sanny, now the president of the Navigators. And Dawson Trotman was in our house many times as well as other leaders in the Navigator movement.

So I have been, by accident so to speak, pretty close to the origins of both Crusade and Navigators. I have watched these movements over the years and am very impressed and yet not uncritical of them. The little pamphlet that I wrote called “The Two Structures of God’s Redemptive Mission,” which is a chapter in *Crucial Dimensions*, has been bought in large quantities by Campus Crusade, Navigators, Intervarsity and Young Life. Thousands and thousands of copies have been devoured by those people, trying to understand themselves in history.

Back to the historical friars. They were always a part of the church. There never was a question that they were not part of the church. In this period, 1200-1600, you see for the first time, as I put it the other day, “monks on skateboards.” These friars were mobile evangelists who went all over creation, all the way to Peking and all around the world. The friars were the major mechanisms of Roman Catholic outreach.

Now, the friars are a little different from the *clerks regular*. This where the Jesuits come into the picture, much later, about the time of the Protestant Reformation. By now you should recognize immediately this word *regular*, which simply means to be “subject to a written discipline.” I am not sure whether *clerks* came from clerics, but *clerks regular* is the official phrase for an organization like the Jesuits. Every organization since the Jesuits has followed a pattern similar to the Jesuits rather than that of the friars, although every organization founded soon after the friars followed their organization until the Order of the Jesuits appeared.

Once again, there are subtle differences between these various traditions—the Celtic monks, the early Benedictines, the Cluny tradition, the Cistercians, and the Canons Regular, the friars—there is a kind of progression in terms of intentional intervention in the outside world. But whatever you do, don’t succumb to the facile, simplistic stereotype that the monasteries were simply where people fled to get away from the world. Even in the very earliest days—by the year 700—those 800 monasteries sprinkled up through France and Germany were missionary outposts as well as sources of engineering, architectural and technological talent. They weren’t fleeing the world; they were penetrating the world. This is demonstrated by the simple fact that the world even-

tually accrued significantly to the organizational pattern, language, etc., of the monasteries.

In fact, almost every major city of Europe is a great oak grown from the acorn of an original monastic center. Rather than vice-versa, this phenomenon is an interesting twist on what you might call a pure Alan Tippett or Charles Kraftian approach in which the missionary will mix completely into the culture without a trace of his own cultural background except for the pure gospel invested therein. In contrast, the monasteries totally ignored the outside culture. And after a suitable length of time, like a thousand years, the outside culture came to follow the pattern of the monasteries instead of vice versa.

They were better than just mission compounds. Mission compounds are not meant to be self-sustaining, and they’re not intended to acquire members from the local situation. If you would go to any mission compound around the world and tell the missionaries, “Look, you’ve got to work and be self-sustaining. You’ve got to provide services the people will pay for, and you’ve got to add people to your membership from the locality,” then you would find yourself describing a monastic structure as a mission outpost. And it would be far superior to the often sterile mission compound in more modern history.

By contrast, in recent history a mission compound is propped up from abroad by subsidies. Therefore, it is inherently incapable of growing or duplicating itself. It cannot even absorb its own children. Columban went to eastern Switzerland and established forty other outposts working out from present day St. Gallen because his mechanism was reproduceable. Yet it was not contextualized. There was very little contextualization of theology especially, or even of church life. The monastery carried its own social structure which was exceedingly durable and not easily corrupted, so to speak, by the outside world. Rather, the language and culture of that monastic tradition eventually took over the outside world.

Both OM and YWAM have forged a network in which in all fields local people can join in. This is quite different from traditional missions which expects to plant a church movement which will be separate as well as maintain an unjoinable foreign mission presence which is not transferable.

I say all this just to balance out the extreme

emphasis (which I nevertheless deem healthy here at Fuller) on going out and contextualizing everything, becoming part of the situation, going along with the culture, and allowing that indigenization process to grow into full bloom. I fully agree with that. I am just pointing out that that is not really the way it happened in Europe.

However, let's step back from our euphoria about the friars. All this wonderful evangelistic power moving forward into this 1200-1600-year period was stricken with a mighty blast when the Black Plague appeared out of the blue. I confess, I cannot understand what God was up to. I don't see how the plague was a blessing any more than sin is a blessing. Obviously God did not send sin in order to bless us. The Black Plague came apparently—who knows from where—but burrowed into southern France, into Italy and advanced by deadly waves and eventually killing off one-third to one-half of the entire population of Western Europe.

But it killed off nine out of ten of the Christian leaders, friars in particular, because they attended the sick and anybody who attended the sick was bound to die. It's a wonder that anyone survived who went near anyone who was sick. The pope survived. While no one understood the function of fleas as a plague vector, the Pope lived for several years between two huge bonfires. Unlike the friars he didn't go near the sick, so he survived. There were some wealthy aristocrats who fled to their mountain resorts and were able to cut off all contact with the outside world for a year or so and survived. But the people who were in the stream of commerce, the ships that went up into southern England, etc., carried the plague into England, and it fanned out. You can see pictures in books of the waves of impact of that plague month after month—six months now, six months again later, etc. It swept over England and killed off enormous percentages of people. Social structure itself broke down in many cases. Some of the monastic settlements were so stricken that the members actually went insane and ran naked in the streets. There were all kinds of breakdowns. The demoralization of society in general was just amazing.

This was far worse than any Viking invasion because the Vikings never killed off a third of all the people. In any one place they may have killed off 100 percent of the people, but they just weren't powerful enough to kill

off as many people as the plague did. The microbes were more powerful than the Vikings. They still are.

The Black Plague was able to transmit itself by three mechanisms: by air, by direct contact, and by fleas that would hop from one infected rat or person to another person. It's hard to believe how you could ever stop a thing like that. The amazing thing is that there is no medical reason why there could not be another outbreak of this plague. There is nothing we know of today that would have any ability to keep the plague from spreading out throughout the world today—other than the caste system in India.

You probably wonder if the plague still exists. Sure! You can find it right here in California. Some little kids were playing with a dead squirrel in a vacation park in northern California. When animals die, the fleas jump off, and as the kids played with this dead squirrel, they picked up the bubonic plague. I picked up a paperbound book in New York the other day which is an account of a fictional outbreak of the Bubonic Plague in 1984.

It seems to me, looking back, however, that God chastened Christianity in the 14th century. It almost seems as though the best elements were eliminated. I've often wondered why. Just maybe God felt that the people didn't deserve the friars.

On the other hand, the resulting drastic scarcity of peasants had the effect of making them more scarce and thus increasing their wages. Furthermore, not only because of the plague but because of the impact of the Bible there began to be a restlessness among the serfs. Somehow they sensed that their grinding poverty was not really according to God's will.

The result was violence—in part prompted by the Bible! In England, it started in Kent in the Canterbury area and swept over thousands of acres. Hundreds of thousands of people gathered in a mob that moved toward London in what is called the Wat Tyler rebellion. They demanded better treatment, actually only reasonable treatment and very much based on the Bible. A local priest had a lot to do with it. He coined the ditty, "When Adam delved (dug) and Eve span (spun cloth), who was then the gentleman?"

Because of rebellions like this, long before the Reformation the Bible began to be seen as a very dangerous book. The complete Bible was

translated into German fourteen times before Luther's superb translation. (Even though our Protestant stereotype is that Luther was the first person to translate the Bible into a German vernacular.)

Luther grew up in a peasant family. In his youth one of the major rebellions, known as the Bundschu Movement, was vigorously crushed by land owners. We'll be taking this up later when we talk about the Reformation. The fertility of this period, the confusion, the breakdown of society ushered in more strongly than ever the secular Renaissance, a harsh, strident stream which is glorified by secular scholars but which was a tragic development in some respects. There were good things about it, but those good things came from the Christianity which underlay it. But there were also horrifying immoral extremes in the Renaissance, a harshness and worldliness which may be thought of highly by secular people today, but sensitive Christian insight would certainly not give the Renaissance the same grades that secular scholars do. All of this prepared in western Europe the grounds not only for the political revolt of the serfs who complained about their conditions, but also for religious revolt. And when you put the two together, you've got the Protestant revolt which was 50 percent a political and cultural backlash against the Latin civilization and 50 percent part and parcel of the religious reform movement that was sweeping all of western Europe (not just Germany).

However, the most amazing thing in this period is how the friars tried to go overland to Peking as missionaries. By 1492 toward the end of the period, Columbus discovered America, as every child in American schools is told. That was also the year, roughly, when Savonarola was burned at the stake in Florence, when a young law student named Martin Luther was struck down by lightning and decided to go into a monastery. It was also the year when a saintly clergyman named Ximenes, who was also a great Bible scholar, became the chaplain of Queen Isabela of Spain—a tremendously important event. But equally important was the fact that in 1492 the last of the Muslims, who had been in control in parts or all of Spain for 700 years, were now finally expelled. So don't forget 1492!

In fact, that year also had to do with navigation, which contributed to missions. Now the friars could go all over the world. They

tried to go by land but really couldn't get very far since land travel to Asia was quite difficult. But they finally got there by ship.

By 1535 the university of Mexico City had already been established by friars—two hundred years before Harvard in Massachusetts. A new contender within the Catholic sodality system for missions soon after was the Society of Jesus (the Jesuits). And by 1600 Matteo Ricci, a Jesuit, was climbing the steps of the palace in Peking. This phenomenal world outreach through the Catholic mechanisms of the friars and the clerks regular had no parallel or counterpart in Protestant tradition for another couple hundred of years. Just imagine, Dominic back in 1212 was reading the Great Commission to his little band of followers, the Dominicans, soon to become a mighty worldwide movement. He told them:

You are still a little flock, but already I have formed in my heart the project of dispersing you abroad. You will no longer abide in the sanctuary of Prouille. The world henceforth is your home, and the work God has created for you is teaching and preaching. Go you, therefore, into the whole world and teach all nations. Preach to them the glad tidings of their redemption. Have confidence in God, for the field of you labors will one day widen to the uttermost ends of the earth.

Note well that this was 600 years before the Protestants seriously entered the fray! Yes, here is Dominic quoting the Great Commission 600 years before William Carey was on his way to India. Now, granted that 600-year advantage was considerably blunted due to the difficulty of land travel during the first half of it, but in the second half by sea travel the Catholics encompassed the world. And though they perhaps had a somewhat defective gospel, nevertheless, they got there and took their form of Christianity with them.

Then, in just the last few "minutes" of history, the Protestants with a leap and a bound caught up to the Catholics, partly because Protestants had something superior. But God doesn't forever guarantee superiority to those who boast of it.

In the 1200-1600-year period, exciting and amazing things happened. Probably the most disastrous single thing, however, was the violent attempt to convert the *Saracens*, another word for *Muslims*. This began a century earlier than the four-hundred-year marker of the year 1200. By contrast, in all our previous 400-year

periods the major people groups were converted—the Romans, the Barbarians and the Vikings. In this period, although the Muslims were a major focus, we got nowhere with them. They were too tough. All the Crusaders did was bloody their noses. The missionary methodology of the Crusades was obviously not the best method to use.

It is still true today that any organization which uses the word *crusade* in its title displays appalling ignorance of the most obvious facts of history, and in the Middle East today this is a terrible, terrible error. (Campus Crusade, for example, does not translate its name for use in the Middle East. As in the case of the Wheaton

College football team named “the Fighting Crusaders,” it might have been better not to have chosen the word to use anywhere in the world.)

In any case, by 1600 Catholic missionaries had at least superficially baptized millions of people in the Western hemisphere and in Asia, and as in previous periods, the final century was one of an incredible flourishing of the faith. But while the major players were Orthodox, Catholic and Protestant, only the latter was uninvolved as yet in global mission.

This should give you something to think about as you plunge into this period. I hope it will be exciting to you.

Winter Chapter 9

The Breakdown of the Uniformitarian Hypothesis

The Reformation is at the late end of the same period we've been talking about, the fourth expansion. It's a specialized topic. For us it's germane, because most of us are in some way indebted to this movement. But we want to put it into perspective, and we want to make sure that we get a good clear-eyed view of where it is we have all come from. I suppose there must be someone in the room who does not derive from a Reformation church or a church greatly benefited by the Reformation. The Greek Orthodox have not very greatly benefited from it, unfortunately. But in your own immediate background there may have been some. How did you ever get here? We often have somebody from the Thomas Church in India, and they feel the Reformation is a very recent movement compared to their origins, although actually the Mar Thoma Church itself is the result of the impact of the evangelical movement on the older Syrian tradition of India.

But I should make one other distinction. Whatever you do, don't confuse the Reformation with the Evangelical Awakening. The Evangelical Awakening occurred less than half the distance between ourselves and the Reformation—it is closer to us, in fact, than it is to the Reformation. Most of the modern vitality of the Reformation tradition can more accurately be attributed to the Evangelical Awakening than it can to the Reformation. But I must hasten to move back away from that statement by adding that, of course, if the Reformation had not occurred, then the Evangelical Awakening probably could not have occurred.

But then having said that, you would have to say that maybe even the Reformation could not have occurred had it not been for the Roman Catholic tradition. So it's really an unending thing.

I've often said to myself, you talk about the Pentecostal movement in modern times, that

all pentecostals are evangelicals, but not evangelicals are pentecostals. All evangelicals are Protestants, but not all Protestants are evangelicals. And all Protestants are Roman Catholics—you may wonder at that—but not all Roman Catholics are Protestants. And so it goes.

The fact is that compared to the Greek Orthodox tradition, we Protestants must seem like Roman Catholics in terms of our calendar and our theology and everything else. We are Roman Catholics in a hundred ways. We Protestants are Roman Catholics; that is where we come from.

But there was in the Reformation a breakdown of unity, a breakdown of what I would call the "uniformitarian" principle or expectation. I've already pointed out earlier that in the eastern part of the Mediterranean, the Greek, or Eastern, form of Christianity, as it reached out, didn't seem to feel it quite so necessary (or feasible) to clobber everybody with the same language and theological tradition. They allowed for great diversity from the beginning. Even in Rome there was originally a patriarch, but somehow they had, say, four patriarchs: one in Antioch, one in Alexandria, one in Rome, and so forth. The Roman patriarch eventually became a pope, in the sense that he said he was "the Supreme Patriarch." The other patriarchs never suggested that they were better than each other; they were all equal. This autocephalic system allowed for a cultural decentralization of the Christian movement. Another phrase is cultural self-determination, and this is, of course, akin to indigenization and contextualization.

But in the West there was a hard-nosed *uniformitarian* policy. That policy survived partly because the Roman Empire itself had had the same policy. The Roman Empire was determined that everyone would speak Latin. It was the language of the empire. When the Roman Empire collapsed and Christianity

began to function in its very place, do you realize that Gregory I, Gregory the Great as he is called, actually ran the postal system of the Roman Empire? He functioned as a magistrate. When the political center of the Roman Empire went east, and the western part was shattered by the migrations (that's a euphemism), the invasions of the Germanic tribes, somehow the Church survived. It floated like a surfboard above the turmoil, and it was not in competition with the various tribal chieftains. They could go about their business, but Christianity had become established as a non-threatening auxiliary government.

Christianity began to some extent to function in lieu of the Roman Empire. They gave out grain to the poor; they ran almost everything. The Christian church in Rome and in Western Europe was a very vital municipal factor in the orderliness of the situation, in a time of tremendous chaos and confusion. It was the bulwark of order. But finally even the church blinked out, and the monastic movement was the most durable of the various structures, allowing the survival of the Christian movement.

Somehow this uniformitarianism had to have an end. There had to come a time when this would not work. The classical breakdown—there was breakdown both before and after the Reformation—but the *locus classicus* of the breakdown of this uniformitarian principle was the Reformation, so-called. Now it is misnamed and misunderstood. Apart from that, everything is okay. The Reformation: as far as the average understanding of the term is concerned, when somebody talks about the Reformation, they are talking about the Reformation of the Roman Catholic Church. Right? They are not talking about the reformulation of the gospel along Germanic cultural lines. They are talking about the correction of evils in the Roman Church. *There is where the word Reformation becomes a misnomer.*

In the first place, the so-called “sons of the Reformation,” the Reformers so-called, were not the only reformers. It is absolute folly to think of Calvin and Luther and Zwingli and Henry VIII as the only reformers. Erasmus was a reformer, the man who jerked Luther out of the doldrums by introducing him to the Pauline doctrine of justification by faith. Johann Staupitz, the Catholic leader who helped Luther see justification by faith in the Pauline letters, was a reformer. There were hundreds of reformers! It was this reforming spirit, that was so power-

ful in Italy and in Spain and in France, that got into Germany.

But in Germany, due to other factors, it became a political issue. And so there was the confluence of two streams of force: the political desire to be separate from Rome, on the one hand, and the religious desire to reform the Church of Rome, on the other hand. These two streams really didn't necessarily have anything to do with each other; they were independent movements.

The Reformation in the larger sense of the term, for instance, allows some historians to speak of the Catholic Reformation (the phrase *Counter-Reformation* will not do). The Roman Catholic Reformation was not merely a backlash against the Protestant Reformation; it started long before. The Protestant Reformation, in a certain sense, is merely one aspect of a larger reformation that was going on for a long time, both before and after Luther. *The Reformation*, spoken of as a Europe-wide phenomenon, or at least Western European-wide phenomenon, is not just the Protestant Reformation; but the Roman Catholic and Protestant Reformation spirit was a movement that ran all across Europe. It was a movement within the church tradition, just as much in Italy as in Germany.

The Reformation with a capital R, referring to the Protestant Reformation—quite often, and much more correctly, referred to as the Protestant Revolt, becomes not a reformation from within a large stratum running all across Europe, but a geographical separation, rather than a stratification problem, within the whole Western European civilization. As a result, when political issues began to get in there, and separation from Rome reared its ugly head, and the breakdown of Christian Europe began to appear, people were horrified, and they laid the blame on the reforming spirit, which was as much present in Italy as it was in Germany. They blamed the people reading the Bible, and they said the Bible must have something to do with this. And so they said, “Goodness! If we're going to dismember the whole Christian empire, the Holy Roman Empire, why we're going to have to get rid of the Bible!”

The famous stereotype says that the Reformation was the result of Luther reacting against the limitations on the Bible. You could put it that way. It's not true, but this is the way that some people put it, wrongly: because the Roman Catholic Church wouldn't let the people read the Bible, Luther broke away and translated the

Bible into the vernacular and allowed people for the first time to read the Bible, and therefore the Reformation broke away. Nothing could be further from the truth! They were reading the Bible all over creation! It wasn't until political entanglements got involved that they blamed the Bible and started to suppress the Bible, not only in Catholic Europe, but in Protestant Europe. The Bible was feared just as much in England as in Italy. You can see those customs men plunging these long iron bars down through the barrels of flour to see if there are any Bibles coming into England, because they wanted to keep the Bible out of England. Who's paying the custom collectors? Protestant rulers! Protestants burned Bibles by the thousands! They even burned the Bible translators. Tyndale died before they could catch up with him, but they dug up his bones and burned them. That's the treatment the Protestants gave to the people who translated the Bible. The Bible was a feared book on both sides of this tension between North and South.

The fundamental tension was cultural, between the Germanic tradition and the Mediterranean tradition. I'm just trying to sum up in harsh, contrasting terms, another view of the Reformation, which is probably not exact in detail, but which is greatly different from the traditional view of the Reformation. I want to stir up your minds a little to think of this in terms of missions.

Let's go back to Luther. There's a greater complexity involved, because of the layers of society in Germany. Luther was born into a peasant family. In that peasant family, his sympathies inevitably were with the Bundschuh movement. That was very, very viciously suppressed when he was in his teens. At that time he could easily understand what happened, and he saw this peasant movement brutally suppressed. He, obviously, being from a peasant family, sympathized with the peasants. One of the things that boiled and smoldered in his blood was the oppression of the peasants by the aristocrats.

Many years later, when he got into the Bible, he discovered the true spiritual response of the heart to the living God through faith, instead of through rituals and so forth. This was an enlightenment that came to him, not only because of the Bible, but because of a man named Johann Staupitz and others, godly Roman Catholic Bible expositors who lead him and helped him along.

Luther, of course, was a rather special person. I wouldn't say unstable, but highly sensitive

and conscientious, and perhaps a little oversensitive about his own guilt. It was a monumental step to get him over the hump into the assurance of God's love and pardon. It was a great achievement. They helped and helped and tussled and pushed to get him over that hump. When he finally got over it, that gave him a sweeping insight into the possibilities of reform of the church. He didn't feel any more German about that than anything else; this was a spiritual concern of his.

Luther was a profoundly spiritual man, no question about it. I'm not trying to make him into a politician. On the other hand, when he went down to Rome, as he did because of an assignment by his order, the Augustinian Order, there is no question but that he was turned off by the Romans. He smarted when they snickered at the way he spoke Latin. They instantly detected his Germanic accent and flashed out the term *tedesco*, that is, "hick" from the German sticks. *Tedesco* was a word like our "Wop" or "Jap" or something like that. It's an epithet. Luther somehow lost his loyalty for that Headquarters of Christendom, and in the process of going up those steps on his knees and seeing all the various tourist traps of Rome—the ecclesiastical booby traps to get the money away from the unsuspecting hicks from the sticks—something clicked inside. He was too much of a biblical scholar by this time to be able to gag it down, and he stood up and said, "This is not the way to salvation. This is a fraud!"

Rome itself now became just a smelly city; you could smell it for ten miles before you got there! Luther was glad to get out of there. All the way back to Germany, you could imagine him getting more German all the way. Now a new dimension entered: it was not just a reform of the church, but it was a German versus Roman attitude. It was mixed in his mind. It wasn't 50-50 or 70-30, or whatever. But we know both things were boiling in his mind.

A long succession of sparing took place in his writings with John Tetzel. Tetzel had a big chest where you put money in and supposedly got your soul out of purgatory, or the soul of your grandmother or something. The German phrase that rhymed was: "When the coin clinked, out of purgatory the soul sprinkled!" Luther saw that at a distance, and having just come from Rome, he had had enough of these guys! He didn't want to see all that money going down to Rome, anyway. And he was not the only German who felt that way. So there're two

factors right there: a theological factor and an economic, nationalistic factor.

So Luther announced that in the next weekly discussion, he was going to take up some of these things. The so-called hammering of a nail into the door of a cathedral and all that drama—this was the normal way of posting the subject of discussion. There was nothing particularly radical about that. It was just like writing on the bulletin board, or on the democracy wall in Beijing; it was the normal thing, to put up there the topic you were going to talk about. The thing that was *not* normal was the thoroughness and the comprehensiveness and radicalness of the 95 theses that he advanced. Most of them were unexceptionable; none of them were unique to Luther.

But there was an incendiary situation at this time in history. In other words, while many sparks had been cast off the anvil, this spark landed in a tinder box. The Germans were under pressure to put more money into Rome. There was an uneasiness all over the empire. They were looking for a new emperor of the Holy Roman Empire. This is a very significant factor.

The papacy was controlled by the Spanish, the French, and the Germans. Any two of those powers could control the papacy. The French had carried the papacy off for safe-keeping over into France for a number of years just before this, and that was a great shame and scandal. The papacy was now back in Rome. The popes survived by juggling these powers and playing them off against each other. It is very easy to say that those popes weren't very spiritual men. You didn't even have time to read the Bible, if you were going to try to retain your existence as an autonomous Vatican state. At first, the Spanish would come in and burn Rome down and take everything over. Then the French would come in and take everything over. Then the Germans would chase the French out. There were these three balls in the air that the pope was juggling: the Spanish, the French, and the Germans. Every time a new emperor was chosen for this loose, unwieldy, somewhat disunified empire, it was always a great crisis—far more than simply electing a new president after an assassination.

At this very moment when Luther was beginning to cause trouble, as we say, they were looking for a new emperor. Of all the possibilities, the pope could see that he could not get ahead by getting a Spanish emperor. And that guy

Charles up in France—he didn't want him to be the emperor. The man that the pope wanted to be emperor happened to be an East German, as we would say today, to tell you where it was in Germany: a man named Frederick of Saxony. Where is Saxony? It is not where the Saxons came from; it's where Charlemagne sent them. Saxony is now in Eastern Germany. The Saxons started out on the North Sea, but when Charlemagne tried to keep them from marauding and causing trouble, he finally just went in and grabbed them and scattered them all over, and a lot of them landed in East Germany. That is where Saxony is today, and that is where the elector, Frederick, was.

An elector is like a senator, but not exactly. He is a political power, qualified to become an emperor. The pope wanted Frederick to be emperor because Frederick was an honest man, he was a good man, he was a Christian man, and he was a man the pope had less trouble with than anyone else. So he wanted him to be the new emperor. I studied the Reformation for many years before I found this out, so you should greatly value that little tidbit, that the pope favored Frederick to be the new emperor. Do you know why that is significant? It meant that the pope was not about to take up arms against Luther! How long do you think Luther had? How much of a lease on life do you think he had because of this accidental political relationship with the pope? He had 25 years within which to work, because of political factors that kept the pope from pushing the buttons for the KGB or the SS or whoever to go up there and get Luther. The pope held them off.

It wasn't that the pope couldn't do anything. He *chose* not to do anything, even after the inexorable forces of the Diet of Worms that condemned Luther, and everything else. They sent up one of their brilliant theologians, John Eck, who turned Luther's arguments against him skillfully. But even after that, the pope didn't do anything. They did not enforce what they had decided. Why? Because the pope was hoping that Frederick would be on his side and become the new emperor. Even after Charles V became the emperor, the pope still counted all the more now on Frederick being the counterbalancing friend. The Germans were needed now, to balance the French, who might come and lug the pope off again to some French location.

Another factor: as time went on, even though the Bundschuh movement had been cruelly and

violently suppressed in his youth, it became clear to Luther that he was not going to get any place as a peasant. He needed Frederick's backing. As a matter of fact, he probably would have lost his life if Frederick had not hijacked him on the way back from the Diet of Worms and placed him in protective custody.

For Luther, it became more and more clear that the great issues of reformation and of nationalism, both swimming around in his head at the same time, could not be cured by simply retaining his theological concern and retaining his family background in the foreground. Now he was in the limelight. He was now a famous person, he was on a first name basis with aristocrats, and more and more he became at home among those people. Somewhere along the line, though he started out as a peasant, he ended up as an aristocrat, as a man who for practical purposes inevitably—not giving up his Christian faith, but simply realizing the lay of the land—ended up on the side of the aristocrats.

There was another reason for him to move in that direction. Not only were the aristocrats a people that the pope depended on, but they were the ones to whom the pope was generous and kindly, so long as they were generous and kindly to the pope. But remember the Bundschuh. Call them the communists, if you wish, the rabble-rousers who were going to get the people to rebel against the leaders. The Bundschuh was not dead. The aristocrats had killed off as many of the Bundschuh as they could. But the ideas were still there. You can not kill an idea. One of the other little tidbits that I bumped upon, long after studying the Reformation in seminary, was the fact that the very night when the Diet of Worms brought in its verdict against Luther, all over the city of Worms there appeared on the most important doorways of homes and civic buildings, the sign of the peasants: the sandal of the peasants. Bundschuh: *bund* meaning pact, covenant, conspiracy; *schuh* meaning shoe. The pact of the peasants, the conspiracy of the peasants, the communists of their time, if you wish! They put their mark on the door, like the hammer and sickle, only theirs was the symbol of a sandal. What was the significance of that? They were rising up in wrath and anger that the man that they were counting on was condemned.

This was a threat! You can imagine, not only the papal forces, but the people of Frederick of Saxony were afraid. I imagine that some people even said, "Ah ha! This means that Luther is in

league with the Bundschuh!" This made it very, very dangerous for Luther, if he was suspected of being a "commie." That's where it lay.

For that reason and others, Frederick sent his men to hijack Luther on the road back from Worms. He'd been given safe conduct to go there and to come back, but it wasn't going to be very safe, apparently, especially with the Bundschuh attempting to affiliate themselves with his cause, an Anti-Roman, anti-establishment attitude. So Frederick took Luther in by force, so to speak, and brought him into the aristocratic world for over a year.

During this period, Luther translated the Bible, while he himself was translated into a new social world. It's another misconception that Luther was the first one to translate the Bible into German. The whole Bible was translated 13 times into German before Luther! His translation was the fourteenth. In fact, the Bundschuh movement wouldn't have been in business at all, if it hadn't been for a vernacular Bible. This is why the Bible is so dangerous!

Of course, those peasants down through the decades had become emboldened by their scarcity. Their scarcity was the result of the Black Death. Imagine a Europe hardly a tenth as large as it is now, or maybe an eighth or a seventh, and 33,000,000 people being killed in the Plague! Can you imagine 33 million people dying? So peasants became scarcer and more powerful.

They were reading the Bible. The Bible is the prime mover in all of this. In the Bible they did not see all this wealth and all the rich people's superiority. In one case, they brought together a document with ten petitions to the landholders, to the aristocracy, all very respectfully written: not a snarl, not a swipe, not an untoward phrase in it. The final paragraph of this petition said, "If there's anything in this petition that is contrary to the Word of God, we herewith and straightway withdraw it." You see, the Bible was central.

What do you think was in that petition? They were pleading with the rulers to go easier on their taxes, to go easier on them. Sometimes in their winter game hunts, aristocrats would take a bunch of peasants along with them on the hunting expeditions. In the bitter winter some of these aristocrats would get cold feet. Their feet would get so terribly cold—how do you warm up your feet in the middle of winter? You don't take out your Coleman stove or anything like that. You cut open a peasant and put your feet inside the body! It will keep your feet

warm enough, without getting them too warm, and frostbite can be avoided. It's really an ideal technique!

But the peasants, who were reading the Bible, felt that there should be a limitation on the number of peasants per expedition who could be so used. Their pleas to the aristocracy were not unreasonable pleas. Talk about the colonial atrocities of our time: there is nothing approaching the brutality and the horror of serfdom back in those days!

The Bible permeated and penetrated that lump like a leaven, and inevitably produced a Peasants' Revolt. By the time the second revolt occurred in Luther's century in Germany, he was on the side of the aristocrats. Being the most powerful person in Germany, in terms of his theological and spiritual dictums, he wrote in his pamphlets right straight out of Romans 13: "The powers that be are ordained of God." And these peasants are to be suppressed in every way, shape or form, beaten and stabbed, and kicked like mad dogs.

By the time the typewriters got all this typed up and in camera-ready copy, and the instant printers ran off the copies and got them all distributed, it took a little longer than it does today. By this time, the aristocrats, without Luther's assistance, had already killed off 30,000-40,000 people: garrotted them, crucified them, drowned them, in the utterly most merciless ways! By the time Luther's pamphlet hit the streets, he was pouring fire on fire. This did not sit well with the populace. It hardened the polarization between Luther and his own background and the people. Luther was now irretrievably a part of the aristocracy. And more and more a German, rather than a Roman.

This gives you some of the complexity of the situation. I am not trying to say anything that is intended as a criticism of Luther as a Christian disciple. He was not only a godly, sensitive, conscientious believer, but he was an exceedingly brilliant and eloquent person, a monumental leader, a tremendous person. But, under the circumstances what would you have done? Where would you have gone? With whom would you have affiliated? Would you have gone with Frederick? Or would you not have gone with Frederick?

Picture yourself and all those tensions and forces, and you see that the Reformation is not a simple picture. It has a great deal to do with the Bible, but it is not as though the Bible was not studied before the Reformation. The Bible

produced the Reformation. As far as suppression of the Bible is concerned, the Reformation *produced* the suppression of the Bible more than it resulted from the suppression of the Bible. The Reformation didn't happen because the Bible was suppressed; the Bible was suppressed because of the Reformation happening in such a way as to produce a political breakdown and war and dismemberment of Europe, and so forth. So it is obvious that the mistreatment of the Bible was not the cause of all the Reformation.

That is one way to put it. I would rather say that the Bible was the one unrelenting force to change and to humanize and to correct and to improve the situation. But, looking back, it's very hard to disentangle all these things.

The result, of course, was the Lutheran Church; also the so-called Reformed Church. Luther was not part of the Reformed Church. Idiotic though these names are—I think I clarified this once before—the Reformed tradition was that derived from Geneva. The Lutheran tradition was different and not the same as the Reformed tradition. But both of them have been called the Protestant Reformation.

The *evangelici* were opposed to the *pontifici*. The *pontifici* were the party of people who followed the pontiff, the pope. The *evangelici* were the people who became Protestants: they protested against any kind of sweeping unification of any portion of Europe. They proposed (protested) that people should be allowed to choose to be *evangelici* or *pontifici*, and should not be forced. Thus, those who protested the imposition of the pontiff's tradition were called the Protestants.

Strictly speaking, you can't say that King Henry VIII was a Protestant. More and more today, Episcopalians say, "We're not Protestants." Seventh Day Adventists say, "We're not Protestants." In a certain sense, however, the word Protestant has gained a larger meaning.

As we look back, what is the significance of all this for us in terms of missionary theory? It means, I believe, that where you do not allow the vernacular and cultural self-determination in a situation, you will have to expect a split in the church. And that could very accurately be called a reformation: a reformulation along indigenous lines.

In Africa, more spectacularly than in any other place, you have thousands of splits off mission-founded churches, the mission-founded churches being more Western and European than they should be perhaps. Eventually, when

the Bible gets translated—this is one of David Barrett's theses, which makes the Bible Society people very unhappy—it is the translation of the Bible that liberates the people from the bondage of missionary culture, and allows and encourages the splits of the African independent churches. The AIC's of Africa, according to that theory and many other factors, are the result of the translation of the Bible.

One thing is certainly true: out of some 5-6,000 African independent churches, many, if not most, would welcome missionaries who would come, not in the name of another church or mission society, but to help them read the Bible in Greek and Hebrew. They'd be very happy for you to go over there and teach them Greek, because then they could read the Bible for themselves, they could translate it for themselves. They would become their own people.

Isn't this reminiscent of the Reformation? It took the Lutherans 50 years to finally establish some kind of formal structure for their movement and then settle upon it. When they did, they merely borrowed back again the Roman Catholic diocesan structure. They never did put the Orders back into the picture, and so the Protestant tradition lost the arms and legs, the vehicles, for renewal and outreach and mission.

To this day, we still don't know what to do with the mission societies, because the Reformation essentially threw out everything, and merely replaced the diocesan structure, minus

the order structure. Reformation will occur in somewhat similar form wherever there is not an 'autocephalic' approach, namely, allowing the people themselves to develop their own theological tradition, to read the Bible for themselves and to be themselves.

Now, I'm sure in all the classes here in the School of World Mission, this same subject is being discussed, so I don't need to add to it. The fact is the Reformation is that one *locus classicus*, that massive breaking away of a cultural tradition, that allowed for a breakdown of the uniformitarian hypothesis.

We should view it as such. It is not just a curious thing that happened. It foretells the future. It could have been predicted. It is at peace with many other movements in the modern world today. We need to study it, because we can see our hand in front of our face in parallel situations in foreign settings.

In response to questions: I think that the Reformation would have taken place without the printing press. I'll grant you that the printing press helped, but the printing press existed long before the Reformation. I'm trying to revise my personal opinion about these mechanical features of communication. Here's an interesting thing: scholars tell us that the average man on the streets of London knew more about the New Testament prior to the invention of printing than they do today! So think about that.

Winter Chapter 10

The Fifth Expansion

We're supposed to push on now into the next period according to our schedule: The Fifth Expansion. But we are only going to take one aspect of this 1600-2000 year period.

I must just make this off-hand comment, that there is so much of rich interest in all these periods that it does seem almost as if a teacher takes a group of students to a museum, but the museum is very large. There really isn't a lot of time, the little kids are flitting around and can't quite fully understand what's going on. But they get absorbed here and there, and they no sooner begin to figure out what is happening, than the teacher drags them on to the next section of the museum. And they finally get out sort of dazzled and confused by the rich detail of the whole situation.

You understand that my purpose is not to stand here and read for you all the little things that you can see through those museum windows yourself, but just to get you excited about the museum itself—so interested that you will want to go back and visit by yourself and linger as long as you like at any particular exhibit, and continue to do so for the rest of your lives.

Thus, what we need to do at this point is to get our perspective again in terms of our time grid. We've seen our first two epochs, where we dealt with the Romans in the first 400 years, and then the barbarian tribes flooded into Central Europe, blossoming as Christians by 800. Then came the Viking period, and toward the end of that third period, by 1200, we found a much more extensive period of flourishing. We talked about the Crusades, the friars, the cathedrals, the universities, and the tremendous burst of power. It's amazing how prolific the human being is, when he doesn't keep killing himself off all the time! But, of course, that flourishing took place after the Viking invasions subsided and the Vikings themselves had become Christians (of a sort) by 1050.

I'm not presenting these epochs as being something on God's timetable. It's just that we're trying to use 400-year chunks in order

better to keep track. This is a grid we're laying down on top of history. For just vague parallelism to the two Dark Ages you now have, beginning in the middle of the fourth epoch, the outbreak of the Plague, which ran for half a century in actuality and then for more than that in its tapering effects. It produced the unrest for the peasants uprisings that leaned into the period of the Reformation, so-called.

This reminds me of a similar situation later. The Second World War was a struggle essentially between Western powers. It wasn't a *world* war exactly, except that the whole world was watching it on television, so to speak. But while the Western powers were locked in struggle the non-Western countries, the colonial countries, struggled loose and got free from the Western powers. That is, during that war the French, the Spanish, the English, the Americans all began to lose their direct political control over the rest of the world. Now, the same thing is true here, to some extent: because of all this turmoil of the Plague and everything, the Roman church ended up losing control over the outlying provinces. To some extent that was the political breakdown of Europe ending in the Reformation—the outer provinces began to struggle loose during the confusion and the difficulties of the Plague.

Meanwhile, however, the most tragic impact of the Plague, as I see it, is its impact on the friars, the Roman Catholic missionary orders, which were able to go out across the world. It was a tremendous set back! I can't remember the precise number, but on an historical chart that my wife prepared, "2000 Years of Christian Expansion," there's a little note off to the left, indicating that something like 120,000 Franciscans died in the Plague in Germany alone! Dominicans died, Augustinians died, all kinds of people died in the Catholic orders. They were the ones who tried to help the afflicted. So it was a fantastic set back!

Nevertheless, I'll read you a quotation from Dominic in 1210—at precisely the time of the Lateran Council, which formally approved the

Franciscans and the Dominicans (the Franciscans had a five-year lead with a provisional approval before that, but at the Lateran Council they were fully approved)—it was that same year that Dominic came out with this statement to his followers: “You are a little flock, but God has for you the purpose of reaching the ends of the earth, because He has said that we must go and preach the gospel in all the lands.” It’s an obvious quotation of the Great Commission.

This was in 1210. See, we need to wait from 1210 to 1810 before there really is any Protestant quoting that same verse. In other words, 600 years of time goes by between 1210 and 1810. William Carey, of course, got out there a few years earlier, but 1810 is as good a date as any other to date the beginning of real energy in Protestant missions.

Six hundred years go by, in which the Roman Catholic tradition is the only really extensive missionary effort. The first part of this 600-year period, running up until 1492—call it 1500—was mission effort characterized as travel by land. The stories of attempts by the friars to cross the steppes of Asia and to go to Beijing, as we call it today—the legendary city of Cambaluc of the Mongols—all of this is just fabulous reading! You would never, ever turn on the television if you had access to the reality of that era. Take the question of the four spiritual laws that were written on the sides of the canvas of the traveling trailer these friars used! They were all very mobile, just like the Mongols were a very mobile nomadic people. The friars would raise this tent trailer up, and there would be the four canvas sides with the four spiritual laws of their devising on it, preaching the gospel of Jesus Christ in their particular way. What I would give to see what was on those four sides, what their precise gospel message was!

This is something you could write a paper on: What gospel did the friars preach? What were they trying to say? What was their emphasis? We have already pointed out that throughout Europe there was a great deal of emphasis on a John the Baptist sort of repentance and forgiveness of sins through faith in Jesus Christ. It’s got to be some how basically pretty Scriptural. You cannot account for the vitality, the durability, the patience, the many other virtues of these movements, apart from the true influence of the Bible.

The friars could not go by any other method, so they had to go by land. Way back there in 1262—notice how far back that is—you get the

Marco Polo story coming into the picture. In 1262, Marco Polo, one of several travelers of a family of merchants, brings back word from Cambaluc, today’s Beijing, the headquarters of the Mongol Empire, and the emperor there asked for a 100 missionaries to come and teach them science and religion! Notice the combination: science and religion. It’s very, very interesting. The gospel has always, always, *always* carried, in its very nature, elements other than purely spiritual elements. Don’t ever suppose that the gospel of Jesus Christ is just purely spiritual! Why? Because God’s concern for us is not just spiritual.

One reason the church persecuted certain people in those days was because they were dualistic, Manichaeism. Some of them believed that the Bible was evil. The Inquisitors didn’t have a theology that was all that superior, but it was superior. And, much as I hate to see the violence of the destruction of whole towns, and the hunting down of the heretics in Southern France, you have to admit that their theology wasn’t so hot. It was tintured heavily with a dualism and an ancient paganism, which was not Christian.

Christian insight has always involved salvation on a holistic scale, but Christians have not always understood that. It was Santa Theresa, one of the most godly women of history, who, it is said, had a little worm that screwed its way into her forehead and tormented her. But she said, Paul had a problem that he couldn’t cure, and so do I. And this made her more spiritual, she said. One day she leaned over to pick something up, so the story goes, and the worm fell out. She put it back in again! Now, that is the ultimate of pagan interpretation of God’s attitude towards the body.

So there has always been, or should have been, in the preaching of the gospel and the acceptance of the gospel, elements other than strictly spiritual elements. For they exist in God’s own appraisal of his own creation, fallen to be redeemed, not only spiritually but physically.

See page 656 in Latourette, where he talks about the study of the Bible in Spain and the role of Cardinal Ximenes (Cisneros is just another name for him). He’s the same man who put together the *Complutensian Polyglot Bible*. The real study of the Bible is there during that time.

Remember the movie on Francis of Assisi, “Brother Sun, Sister Moon.” The film ends where it should have begun, but as far as it goes, it is an excellent movie of the times and the

situation in which the Catholic Franciscan order was born. The thing that irritates me is the fact that all through the movie they're quoting the Bible, but never in the movie do you see the Bible. The Bible is totally absent. The whole idea is that somehow God just works like this, and yet the Bible is being quoted—obviously, somebody was reading the Bible. At this same time, Peter Waldo was taking the Bible in the vernacular all around the place. The Bible is the preeminent force in all this period!

Morris Watkins, who did his doctoral dissertation here recently and whose book has just been printed by the William Carey Library, shows the prominence of the Bible. Remember the prominence of the Bible in the Irish church: that bejeweled book which they were constantly carrying and copying and writing commentaries about. I think that while the Bible was part of the political banner of the Reformation, it continued to be a living force both in the north and in the south.

Someone might want to do a paper on the role of the Bible in the Catholic so-called Counter-Reformation. You'd better put "so-called," because I really think that's the only fair way to put it. It's true that the Protestants boast about the Bible. The role of the Bible in the Catholic movement is more subdued; it's less officious, but it is obviously there.

The point I'm trying to make right now is that when 100 missionaries were asked for by that Mongol emperor, Kublai Khan, he asked for missionaries who would bring them science *and* religion, or faith. I'm not sure of the exact wording of what they asked for, but they did want Europeans to come and bring them science. Missionaries have taken science all over the world. The largest technical university in Latin America, in Brazil, is there because of missionaries. The largest agricultural experimental station in Asia is there because of missionaries. The vast majority of universities outside of the West, as well as in the West, are there because of Christians, and even the emphasis on science in the Western tradition has its roots in the Christian movement. Of the five greatest men of science in English history—Sir Humphrey Davie, James Clerk Maxwell, William Thompson (Lord Kelvin), Isaac Newton and Michael Faraday—four of these five were devout Christians!

Kepler's three laws of motion were the first example in human history of the reduction of natural law to mathematical description. His three laws themselves are actually stunning,

absolutely fantastic breakthroughs in terms of describing in mathematical terms the planetary motion that was confused for centuries in people's minds—reducing it to really amazing laws! He showed that the time periods of the planets are proportional to the squares of the distances of their axes, and all kinds of amazing things like that were explained. Why? Because Kepler, as a Christian, had a Christian cosmology. He believed devoutly that God's creation would be orderly.

Latourette talks about the fact that the pagan tribal peoples, with their capricious pantheon of competing deities fighting and scrambling with each other, just like the Greek gods were, found that Christianity replaced all that with a cosmology of one God of order, and actually laid the groundwork for belief in natural law. These former tribal peoples wouldn't be looking for laws that could be described in mathematical terms, if they hadn't become Christians. There is no other human historical tradition that conceives of nature as orderly, except that which stems from the Judeo-Christian tradition. Science is impossible without that kind of cosmology, which is uniquely Judaic.

Even the so-called Greek science, as some authors have tried to put it, that preceded Christianity, was a vast confusion, compared to what happened when Christian cosmology replaced those deities whose sudden impulses could change nature, and allowed people to believe that God was consistent and predictable.

So, one of the things that attracted the rulers in Cambaluc was this other insight into the nature of nature, which came along as a by-product of the Christian faith. They wanted it. There it is, in 1262.

Now you go running down through history to the year 1600, and here is a man walking up the steps of the palace in Beijing, as it is now called. Who is he? Where did he come from? What has he got? What is he delivering? His name is Matteo Ricci. Matteo is simply the word for Matthew—there's the impact of the Bible. Right there in the year 1600.

Back in Italy some years before, maybe 15 years earlier, the intelligence of the Jesuit order had brought back the information that the rulers of China were very fascinated and attracted by two things: maps and clocks. These were two things they did not have control over, which the Christians did have control over. Latourette points out that clocks were invented in the monasteries in order to sound out the hours and then to reduce the *regulas* into practically

implementable orderly schemes. The clocks had a practical goal in mind in those days.

And the maps, too, were the result of worldwide interest, based on the Great Commission. Prince Henry the Navigator was one of the great scholars of the seas and promoters of navigation, although he never navigated except from land. He was a proponent, a massive, steely, disciplined proponent of reaching out, who had profoundly Christian purposes in sending ships out and refining their navigation methods and so forth. Their interest in the world, the maps that were being put together also were the result of Christian concern and Christian faith.

You take those two things, the clocks in the monasteries and the maps that would enable the Great Commission to be fulfilled, and those two things are the key that finally gets the Jesuits to Cambaluc, to Beijing. In a Jesuit monastic center in Italy, the command comes to Matteo Ricci's superior: "Prepare a man in maps and clocks, cartography ..." So this young man spent 11 years mastering clock-making and maps and cartography, and then he graduated from the "School of World Mission" and was sent off to the East!

Even so Ricci couldn't get into China and so landed in Macão, which was Portuguese. He stayed there and sort of informally allowed out the information that he knew all about clocks. They had clocks there, which travelers going later to Beijing looked at. And they had maps, which they wouldn't allow out of the room, but they showed them. So the word finally got to the emperor, and after a number of years the word comes from Beijing that Matteo Ricci is wanted in that capital city.

It is a very interesting repetition, you see, four hundred years later than Marco Polo. In his time, of course, they did send a handful of missionaries back to China. They sent four: two got scared before they ever got to the eastern end of the Mediterranean; the other two quit later on. Marco Polo's group did finally get there, but without the missionaries. Twenty-five years later, John of Montecorvino did finally get to Beijing. But by now the Khan who had asked for the missionaries had died. One of history's greatest failures to respond!

The only thing comparable that I know of occurring in modern times involves that same country, China. In a film that we made at the U.S. Center for World Mission about nine months ago, we had Pat Boone asking me a question about China, and I made the statement, "People

have said, 'These places are all closed to the gospel. You're talking about Chinese, Hindus, Moslems. You can't get at any of these people, so why keep talking about them?'" My answer to such questions is, "If China should open and all of a sudden they should want 50,000 American teachers of English, would we be ready?"

Now, what is it they would want English for? Clocks and maps! That is, technology from the West! A technology born and bred and developed, as only it could have been—among people who believe God made the world and made it beautiful and orderly.

You look at the 34 subatomic particles charted out by the nuclear physicists, and you are dazzled by the symmetry and the astonishing wonder of that. You're getting to the outer limits of human perception when you get into the subatomic particles and try to see what God made in that area. But this kind of knowledge is what those same Chinese want today.

Well, my answer was wrong. I misled Pat Boone. China didn't ask for 50,000 American teachers of English. They have just now announced that they want 500,000! I made a big mistake. But, of course, we're not ready for that either. If we're not ready for 50,000, we're not ready for 500,000. The 500,000 isn't all English teachers, I'll grant you. They want them to teach English, French, Spanish and German, in a big mass campaign; but English is the language they are really emphasizing. More than half of those teachers are to be English teachers. Are we ready to go to China with what it is they want, as well as the gospel?

Again and again after Marco Polo Europeans made massive attempts to go to China by land, but the land approach was not very successful. But then 1492 rolled around. Remember that date: that's the date when the Moors were pushed out of Spain. The next period of Catholic missions was to be by sea, and this was unimaginably more successful in reaching China! Here's again a technological achievement: navigation instruments, prepared by a godly man named Prince Henry the Navigator, an achievement that allowed these same people, these same organizations, to get to the ends of the earth. Without such instruments, they couldn't have done so.

Don't tell me that there isn't an interplay between technology and missions! Here's a perfect example. But it's a long and fabulous story, hardly known to Protestants. Protestants don't have the faintest idea what it is all about.

To illustrate, I brought along a book today

called *Observations in Lower California*, published by the University of California at Berkeley. What I have told you is the English translation of the title. It was written in German in 1772 by Baegert, a Jesuit. He spent almost 20 years in Baja California, just south of us here. While you're in California, you ought to look around a little. You'll find a great deal of evidence of Roman Catholic missions in our area. Just a few miles away from here is the San Gabriel Mission. These mission outposts were one day's journey away from each other, all the way up from Mexico, like a spinal column running up through California.

These were not examples of the monks fleeing the world. These people were on the outer edges of the face of the earth here in California! There was no place farther away from Europe. Even China was much closer than California, in the sense of how to get there safely. These outposts were not just little private preserves where they were looking out for their own salvation. They were reaching out to the Indians and trying to convert them. They were very obviously in that kind of a business, and this whole book is about that.

One of the most astounding things in this book is the culture shock of this Jesuit as he looks at these Californians—which is what he calls the Indians. Probably the most humorous thing is his ethnocentrism with regard to languages. This is 1772; he should have known better. Long before this, 200 years before this, the Catholic missionary movement had many missionaries who were highly skilled linguists. In Mexico City they were teaching a number of different languages to the friars who were going out to the various tribes. Down in Guatemala, where my own family lived for ten years, you can go and see a great set of ruins, broken down by earthquakes, the remains of the buildings of a group called the Redemptionist Fathers. They emphasized the indigenous languages, using the vernacular.

But here in 1772 comes a guy who somehow missed out on all that linguistic insight, and his whole book is just a diatribe about the stupid Californians. He doesn't say it quite that way, but he really doesn't think these people are very bright. In chapter 10, he comes to the their language and he speaks of:

a surprising and pitiful lack of a great number of words, without which I believe it is hardly possible for reasoning creatures to converse, still less to preach to them or teach them the

Christian doctrine. For example, there are no words to express whatever is not material and not perceptible by the senses and can neither be seen nor touched, nor are there words to express virtues nor vices nor qualities of feelings. For example, there are no nouns of that type and only three or four adjectives which could be read in the face in terms of emotions: merry, sad, tired and angry. There are no terms which relate to social, human or rational and civil life, and no words for a multitude of other objects. It would be futile to look in the [local Indian language] for the following words. Don't look for these words; they are not there: life, death, weather, time, cold, heat, world, rain, reason, memory, knowledge, honor, decency, consolation, peace, quarrel, member, joy, grace, feeling, friend, friendship, truth, shame, enmity, faith, love, hope, wish, desire, hate, anger, gratitude, patience, meekness, envy, industry, virtue, vice, beauty, form, sickness, danger, fear, occasion, thing, diversity, punishment, doubt, servant, master, virgin, judgment, suspicion, happiness, happy, reasonable, bashful, honorable, intelligent, moderate, pious, obedient, rich, poor, young, old, agreeable, lovely, friendly, half, quick, profound, round, contented, to greet, to thank, to punish, to be silent, to walk, to complain, to worship, to doubt, to buy, to flatter, to persecute, to dwell, to breathe, to imagine, to idle, to insult, to comfort, to live, and thousands of words like these, in general all German words ending in *heit, keit, nis, ung* and *facht*

Obviously, he was not a very good linguist! Obviously, he had not really learned that particular language. What he is saying is just so much nonsense! But it reveals to us the culture shock, the problems, the inabilities. It's the usual sort of clash that took place when people from Europe moved out across the globe and landed here in the so-called New World in the 1500s and penetrated clear across Mexico, clear over into California, ran into these strange people and just could not understand them.

We need to avoid the common stereotypes of our time, even though there are elements of truth in them. If these Native Americans did not have ways of expressing the concepts listed by this missionary, how could they reason? The Europeans looked back on their own savage past and they realized that there was a time when they themselves really didn't have cities, they didn't have industry; they didn't have a civilization growing up apart from the coming of the Christian faith—remember Churchill's summary. Thus, when they went out to the rest

of the world, they not only went out to the world with the spiritual gospel, but also with civilization, with science, because that is what they assumed the people would want. That, they felt, was part of God's concern. They assumed that if they were to take the gospel, they would also civilize the people. And if they civilized the people, then the people would be more useful. They could do more things, they could trade with them. They could get them to do useful things, instead of chasing each other around and killing each other, which is more or less the chief pastime of all mankind everywhere, and, as it turned out, that was what the people in the New World were doing before the conquistadors ever arrived. Had they not been at odds with one another the conquistadors could not have conquered them.

But we can't say that the Europeans went just for commercial purposes. We have to say it was a double motivation, even if some say it was mainly for commercial interest. It is quite impossible, I believe, to make a case for one of these two interests as being more prominent than the other. It's very easy to say that religion was just a technique. But you just cannot explain what happened that way.

Look at this man's motivation. Here he is, frustrated after 20 years, writing up this whole book: imagine the stupidity of this man, but also consider the fact that he stuck it out for 20 years, and that he went out there in the first place. The only reason he is back in Germany now is that the entire Jesuit Order was dissolved, and so he has time to write this book.

There is another section of this book we have to contend with. It is an interesting chapter in the Appendix in the back. When I showed this to Donald McGavran years ago, he lifted out the whole chapter, threw out every bit of the text of the *Church Growth Bulletin* planned for that month, and just plunked this whole section in its place! Maybe he had temporary insanity or something, but judge for yourself. I won't, of course, have time to read the whole thing, but you can look it up in the *Church Growth Bulletin*. This chapter is entitled "Some Questions Directed to Protestants and Particularly to Protestant Ministers." He says:

Although I am writing a report and not a controversy [his book is primarily to Catholics], I may be permitted to interrupt my narrative and address myself in this chapter to the gentlemen of the Protestant faith, since it may happen that this volume will get into

their hands. Now the Protestants are obviously not the true Church, because the true Church is characterized by its zeal to convert people.

The true Church of the New Testament does not say: "Do not set your feet into idolatrous provinces and lands." But on the contrary, the New Testament says "Go into the world and preach the word of God unto all men!"

This comes from the Latin, to the German, to the English, and it still sounds pretty much like the Great Commission. Let's go on.

The Bible frequently and emphatically demands of Christian preachers to seek converts. This work of conversion must be carried on in order to conform with the many prophecies. The neglected missionary work on the part of Protestants must be due either to prejudice on the part of all non-Catholic sects, or it must prove that they are invalid and the Roman Catholic religion is the truth. The Protestants, for example ...

Here he goes into another whole section saying, essentially, "You know, if the Protestants really wanted to be missionaries, they would really have a very easy time, because they have complete sea power in both the West Indies and the East Indies. They have an excellent opportunity of carrying out the work of converting nonbelievers in both the West and the East Indies, for there, as everyone knows, their trade and power is very great. And [now here's a theological barb!] it would be much easier for them, and they would be much more successful than the Catholics, because as a matter of fact all they have to preach to the pagans is their doctrine of faith. They in fact could permit the natives in the spirit of Luther to practice their wickedness thousands of times a day. In that spirit they could allow them to kill and yet throw the gates of heaven wide open for them, thanks to faith alone."

And then, lest anyone not believe what he has just said, he now quotes Luther verbatim—here's Luther, who said almost everything at least once—and you can try to reconstruct the context, but here it is:

Be a sinner, sin bravely, but let your faith be stronger for it, and rejoice in Christ who vanquished sin in the world. We have to sin as long as we are in this world. It is enough that we through God's wealth and grace have seen the Lamb who bears the sins of the world. No sin will separate us from Him, although a thousand and another thousand times a day we whore and murder.

That's Luther making a point!

I won't have time to go further into this, but in this chapter directed to Protestants Baegert quotes every verse you've ever heard at a missionary conference, quotes them in favor of the Great Commission! He asks:

Where are the great volumes of martyrs in the history of Protestant missions, like we've got in the Jesuit Order? The results of the so-called Reformation in the 16th century, and from 1517 until now, have been nothing but dissension and devastation in the sheepfold of Christ. The English and the Dutch, particularly the latter, trade in all things in all corners of the globe and they will do anything for a profit, but they do not carry the Gospel of Christ.

He is right. For example, when the Japanese got so fed up with Christianity that they closed their ports to all European traders, they didn't throw the Dutch out. Why? Because the Protestant Dutch never, ever, brought missionaries. In fact, the Dutch even helped the Japanese kick out the Spanish and the Portuguese, and even assisted in the gruesome martyrdom in Japan of hundreds of Catholic missionaries and thousands of Christians! This went on for quite a while.

Anyway, the fact is that here is a man quoting the Bible, obeying the Bible, going across the world with the Bible, along with other Catholic missionaries, *during a period of 600 years prior to any stirring within the Protestant tradition along the same lines.*

We left Matteo Ricci on the steps of the Peking Palace. We have not yet talked about the Chinese Rites Controversy. Let me just give you a little peek into what was involved there. The Jesuits got to China first. Matteo Ricci sailed for the East long before the year 1600. He was in Macão for some years before getting this fantastic opening to get into China. These men apparently had a School of World Mission behind them that produced in each of them a very similar, highly contextualizing strategy, whether it was Nobili in India or Ricci in China or Valignano in Japan—they were all contemporaries—all apparently getting their strategy from the same mood and perspective back in Europe. One of the things Ricci did was to absolutely master the Chinese classics. His people knew the literature as well as any Chinese. They dressed like the Chinese.

Centuries later, Hudson Taylor was to run into the Jesuits. While the official two-volume report on Hudson Taylor makes practically no

mention of the Jesuits, more recent research gives quite a bit of additional information about his contact with the Jesuits. You can see this in a lighter and very fascinating book called *Hudson and Maria*, which is ostensibly about the romance of Hudson Taylor and his marriage. But it mentions his contact with the Jesuits and the fact that, of all the Protestant missionaries in China, Taylor was the only one who proposed wearing Chinese dress, wearing a pigtail and everything else, and that he got this from the Jesuits!

Back to 1600. Ricci and company became Chinese if any missionaries ever did! Of course, they didn't ever go on furloughs, or anything like that. But there came a day when the Franciscans arrived. And the Franciscans, even by the year 1600, were characteristically less intellectual, less academic. They were going to get things done quickly, by a process of immediate witnessing and so forth. I hesitate to make comparisons, but there would be some trace of comparison, say, between Campus Crusade and the Franciscans.

So the Jesuit sees a Franciscan coming, and let's assume they were both Italians, so the Jesuit conjures up a bit of his remaining Italian and blurts it out to this guy coming up the steps, and the guy jumps back absolutely astonished that a Chinese would speak in Italian! Freaked out completely! The immediate conclusion was that these Jesuits have syncretized Christianity: they have gone over to the Chinese. Instead of winning the Chinese to Christ, the Chinese have won the Jesuits to themselves. And they even allow the Chinese to worship their ancestors—that is the heart of the Chinese Rites Controversy.

So there began a seesaw of power across the years: letters going back to the pope; the pope writing back to China. It took about two solid years for a letter to go and a reply to come; it was not a very good method of communication. Exaggerations were made and all kinds of distortions, as you could imagine, with the two parties trying to persuade the pope of their version of what was happening. And, of course, pope after pope after pope went by, and each new pope had to be reeducated; and the Vatican politicians, of course, had other things to do.

This little thing finally had to be settled, and they finally settled it wrong. Even the emperor of China got into the act and said, "Listen, we trust the Jesuits. They understand us. If you deny their approach, we will throw all missionaries out of China." The pope, of course, couldn't believe that anybody would have more authority

than he did, and so he simply wrote back to the emperor and said, “Go jump in the lake!” Or something to that effect.

And, sure enough, the emperor of China, very begrudgingly, expelled every missionary from China. What a major setback! There were maybe a quarter of a million Christians by this time in China, and the whole thing collapsed, due to the sudden, very bizarre, elimination of any contact with the outside world and with Christianity elsewhere in particular. Then, of course, not for this reason, the entire Jesuit order was closed down for about a quarter of a century, most of them actually killed off. Finally only a handful of white-haired men were left, but that is all it took to rebuild the order into enormous muscular strength again in a few years.

Someone has asked me, “Isn’t it amazing that the Jesuits would bounce back so rapidly? Where would they get all their new missionaries?” I promised to say just a word about this.

It is amazing, but the hardest thing about starting a mission society is to design the social structure of that organization. This is why it has been so slow in Korea to get a mission society started that really is a tough-minded, effective, experienced organization. The structure—that is what’s precious—is so important, and is so difficult to hammer out and to define! Once it is hammered out, well-oiled, and clearly understood, then it is a hundred times easier for a group like the Jesuits to bounce back, having already developed the mold, than to start a new organization that has to make things up as it goes along.

I know, I’m involved in such an endeavor. I have ninety people now who have joined me at the U.S. Center for World Mission. We’re hammering out, as it were, a *regula*, a way of life, a lifestyle as well as a theology and a strategy. The people that we absorb, in a naturalization process, the definition of standards, and all the hundreds of little nitpicking things that the conventional way of life has already resolved, have to be either borrowed or created, and it takes time!

It’s easy to build buildings; it is *not* easy to build social structures. We have to take very seriously and very respectfully the developmental accomplishment of any existing organization.

Now I say that because many of our young people today are displeased with existing organizations. They want to start new ones, or they don’t want to have anything to do with organizations. They’re just mad at all institutions! Anti-institutional is the phrase. Anything that already exists, any rules that are already laid down, have got to be wrong! The hippies in their day tried to start out afresh. There were 20,000 communes in this country at one point: almost all of them went kaput, and almost always over the problem of establishing a *regula*, a way of life, a social system. They just couldn’t do it!

For example—just to give you a little insight into the enormity of the problem—has anybody here ever attempted to start a new language from scratch, without borrowing from any other language? It is almost impossible to believe that any human being would have the intelligence to come up with a new language comparable to any real language that already exists, if he had to invent it out of whole cloth. As a person with a Ph.D. in Linguistics, I know how amazing and strange the different grammatical mechanisms are from language to language. It is hard to believe that there is any common origin whatsoever. Forty utterly different *language systems* in the world today! By a language system, I mean a system that groups languages as different as Finnish and Korean in the same family; they apparently have the same origin. The Korean who travels in Finland may not realize that fact, nor vice-versa, but linguistically speaking, it is so much easier for a Finn to learn Korean or vice-versa, than it would be for someone who speaks English or Swahili or Chinese. On the other hand, there is no connection whatsoever between Korean and Japanese. Well, now, for a Korean to invent Japanese, for example, or vice-versa, is just unthinkable!

Okay, social structure is just as complicated as language structure. While the Jesuits don’t represent a completely different social structure, they certainly represent an additional set of social norms which produce a community, in addition to what the general European background provided, and their structure is really a great accomplishment. It is what enabled them to bounce back and recruit new missionaries again so readily.