

# Lausanne world pulse.com

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A FREE monthly, online magazine that provides you with missions and evangelism news, information and analysis.

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## WORLD NEWS BRIEFS

October 2005

### AUSTRALIA

More than 25,000 people from the Hunter region of Australia (15% of the population) attended the recent Harvest '05 crusade. Nearly 2,500 volunteers from 200 churches participated in the event, which resulted in more than 2,000 people giving their lives to Christ. The crusade was accompanied by two Harvest Jam Youth programs, featuring Christian artist Rebecca St. James and Christian bands Delirious and Planetshakers. Of the 10,400 young people attending the youth events, more than 1,000 gave their lives to the Lord. (Religionjournal.com)

### BELARUS

Christians from New Life Church in Minsk are protesting the state's seizure of their church land. The 600-member church is part of the Full Gospel Union Church denomination and has been under watch since the nation passed the 2002 Law on Freedom of Conscience which requires all existing churches to re-register. Many believe this is part of the government's plan to rid the country of all non-Orthodox churches. Other churches that have refused to re-register have found themselves the target of government attempts to shut them down. (ASSIST News Service)

### BURMA

Ronald Lalthanliana, a key figure in spiritual renewal across Burma for more than fifty years, passed away in late July at the age of 89. The son of the first native missionary to Matipur, an Indian state bordering Burma, Lalthanliana started a ten-person fellowship in 1955 that has planted churches which include more than 18,000 believers. Lalthanliana is remembered for living the gospel that he preached, having been imprisoned without trial for four years under false charges. During that time, he led forty inmates and four policemen to the Lord. He is survived by his wife, six children and over thirty grandchildren and great-grandchildren. (Christian Aid Mission)

### ENGLAND

The United Nations Security Council is being called upon to address the threat to peace in Burma. Commissioned by former Czech president Vaclav Havel and Bishop Desmond Tutu, the report recognizes the reasons the Security Council should intervene, as well as suggests how the Burmese government can work with the UN Secretary General's office in reconciliation and restoration of the democratic government. The report also urges the Burmese government to allow international humanitarian organizations unhindered access to the country and to immediately release all prisoners of conscience. (ASSIST News Service)

### INDONESIA

Three Christian women have been charged with violating Indonesia's 2002 Child Protection Act and sentenced to three years in prison. The women, who held a "Happy Sunday" program in their homes in early May, were charged with attempting to Christianize Muslim children. Although the children had their parents' permission, observers say pressure from Islamic radicals who threatened to kill the women, witnesses, pastors, missionaries and judges in the trial factored into the decision to convict. The verdict may be appealed. (Compass Direct)

## **IRELAND**

The first Christian radio station in Ireland will begin broadcasting around Christmas of 2006 in Cork, a city where nearly half of the 120,000+ people declare themselves to be Christian. After successfully holding a temporary license in 2004, LifeFm has been granted a five-year license by the Broadcasting Commission of Ireland. LifeFm will be volunteer-run and include both contemporary and traditional Christian music, along with news features, community events and talk radio. (ASSIST News Service)

## **PAPUA NEW GUINEA**

In less than six weeks the translation of the Iwam New Testament will be complete. Several Iwam men are partnering with missionary Hope Sharp to complete the final 1,151 verses of the Gospel of Luke as well as revising literary materials used by teachers in the Aumi and Aiwanu villages. (New Tribes Mission)

## **RUSSIA**

More than a year after 331 people (including 186 children) were killed by explosions and gunfire in a terrorist attack in Beslan, a new Calvary Chapel has opened to provide hope for those still suffering from the school attack. After serving with Calvary Chapel Jerusalem, missionary Jason Calzone visited Beslan and has partnered with Beslan pastor Jumbal in starting a church in the area. Beslan is less than 100 miles from the Chechnian border. (ASSIST News Service)

## **RUSSIA**

A Russian Orthodox bishop has appealed for a European Roman Catholic-Orthodox alliance to combat what he described as secularism, liberalism and relativism. "Europe has so rapidly de-Christianized that urgent action is needed to save it from losing its centuries-old Christian identity," said Bishop Hilarion (Alfeyev) of Vienna and Austria, the Russian church's representative to the European Union. (Ecumenical News International)

## **VIETNAM**

For the third time, evangelist Dinh Van Hoang's home was burned down because he would not sign a paper denying his Christian faith. A member of the Hre minority and the Evangelical Church of Vietnam (South), Hoang and several other Hre members have been discriminated against and harassed for their faith for years. Authorities in the Son Ha District of Quang Ngai Province allegedly incited a mob of war veterans, local defense forces and young people to burn down Hoang's home. Hoang has undergone mockings, beatings and imprisonments over the years by local authorities. This recent action comes shortly after Vietnam adopted legislative measures supporting greater religious freedom. (Compass Direct)

## **UNITED STATES**

While millions of Americans are reaching out to help families and individuals affected by Hurricane Katrina by offering housing and other resources, Compassion International (CI) and the International Bible Society (IBS) have partnered to reach one specific group--children. "The Survivors," an interactive Scripture booklet specifically designed to help children deal with crisis and loss, was developed by IBS and is being distributed by CI. More than 180,000 copies in English and Spanish have been handed out in an effort to help the children affected by the hurricane and ensuing disasters. (ASSIST News Service)

## **UNITED STATES**

Amidst the devastation left in the wake of Hurricane Katrina, New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary president Chuck Kelley is reminding the church of the opportunity to both proclaim and minister. "We separated the two functions. Evangelism became proclamation and ministry became missions," Kelley said in an interview with the Southern Baptist TEXAN. Kelley is reminding Southern Baptists and others in the church that the two must go hand-in-hand and Christians must provide tangible resources such as shelter, food and clothing for individuals in need. Through one program known as Mission Lab, churches have brought mission groups into the New Orleans area for a week-long ministry experience. Even before Hurricane Katrina, both teenagers and senior adults served among the homeless, alcoholics and impoverished citizens of New Orleans in recent years. (Baptist Press News)

## **UNITED STATES**

Pastors and Christian leaders from thirty-five nations will gather in the United States October 10-13 for the International Summit for Church Leaders. Sponsored by Global Advance, the event is held every three years and is intended to give leaders in the church the opportunity to discuss strategies for reaching unreached peoples; evaluate the state of global evangelization; and pray over the needs of the church. (Mission Network News)

# WORLD EVANGELISM & MISSIONS REPORTS

## “Jesus. All about Life” Media Campaign Shares Gospel Message throughout Adelaide, South Australia October 2005

*by Martin Johnson*

**P**ut together 350 churches and church-based organizations; 25,000 pamphlets; 11,500 response books; 20,000 prayer cards; more than 1,000 people trained in evangelism; \$260,000 (Australian dollars) worth of television and radio time; twenty-two giant billboards; and hundreds of people praying and what do you have?

The answer is: Australia’s first outreach campaign using prime-time media to reach a whole city with the message that Jesus is all about life. The “Jesus. All about life” (JAAL) campaign was developed by Bible Society New South Wales (NSW) and was launched August 8th in Adelaide, South Australia. The five-week campaign was aimed at raising awareness of the person and message of Jesus Christ and at encouraging people to investigate the abundant life that Jesus offers. Most visible in the campaign were six television commercials aimed at young people, families and baby boomers. The commercials were produced following extensive research which included focus groups and a series of “think-tanks.”

Central to the success of the campaign was the involvement of local churches that were led by a committee made up of church and Christian business leaders. Bible Society NSW developed the JAAL campaign as part of its strategy to “engage with a post-modern culture.” The prayer was that by reading the specially-produced response book and coming into contact with local churches, the people of Adelaide would experience the truth of Jesus’ message. To support the campaign, Bible Society NSW and Ambassadors for Christ also produced a five-week DVD-based course which looked at topics such as: “The Spiritual Search;” “Can I Trust the Bible?;” and “My Relationship with God.” Presented by co-director Reverend Karl Faase, the course used the JAAL response book as its main text.

The Adelaide campaign is now completed and Canberra is looking to launch the project in March and April of 2006. Committees in Brisbane and Melbourne have also been established and Perth and Hobart have shown interest.

Bible Society NSW has made a major investment in the “Jesus. All about life” project and believes it will be used to bring thousands of people to the saving knowledge of Jesus Christ. The Adelaide campaign generated 1,500 requests for the information pack, which included the response book. Churches gave away 10,000 books in their local communities. In addition, local churches ran over 400 events—all under the “Jesus. All about life” banner. Although JAAL uses prime-time media and outdoor advertising, the real strength is the involvement of the local church. In the words of Michael Fitch (who ran a similar campaign in Ireland in 2002, called “Power to Change”), it’s really about “motivating the quiet Christian to share their faith.”

*Martin Johnson is manager of communications for Bible Society NSW and director for the “Jesus. All about Life” project.*

## Casting a Global Net

October 2005

*By David Hackett*

**W**hen it comes to sharing the gospel of Christ with many people at one time—casting the proverbial large net—Christians eagerly use the tools of their day. Paul preached from Mars Hill. Luther churned out printed Bibles. Huge crowds in the 18th century were drawn to Gospel tents. More recently, we have seen stadium gatherings. As Global Media Outreach Chairman Walt Wilson says, “The Internet is the funnel to put new believers into the church.”

The Computer Industry Almanac projects that the worldwide Internet population will reach 1.07 billion in 2005. Only 35% use English on the Web, which means that nearly 700 million are surfing the Web in another language. In fact, the top languages online are Chinese, Spanish, Japanese, German, French and Korean (with less common languages online as well).

### **A Vision is Born**

From this realization, a new vision is coming into focus. The Internet can be used for evangelism in a variety of languages. Around the world, creative ministries are launching websites focused on drawing people to Christ. These sites are much different from those sites which exist to nurture Christians. Jargon is often minimal for those who, as Wilson says, "want to do business with God."

These sites often feature indigenized content relevant to the culture they are reaching out to and address spiritual topics of interest to particular situations in that culture. For example, sites might use color schemes and layouts that are attractive to a specific culture. They may also attempt to answer questions about ancestor worship or dealing with spirits.

John Edmiston, founder of Cybermissions.org agrees the Internet has enormous potential for cross-cultural outreach. "Two-thirds of the Internet is not English-speaking," he says. Edmiston adds that Christians using the Web for evangelism "can communicate one-to-one securely – as well as one to many."

An advantage to Web-based outreach is that people visit these sites on their own rather than being sought out by ministries. "The Internet is where people do their secret thinking," Edmiston says. "It's where they ask intimate questions they can't even ask others. This is where the anonymous feature of the Web is best put to work. People ask their deepest, most secret questions."

### **International Internet Evangelism Network (IEN)**

Because of the growing interest in reaching non-English speaking people on the Internet, a new effort is underway to create an international network of Web evangelism pioneers who work in languages other than English. Organizers are calling this anticipated network the "International Internet Evangelism Network," or IEN.

The purpose of the IEN is to advance global Internet evangelism by creating a community of Internet evangelism practitioners who share what they learn, thereby avoiding duplication of efforts, and offer encouragement to each other. The forum can help practitioners discover ways to collaborate in similar ministries, with the hope of reducing expenses and increasing Christian unity.

### **Endorsed by the Internet Evangelism Coalition**

The Internet Evangelism Coalition (IEC) has long desired to assist online evangelism initiatives in languages other than English. However, its member organizations, operate mostly in English.

At its September 2005 meeting, the IEC executive committee and visionSynergy ([www.visionsynergy.net](http://www.visionsynergy.net)) partnered to bring into being this international Internet evangelism network. According to Dr. Sterling Huston, chairman of the IEC executive committee,

"The rapid growth, broad international reach and economical cost of the Internet offers individuals, churches and ministries an unprecedented opportunity to share the gospel of Jesus Christ worldwide. The IEC is enabling the church in fulfilling its mission by creating and communicating Internet resources for evangelizing our world. It has voted to establish a relationship with visionSynergy and wants to help facilitate this initiative. The IEC is cooperating with visionSynergy on this effort."

VisionSynergy is a small team with much experience in creating viable and enduring mission networks and mission partnerships between churches, agencies and organizations to advance global evangelization, especially among unreached people groups. The ministry hosts a networking resource site [www.powerofconnecting.net](http://www.powerofconnecting.net)

VisionSynergy believes that an international Internet evangelism network will significantly increase the growth and effectiveness of existing and new online evangelism efforts.

### **Collaboration Seen as a Key to Success**

Many have responded positively to the vision for an International Internet Evangelism Network.

"Connecting and collaborating are key to our future success in online ministry—and especially online

evangelism," says Mark Burger, executive director of Dad's Place Ministries [www.dadsplace.org](http://www.dadsplace.org). Burger was at the September annual meeting of the IEC.

International ministries are equally responsive. In June 2005, I presented plans for this network to the Global Christian Internet Alliance (GCIA), which met in Paris. The GCIA is an alliance of Christian ministries that have established online presences and over two dozen ministries from fourteen countries were represented at this year's conference. The group identified common challenges that could be addressed through an International Internet Evangelism Network. Members of the GCIA will be early participants in the network.

### **Regional Expressions May Develop**

One way a global Internet evangelism network might develop is through regional or language-specific networks. Early collaborative efforts are already underway:

- Several ministries are preparing an online evangelism effort for French-speakers ([www.connaitredie.com](http://www.connaitredie.com)). There are over twenty-seven million French-speakers online.
- Ministries are using the Web to reach out to Farsi-speakers ([www.kelisatv.com](http://www.kelisatv.com)).
- Numerous seeker-friendly, evangelistic websites for the Islamic community are operating (<http://thelightoftruth.com>), containing both English and Arabic versions.
- China appears ripe for online evangelism with an Internet population of 103 million, second only to the US. Nearly half of web users in China are under the age of twenty-four.

Even in countries with fewer online users, such as Uzbekistan, community leaders are still online. Reaching these leaders through the Internet may have a disproportionate impact. Cybermissions.org leaders refer to a "tunnel and blast" strategy of using the Internet to tunnel into a culture to find a "person of peace," then building a relationship and equipping the person to win the community and thus "blast" the gospel. In the developing world one person may be directly or indirectly connected to 300 people.

These developments reveal a dramatic maturing of the Internet evangelism world and the mainstreaming of what ten years ago would have been considered very edgy concepts. Edmiston views global Internet evangelism as part of God's unfolding purpose:

"God has planned the use of Internet evangelism from long ago and stretched out his hand to bless it. We are at a critical period of world harvest when much needs to be done and yet many countries are closed to conventional means of preaching the gospel. God has raised up Internet evangelism and cybermissions as one way of meeting this need and is powerfully blessing it and making it effective."

*Dave Hackett is associate director of visionSynergy, [www.visionSynergy.net](http://www.visionSynergy.net)*

## **Local Churches and Ministries in Mississippi Uniquely Impacting Communities Affected by Hurricane Katrina October 2005**

*By Jarvis Ward*

**W**hen Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and Mississippi Emergency Management Agency (MEMA) officials finally began to better access the damage caused by Hurricane Katrina, they were amazed by the mobilization and compassionate response by local churches and partnering churches. Even the Mississippi Red Cross state director recently said to a group of government leaders that "if the church had not taken the initiative many more people would have died."

Churches and faith-based ministries in and around central Mississippi mobilized ministry vehicles and personal vehicles to transport water, ice and food to those in badly damaged areas. In many counties along the coast, local churches and faith-based ministries were the first to respond and because they knew the areas, the workers could respond quickly and could creatively secure needed resources.

Members and staff of local churches and ministries were also the first to take those displaced by Katrina into their homes and facilities. These groups and individuals accepted the inconvenience of transporting,

housing, feeding and clothing other Mississippi residents and displaced Louisiana and Alabama neighbors.

In almost every Mississippi county, the church and faith-based organizations have been a source of continual comfort and compassion by providing love and prayer support to those in need. When other groups were not able to help Mississippians and other displaced neighbors, local churches and faith-based organizations, in collaboration with churches and ministries around the nation, have effectively and efficiently addressed pressing needs. All ministries that helped have been moved with compassion as they provide housing, food, clothing, transportation, counseling, medical and monetary aid to those impacted by Katrina.

Leaders of local churches and ministries are also providing advocacy to those displaced in an effort to get the attention of FEMA, MEMA and insurance companies.

Local churches and ministries did not wait for money or clearance to go in to remove trees; set up feeding, clothing and water stations; or erect medical clinics for those needing daily care. Local churches and ministries, in conjunction with thousands of Christians around the world, continue to pray, to care and to share with those in need.

Through these efforts we are seeing a clear demonstration and declaration of the gospel of Jesus Christ!

*Jarvis Ward is National Facilitator of City/Community Ministries, for the Mission America Coalition.*

## **Bibles Brighten Lives for Survivors of Hurricane Katrina; Three Quarters of a Million Scriptures for Distribution**

October 2005

**By Roy Lloyd**

**T**he American Bible Society (ABS) already has three quarters of a million Bibles and scripture portions for distribution to those who survived the devastation of Hurricane Katrina, with more to come in the days ahead. All of the scriptures are in English and Spanish and include outreach Bibles and a special booklet created for this tragedy called God Is Our Shelter and Strength. A million copies of the pocket-sized portion have been printed in both languages.

Other booklets also are being distributed including The Lord Keeps You Safe; Hold On: Love Is on the Way; How Can I Pray when I'm Angry; and The Lord Is Near the Brokenhearted. Each of the portions contains Bible passages that relate to the themes and do not contain any theological or doctrinal language. The ABS believes that the Bible speaks for itself.

Notable celebrities are helping the ABS to get out the word about the desperate need for Bibles. Pat Boone has videotaped an appeal for the financial support needed by the Bible Society to give Scripture to survivors of the hurricane. That video can be viewed at [www.KatrinaBibles.org](http://www.KatrinaBibles.org).

Grammy Award-winning singer Yolanda Adams has received 20,000 copies of the God Is Our Shelter and Strength booklet to give to her audience on October 2 at a special "Day of Healing" concert for evacuees relocated to Louisiana's capital city, Baton Rouge. Some 7,000 ABS Bibles and 3,000 copies of the Bible Society youth publication 4 the Streets also will be distributed.

Appearing with Adams in the concert will be Kirk Franklin; Joe Ligon & Mighty Clouds of Joy; and Israel & New Breed. Adams says:

"Now that food, clothing and housing have been facilitated to the victims of Hurricane Katrina, it is vitally important that the spiritual needs of the evacuees are taken care of. Faith and hope must be built from the inside, to assure the victims that God has not forsaken them. The Bibles and scripture portions will help build the faith and hope of the victims, so that they realize that God's people truly care and love them."

In Houston volunteers from local churches are putting God's word into the hands of those who are anxious to receive the Scripture. William Taylor, who heads the volunteers with Operation Compassion, thanked the Bible Society for providing what was needed to reach out to those affected.

As thousands of evacuees lined up at St. Agnes Baptist Church in Houston, ABS Bibles and scripture portions were made available to them. Those in the long line had been there since 6 p.m. the night before to retain their spot in the FEMA line. When the opportunity to get a Bible was presented, many asked someone to save their place so they could come to get their own Bible.

At that site, Dorris Ellis, editor of the Houston Sun and an ABS volunteer, said, "Most of these people lost their Bibles and they will treasure this new Bible as a sign of a fresh start. They will read it while in line and be comforted and encouraged."

In Houston's George R. Brown Convention Center, the Reliant Arena and the Astrodome, the God Is Our Shelter and Strength booklet is popular with those being housed in those sites and with the many church volunteers who also need the strengthening provided by the Bible.

In the Astrodome parking lot, volunteers from California requested Bibles from ABS staff to put into the backpacks they had purchased to give to evacuees, along with the essentials of toiletries and clean socks.

At the Reliant Center health station, being staffed by medical personnel affiliated with CeeJay Crusades, Bibles are available for those who wish to have them. All the Bibles are supplied by the ABS.

Pastor Pedro Cantu of Amor y Restauracion (Love and Restoration) Church is helping resettle the Spanish-speaking people who fled the flooding in New Orleans. He says the God Is Our Shelter and Strength booklet is a map for those seeking to renew their lives and a key that opens up the power of the Bible. One of the evacuees he helped, Carlos Garay, has himself become a volunteer and says that now and in the future those who have suffered so much will realize that their lives must be built on the rock of the Bible.

The ABS has established the Hope Fund to enable a response to the spiritual need that exists. The Hope Fund is set up to respond to profound needs, like the hurricane disaster, in this country and around the world. For more information, go to [www.AmericanBible.org](http://www.AmericanBible.org).

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## **WORLD PERSPECTIVES**

### **Theological Reflections on the Christian Humanitarian Response**

October 2005

*By Bryant Myers*

**T**here are a number of theological themes that must be kept in mind as we explore the Christian response to humanitarian crises.

#### **Hospitality**

While the Christian response to uprooted people is biblically demanded, the imperative rests on something deeper than Old Testament law. The demand to love God with all one's heart and mind and to love one's neighbor as oneself is made clear in Jesus' teaching in Matthew 25. All the nations will be gathered and separated according to their giving to the "least of these" in food, water, clothes, medical care and hospitality.

One of Kosuke Koyama's endearing contributions to missiology is what he calls "neighborology."<sup>1</sup> Koyama reminds us that people need good neighbors more than good theology or emergency relief and that inviting people into our homes is vital. Hospitality is a missiological response.

Pope Paul VI underscored the same idea in *Populorum Progressio*, an encyclical written two years after the Second Vatican Council: "We cannot insist too much on the duty of giving foreigners a hospitable reception. It is a duty imposed by human solidarity and by Christian charity."<sup>2</sup> The Pontifical Council for

the Pastoral Care of Migrants and Refugees reminds us that progress in terms of living peacefully together is “closely linked to the growth in the mentality of hospitality.”<sup>3</sup>

Hospitality is more than caring for or reaching out, it is getting close and personal. It’s like Jesus sharing a meal with lepers and outcasts. “I was a stranger and you welcomed me” (Matthew 25:35).

## **Charity and Solidarity**

We must also acknowledge the responsibility of the rich. While no one is too poor to give, the Bible suggests that those who have much are obligated to share. In Acts we are told that no one in the community of faith was in need (Acts 4:34) and this was made possible by sharing. Failure to welcome the refugee, displaced person or migrant worker constitutes a moral failure, not simply an economic choice. The expectations of welcoming goes far beyond provision of material needs. In *Populorum Progressio*, three moral duties of rich nations are named: 1) mutual solidarity in the form of the aid that rich nations should give developing nations; 2) social justice in the form of rectifying trade relations between strong and weak nations; and 3) universal charity—the effort to build a more humane community in which all give and receive.<sup>4</sup> This echoes Old Testament commandments. Sharing (loving the alien) must be accompanied by creating a fairer playing field (not oppressing the alien) and restoring just and peaceful relationships among peoples (giving the alien an inheritance).

Where does the passion for charity and solidarity come from?

## **Faith and Love**

We now must consider the relationship between our faith and our capacity to love our uprooted neighbor. The test of our faith is our ability to love. If we cannot welcome the stranger, our faith is suspect. Either we don’t truly believe, our gospel is too narrow or there are idols distracting us from our responsibilities.

But, more importantly, faith is the precursor to being able to truly love. Our faith in the Lord of grace and the sanctifying Holy Spirit is what holds the promise that we can love unselfishly. David Bloesch sums: “Faith alone justifies; love attests that faith is alive. Faith is personal; love is social. Faith is the foundation; love is the goal. Faith is the root; peace, joy and love are the fruits.”<sup>5</sup> Our Christian faith and its vitality and sustenance are the foundation of our humanitarian response.

## **True Humanitarianism**

Finally, we must clarify our theology of humanitarianism. Bloesch warns of the temptation to reduce a truly Christian understanding of humanitarianism to its modern secular form:

“The object of humanitarianism (in its secular sense) is not to identify with the world in its shame and affliction (James 1:27), nor to permeate the world with the leaven of the gospel, but to remold the world in the image of enlightened humanity. Humanitarianism is a liberal form of religion emphasizing service to humanity above all other concerns....The goal is the greater happiness of man, not the glory of God.”<sup>6</sup>

The danger of reduced understanding of humanitarianism is not only how it affects our actions, but how it affects our thought life: “When concern for social improvement pre-empts the hope for the righteousness of the Kingdom, we are in the humanitarian [Western liberal democratic] rather than the biblical thought-world.”<sup>7</sup>

The antidote to a false humanitarianism is to be sure that our anthropology is theologically sound. The truth is that God created human beings as free beings and that we are made in God’s image and are here for a purpose. We are to first glorify God and then we are to make the earth productive. This is the foundation of our humanitarianism as Christians and the test of our humanitarian response. Are we affirming the truth about God and the truth about humankind?

*Populorum Progressio* reminds us that a truly Christian humanism “points the way to God” and that “Man is not the ultimate measure of man. Man becomes truly man only by passing beyond himself.”<sup>8</sup> We have not reached high enough unless the goal of humanitarianism is to encourage people to find God. In this, they will discover that they become most truly themselves when they also care for others. Bloesch says it well: “Although Good Samaritan service sometimes has chronological priority over evangelism, the mission of the church is not fulfilled until we declare the message of reconciliation and redemption.”<sup>9</sup> He also reminds us that:



"the great saints of the church have revolutionized society because they have given the world a new metaphysical vision, a world and life view anchored in the transcendent. They have provided not simply programs of social change, but a sense of meaning and purpose to existence."<sup>10</sup>

As we stand on the shoulders of Christians who fought for issues relating to the slave trade, child labor, piracy, liquor trafficking, poverty and refugee movements, we need to take care that we are practicing a truly Christian humanitarianism.

### Footnotes

- 1 Koyama, Kosuke. "Extending Hospitality to Strangers: A Missiology of Theologia Crucis." *International Review of Mission*, p. 82. No. 321, Oct. 1993.
- 2 Paul VI. *Populorum Progression*. p. 67, 1967.
- 3 Etchegaray, Roger Cardinal and Chelli, Archbishop Giovanni. "Refugees: A Challenge to Solidarity," a paper presented for Pastoral Care of Refugees at the Pontifical Council for Pastoral Care of Migrant and Itinerant People. p. 4, 1983.
- 4 Paul VI. *Populorum Progression*. Paragraph 44, 1967.
- 5 Bloesch, Donald. "Humanitarianism." *Faith and Counterfeits*. Intervarsity Press. p. 51, 1980.
- 6 *ibid*, p. 47-48.
- 7 *ibid*, p. 47.
- 8 Paul VI. *Populorum Progression*. paragraph 42, 1967.
- 9 Bloesch, p. 58.
- 10 *ibid*, p. 52.

*Bryant Myers is vice president for Development and Food Resources at World Vision International.*

## Re-affirming Holistic Mission: A Cross-Centered Approach in All Areas of Life

October 2005

*By Chris Wright*

**I was a bit puzzled, I must confess.** There I was at the Lausanne Forum in Pattaya last year and I noticed that 'Holistic Mission' was one of the 31 special Issue Groups. I had thought that holistic mission was what Lausanne was all about, not one of many mission interest subdivisions. Somehow, our splendid definition of world evangelization ("The whole church taking the whole gospel to the whole world") gives that impression. Indeed, holistic surely implies 'the whole' of something. It turned out that much of the specific content of the Holistic Mission IG was really social action. That, in and of itself, is an interesting shift in meaning. Holistic mission includes the whole of what God calls and sends us to do. Evangelism without social action is not holistic mission. Likewise, social action without evangelism cannot be holistic mission either.

Back to our Roots

Originally 'holistic mission' was coined in response to the idea that evangelism (understood as the verbal proclamation of the gospel) is the only real mission. However, at the 1974 Lausanne conference, evangelicals re-affirmed the great 19th century heritage of evangelical social action in the context of 20th century needs, stating in paragraph 5 of the Lausanne Covenant that "evangelism and socio-political involvement are both part of our Christian duty. For both are necessary expressions of our doctrines of God and man, our love of our neighbor and our obedience to Jesus Christ." During the 1980s much work went into clarifying the relationship between evangelism and social responsibility, and the 1982 consultation with that very title in Grand Rapids, Michigan, affirmed the integral partnership. "Evangelism and social responsibility, while distinct from one another, are integrally related in our proclamation of and obedience to the gospel...In practice, as in the public ministry of Jesus, the two are inseparable."

The 1989 Manila Manifesto added that "The gospel must become visible in the transformed lives of men and women. As we proclaim the love of God we must be involved in loving service, and as we preach the kingdom of God we must be committed to its demands of justice and peace." In the wake of Lausanne I, John Stott wrote in his commentary on Matthew 6:33:

"To seek first God's kingdom and his righteousness may be said to embrace our Christian evangelistic and

social responsibilities, much as do the 'salt' and 'light' metaphors of Matthew 5. In order to seek first God's kingdom we must evangelize, since the kingdom spreads only as the gospel of Christ is preached, heard, believed and obeyed. In order to seek first God's righteousness we shall still evangelize (for the inward righteousness of the heart is impossible otherwise), but we shall also engage in social action and endeavor to spread throughout the community those higher standards of righteousness which are pleasing to God.<sup>1</sup>

## **Back to the Bible**

The theological work that was done by the Lausanne Theology Working Group and other groups during the 1980s re-established evangelical theology of mission on a solid biblical basis—and by 'biblical' I mean the whole Bible, not just a few verses from the New Testament. For just as the whole church must include the churches of the global South, North and West, so too the whole gospel must be drawn from the entire Bible.

Many evangelicals say they accept God's revelation in both the Old and New Testaments. But to read some mission theories and strategies, one would hardly think that was true. A common assumption is that all social, economic and political dimensions of the Old Testament cannot contribute to Christian mission, for only the spiritual needs of humanity are addressed in the New Testament. This view of the New Testament, and the missiological implications that accompany it, requires us to imagine that for century after century the God of the Bible was passionately concerned about social issues—political arrogance and abuse; economic exploitation; judicial corruption; the suffering of the poor and oppressed; the evils of brutality; and bloodshed. Indeed, God was so passionate that the laws he gave and the prophets he sent addressed these matters more than any other issue sans idolatry. Meanwhile, the psalmists cry out in protest to the God they know cares deeply about such things.

Somewhere, however, between Malachi and Matthew this changes. Such things no longer claim God's attention or spark his anger. Or if they do, it is no longer our business. The root cause of all such things is individual, internal and spiritual sin, and now, these things are all God is interested in. A subtle form of Marcionism underlies this approach. The alleged God of the New Testament is almost unrecognizable as the LORD God, the Holy One of Israel. This alleged God has certainly shed all the passionate priorities of the Mosaic Law, and has jettisoned all the burden for justice that he laid on his prophets at such cost to them. The implications for mission are equally dramatic. For if the pressing problems of human society are of no concern to God, they have no place in Christian mission—or at most a decidedly secondary one. God's mission is getting souls to heaven, not addressing society on earth.

Such a view of God and mission is unbiblical, and frankly, unbelievable if one is to take the whole Bible as the trustworthy revelation of the identity, character and mission of the living God. We cannot overlook the depths of the spiritual realities of sin and evil the New Testament exposes—or the glories of God's redemptive accomplishment in the cross and resurrection of Jesus of Nazareth. These truths of the New Testament simply do not nullify all that the Old Testament has already revealed about God's comprehensive commitment to every dimension of human life; about his relentless opposition to all that oppresses, spoils and diminishes human well-being; and about his ultimate mission of blessing the nations and redeeming his whole creation.

## **Back to the Cross**

Our mission flows from God's mission, and God's mission has many dimensions as we trace the theme of his saving purpose through strands of Scripture. Every dimension of God's mission led to the cross of Christ, which was the unavoidable cost of this mission. Therefore, we need a mission-centered theology of the cross. Think for a moment of the contours of God's redemptive purpose.

It was the purpose or mission of God:

- To deal with the guilt of human sin, which had to be punished for God's own justice to be vindicated. This was accomplished at the cross. God took that guilt and punishment upon himself in self-substitution through the person of his own Son. For "the LORD has laid on him the iniquity of us all" (Isaiah 53:6) and "Christ himself bore our sins in his own body on the tree" (1 Peter 2:24).
- To defeat the powers of evil and all the forces (angelic, spiritual, "seen or unseen") that oppress, crush, invade, spoil and destroy human life, whether directly or by human agency. This was accomplished at the cross: "Having disarmed the powers and authorities...triumphing over them by the cross" (Colossians 2:15).
- To destroy death, the great invader and enemy of human life in God's world. This was accomplished at

the cross: "By Christ's death he destroyed the one who holds the power of death – the devil" (Hebrews 2:14).

- To remove the barrier of enmity and alienation between Jew and Gentile, and by implication ultimately all forms of enmity and alienation. This was accomplished at the cross: "For he himself is our peace, who has made the two one and has destroyed the barrier...to create one new humanity out of the two, thus making peace, and in this one body to reconcile both of them to God through the cross, by which he put to death their hostility" (Ephesians 2:14-16).
- To heal and reconcile his whole creation—this is the cosmic mission of God. This was accomplished at the cross. For it is God's will "through Christ to reconcile all things, whether things in heaven or things on earth, by making peace through his blood shed on the cross" (Colossians 1:20) "All things" clearly means the whole created cosmos since that is what Paul says has been created "by Christ and for Christ" (vs. 15-16) and has now been reconciled by Christ (v. 20).

All these dimensions of God's redemptive mission are set before us in the Bible. God's mission was that:

- sin should be punished and sinners forgiven
- evil should be defeated and humanity liberated
- death should be destroyed and life and immortality brought to light
- enemies should be reconciled, to one another and to God
- creation itself should be restored and reconciled to its creator

Together, these constitute the mission of God and all led to the cross of Christ, the unavoidable cost of God's holistic mission.

A full biblical understanding of the atonement goes far beyond personal guilt and individual forgiveness. That Jesus died in my place, bearing the guilt of my sin, is of course the most gloriously liberating truth. That we should long for others to know this truth and be saved and forgiven by casting their sins on the crucified Savior in repentance and faith is a most energizing motive for evangelism. But there is more in the biblical theology of the cross than individual salvation, and there is more to biblical mission than evangelism. The gospel is good news for the whole creation (Mark 16:15, cf. Ephesians 3:10). Pointing out the wider dimensions of God's redemptive mission (and therefore of our committed holistic participation in God's mission), is not 'watering down' the gospel of personal salvation. Rather, we set that precious good news for the individual firmly and affirmatively within its full biblical context of all that God has achieved, and will finally complete, through the cross of Christ for the whole of creation.

### **Cross-Centered Theology of Holistic Mission**

But it is equally true and biblical to say that the cross is the unavoidable center of our mission. All Christian mission flows from the cross. We need a cross-centered theology of holistic mission.

It is vital that we see the cross as central to every aspect of holistic, biblical mission. It is a mistake to think that while our evangelism must be centered on the cross, our social engagement has some other theological foundation or justification. Why is the cross equally important across the whole field of mission? Because in all forms of Christian mission we are confronting the powers of evil and the kingdom of Satan in the name of Christ. If we are to proclaim and demonstrate the reality of the reign of God in Christ—if we are to proclaim that Jesus is king, in a world which chants "we have no king but Caesar" and his many successors, including mammon—then we will be in direct conflict with the usurped reign of the evil one in all its manifestations. The battle against the powers of evil is the unanimous testimony of those who struggle for justice and for the needs of the poor, oppressed, sick and ignorant. It's the testimony of those who seek to care for and protect God's creation against exploiters and polluters just as much as it is the for those who struggle to bring people to faith in Christ or who plant churches. In all work, we confront the reality of sin and Satan and are challenging the darkness with the light and good news of Jesus Christ.

With what power are we competent to engage the powers of evil? On what basis dare we challenge the chains of Satan in people's spiritual, moral, physical and social lives? Our authority lies in the cross. Only in the cross is there forgiveness, justification and cleansing for guilty sinners. Only in the cross stands the defeat of evil powers and all oppression and injustice. Only in the cross is there release from the fear of death. Only in the cross are enemies reconciled. Only in the cross will we finally witness the healing of all creation.

Sin and evil constitute bad news in every area of life. The redemptive work of God through the cross of Christ is good news for every area of life. In short, we need a holistic gospel because the world is in a holistic mess. By God's incredible grace we have a gospel big enough to redeem all that sin and evil has touched. And every dimension of that good news is good news only because of the blood of Christ on the cross.

Ultimately all that will exist in the new, redeemed creation will be there because of the cross. Conversely, all that will not be there (suffering, tears, sin, Satan, sickness, oppression, injustice, corruption, decay and death), will not be there because they will have been defeated by the cross.

Holistic mission must have a holistic theology of the cross. The cross must be as central to our social engagement as it is to our evangelism. There is no other power, no other resource, no other name, through which we can offer the whole gospel to the whole person and the whole world, than Jesus Christ crucified and risen.

### **Footnote**

1. Stott, John. 1978. *Christian Counter-Culture*. Intervarsity Press. p. 172.

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## **A Theology for Uniting Evangelism and Social Ministry**

**By Scott Allen**

**O**ne of the most destructive, yet least understood mindsets affecting evangelical Christianity generally, and evangelical missions in particular, has been Gnostic dualism. The Bible affirms that God is creator of both spiritual and physical realms. Gnostic dualism takes this basic truth and categorizes these two realms as higher and lower, more important and less important—with the spiritual realm coming out on top. Like a virus run wild, it has infected churches and institutions of Christian learning worldwide with destructive consequences. In the arena of global missions, it has resulted in the pitting of evangelism and social ministry. I've worked with Food for the Hungry for over 15 years and can't count the number of times I've been asked which is more important— evangelism or social ministry. The very premise is rooted in an unbiblical set of assumptions about reality.

A good way to understand the assumptions that undergird a particular project is to examine what gets measured. In evangelical missions, the basics have centered on number of conversions and number of churches planted. In a very real respect, this project has been incredibly successful. We live in a time of phenomenal church growth—particularly in the developing world. Churches have been planted worldwide and countless people have come to faith in Christ. For this, we rejoice. And yet something is wrong. Well-known British Bible scholar John Stott observed: "[The Church in many parts of the world today is] characterized by superficiality. [The situation] is strange, tragic and possessing a disturbing paradox. In some places, the Church is growing strongly, but even there, the problem is that the growth is without depth."<sup>1</sup> Dr. Van de Poll, a prominent African theologian commented in a similar vein:

Because the Gospel was not brought to the people as a new totally encompassing life view, which would take the place of an equally comprehensive traditional life view, the deepest core of the African culture remains untouched... The convert in Africa did not see the Gospel as sufficient for his whole life and especially for the deepest issues of life.<sup>2</sup>

The upshot is that there are churches all over the world today, but tragically, little corresponding evidence of social and cultural transformation. The reason is quite simple: For many Christians, social ministry is less important than evangelism. This fallen world is passing away so why bother trying to reform it? These assumptions are symptoms of the virus of Gnostic dualism.

Yet by God's grace this is changing. Fresh winds are blowing, and the fortress of mental dualism is falling around the world with breathtaking speed. There is ever-increasing evidence that God is leading his bride back to a comprehensive, undivided understanding of reality. Increasingly, Christians are rejecting Gnostic assumptions in favor of a thoroughly biblical worldview--one that unites evangelism and social ministry

as essential elements in a larger purpose--the advance of God's kingdom "on earth as it is in heaven" (Matthew 6:10). Let's focus on four areas where Gnostic assumptions are being challenged and replaced.

## **View of God**

Let's begin with the basic view of God and of reality. There is increasing awareness that God not only created both physical and spiritual realms--he declared both to be good! Genesis 1:31 makes this point emphatically: "God saw all that He had made, and it was very good." The prioritizing of the spiritual as more important than the physical comes not from scripture, but from ancient Greek thought propounded by Plato and others. The Bible is explicit. God is Lord over all. He created the spiritual and the physical realms and cares for both equally. He seeks to be glorified not only in church buildings, but also in homes, schools, the companies, courthouses and the houses of government. "The earth is the Lord's, and everything in it" (Psalm 24:1).

## **View of People**

Gnostic thinking tends towards compartmentalization and wants to prioritize some things as more or less important. When applied to one's view of human nature, this view will prioritize the soul over the physical body and spiritual need over physical need. But increasingly, Christians are rejecting this view for a view more consistent with scripture--one that sees people not as disembodied souls, but as a wholistic integration of spirit, body and mind living in the context of a series of social relationships. And this wholistic view of people is what is driving the ever-increasing interest in wholistic ministry.

## **View of God's Redemptive Agenda**

A simple yet foundational question reveals how deeply Gnostic thinking has infected the evangelical church's view of God's redemptive purposes: Why did Jesus die on the cross? Pose this question to a group of Bible school or seminary students and the answers are likely: "He shed his blood to forgive my sins." Or "He shed his blood to save my soul and open the door of eternal life in heaven." While these answers are gloriously correct on one hand, they are also woefully incomplete. For a broader perspective, consider Colossians 1:19-20: "For God was pleased to have all his fullness dwell in [Christ], and through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether things on earth or things in heaven, by making peace through his blood, shed on the cross."

The phrase Paul uses to describe the scope of God's redemptive agenda is "all things." This makes perfect sense when you realize that God created "all things" and declares them good. If this is the scope of God's redemptive agenda, it certainly ought to be the scope of our ministry. Do we see spiritually lost people heading to a Christless eternity? Do we see disease, poverty, hunger, social alienation, injustice and environmental destruction? Our redemptive agenda should encompass all areas of brokenness. We are God's agents of comprehensive healing--ambassadors of his full kingdom intentions. In the words of missionary evangelist Francis Schaeffer, we should be working "on the basis of the finished work of Christ... [for] substantial healing now in every area where there are divisions because of the Fall."<sup>3</sup> We are to believe that such healing can be a reality on the basis of the finished work of Christ. This healing will not be perfect or complete on this side of Christ's return, yet it can be real, evident and substantial.

## **View of the Great Commission**

A Gnostic mindset limits the mandate of the Great Commission to personal evangelism. A biblical mindset sees it as far more comprehensive, namely, the discipleship of ethane--nations! Central to this is personal evangelism, but here's the difference: Evangelism (and by extension church planting) is not seen as an end, but rather as a means, to a larger end of community and even national transformation that effects every sphere of society. This transformation results in a blessing to the nations in line with God's promise to Abraham in Genesis 12:2 "... all peoples [nations] on earth will be blessed through you."

How does this agenda get accomplished? Certainly, it is a process, and it is one that must include evangelism, for unless fallen people are born again, no hope of kingdom advancement is possible. But equally critical is Christ's imperative to "teach [the nations] to obey everything I have commanded" (Matthew 28:20). It may be helpful to recall what Christ taught. One important element was to love others--to be compassionate and tenderhearted towards the poor and broken and to help them. In the Parable of the Good Samaritan, Jesus said "Go and do likewise" (Luke 10:37). But how many Christians incorporate Christ's imperative to compassionately serve their poor, broken neighbors into their understanding of the Great Commission?

## Jesus, Our Example

Matthew 4:23 provides a concise description of Christ's ministry: "Jesus went throughout Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, preaching the good news of the kingdom, and healing every disease and sickness among the people." Note the distinct parts: (1) teaching; (2) preaching the good news of the kingdom; and (3) healing. Now note their seamless integration. There is no higher or lower, no "more important" and "less important." While they are distinct and functionally separate, in relationship to Christ's overall ministry, they are inseparable. The preaching and teaching were backed up by real-life demonstrations of healing power.

## Conclusion

Much of the excitement I feel today comes from seeing the church worldwide cast off the yoke of Gnostic dualism and embrace an all-encompassing biblical worldview--one that unites proclamation and demonstration in the broader redemptive agenda of the healing of "all things." When churches get this, and begin to organize their ministries accordingly, they become unstoppable agents of social and cultural transformation. Let's keep all of our zeal for evangelism--in fact, let's be more passionate about it. But let's remember that it is part of a broader agenda, and not an end in itself.

## Footnotes

- 1 Stott, John. Quoted by Rhonda Oosterhoff, "Discipleship Conference Addresses 'Superficiality' in Worldwide Church," World Pulse. Nov. 5, 1999, p. 1.
- 2 Van de Poll. Quoted by Dick Day in lecture "The Truth for Youth," Forum 2004, Pattaya, Thailand, Oct. 2004.
- 3 Schaeffer, Francis. 1970. Pollution and the Death of Man. Wheaton, Ill.: Tyndale House Publishers. p. 68.

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## Dynamic Evangelism: Jumping out of the Window and into the Harvest

October 2005

*By Greg Forney*

**T**he students are clamoring and the professor is holed up in his office. They want answers and he cannot hold them back for long. He gets up--what is he going to do? One expects him to open the door and let the flood in, but instead he jumps out the window. Rather than embracing the academic, he escapes to the adventure, where the questions of archaeology are answered firsthand, in the form of rolling boulders and snake-filled pits.

This is a scene most of us remember from the fictional Indiana Jones movie. It is also a reminder that our theological discussions need to be more than academic exercises. They need to be a discussion based on the word of God in and out of the classroom. We need to be reminded that it was Jesus Christ who was the word incarnate.

As an international relief and development organization focusing on both spiritual and physical hungers worldwide, Food for the Hungry is often asked how we can purposefully meet these supposed conflicting goals. That we even ask questions like this in the church today is a result of centuries of Gnostic heresy regarding the separation of the physical from the spiritual. The Gnostic philosophy -- the belief that Christ only appeared to be a man -- was prevalent in 1st century Palestine and crept into the early church. Gnostic teaching threatened not only the reality of the incarnation of Christ, but also the authority of the atonement and bodily resurrection. John answered this false teaching in 1 John 4:2: "By this you know the Spirit of God: Every spirit that confesses that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is from God."

As Christians, our sanctification in Christ is worked out in our fleshly existence here on earth. There is no separation between the physical and spiritual. There is, however, the power of God displayed in our weakness. Paul explains this in 2 Corinthians 4:7-10: "But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, so that the surpassing greatness of the power will be of God and not from ourselves; we are afflicted in every way, but not crushed; perplexed, but not despairing; persecuted, but not forsaken; struck down, but not destroyed; always carrying about in the body the

dying of Jesus, so that the life of Jesus also may be manifested in our body.”

What does this mean in our evangelism efforts as Christians? It means we must jump out of the window and into the harvest. Indeed, just as Indiana Jones, we will face rolling boulders and snake pits.

Evangelism is conducted out in a world where people work, play and live. Each situation is different. There is the cranky neighbor who vocally expresses no want or need for God. There is also the sweet grandma on the corner. Each is different. There is the physically hungry and malnourished child. There is also the close friend we visit with over lunch. Each is different.

These are the questions Food for the Hungry field workers ask everyday when they approach someone like Jhoan from the Philippines. As a child, Jhoan used to think God was unfair and unjust, even cruel. She could not see how he would allow some people to be rich and yet allow her family to be very poor, lacking for basic needs such as food and water. She would often wonder how God could be good when there was no good in her circumstances. Over a period of several years, Jhoan’s heart was softened by the love and physical support of Food for the Hungry staff and the local church in her area. Now when she looks at God, she sees him as good, loving and gracious.

Evangelism is a fluid, changing process, refined as we get our hands dirty in the great adventure God has set before us. As Christians, we are called to go to the hardest places on earth, often facing the ridicule of friends and family as we reach out to areas around the world. We are commanded to always be ready to make a defense to everyone who asks us to give an account for the hope that is in us.

This will and should look differently as we bump into and come alongside our neighbors and enemies. And it happens best when we are there with them. It happens when we step outside of the church building and into the harvest. That is where Jesus Christ was when he came—and that is where he takes us.

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October 2005

## **TRENDS AND STATISTICS**

Analysis of the growth in the church and missions

### **The UK Church in 2020: If Trends Continue**

**By Peter Brierley**

**O**n Sunday May 8th, all 38,000 churches in England were invited to complete a form regarding both the number of people in church that day and the number attending in an average week. The results of this census are not due until September 2006 and we do not know if the results will show any changes in the general decline of church attendance.

Ascertaining the state of the church, however, is not limited to such exercises. Many numbers have been in the public arena for some years and can be projected forwards using normal statistical methodology. This of course assumes that present trends will continue—something that is almost never true!

Suppose we project existing church trends fifteen years into the future. What will the church in the UK look like in 2020? And can we learn anything from doing this? I believe we can.

#### **Church Membership**

While the apex for church membership in 1930 in the UK topped ten million people (29% of the population), by 1980 the number had dropped to 7.5 million people (just 13% of the population). In the interim, overall population in the UK had increased by ten million within the same period of time. If we are to follow this trend, the total decrease from 7.5 million in 1980 to 4.6 million in 2020, and from 13.4% of the population to just 7.2% leads to an average rate of decline of 1.2% per year (see Table 1). Because of the extraordinary growth of the black church community within Pentecostal churches, free churches are decreasing at only half (0.7%) the rate each year as Anglican and Catholic congregations (1.6%).

<b>Table 1</b>			
<b>Church Membership (1980-2020)</b>			
	Anglican	Catholic	Free Churches
1980	2,179,808	2,454,803	2,894,384
1985	1,895,943	2,281,340	2,770,316
1990	1,727,977	2,205,494	2,700,864
1995	1,785,033	1,921,486	2,597,207
2000	1,633,848	1,771,121	2,478,603
2005	1,542,613	1,681,519	2,410,192
2010	1,397,311	1,529,525	2,308,635
2015	1,269,458	1,402,558	2,225,495
2020	1,141,605	2,142,356	1,142,356

### Church Buildings

There were just over 50,000 church buildings or congregations in 1980, a number which is projected to drop to under 44,000 by 2020. This remains one of the more stable elements in the years ahead, with new congregations replacing old ones. Methodists are currently closing as many churches each year as all other denominations put together. The numbers are likely to change considerably, however, when failing finances cause many rural Anglican churches to close.

### Church Ministers

In 1980 there were 36,000 ministers in the UK, the majority full-time "stipendiary" (paid for their work). By 2020 the number is projected to drop to 32,000, a decline of 0.3% per year. This, however, hides the changing face of the church; today, more women, part-time persons and non-ordained individuals are serving. These changes partly reflect financial stringency, but they also reflect the ethnic minority vitality, as more black churches are using part-time staff.

### Church Attendance

Church attendance is where the greatest changes are expected. Denominationally the pattern is likely to be similar to that of membership. Church attendance figures, however, have one advantage over church membership (which is defined differently for each denomination). Church attendance is similarly defined across all denominations and can be broken down by age and gender. For this article, we will look at age.

The UK church has been losing young people for quite some time. During the 1990s half a million children under 15 dropped out of church. This has great implications for the future of the church (see Table 2).

<b>Table 2</b>			
<b>Church Attendance (1980-2020)</b>			
	<b>Under 20</b>	<b>20 to 44</b>	<b>45 &amp; over</b>
1980	2,023,530	1,622,220	2,375,850
1985	1,767,860	1,524,880	2,330,720
1990	1,599,860	1,455,800	2,314,110
1995	1,288,260	1,289,130	2,217,460
2000	1,043,180	1,143,960	2,192,740
2005	769,670	981,420	2,224,970
2010	482,940	812,720	2,223,050
2015	344,740	630,180	2,123,990
2020	237,870	493,320	1,952,760

While the average rate of decline, 2% per year, is higher than any figure assessed thus far, the rate varies largely by age-group. Younger persons under 20 are declining at a rate of 5.2% per year. This must be reversed if the church is to survive and thrive. Those between the ages of 20-44 are declining by 2.9%.



The oldest age group, 45 and over, is decreasing by only 0.5% per year, but the problem is that those over 45 went from being 39% of the total in 1980 to 73% by 2020. If three-quarters of churchgoers are over 45 by 2020 the image of the church as being "an old people's club" will be reinforced almost irrevocably.

### **So What?**

This brief glimpse into the possible future of the church, if present trends continue, should lead us to do everything we can to ensure these statistics do not become a reality. The following are four steps the 2005 church in the UK can take.

First, we need to be concerned with the lack of young people in our churches. It is absolutely imperative that we find out why they are "bored with church," and be willing to make changes that will make the experience more meaningful. We will devastate the church if we only satisfy older members. We must nurture young people, and as appropriate, give them leadership experience and identify future key leaders for senior church positions.

Second, we need to look at the vitality and success of ethnic minority churches that are expanding and starting new churches all over the country. Church planting works and we need to capture both the enthusiasm and the risk-taking needed.

Third, we need to provide practical training for clergy in vision-building and change management. We need to make the switch from a maintenance-mode to a mission-mode.

Finally, we must wait and trust upon the Holy Spirit for an outpouring of Pentecostal power.

If any reader would like more information and details about these trends, they are available in "The Future of the Church, Religious Trends." Christian Research. No 5, 2005/2006 and can be ordered from [www.christian-research.org.uk](http://www.christian-research.org.uk).

*Dr. Peter Brierley is executive director of Christian Research.*

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## **LAUSANNE REPORTS**

### **2004 Forum For World Evangelization Holistic Mission Issue Group Occasional Paper Overview October 2005**

*By Evvy Hay Campbell*

**H**olistic mission can be defined as "the task of bringing the whole of life under the lordship of Jesus Christ"<sup>1</sup> and includes the affirmation that there is no biblical dichotomy between evangelistic and social responsibility. "Integral mission," the term adopted for holistic mission at the Micah Network in Oxford (2001), defines it as "the proclamation and demonstration of the gospel," emphasizing that it is not simply the issue of evangelism and social involvement occurring simultaneously, but that "our proclamation has social consequences as we call people to love and repentance in all areas of life" and that "our social involvement has evangelistic consequences as we bear witness to the transforming grace of Jesus Christ."<sup>2</sup>

The mission of God is "to reconcile to himself all things, whether things on earth or things in heaven" (Colossians 1:20) and our part is crossing geographic, cultural, political, economic and social barriers "with the intention of transforming human life in all its dimensions, according to God's purpose, and of enabling human beings to enjoy the abundant life that God wants to give to them and that Jesus Christ came to share with them."<sup>3</sup> Thus issues of justice for the poor, orphans and immigrants figure prominently in holistic mission. Indeed, properly understood, holistic mission was a concern for every Issue Group at the 2004 Lausanne Forum.

The Holistic Mission Issue Group addressed topics in four sectors particularly pressing in the evangelical world economic justice, health, hunger and displaced people.

Sector papers integrated or concluded with action plans for churches, para-church organizations and the evangelical community at large. With regard to economic justice, the mandate for the church was seen as: pursuing a holistic theology where economic justice is integral to its mission; embracing and teaching a biblical understanding of the poor and poverty; denouncing systemic and structural sins of injustice; addressing lifestyle issues related to consumerism; demonstrating economic justice through word, deed and sign incarnationally among the poor; and involving the poor in the process of transformation. The sector group identified twenty action steps for churches, including implementing holistic models of microfinance and enterprise as solutions to economic injustice; incorporating issues related to economic justice into pastoral training; helping reshape the global economy so that benefits of globalization (such as access to markets) are available to the marginalized and vulnerable; promoting an understanding of the negative ecological impact of economic injustice; and encouraging debt relief, fair trade and the transparency and accountability of governments, transnational corporations and the international banking sector.

With regard to health, it was heartening to note how local churches in Africa, Asia and Latin America have responded, often in partnership with Christian non-government organizations such as World Vision, MAP International, Food for the Hungry, Samaritan's Purse, Tearfund and Trans World Radio. Programs have: begun in the affected community; built on local assets; developed multifaceted ministries; strengthened local capacity; addressed disease prevention and health promotion; and become sustainable. Additionally, a declaration on HIV/AIDS was developed, calling for a response to this complex biological, behavioral, cultural and socio-economic issue which affects both youth and a disproportionate number of women. A response of compassion was advocated, addressing the root issues of poverty and injustice and the challenge HIV/AIDS brings to world evangelization.

The sector group focusing on hunger dealt with agriculture, advocating economically-viable, resource-efficient and environmentally-sound agriculture that promotes justice while building community. This is characterized by less dependence on fossil fuels and allows room for both wild and domestic creatures. It also encourages local and natural methods of pest control (rather than purchased pesticides) and produces agricultural products primarily for sale in the region in which they are produced. Only the surplus is used to earn income.

Finally, a Christian response to people uprooted by conflict, persecution, poverty, economic collapse, famine and natural disasters was considered. Scripture has a great deal to say about both the care and plight of aliens and foreigners. Hospitality, solidarity and love toward the displaced are responses grounded in Scripture. Not only are the provision of food, housing and caring for refugees necessary, but the church has the unique task of bearing "witness to the reality of Jesus' victory"<sup>4</sup> that gives meaning and purpose to existence. The response of the church must include ensuring survival, providing protection, offering spiritual care and enabling people to recover identity and vocation.

Interested in knowing more of the compelling work of the Holistic Mission Issue Group? Read the full paper at [http://community.gospelcom.net/lcwe/assets/LOP33\\_IG4.pdf](http://community.gospelcom.net/lcwe/assets/LOP33_IG4.pdf) and consider how you can respond to global human need.

#### **Footnotes**

1. Hughes, Dewi. 2004. Introduction. Holistic Mission, Occasional Paper No. 33. Lausanne Committee for World Evangelization (LCWE).
2. The Micah Declaration on Integral Mission.
3. Padilla, C. Rene. 2004. Holistic Mission. Holistic Mission, Occasional Paper No. 33. LCWE.
4. Newbiggin, Lesslie. 2003. Signs among the Rubble. Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, p. 113ff.

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