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# east africa journal of evangelical theology

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## THE EAST AFRICA JOURNAL OF EVANGELICAL THEOLOGY

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### Cover:



The Baobab tree is the EAJET symbol for the gospel in Africa. The good news of Christ, like the baobab tree, is ageless, enduring and firmly rooted in African soil.

## On the Training of Christian Ministers

He stands in his white collar and tie before his fellow tribesmen. He has been to Bible College and his people are proud of him. On this first Sunday he initiates his people into the mysteries of the Millennium. The congregation of herdsmen are blissfully befuddled by the sermon of the day but they nod and smile as they begin their post-benediction return to their huts to face another week of struggling for food, dreaming of the future, guiding families, facing temptation and puzzling over exactly how the Lord Jesus Christ relates to their dust-covered existence.

On that same Sunday in the town to the north an aging pastor finishes delivering his sermon on tithing to his coughing congregation. This TEE-trained veteran of the ministry has refined his approach through constant practise. His sermons on giving are well known, coming as they do at least once a month. The businessmen, university students, school teachers and civil servants in the congregation who shift in their seats sometimes let their minds wander during the message to ponder other questions. What does the Bible say about family life, what does the book of Romans teach, what does Ephesians say about the church or Genesis about science and Scripture? Good questions perhaps but not within the area of interest or expertise of the shepherd of this particular flock. He remembers having been tested on various programmed texts on some of these topics, somewhere, but most of these books are gathering dust and the white-ants got the rest.

The apparently awkward fit between these two pastors and their congregations raises the crucial and much-debated question of how best to train effective servants for the church of Jesus Christ. On the one hand many questions are being raised whether our residential Bible colleges, seminaries and institutes are producing the kind of church leadership we need. Do not such schools promote an elitist mentality? Do they not produce people who lose touch with the people, who subtly absorb the idea that education breeds superiority and buys one the right to expect and demand higher status, privilege and pay?

Do they not come from schools brainwashed with the idea that Theology refers to a set of notes neatly arranged under unpronounceable topics with “-ology” tacked onto the end? Do they not suspect that it is beneath theology to address such questions as how to be reconciled with my rebellious son, or how to fight angry feelings against God when the

rains don't come? Do not the newly formed accreditation movements simply reinforce the elitism, irrelevance and status-seeking so ingrained in institutional ministerial training? These searching questions are being asked by missiologists, educators, church leaders and thinking christian laymen around the world. The conclusion of their thinking seems to be that we need to reform our residential programs and promote more nonformal means of ministerial training through such things as extension education and occasional weekend seminars.

But new questions must be raised. Do not these new methods, aimed at eliminating the spiritual and cultural awkwardness of residential theological training, produce an awkwardness of their own? Were not the pioneers and architects of the new ideas products themselves of residential theological education? Does this not imply that institutions can provide creative and valuable sanctuaries for sustained biblical thinking and study? Cannot such sustained thinking produce agents of renewal and reform? Is it not also true that in an upwardly mobile culture such as one finds in many developing countries appropriate training for ministers in urban and town contexts may be better provided by residential than non-residential programs? Is not one way of coming alongside one's flock to be trained in a way that people in the congregation respect and understand? Does the laymen with a Ph.D. really want his minister to spurn the degree granting institutions and instead equip himself with a few seminars and certificates? Is it not also true that many residential programs are working productively with the new ideas and providing non-formal types of training as well?

These are but a few of the questions in the debate over theological education. This issue of EAJET contains two articles dealing with appropriate theological education. The reflections on Maasai leadership development and the pros and cons of accreditation, respectively, represent the continuing struggle to understand what kind of ministerial training the church needs.

Perhaps the best tentative stand to take at this point in the ongoing debate is to call for less ideology and more pragmatism. All sides seem willing to agree that the basic principle of theological education is to train twice-born people to practise in their unique cultural contexts the will of the living God who speaks in the Scripture. Whatever methods, institutions, or models make that happen, should be promoted and used. There's a place for both the educated greenhorn and the rusty veteran in the church of Christ. There's also a place for the institutional classroom as well as the programmed text. Lets keep chipping away at the rough edges of theological education till we produce ministers that are fit — both for their peoples needs and the Master's use.

\* \* \* \* \*

No question is more crucial to man than the oft asked — “What must I do to be Saved?” This issue of EAJET continues to explore the christian doctrine of salvation and issues concerning it that have been raised within the African context. Dr. Tokunboh Adeyemo completes his two-part series on salvation by responding to a number of contemporary objections. In the final article, the question whether there is salvation outside of personal faith in Jesus Christ is explored. You’ll need to answer queries like these as a disciple of Jesus Christ. These articles just might help you in providing some biblical answers to these tough questions.

# THE SALVATION DEBATE AND EVANGELICAL RESPONSE

Tokunboh Adeyemo

No other doctrine is as sensitive as the doctrine of salvation. It usually provokes. Because of the hard facts with which it confronts people, it gets attacked from left, right and centre. Those outside the Church accuse Christians as being bigoted whenever they talk of 'being saved.' Within Christendom, many who are theologically liberal mock those who claim to be saved as being 'naive.' 'How can you be sure that you are saved?', they sarcastically ask. "Look at the millions of religious Hindus and Muslims. You mean they will be lost?" the critics ask. 'God is love, and since he doesn't want anybody to perish, all shall be saved eventually', they often argue. Endlessly the talking goes. The debate about salvation is very much alive. How should an Evangelical respond?

In this article we shall address ourselves to five areas of the salvation debate: Pluralism, Universalism, Second-chancism, Syncretism and Humanitarianism.

## Pluralism

### An Explanation

Pluralism is the doctrine that advocates many ways of salvation. As a belief or system of thought, it grows out of the socio-religious complexities of human society. It is argued that there are many faces to reality and since human perception of reality varies from people to people, and from place to place, and from generation to generation, room should be allowed for divergent forms and structures as long as the substance is the same. The Hindus know God and worship him; so the Muslims; and the Buddhists and so on and so forth. God is one, it is argued; and it doesn't matter whether you call him God or Allah or Brahma or Theos or Jehovah or Mungu. Appeal is also made to the sociological structure of the society. In the same house, among the same family you have Muslims and Christians and traditional religionists living together in harmony. Sometimes being saved is compared to going to a place like Mombasa from Nairobi. You can go by road, or by train or by aeroplane. It does not matter which way you take. As long as you get there, you are ok.

The highest form of pluralism is the religious cult called **Bahatism**. Originating in nineteenth century, Bahai's goal is to become a world religion to end all religions by accepting all religions. All of the founders of all religions are divine including Bahau'llah (Mirza Husain Ali, died 1892)

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DR. TOKUNBOH ADEYEMO is the General Secretary of THE ASSOCIATION OF EVANGELICALS IN AFRICA AND MADAGASCAR. This is the second of a two-part series on the topic of salvation.

who founded the Bahai movement. The founder claimed progressive revelation with his idea as the latest. The goal of the movement is to establish a new world order.

In Africa, two of the strongest advocates of Pluralism are Dr. Kibicho, head of the religious department of the university of Nairobi and Dr. B. Akiiki of the religious department of Makerere university. In a paper presented at the yearly meeting of the Association of Theological Institutions in Eastern Africa held in April, 1982 at the Lutheran Theological College, Makumira, Tanzania, Dr. Kibicho states that the means of salvation include:

- 1) the created order;
- 2) man's unique nature;
- 3) persons of outstanding wisdom;
- 4) the activities of God in individuals and in nations; and
- 5) peoples' religious activities led by divine persons and others.

He further argues: There is revelation fully salvatory in any religion, as the 'cosmic Christ' is present. This revelation he concludes, 'must be understood in pluralistic terms.'<sup>1</sup> His colleague, Dr. Akiiki shares the same conviction. He claims that African worship is highly experienced compared to Christian worship of only 2,000 years. To him, survival (i.e. salvation) is at the heart of religion in Africa. And since African traditional religion offers that, in participation, initiative, love, care, and respect for others, it qualifies for a salvation religion. In principle he did not see much real contribution from the Church to the understanding of God in Africa. He admits that Christ is divine but only on the same level with African divines.

### **A Christian Defense**

The first weakness of the Pluralists is that of their premise. More often than not, arguments begin from the point of anthropology and sociology rather than theology. Reality is boxed within human experience in a kind of closed system. Only the facts which agree with socio-religious experiences are taken into consideration at the expense of God's revelatory pronouncement. For example, how do the Pluralists reconcile their claim with Christ's assertion: 'I am the way, the truth and the life, no man comes unto the Father but by me'? Again, what will the Pluralists say to Peter's statement: 'There is no other name (besides Jesus Christ) under heaven given to men by which we must be saved' (Acts 4:12)?

We are talking here about authority. Both Jesus and Peter together with all the inspired New Testament writers advocate one way — Christ's way. Dr. Kibicho says that there are other ways including persons of outstanding wisdom. On what authority does he base his assertion? Is biblical revelation supreme and final as seems implied in Psalms 119:89 and

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1. Norvald Yri, 'Theology in Africa — Que Vadis?', an unpublished critique paper; Lutheran Theological College, Makumira, Tanzania, April 1982.



Matthew 5:18? Is the witness of the Bible concerning itself valid and normative? Are the words of the Scriptures inspired of God and without error (2 Tim. 3:16)? Protestant Reformation thesis of **sola Scriptura** (the Bible alone) rests on a positive answer to these questions. God has spoken and what He has said is the truth since God cannot lie (Titus 1:3; Heb. 6:18). On the basis of their commitment to the Lordship of Jesus Christ and the trustworthiness of the Word of God, evangelicals throughout the centuries have always limited the ground of religious authority to the Bible.

Secondly, the Pluralists err by confusing means of revelation with means of salvation. Kibicho claims that the means of salvation include the five things listed above. This statement is grossly misleading. Beginning from the created order to man's unique nature, and including all God's activities in history as well as man's religious activities, all that man perceives is that there is a God. But such knowledge does not automatically save man. Surely it confronts man with the existence of God. It also reveals certain attributes of God like power, goodness, righteousness, justice and wisdom. If anything, such knowledge condemns man as a sinner. For instance, making laws in a state does not necessarily transform that state's citizens to be law-abiding. Rather, the laws reveal the sinfulness of the people and serve as a canon to condemn them. But it may be argued: 'aren't the law-abiding citizens rewarded or honoured by the same laws?' To this we respond that the law-abiding citizens are not necessarily rewarded unless they do acts of merit, though they are unpunished for what they have not done. Correspondingly, if a man responds positively to God's revelation either by keeping God's moral laws or pure religious devotion as some Muslims do, God will exonerate him from the penalty of sin acts. But as for merit which earns salvation no one is qualified since all by birth inherit a sin nature.

Herein lies God's love, He gave His only Son, who was not born in sin, neither knew nor committed sin acts and yet he died vicariously in the place of condemned sinners. The death of the innocent righteous Son of God is the only acceptable merit for salvation before God. It is the only means of salvation. And it is as repentant sinners place their faith in Christ and his finished work, either prospectively as in the Old Testament times or retrospectively as since after the cross, that God in His mercy imputes Christ's righteousness to their accounts. This is why the Bible concludes that salvation is a gift. The classical Dispensationalist thesis on this subject can not be surpassed. It states: 'The requirement for salvation in every age is faith; the object of faith in every age is God; the content of faith changes in the various dispensations but the basis of salvation in every age is the death of Christ'.<sup>2</sup>

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2: Charles C. Ryrie. *Dispensationalism Today* (Moody Press)

A third area where the Pluralists err is their failure to see the radical nature of sin. Prophet Jeremiah locates its root in man's heart saying: 'The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked' (Jer. 17:9). David, the Psalmist, identifies it with the very seed of life. He says: 'I was shaped in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me' (Ps. 51:5). Isaiah asserts that try as we could, 'all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags' (Isa.64:6). In another message, he uses the metaphor of sheep going astray, every one to his own way, to describe the lostness of man. Apostle Paul puts all these together in a beautiful piece: 'All have sinned, and come short of the glory of God; and the wages of sin is death' (Rom. 3:23; 6:23). Death in this context is a spiritual separation or alienation from God. On anyone in such a state, the wrath of God hangs. God's justice demands a punishment of every sinner; God's love provides a substitute in the person of Christ who, knowing no sin, was made to be sin for all that every believer might be made the righteousness of God in Christ. This is what Christ means when he categorically states: "I am the way, the truth, and the life; no man comes to the Father except by me' (Jn. 14:6).

### Universalism

#### An Explanation

Universalism is the belief that ultimately all mankind shall be saved. Speaking in October 1981 after his election as one of the six presidents; of the World Council of Churches, Dr. A.M. Ramsey, former Archbishop of Canterbury declared: 'Heaven is not a place for Christians only. Those who have led a good life on earth but found themselves unable to believe in God will not be debarred from heaven. I expect to meet some present-day atheists there.'<sup>3</sup> Recent studies in the World Council of Churches have raised the question of universalism explicitly and have also assumed the universalist position. One of their statements reads: 'By the raising up of the New Man, Christ Jesus, every man has been made a member of the New Mankind'.<sup>4</sup> In his book, **New Testament Eschatology in an African Background**, Professor John S. Mbiti espouses universalism. His Chapter on 'corporate eschatology' is nothing but universalism through and through. In one instance he states:

For individuals it (i.e. Resurrection) is the union between creatures and their Creator. Thus, the Resurrection is a personal experience. flooding mankind and the cosmos with the dimension of the present, in the presence of God, clothing them with immortality, incorruptibility, unchangeableness of lifeness. It is a resurrection into a consciousness of and participation in the very presence of God.<sup>5</sup>

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3. Daily Mail, October 2, 1961, published in Britain.

4. Cited by Dr. Edmund P. Clowney in 'The Sovereignty of God ... and the Lostness of Men', **Horizons** November-December 1970, p. 4.

5. John S. Mbiti. **New Testament Eschatology in an African Background**. (London: SPCK, paperback 1978), pp. 168-9

In another instance he says: 'Man's participation in the Resurrection-event would be incomplete as long as the rest of creation remains groaning in travail.'<sup>6</sup> To make his universalistic claim dear, Mbiti categorically declares:

There is not a single soul, however debased or even unrepentant, which can successfully 'flee' from the Spirit of God (Ps. 139:1-18). God's patient waiting for the soul's repentance must in the end be surely more potent than the soul's reluctance to repent and turn to Him (cf. 2 Pet. 3:9). The harmony of the heavenly worship would be impaired if, out of the one hundred in the sheepfold, there is one soul which continues to languish in Shoel or 'the lake of fire'.<sup>7</sup>

Universalism is not a new doctrine. It was espoused early in the history of Christianity by Clement of Alexandria (d.c. 215) and his pupil, Origen (d. 254). Down through the ages, it has succeeded in securing advocates and proponents. These include Gregory of Nazianus (d.c. 389), Gregory of Nyssa (d.c. 394), Didymus of Alexandria (d.c. 395), John Scotus Erigena (d. 877), Jonathan Mayhew, John Murray (founder of the Universalist church), Friedrich Schleiermacher, Karl Barth (d. 1968), Frederic W. Farrar, Charles H. Dodd (tutor of Professor John Mbiti), Herbert H. Farmer, and John A.T. Robinson. Universalism has never found acceptance in any of the major branches of the Church. In fact, after the Reformation, 'it was condemned in the Augsburg Confession (1530) and was at variance with the conclusions of the Heidelberg Catechism (1563), the Council of Trent (1563), and the Westminster confession (1646)'.<sup>8</sup>

Universalists' arguments can be broadly grouped in two categories: Speculative or philosophical and Biblical or theological. On speculative ground, the case is advanced that if the ultimate attribute of God is love, that radical love will pursue every man until he is redeemed. It is also postulated that God's irresistible grace cannot but overcome man's opposition. Further, Universalists usually romanticise the Biblical teaching concerning heaven and hell. Paul Tillich considered them as nonsense terms in reality. He claims that when one dies he simply comes into the New Being. Emil Brunner takes the mention of hell as a challenge to right action rather than as a description of an objective condition. To Mbiti, 'heaven for its own sake is not heavenly. It has neither attraction nor meaning, except perhaps to societies that might feel oppressed and deprived, and hence the need to escape psychologically to such a myth'<sup>9</sup>

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6. *ibid* p. 169

7. *ibid*. p. 179

8. David J. Hesselgrave, 'Universalism', **Baker's Dictionary of Christian Ethics**; ed. Carl F.H. Henry (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1973), p. 689.

9. Mbiti, p. 89

On the Biblical or theological ground, Universalists begin with the death of Christ. It is claimed that since Christ died for the sins of the whole world, everyone shall be saved in the end. It is reasoned that since the fall of Adam has affected us all, and since God's grace in Jesus is for everyone on the basis of his universal atonement, it is only logical that everyone shall be saved. Karl Barth argues that through the will of the electing God, all men are in Christ and that the only difference between Christians and heathen is 'noetic' not 'ontic'. In support of this view, Universalists often cite Bible passages which declare the salvation of all men to be God's will (e.g. 1 Tim. 2:4); or that allegedly predict the salvation of all (e.g. 1 Cor. 15:22-28); or seemingly include all in a salvific relationship with God (e.g. 2 Cor. 5:19); or purportedly give grounds for hope after death to all (e.g. Mt. 18:18-22).

From the death of Christ, they proceed to His Lordship, using Philippians 2:9-11 as their proof-text. On this passage, Gregory of Nyssa based his doctrine of total annihilation of evil with a corollary of salvation of all. Identifying 'things in heaven' as obedient angelic beings; 'things on earth' as all human beings — dead or alive; and 'things under the earth' as disobedient fallen angels, Gregory asserts that the confession of Christ as Lord shall be incomplete without the redemption of all. He claims: '... when evil shall have been (some say) annihilated in the long revolutions of the ages, nothing shall be left outside the world of goodness, but even from those evil spirits shall rise in harmony the confession of Christ's Lordship'.<sup>10</sup> Here Gregory shares his teacher, Origen's view that Satan himself shall be saved same day.

To strengthen this position, appeal is made to the sanctifying power of punishment. Gregory uses two analogies here to depict salvation which results from purgation. The first is that of gold refined by fire. 'For it is as when some worthless material has been mixed with gold, and the gold-refiners burn up the foreign and refuse part in the consuming fire, and so restore the more precious substance to its natural lustre'.<sup>11</sup> The second metaphor is that of a surgical operation. He writes:

For it is now as with those who for their cure are subjected to the knife and the cautery; they are angry with the doctors, and wince with the pain of the incision; but if recovery of health be the result of this treatment, and the pain of the cautery passes away, they will feel grateful to those who have wrought this cure upon them. In like manner, when, after long periods of time, the evil of our nature ... has been expelled, and when there has been a restoration of those who are now lying in Sin to their primal state, a harmony of thanksgiving will

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10. Philip Schaff & Henry Wace, eds, 'Gregory of Nyssa' in **Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers of the Christian Church** (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Pub. Co., 1976, reprinted; Vol. 5,) p. 444

11. *ibid.*, p. 495



arise from all creation, as well as from those who in the process of the purgation have suffered chastisement, as from those who needed not any purgation at all. These and the like benefits, the great mystery of the Divine incarnation bestows.<sup>12</sup>

In this quote, it becomes clear that Gregory and Origen are one in respect of salvation of all, including Satan. Gregory concludes his thesis stating that by the Christ-event, God frees man from evil and heals even the introducer of evil himself namely Satan.<sup>13</sup> This is the highest form of universalism.

The last Biblical argument often used by the Universalists is 1 Corinthians 15:22-28, a passage that deals with the consummation of all things. From this passage emerge two arguments. A weaker one based on verse 22 envisions a universal salvation in Christ corresponding to a universal fall in Adam. This has already been alluded to above. The second and stronger argument is based on verse 28, and in particular, the little phrase: "that God may be all in all". Like Origen, Gregory insists on the impossibility of God being in 'everything', if evil still remains. Therefore, he argues for the restoration of all things to their original or primitive state at creation. He interprets the phrase to mean 'that God will be instead of all other things, and in all'. He concludes by saying: "He that becomes 'all' things will be 'in all' things too; and herein it appears to me that Scripture teaches the complete annihilation of evil. If, that is, God will be 'in all' existing things, evil, plainly, will not then be amongst them; for if any one was to assume that if it exist then, how will the belief that God will be 'in all' be kept intact? The expecting of that one thing, evil, mars the comprehensiveness of the term 'all'. But He that will be 'in all' will never be in that which does not exist."<sup>14</sup> By this passage Gregory reinforced his doctrine of annihilation of evil, restoration of all things to their original state of goodness and, of course, salvation of all things so that God may be all in all.

### **A Christian Defense**

If the problem of a Pluralist is sociological in nature, that of a universalist is intellectual. A careful study of universalists' literatures reveals the tendency to wed Biblical theology with secular philosophy. Wherever this happens, compromise is usually struck with biblical revelation on the shorter end. This is evident as much in Origen's attempt to systematise biblical doctrines on Plato's humanistic philosophical ideals as in Paul Tillich's theological construct heavily based on Hindu pantheistic assumptions. Forgotten is the fact that God, the eternal and unchanging One, has spoken and His words

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12. *ibid.*, p. 496

13. *ibid.*

14. *Ibid.*, p. 452

cannot be broken. As for human rationalization, this cannot only be challenged but changes from generation to generation and from culture to culture.

To the claim that God's radical love will pursue every man until he is redeemed, the universalists forget that God's perfection of righteousness and justice is equally ultimate. Likewise, God's irresistible grace has been overstressed at the expense of essential biblical conditions for salvation, namely, repentance and faith. The Bible makes it abundantly clear that God holds everyone responsible for his own choice. He does not force His will on people, rather He invites them to respond. In John 1:11-12, we read that He came to that which was his own, but his own did not receive him. Yet to all who received him, to those who believed on his name, he gave the right to become children of God. In another passage we read of the verdict that whoever believes in him is not condemned, but whoever does not believe stands condemned already because he has not believed in the name of God's one and only Son (John 3:18). In the light of this, the Universalist's claim that people are saved against their will is erroneous. God's offer of salvation is like an invitation to dinner extended to all. Adequate provision is made for all. But when the time comes, people, exercising their freedom, give different excuses thereby forfeiting their chance. Jesus ends that parable by saying: 'many are called, but few are chosen' (see Mt. 22:1-14). Those who are chosen are those who respond positively to the invitation.

Unlike the Universalists, Jesus and the New Testament writers take the issue of man's destiny seriously. They do not romanticise heaven and hell or exploit the doctrine merely to induce right action. Jesus emphasizes the separation at the end of time between 'sheep' and 'goats' - the former those inheriting God's Kingdom and the latter those departing to destruction. Both heaven and hell are as real in the teaching of Jesus as palaces and prisons are in this world. It is also Jesus who told the story of the rich man and Lazarus. Unlike his parables, Jesus named one of the characters in this story giving an impression of his having a particular case in mind. Locatively placed with a great gulf fixed between them, Jesus vividly illustrates the two eternal destinies for mankind. This same message is conveyed by Apostle John in Revelation 20:11-15 which describes God's final judgment and the verdict of life to those who have believed and of death — a separation from God; a banishment from His presence into a lake of fire — to those who have rejected Him. If everyone is saved automatically as the universalists claim, then the Lord's commission to His Church to preach the gospel and make disciples is a mockery. Also, the call to practise holiness and self-denial makes no sense.

The argument of all being saved in Christ as all fell in Adam seems logical. In fact, Apostle Paul employs the thesis in Romans chapter five where he compares and contrasts justification with condemnation. Using the expression 'much more' the apostle demonstrates the higher, greater and

deeper effect of God's grace through Christ's death that brings salvation. 'Where sin increased', he reasons, 'grace increased much more'. If he had stopped there, we would have had no case against universalism. But he didn't. He goes on to ask: Shall we continue in sin that grace may abound? And the answer is: God forbid. From this account and similar passages we arrive at this conclusion: By his death — an expression of God's love and grace — Christ makes everyone saveable since everyone is the object of God's love. Whether a man is saved or condemned in the end depends not on the provision made by God but rather on his response of faith or rejection in revolt. This naturally raises questions about the fate of dead infants, the mentally sick and the unevangelized peoples of the world. In keeping with our conclusion that the blood of Jesus Christ, the Lamb of God slain before the foundation of the earth, speaks better things than the fall in Adam, and consistent with God's loving kindness, that does not want any to perish, we are forced to conclude that God will deal favourably with infants and the mentally sick.<sup>15</sup> As for the unevangelized, God is a righteous and impartial judge. He will judge everyone of them according to how they respond to the measure of revelatory light He gives them.<sup>16</sup>

Concerning confessing Jesus Christ as Lord, we need not force the Scripture into human rationalism which asserts that comprehensive confession is only meaningful with the annihilation of evil. In the contrary, just as the demons believe that there is one God but yet won't submit to Him so will it be with the lordship of Christ. In defeat the condemned intelligencies — human and angelic — will acknowledge the lordship of Jesus Christ even when that is against their stubborn will. Likewise, it is superfluous to stress the sanctifying power of eternal punishment by fire at the expense of eternal satisfaction of God's justice and righteousness. No where does the Scripture speak of annihilation. Even at the dawn of new creation — of heaven and earth — we still read of two separate destinies. Of new heaven and the descending new Jerusalem Apostle John says: 'Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God'. Then he goes on to describe the destiny of those condemned: 'But the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and fornicators, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burns with fire and brimstone, which is the second death' (Rev. 21:3,8)

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15. Robert P. Lightner has carefully pulled together Biblical teachings in support of this conclusion. His book, **Heaven for those who can't Believe** which primarily deals with the case of dead infants covers in some measure the case of those who cannot believe, the mentally retarded. Published by Regular Baptist Press, Schaumburg, Illinois, 1977.

16. In his epistle to the Romans chapter 2, Paul identifies four canons of judgment — truth; deeds; law (on tablet and on conscience); and the gospel — and in his preaching on Mars' Hill, he adds a fifth, judgment by 'this man' meaning Jesus (Ac. 17:31).

Can the belief that God will be 'in all' be kept intact with the existence of evil? The Bible answers in the affirmative. It is consistent with the sovereignty of God to exercise His will in goodness and in severity — to those who believe, goodness; but to those who believe not, severity (see Rom. 11:22). In a similar judgment: context during the captivity of Israel, Jehovah speaks of his sovereign authority in words that are not comforting to a rebellious heart. He says: 'I am the Lord, and there is none else, there is no God beside me ... I form the light, and create darkness; I make peace, and create darkness; I make peace, and create evil; I, the Lord, do all these things' (Isaiah 45:5,7). Though God does not desire any to perish, when men rebelliously turn away from Him and reject His merciful provision, He cannot but satisfy His justice and righteousness. This does not in any way diminish His goodness or limit the comprehensiveness of His being 'all in all'. Rather, it confirms His dual perfections of love and justice, of Goodness and severity. After all, He is Lord of all.

## **Second-chancism**

### **An Explanation**

This doctrine takes three forms. One form states that the unevangelized, the mentally sick and infants who died before they could make a decision will be given a chance in the resurrection of all peoples. The second form teaches that after death and while awaiting the resurrection, an offer concerning Christ is made to the unbelieving dead regardless of whether they heard the gospel before they died or not. Passages often cited in support of this position are Ephesian 4:9-10; 1 Peter 3:19-20 and 4:6. The third position is that held officially by the Roman Catholic Church. It maintains that 'the soul which has temporal punishment still due goes to purgatory ... The faithful can help the holy souls by prayer and good works (i.e. indulgence)<sup>17</sup>. Passages used in support of an intermediate state between death and judgment and for the possibility of forgiveness either through intercession or purgatorial fire include 2 Maccabees 12:39-45 (from apocryphal books unrecognised by the Protestant Church), Matthew 5:26; 11:32 and 1 Cor. 3:11-15.

### **A Christian Defense**

The teaching about a second chance stems from an improper exegesis of the passages cited, a universalistic tendency, and a failure to take the Scripture at its face-value where it speaks forthrightly. The Bible clearly says: 'It is appointed to every man once to die, and after death judgment' (Hebr. 9:27). In support of this thesis, the writer of Hebrews refers to Christ's death which makes atonement for sins once and for all (verse 28).

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17. Josef Neuner, S.J. and Hunrich Ross, S.J. edited by Karl Rahner, S.J. **The Teaching of the Catholic Church** (New York: Alba House, 1967), p. 414



The emphasis of the New Testament suggests that the choice of one's eternal destiny is made during one's life time. The story of the rich man and Lazarus already mentioned disallows a second chance. The statement of Jesus to one of the malefactors crucified with him offers no second chance to the other (see Luke 23:39-43). In John 3:18, we read that whoever does not believe stands condemned **already**. Later in verse 36, John argues that as one enters into eternal life upon believing on Christ so the other enters into eternal condemnation upon rejecting God's offer. The drama of destiny is lived out here and now.

## Syncretism

### An Explanation

Originally a political term, syncretism was later used as an expression of harmony between philosophy and religion. Much later, in the context of religious plurality and cultural diversity, syncretism has assumed the meaning of 'mixture'. Thus John Stott describes it as 'a fruit cocktail of religions'. Webster, Random and Oxford dictionaries define it as 'the reconciliation or union of divergent beliefs'. At the Congress on the Church's Worldwide Mission held in the United States in 1966, three kinds of syncretism were described:

1. Syncretism by assimilation which incorporates elements of non-Christian religions, assuming there is no qualitative difference between the Christian faith and other faiths.
2. Syncretism by accommodation which reduces or replaces the Gospel message.
3. Syncretism by accretion or by growth in which secondary beliefs and practices overlay and obscure the basic message.<sup>18</sup>

Our concern in this paper centres on the second type, syncretism by accommodation. It is what Professor Beyerhaus describes as 'an unconscious tendency or conscious attempt to undermine the uniqueness of a religion by equating its elements with those of other belief systems. Syncretism equates heterogeneous religious elements and thereby changes their original meaning without admitting such a change'.<sup>19</sup>

Syncretistic soteriology claims: 1) that there are many ways to reach the divine reality: 2) that Christ's atoning sacrifice needs to be supplemented. Both positions are found among liberal Protestant thinkers, within the ecumenical ranks and the Roman Catholic theologians. Writing in **Attitudes Toward other Religions**, Hans Kung remarks: 'Every human being is under God's grace and can be saved; and we may hope that everyone is.

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18. Harold Lindell, ed. **The Church's Worldwide Mission** (Waco: Word Books, 1966), p. 96.

19. Professor Peter Beyerhaus, 'Syncretism', in **Christianity Today** (July 5, 1974), p. 1175.

Every world religion is under God's grace and can be a way of salvation' 20 The distinguished Roman Catholic divine Karl Rahner says: 'The exclusive claims of Christianity operate only where Christianity is known; non-Christian faiths, which are the combined products of grace and sin, function as legitimate and saving religions where Christianity is absent; their adherents should be classed as anonymous Christians'.<sup>21</sup> The whole gamut of pluralists' argument as seen above is rooted in this belief that there are many ways of salvation. From the workbook of the 5th General Assembly of the World Council of Churches held in Nairobi in 1976 we read: 'We cannot exclude possibilities of God speaking to Christians from outside the Church ... We may find ourselves encountered by an African Christ, a Latin American Christ, and Asian Christ or a European Christ.'<sup>22</sup>

The second form of syncretistic soteriology is contained in all kinds of legalism, gnosticism, asceticism and false mysticism. Any doctrine or practise that postulates grace plus anything (including penance; hidden superior knowledge; esoteric experience; observance of certain food and days; keeping the Law; and performing rituals and sacrifices) is syncretistic soteriology.

### **A Christian Defense**

We have given an answer to the pluralistic form of syncretism above. It is unnecessary to it repeat here. To the second form, there is no stronger statement than the Reformation thesis **sola gratia** and salvation is by faith alone, **sola fide**. The just shall live by faith alone! 'For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith — and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God — not by works, so that no one can boast' (Eph. 2:8-9). In another passage we read: 'But when the kindness and love of God our Saviour appeared, he saved us, not because of righteous things we had done, but because of his mercy' (Tit. 3:4-5). Every repentant sinner approaches God with an empty hand. For salvation in Christ is a free gift. The sacrifice of Christ by his atoning substitutionary death is both efficient and sufficient. There is nothing more that a sinner can do or is required to do except to believe on the Lord Jesus Christ.

Often the error of syncretistic salvation arises from a false concept of the fall of man. Fallenness is regarded as weakness through deprivation rather than badness through depravity. There is no radical directional antithesis between sin and grace, only a difference between want and supply. The

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20. Owen C. Thomas, ed. 'The Freedom of Religions', **Attitudes Towards other Religions**, p. 216.

21. Karl Rahner, 'Christianity and the non-Christian Religions' **Theological Investigations**, translated by Karl H. Krueger vol. 5, pp. 115-35.

22. 5th General Assembly of the WCC, Nairobi, 1976, pp. 19-20.

Scripture says: all were dead in trespasses and sins. What can a dead man do to procure his salvation? The gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ, our Lord. And having been saved by grace, the believing sinners are kept by the same power. 'Holy Father, keep them through your own name those whom you have given me', prays Jesus for his followers. The Old Testament prophets as well as New Testament writers mince no words in their denunciation of all forms of syncretistic soteriology. Anything added to salvation by grace through faith makes it unbiblical.

## HUMANISATION

### An Explanation

Is salvation liberation? Men like Gustavo Gutierrez, James Cone and Canon Burgess Carr will readily answer in the affirmative. Liberation from what? From racial inequality, political oppression, economic injustice, exploitation and any other thing or system that prevents man from being 'truly human'. From Uppsala (1968) to Bangkok (1973) to Nairobi (1975) and to Melbourne (1980), the socio-economic and political interpretation of salvation has dominated the World Council of Churches and the consiliar movement. Philip Potter, the General Secretary of WCC dismissed the proclamation of the gospel to the unreached two billion, or to other lands, or to the world as 'totally futile'.<sup>23</sup> 'Salvation Today' was at Bangkok described by M.M. Thomas, chairman of the WCC Control Committee as:

1. bodily health and beauty of bodily form for the youth.
2. development of material abundance
3. security from aggression and peace of the frontier between peoples
4. social justice among the people.<sup>24</sup>

Stemming from this concept of salvation has been the Council's Program to Combat Racism which gives millions of dollars to Liberation fighters. The former General Secretary of All Africa Conference of Churches (AACC), Canon Burgess Carr, stated at his organization's 3rd General Assembly at Lusaka that God endorses violence by the death of His Son on the cross.<sup>25</sup> He therefore conceives liberation struggles as part of salvation process. One of Geneva reports of the WCC sums up this position aptly:

We have lifted up humanization as the goal of mission because we believe that more than other (positions) it communicates in our period of history the meaning of the messianic goal. In another time the goal of God's redemptive work might best have been described in terms of man turning towards God ... The fundamental question was

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23. 'International Review of Missions' (April 1973), p. 145

24. *ibid.*, pp. 159-160

25. Byang H. Kato "Evangelical Evaluation of Lusaka Conference", *Perception*, Volume 1, No. 2, July 1974, p. 8.

that of the true God, and the Church responded to that question by pointing to Him. It was assuming that the purpose of mission was Christianization, bringing man to God through Christ and His Church. Today the fundamental question is much more that of true man, and the dominant concern of the missionary congregation must therefore be to point to the humanity in Christ as the goal of mission.<sup>26</sup>

The position as described above has been given theological expressions in works of such men as Harvey Cox, **The Secular City** (1965); L. Shier, **The Secularization of History** (1966); James Cone, **A Black Theology of Liberation** (1973).

### **An Evangelical Appraisal**

When carefully examined one discovers that humanisation as advocated by some leading Black and Liberation theologians and within the senior ranks of the WCC is a radical departure from the Biblical emphasis on the religious relation between God and man to the social relation between man and society — a shift from the vertical dimension to the horizontal. In his evaluation of 'theologies of liberation' in Latin America, Samuel Escobar identifies three areas of weakness in the system. The first is the primacy of praxis: 'you first perceive God moving in history and consequently throw your lot with Him; only then you go to Scripture or to Christian truth in order to read'<sup>27</sup> The second is a false historical assumption which claims that the Church has always been classist, that is, an institution at the service of one social class: the exploiters. Such an assumption endorses the inevitability of class struggle. The third deals with the hermeneutical method which employs Marxist economic analysis of the society as a science for understanding Scriptures. Beginning with such presuppositions and using such a method one can understand the reason for the radical shift.

Does it therefore mean that salvation in the Bible not include the horizontal dimension? How broad is salvation in Scripture? In his article presented at Grand Rapids on the Consultation on the relationship between Evangelism and Social Responsibility, Ronald Sider comes to several conclusions. Since we are in basic agreement with him, we have quoted him extensively here. 'In the Old Testament salvation is clearly social and corporate and includes every aspect of life. God's salvation pertains to material prosperity, justice for the poor and needy in the judicial system, and the continued historical existence of the people of Israel. The very centre of God's saving activity in the Old Testament was the

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26. Drafts for Sections, The Uppsala Report 1968, p. 34.

27. Samuel Escobar, 'A Critical Appraisal of Current Theological Trends in Latin America, unpublished paper presented at Seoul Korea during the Third World Theologians Consultation, Sept. 1982.



calling forth of a redeemed community, the people of Israel. At the same time the vertical dimension is everywhere present. God himself is the author of salvation. He took the initiative to effect salvation at the exodus. Both persons and the people of Israel continue to enjoy salvation only as they trust in Yahweh'. Turning to the Gospels, one finds that the idea of salvation is inseparably linked with the Kingdom of God in the teaching and ministry of Jesus. Being saved is entering into (Mk.9:47) or receiving (Lk. 8:17) or inheriting (Mt. 25:34) the kingdom. 'Just as a new redeemed community was central to God's salvation in the Old Testament, so too Jesus called out a new community of disciples who received the salvation of the dawning kingdom and began to live out the kingdom values of the New age. Experiencing the salvation of the kingdom Jesus announced meant a total transformation of values, actions and relationships.<sup>28</sup> That salvation begins with a religious vertical relationship of man with God and then reaches out in horizontal dimension to neighbours in the society. In Pauline thought, salvation focuses on the redeeming act of Christ on the cross. Through it as a past event, believers are justified, redeemed and reconciled with God; and as a present reality, they are empowered by the Holy Spirit to live out victorious reconciled lives where there is neither Jew nor Gentiles (Eph. 2:11ff). Forgiveness, sanctification, reconciliation, corporate transformation are all aspects of salvation in the New Testament. We truncate the gospel wherever the horizontal dimension is overlooked. On the other hand, any gospel that blurs or ignores or stresses the horizontal at the expense of the vertical is as good as secular humanism. Sider's final conclusion is appropriate to end this section. 'If biblical usage is decisive, then we should use salvation language to refer only to what happens when persons confess Christ, experience the salvation he offers, and begin to live out the radical demands of his new kingdom. Certainly that salvation is vertical and horizontal, personal and social. But it is all within the context of conscious confession of Christ. Salvation language should probably not be used to refer to the imperfect emergence of justice and peace in the society at large before the return of Christ'.<sup>29</sup>

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28. Ronald J. Sider and James Parker, III, 'How Broad is Salvation in Scripture?' Unpublished paper presented at Grand Rapids during the Consultation on the Relationship between Evangelism and Social Responsibility, June 1982, p. 5

29. *ibid.*, p. 15

## Conclusion

From the above it has been demonstrated that it is not any empty assertion to say that of all doctrines of the Church that of salvation is prince. It suffers attack more from within the Church than from outside. Our study reveals that attacks from within the Church on this doctrine arise primarily from three sources: 1) an erosion of confident trust in the inspired authoritative Word of God; 2) an accommodation of God's Word to human philosophy and rationalism; and 3) a reversal of hermeneutical process, from the world to the Word instead of from the Word to the world. As evangelicals we must guard against these pitfalls. We must tenaciously hold to the primacy of God's Word. God's eternal unchanging Word must remain supreme in matters of faith and practise. It is not a product of the literary activity of the Church. Rather, the Church bows before the authority of the Word. **Sola Scriptura** must ring out loud and clear in our day.

To understand the word and communicate it with relevance, evangelicals, particularly of the Third World, must evolve meaningful and effective hermeneutics. I cannot agree any less with Rene' Padilla in his suggestion of a four-dimensional hermeneutics: 1) communal, deriving from community of believers; 2) pneumatic, illumined by the Holy Spirit; 3) contextual, taking seriously the cultural context; and 4) missiological, responding to God's mission of calling people from all nations to faith and obedience in Christ.<sup>30</sup> It is also imperative that we exegete our socio-economic-politico and cultural contexts seriously. We need to know our people, our history and present day struggles so as to be able to relate the gospel sensibly. Needless to say that words and deeds, faith and obedience, evangelism and social justice must go hand-in-hand. If the Church fails in this harmony her credibility disappears and she becomes irrelevant or unnecessary. Finally, the Church as a pneumatic community cannot afford to sacrifice purity, prayer and loving outreach for programs, propaganda and popularity. All nations must be disciplined for Christ.

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30. Rene' Padilla, 'Toward a Biblical Foundation', Unpublished paper delivered at Seoul, Korea, Sept. 1982

# MAASAI LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT: AN EMERGING PROCESS

Edgar J. Elliston

Olarikoni ole Manyatta<sup>1</sup> usually spends his mornings near the Morijo bore hole with the other Maasai elders of his area. He looks like the other men. He wears his red plaid sheets and an old stocking cap. He is about 45 years old and can not yet read. The other local men call him their **olaiguanani** or spokesman. He became a believer recently along with many of his neighbors and extended family. The community considers him to be their key leader who is helping to bring people to become Christians. He is a Level 1 leader<sup>2</sup>.

Olpayian ole Ng'eno serves as an elder in his local congregation. He reads his New Testament regularly. He has been attending the "Evangelists' courses" for four years. He occasionally preaches for his local congregation and regularly witnesses to non-believers in his community. However, he still lacks the ability to go beyond the most basic skills in interpreting Scripture. While he wants to encourage new believers, his ability to teach them is limited. He is a Level II leader.

Olaretoni ole Laisiayiani began serving as an evangelist shortly after he was converted. Later, after participating in several years of "Evangelists' Courses", the church recognized his effective ministry by licensing him as a pastor. Since then, he has helped with the establishment of five new congregations. However, he still does not know how to both organize new congregations and to assure their continued growth without his being personally involved at every stage. He is a Level III leader.

John ole Ng'ida preaches well and serves as the pastor of a town church. He is a graduate of a higher level theological college. He is a popular and effective teacher in the training courses. However, as a pastor he portrays a poor image. He lives in a distant community and commutes to his congregation only on Saturdays and Sundays. Usually, only about 40 women and children attend services in the building which was built to serve 500. Few men participate. He spends his weekdays operating his small business. While he is among the highest paid pastors in the region because of his training, he still feels that he must work to supplement his income. He is a Level IV leader.

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1. All of the personal names have been changed.

2. E. Elliston, "A Paradigm for Maasai Church Leadership". Mimeographed Report, 1983.

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Dr. Edgar Elliston is the Leadership Development Co-ordinator for the Southern Region of the Africa Inland Church, Kenya.

These four church leaders illustrate several leadership related problems. We see the problems of inadequate or inappropriate training in the ministry of each one. Inadequate or inappropriate training frustrates the growth of the church at every level not only numerically, but in “organic” and “spiritual” growth as well. This training tragedy demands improvement as we see men give years to be trained and still be unable to function effectively.

All of these men feel the frustrations of not having enough trained leaders for the growing numbers of churches among the more traditional population.

In 1981 the Southern Regional Church Council of the Africa Inland Church recognized some of these problems and took the initiative to work through them. The SRCC asked a group of missionaries to build a coordinated leadership development programme on the already existing leadership development base.

A standard AIC Bible school curriculum exists for all of those who would be licensed or ordained. This curriculum, however, was designed primarily for a secondary school level. It is Western rather than African or more specifically Maasai in its orientation. We can see some of the problems of this curriculum as we observe the dislocation of its graduates from the people they seek to serve and their all too often ineffective ministries among the increasingly responsive pastoral population.

The growing churches need an innovative theological education programme in Maasailand which produces large numbers of functioning ministers for the many new churches. The Maasai churches need a theological education programme which produces many pastors who pastor, evangelists who evangelize and teachers who teach. The Maasai churches need a theological education programme which fits the available inputs including students and supportive resources **and** which fits the communities to be served.

Rogers suggests three domains which need our attention when we consider a new approach to such a problem. These domains include: the Antecedents, Process and Consequences of what is done<sup>3</sup>.

### **Antecedents**

The more than 210,000 Maasai living in Narok and Kajiado districts of Kenya range over an area of nearly 14,000 square miles (36,000 km<sup>2</sup>). The majority continue in a pastoral lifestyle and economy. About 11,000 Maasai claim to be Christians. The Africa Inland Church is one of the largest

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3. E. Rogers with F. Shoemaker. **Communication of innovations**. New York, Free Press, 1971:103.



of the twenty denominations represented among the Maasai. The Africa Inland Church is gathered into about 130 congregations with an average weekly attendance of about 5800. Eleven Maasai pastors and about 100 evangelists serve these churches<sup>4</sup>.

The African Inland Mission began to evangelize the Maasai in 1903. Church growth was slow until about ten years ago when receptivity began to increase. The accelerated growth continues into the present. The number of new congregations demonstrates this growth. Over the past five years more than 60 new congregations have been established.<sup>5</sup>

The growth of the number of churches parallels the growth in leadership development. Missionaries initiated the "Evangelists' Courses" in 1972 for both nonliterate and literate church leaders in Kajiado. These courses have grown to include more than 30 weeks of training in 1982 for a total of more than 250 local church leaders.

A typical course lasts from one to three weeks. After a course, the participants return to continue serving in their local congregations. The curriculum planners recognize the validity of Kinsler's statement: "Leaders are not formed by educational institutions ... leadership development takes place in society"<sup>6</sup>.

This nonformal educational approach to educating the ministry –

breaks down the dichotomy between the clergy and laity by encouraging all kinds of leaders to prepare themselves for ministry. It stimulates the dynamics of ministry at the local level by training those men and women **in the context** (emphasis added) of their own communities and congregations. It enables the congregations to develop their own leadership for ministry so that they do not need to depend on outside highly training professional clergy<sup>7</sup>.

With the present theological education structure we are training **in** ministry instead of preparing **for** ministry. All of the course participants are functioning leaders in their local congregations.

Missionaries constructed and started a Bible College in Narok in the late 1960's. However, they only conducted classes for three years for pastors

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4. K. Shingledecker, et. al. **Unreached Peoples of Kenya Project: Maasai Report**. Nairobi, Daystar Communications, 1982:20.

5. Christian Missionary Fellowship. **1982 Annual Report**. Indianapolis, Christian Missionary Fellowship, 1983:13.

6. F. Kinsler. **The Extension Movement in Theological Education: A Call to the Renewal of the Ministry**. South Pasadena, William Carey Library, n.d.:13.

7. Ibid, p. 8.

who had transferred from other Bible schools to complete their fourth year of training. The facilities have been used for nonformal training programs since 1979.

### **Process**

In the present period<sup>8</sup> several different but very important developmental processes are flowing together to form the present stream of leadership development in Maasai land. Some of the processes serve to multiply church leaders, whereas, others tend to cloud the stream.

Miller's definition aptly fits the cooperative leadership developmental efforts of the church and missions.

Development is a process by which people gain greater control over themselves, their environment and their future, in order to realize the full potential of life that God has made possible<sup>9</sup>.

Some of the more important current developmental currents affecting Maasai leadership education include: the nonformal education of Maasai church leaders, mission disengagement, the development of a more servant-based leadership, the formal education of church leaders outside of the Maasai culture to serve among the Maasai and the growth of church among the more traditional Maasai.

### **Nonformal Education of Maasai Church Leaders.**

One missionary assumed the initial responsibility of coordinating the diverse nonformal educational programs in 1981. He clearly saw his initial role to be a 'catalyst'<sup>10</sup> through which he could stimulate the more farsighted church leaders to think about needs, options and constraints in the whole area of leadership development. He pursued the basic strategies of "re-educating" the existing church leaders and "facilitating" the emergence of alternatives in discussion at first and in actual teaching situations later<sup>11</sup>. A working nonformal educational model was already producing church leaders in Kajiado area. This model served both as a focal point of discussion and as a base on which to build. The focus was

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8. For the purpose of this article I am dating the present period from 1981 when the Southern Regional Church Council of the Africa Inland Church requested the Christian Missionary Fellowship to coordinate leadership development in the region. I recognize some trends such as the increased church growth and nonformal training began before 1981. However, it was at that time that the church took positive steps to coordinate leadership development for the whole region.
  9. R. Sider (ed.). **Evangelicals and Development: Toward A Theology of Social Change**. Exeter, The Paternoster Press, 1981:19.
  10. R. Havelock. **The Change Agent's Guide To Innovation In Education**. Englewood Cliffs, Educational Technology Publications, 1973:8.
  11. G. Zaltman and R. Duncan. **Strategies for Planned Change**. New York, John Wiley and Sons, 1977:90-127.

and continues to be on short classes followed by supervised work among the villages. The learning is re-inforced in some of the areas by “end of the month fellowship” times in which there is reflection about the learning and activities.

When curriculum was first discussed, several church leaders presented the approved church Bible school curriculum as the solution to leadership education problems. However, as they gave further attention to the churches to be served the leaders to be taught and available resources, they began to see that this curriculum was not entirely appropriate. It was inappropriate in terms of its targeted students (secondary level), the communities to be served (urbanized) and the goal of the kind of ministry it would produce (a professional clergy expecting a high level of support). The majority of Maasai church leaders now are either non-literates or have less than a standard 7 level of education. The churches to be served average about 30 in attendance. They cannot afford nor do they want highly trained pastors who would be out of place among them. The priority need for the Maasai churches is in the rural areas for men who will continue to be at least partially self-supporting and willing to work with rural communities in small congregations.

A “schooling approach” to theological education as represented in this curriculum contains all of the inherent weaknesses of a schooling approach to education in general. Ward lists some of these weaknesses which affect Maasai theological education in particular:

1. All learners are assumed to be similar in terms of needs, interests and abilities.
2. Learners are increasingly made more competitive at the price of cooperation.
3. Learners are expected to be receptors of learning rather than communicators.
4. The learners’ part in decision-making is minimal and tends to be steadily reduced.
5. The content to be learned is justified in terms of future needs of the learner.
6. Rewards are symbolic more than real<sup>12</sup>.

Some of the church leaders along with the missionaries involved recognize the validity of Kinsler’s criticism of the traditional western curricular approach to theological education and are trying to avoid its pitfalls.

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12. T. Ward. “Schooling As a Defective Approach to Education”. Unpublished manuscript, n.d.:2-3.

Traditional training patterns reinforce the dichotomy between clergy and laity; they debilitate the dynamics of ministry at the congregational level; and they make the churches dependent upon highly trained, professional pastors<sup>13</sup>.

Theological education can in fact be a major obstacle to the growth of the church and the fulfillment of her ministry<sup>14</sup>.

Early in the process the missionaries and key church leaders spent much time in the building of relationships and confidence so that the issues of curriculum and possible changes in training could be considered openly. The Regional Church Council recognized the needs for wider discussion and so instituted a regional leadership committee of other missionaries and church opinion leaders.

TEE is another small branch of the nonformal educational process which is flowing to join the Maasai leadership development stream. Several of the Level III church leaders who know Swahili have been studying TEE courses and have begun teaching Levels I and II leaders in their local churches.

The church leaders and missionaries have consciously sought in these nonformal approaches to move away from the "western academic-professional model of ministry which is self-defeating in terms of effective leadership"<sup>15</sup>. Kinsler criticizes the system of theological education which "serves to select young, inexperienced men and women, separate them from the normal processes of leadership formation, and place them artificially over the other members"<sup>16</sup>. Planners are therefore giving attention to the training of older men whose leadership roles have already been acknowledged by both their churches and communities. By focusing attention on functioning leaders "there is far less danger that their training will serve (primarily) as a ladder for personal advancement"<sup>17</sup>.

Church leaders and missionaries have tried through these nonformal processes to move away from colonial educational structures by involving those being taught and those being served in the curricular planning process.

The thread that ran through all colonial education was the fact that it was offered ... without the input or consent of the colonized ...

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13. Kinsler, *Op. Cit.* p. 8.

14. *Ibid.* p. 12.

15. *Ibid.* p. 14

16. *Ibid.* p. 14.

17. *Ibid.* p. 17.

Colonial schools never held out the prospect of integration into indigenous culture to those who attended them; neither did they prepare the colonized for leadership in their own society<sup>18</sup>.

Some church leaders have not yet understood or accepted the nonformal educational structures. The overtones of the colonial education structures still emerge in discussions as the western schooling model is held as the ideal or goal to be achieved. "The essential structure of the educational system is perhaps the most dramatic example of the continuing impact of colonialism<sup>19</sup>.

The present leadership education processes have emerged them with significant differences in the purpose, timing, control, content, delivery system and costs from a western schooling model<sup>20</sup>. Education should not be simply equated with schooling. It has much broader potential structures and processes.

As the nonformal education of church leaders has continued, some traditionally minded church leaders have been applying pressure to increasingly "formalize" the programming and raise the entrance requirements. These pressures are closely tied to the issues of official church recognition through licensure and ordination.

The primary functions of accreditation – encouragement and protection<sup>21</sup> – are only beginning to be considered by some of the leaders in the nonformal training processes. Many present leaders fear the threat of a "traditionalist accreditation approach"<sup>22</sup> which would bring about what they would see as an irrelevant, ineffective training institution. Others are only beginning to see the positive benefits of an accreditation process which seeks to focus on the same "renewal agenda"<sup>23</sup> which the Maasai educational processes are seeking to address.

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18. P. Altbach and G. Kelley. **Education and Colonialism**. New York, Longman, 1978:2-3.

19. Ibid. pp. 30-31.

20. T. Simkins, **Non-formal Education and Development**. Manchester, University of Manchester, 1979:14-15.

21. E. Elliston. "Accreditation in African Theological Education". Mimeographed Paper, 1978:3.

22. P. Bowers. "Accreditation As a Catalyst for Renewal in Theological Education", **East Africa Journal of Evangelical Theology**, 1982:1:11-21.

23. Ibid. p. 17.

Some of the questions related to the accrediting process such as the qualities of the educated functioning graduates have begun to be addressed<sup>24</sup>. However, the church in the region has only begun to consider such crucial issues as the financial support of the programming, adequacy of staffing, administration and learning resources such as library facilities.

### **Mission Disengagement**

Rogers suggests the final role in a developmental process is a “terminating” role<sup>25</sup>. The CMF has built into its policy of planning for all developmental processes the process of disengagement. The **CMF-Kenya Position Paper on Development** states, “That disengagement (but not necessarily termination) should be effected as soon as there is a self-renewal capacity in any sector of the community involved”<sup>26</sup>. The aim is to work toward a “partnership-in-mission” about which Engel writes<sup>27</sup>.

In order to achieve this goal of disengagement the missionaries have recognized that developmental processes follow the sequence of 1) giving, 2) helping, 3) teaching, 4) leading and 5) sharing. They have observed that only as the latter types of participation are engaged will the related problems of the earlier ones be overcome. Ward holds that all of the earlier stages of a developmental relationship have serious potential problems if the process itself does not proceed to overcome these problems.

<b>Relationship</b>	<b>Related Problem</b>
Giving	Dependency
Helping	Oppression
Teaching	Hierarchy
Leading	Authoritarianism
Sharing	No associated problem <sup>28</sup>

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24. I have summarized in another place the more important values which undergird the concept of Christian leadership. They are summarized in the following propositions. “These criteria are assumed to be relevant and applicable inter-culturally when they are 1) translated in dynamically-equivalent ways ... 2) ... behave in ways which are beyond reproach in their communities ... 3) ... be distributed within the church with different persons ‘leading’ according to the particular gift he she may have ... 4) ... not base their leadership on their own rank, status or power ... 5) ... contribute to the purpose, fulness and functioning of the church. 6) ... reproduce themselves through others.” In E. Elliston. **Curriculum Foundations For Leadership Education in the Samburu Christian Community**. Unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, Michigan State University, 1981:223-224.

25. Rogers, **Op. Cit.** p. 248.

26. Christian Missionary Fellowship. **CMF-Kenya Position Paper on Development**. Nairobi, Christian Missionary Fellowship, 1981:4.

27. J. Engel. **Contemporary Christian Communications: Its Theory and Practice**. Nashville, Thomas Nelson Publishers, 1979:284-287.

28. T. Ward. “participation — The Key to Development strategies”. A lecture delivered at Daystar Communications in Nairobi, Kenya, 1977.



The missions involved recognize the present dangers in the developmental process and are seeking to reach a genuine reciprocal relationship in the process of disengaging by engaging present church leaders in every aspect of the present educational processes. The goal of this disengagement process is for the missions to withdraw from supporting the church to join in partnership with the church to evangelize as yet unreached peoples.

As this process is being implemented with the church, the problems of "people greed", "personnel dependency" and "lack of personal commitment" along with their parallel problems of "money greed", "financial dependency" and the lack of "self-commitment" to which Reichenbach refers are being reduced<sup>29</sup>. Disengagement threatens some church leaders but the process is continuing to bring the church to be mature and reproducing in Maasai land.

### **Servant-Leadership**

Part of the stream of mission disengagement is being focused into the process of developing a more "servant-based" leadership among the churches. The following diagram is currently serving as a paradigmatic model for describing this process<sup>30</sup>.

#### **Leadership Paradigm**

**Level I** – Nonliterate, unpaid local leaders who serve within local congregations

**Level II** – Literate, unpaid local leaders who serve locally and witness outside

**Level III** – Partially paid leaders of small churches or groups of churches, STD 7 education, often licensed

**Level IV** – Paid, ordained pastors of town churches  
Bible school graduates

**Level VI** – National  
international  
with B.A.-

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29. B. Reichenbach. "The Captivity of Third World Churches". **Evangelical Missions Quarterly**. 1982: 18:3:166-179.

30. E. Elliston. **Op. Cit.** 1983:2.

The inverted pyramid suggests that each succeeding level is supportive of the other levels and is teaching each of the preceding levels. The aim is to move away from status based on education or power and move toward increased serving with increased learning. This paradigm of five levels parallels the leadership levels described by McGavran<sup>31</sup> and McKinney<sup>32</sup>. A further aim is to move away from the professionalization of the ministry because "the ministry is not fundamentally a profession: it is a function of the body of believers".<sup>33</sup>

Jesus did not choose the status-based school models of the Greeks for his training programme. Rather, He chose nonformal or informal<sup>35</sup> modes of instruction to emphasize servant-leadership. Covell shows that the aims of the biblical models for successful teaching were not to impart knowledge, but to produce obedient disciples<sup>34</sup>. The current educational processes seek to emphasize servant-based-functioning leadership and to teach in ways which are both culturally appropriate and pedagogically effective.

### **Formal Education of Church Leaders for Maasai**

A fourth process flowing into the Maasai leadership education stream is the continuing formal education of church leaders outside Maasailand in western oriented Bible schools. Some graduates of these Bible institutes and theological colleges are serving in Maasailand. These graduates generally locate in the town churches which need higher level trained leaders. They are represented by the case cited above of John Ole Ng'ida. Unfortunately, their training often has been dysfunctional in crucial areas. Many of these men have been culturally, socially, economically and educationally dislocated from the growing edge of the church. They have come to expect to fit into a status-oriented church hierarchy. Often their view of the ministry is simply to preach on weekends, visit the sick, marry those seeking marriage, bury the dead and spend the rest of their time in their own money-making businesses.

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31. D. McGavran. "Five Kinds of Leaders". Lecture delivered at Columbia Bible College. Recorded and distributed by William Carey Library, South Pasadena, n.d.
  32. L. McKinney. "Leadership: Key to the Growth of the Church". In V. Gerber (ed.). **Discipling Through Theological Education by Extension**. Chicago, Moody Press, 1980:183
  33. Kinsler. Op. Cit. p. 14.
  34. R. Covell. "Biblical Models for Successful Teaching". In V. Gerber (ed.). **Discipling Through Theological Education by Extension**. Chicago, Moody Press, 1980:105-118.
  35. The following definitions are perhaps too simplistic, but they will serve to show the essential differences. Nonformal education refers in this article to out-of-school, planned learning experiences. Informal education refers to unplanned out-of-school learning experiences. Formal education refers to schooling-based learning experiences.

However, dysfunctions do not cloud the whole picture. Some of these men now actively participate in the teaching of other church leaders thus putting their formal training into a multiplying mode. With the higher level of training they better understand Christian theology and are beginning to serve in key teaching roles. If the missionaries are in fact to disengage, these more highly trained leaders are needed to replace them in their various vacancies.

### **Maasai Church Growth**

The churches are growing among the traditional Maasai. Not only are many coming to know the Lord in many of the established congregations, but new congregations continue to emerge. Significant growth in both the number of new believers and new congregations is occurring among the Ilkosongo section near Loitokitok and the Ildamat section near Narok. Other Maasai sections are also experiencing increased receptivity. Even the Olpurko who were until recently considered resistant are seeing the conversion of new believers. This growth of the church increasingly emphasizes the urgency of the training needs. The training process is simply not keeping pace with the growth nor with the increasing demand for congregations to be established in new places. As the Daystar Communications survey documents, these new congregations are small and generally in remote areas<sup>36</sup>.

### **Consequences**

In spite of some confusion, continuing questions, occasional opposition and some dysfunctions, positive consequences of the present process are emerging. In the last five years at least 63 congregations have come into being. Without exception these new churches have been involved with the new curricular processes of leadership development. The number of Maasai church leaders-in-training has grown dramatically from less than ten in 1972 to more than 250 at the present. These men are nearly all in Levels I-III and are actively serving in the growing churches.

Another significant consequence has been the increased awareness of the need for developing more relevant curricula for the various levels of church leadership. More mature church leaders from each level have joined in the planning for courses around each of the training centers at Loitokitok, Kajiado and Narok. Church leaders from Levels III-V have joined in the teaching of both knowledge and skills which are appropriate for each of the leadership levels.

Local congregations and those being trained are increasingly supporting the training programmes both financially and through providing food and other supplies.

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36. Shingledecker. *Op. Cit.* p. 24.

The controlled cost of training for each trained, functioning leader is another encouraging consequence. Kinsler's comparison of formal and nonformal approaches is certainly being seen in Maasai land.

Traditional, residential theological schools are extremely expensive, especially if they attempt to reach the more mature leaders of the churches. And, they create a heavy financial burden for the churches, for they produce professional pastors at higher and higher support levels.

(A nonformal approach, however,) is capable of serving large numbers of students, particularly leaders of congregations. These students are certain to serve the church, whether they are paid a salary or not, and they generally do not raise their support level expectation by taking extension studies<sup>37</sup>.

However, some dysfunctional consequences continue to trouble the church. As many new congregations are emerging, the lack of adequately trained leaders is increasing. Inadequately trained leaders often lead the new congregations frustrating every aspect of church growth. The trained men simply can not make the rounds often enough. One congregation which averages more than 100 weekly for worship recently went nearly eight months without a visit by a licensed or ordained pastor.

While the church is beginning to help support the training programs, there has not been a proportional increase in church support to the growth of leadership training needs. This problem has been heightened by some missionaries leaving and others being transferred from the area.

### **Conclusion**

The problem of enabling nonliterate local leaders like Olarikoni Ole Manyatta to lead his community to Christ is partially being met by the increased training of functionally literate outward-looking leaders like Olpayian Ole Ng'eno. He is being encouraged to teach others like Olarikoni Ole Manyatta.

The problem of having adequate teachers for Olpayian Ole Ng'eno is being met in part by enabling licensed pastors like Olaretoni Ole Laisianiani not only to teach in courses, but also to visit and encourage in the villages. Such licensed pastors are increasingly being taught by those who have attended Bible schools or by their colleagues who study TEE courses together with them.

The integration of Level IV leaders like John Ole Ng'ida into the planning and teaching processes is serving to reduce their dislocation and to take advantage of their specialized education. Several of these men are moving from disillusioned nonfunctioning pastors to multiplying servant-leaders.

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37. Kinsler. *Op. Cit.* p. 21.

# THE VALUE OF ACCREDITATION FOR THIRD WORLD THEOLOGICAL EDUCATION

Titus Kivunzi

## Introduction

The main purpose of this article is not to give answers to all the issues involved in accreditation of theological education in the Third World. The writer is only interested in posing some questions for consideration, which may lead to further research.

Our discussion is divided into three parts. The first part deals with the problem of accreditation as seen by the educators and the church: its meaning, what it does, and its benefits. The second part deals with the strengths of accreditation in regard to: its standards, self-study by the institution, and its results as seen in the graduates. The third part looks into the weaknesses of accreditation.

## 1. THE PROBLEM: AS SEEN BY THE EDUCATORS AND BY THE CHURCH

The term "accreditation" is new to the Third World church. The two known concepts are "certification" and "licensure," both of which only apply to individuals rather than institutions. The terms mean that the individuals holding certain credentials are authorized to perform specific services and practice their profession before the public. These are normally granted by the government. But the idea of recognizing an institution rather than an individual (so that having been in the institution one is automatically qualified) is somewhat foreign to the mind of the church.

According to the Council on Postsecondary Accreditation,<sup>1</sup> the term "accreditation" denotes that there has been a third-party examination and evaluation, usually by peers, through some mutually agreed-upon process in order to arrive at a quality determination of that which is being examined. John Mayor says that the term is commonly employed in education, and is granted by a professional or an agency of the state, and applies only to institutions, unlike the terms "certification" and "licensure," which generally apply to individuals. Because of this he goes on to say that if accreditation is confused with these other forms of

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1. Theological Education 14: Issues in Accreditation, (Autumn 1977, Vol. XIV; No. 1, p. 11.

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Rev. Titus Kivunzi is the Principal of Scott Theological College and a Consulting Editor to EAJET.

recognition by the accrediting body, it can be a hindrance to the program and fail to meet its purpose.<sup>2</sup> Accreditation means recognition after the evaluation of an institution's curriculum, government, and resources by an external body. It means putting a "price tag" on the institution.

William K. Selden defines accreditation as "the process whereby an organization or agency recognizes a college or university or a program of study as having met certain predetermined qualifications or standards."<sup>3</sup> All these definitions are given by the professional educators. But the church does not see the difference between the institutional status before accreditation and after accreditation. The main reason is ignorance of the system. The church needs to be introduced to the system in a direct way. But because this is not done, the question remains, "What is it?" The foreign agencies have not responded to the question. To the church accreditation may mean authority to grant degrees. It may mean school inspection by authorities, just as it is in the case of the public schools. Public schools are inspected by the government authorities, as each one decides in order to see how the school is doing, rather than to show the school what to do. While accrediting agencies do more or less the same thing, the approach and the purpose are different. But in order to impress this difference upon the people in the church, it is going to take more than office correspondence. It is going to take several meetings with the church, in order to explain to the people the meaning of accreditation and its benefits to the institution and to the church.

In concluding this topic I would like to say that theological schools in the Third World do have a problem of undefined importation of **predetermined** Western standards.

#### **What Does Accreditation Do?**

To answer this question let's look at the work of the Accrediting Council for Theological Education in Africa (ACTEA). In response to the question, "How does ACTEA accreditation help?", the ACTEA secretary gives three things: 1) improvement, 2) credibility, 3) contact.<sup>4</sup> The accrediting body should seek to help a theological institution to improve what it is already doing by suggesting guidelines which are in tune with its primary mission. It should lead the institution until it gains credibility by providing basic academic quality. This step should not only aim at academic recognition, but also at spiritual growth. Finally it should provide an opportunity for contact or fellowship with other theological institutions within the continent and outside the continent. This goes beyond William Selden's

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2. John R. Mayor, **Accreditation In Teacher Education: Its Influence on Higher Education**. (Washington, D.C.: National Commission on Accreditation, 1978), p. 6.

3. Ibid.

4. Materials from ACTEA, "Your Questions Answered," p. 1.

idea of predetermined standards. The standards should not be merely predetermined “do’s and don’ts.” They should be **commonly agreed** upon standards of quality as the ACTEA puts them.<sup>5</sup> Not only the accrediting body, but also the institution and the church where the institution is located should be involved in setting those standards.

### **Who Benefits From Accreditation?**

A response from a short-sighted point of view is “Accreditation benefits the institution. The institution gets all kinds of standards, suggestions and recognitions from the agency.” But its effectiveness depends on realities beyond the “price tag” put on it. If the accreditation agency and the recipient institution lose the sense of ascribing worth to and glorifying God in their endeavor, they are both playing the flute with no one to dance. Accreditation must seek to glorify God by improving the effectiveness of the institution in serving the community. By so doing the church reaps the benefits. It seems that if accreditation is not seriously studied and prayerfully applied, it can end up merely benefiting the institution and individual students, but not the church. This happens very subtly by raising the standards of education very quickly in order to keep abreast with the rest of the world. We forget the fact that it took the Western world very many years to bring their theological standards where they are today. By rushing the newly founded schools in the developing countries we end up turning out first class academic giants, but spiritual dwarves. This is why I am not in total agreement with today’s ideas that we are training “leaders” for the church. Lois McKinney talks about two things in relation to holistic approach to leadership training: identifying the levels of leadership in a given area, and finding out what kind of leaders do the churches need.<sup>6</sup> I am not sure that that is what we need to find out. What we need to find out is the kind of education needed for the church of Christ. Foreign agencies must guard the Third World church against the danger of “sons of Zebedee-ism.”<sup>7</sup> They must refrain from emphasizing leadership in connection with theological training. The church belongs to the Master Builder, Jesus Christ (Matt. 16:18). He is its Leader as His Spirit guides it into all the truth with the purpose of glorifying Christ. (Jn. 16:13,14). It takes more servanthood and humility to cause the church to grow than it takes authority and lordship over the flock. In fact, authority and lordship are absent in the teaching of Jesus concerning His church. The church needs spiritual servants rather than leaders. Producing spiritual servants takes more time than more of us realize. We must be careful to resist the temptation of wanting to mature the Third World church overnight, and thereby ruining the insitutional products not only by placing “price tags” on them, but also by leaving the church very many years behind.

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5. Materials from ACTEA, “Your Questions Answered,” p. 1.

6. Paul Bowers, ed., **Evangelical Theological Education in the 1980’s** (ICAA), p. 36.

7. “Sons of Zebedee-ism” is based on Matt. 20:20-28, where the sons of Zebedee went to Jesus with the quest for promotion.



Accreditation agencies which allow for flexibility and changes in their standards help the graduates from the accredited institutions relate more effectively to the grass-root needs of the church. When such flexibility occurs, it is not only the institution or the students who benefit from the accreditation, but also the church.

Having said all that I must make it clear that before the accreditation benefits are experienced by the church they must first of all be experienced by the institution. Accreditation does help the institution maintain high educational standards. This takes place as the institution tries to maintain its status. The accreditation becomes the institutional voice and can be used for advertisement and promotion. The agencies do help by suggesting available materials for the library. Secondly, accreditation benefits are experienced by the teachers. Once the school receives accreditation, plans for faculty educational development are no longer an option. Professors must seek ways of sharpening their teaching skills in order to be able to face the challenge. Thirdly, accreditation benefits are experienced by the students. It helps the students overcome the embarrassment of being unable to gain acceptance in other schools or transferring their credits.<sup>8</sup>

## **II. THE STRENGTHS OF ACCREDITATION**

If accreditation can be seen as a means, not an end, of promoting improvement of the theological education, there are many significant strengths that can be pointed out.

### **Regarding the Standards**

Many schools in the Third World operate without laid-down standards at all. And those which have their own standards do suffer the ethnocentric fever that says their ways are the best. There are various ways therefore in which accreditation standards can benefit the institution.

1. The accreditation standards help to mediate between those institutions which have no guidelines and those which do have some. To the latter they serve as a corrective device. By comparing the two standards the institution can see that there are yet other good things besides those which they already have. They also help to point out that there are other ways of doing the same things more effectively. Because of the available standards, those schools without definite plans for the future begin to think in terms of spiritual and functioning growth.

2. The standards help the institutions to begin to think of long term goals of their ministry.

3. They serve to stimulate such institutions, to get them moving and to cause them to begin to employ their restored energy for more effectiveness.

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8. Sherry S. Harris, ed., **Accredited Institutions of Postsecondary Education: Programs, Candidates**, (American Council of Education, 1981-82), pp. 383-386.

4. They serve as a diagnosis to check the institutional academic health as it relates to the ministry.

5. If well administered, these standards do help in developing guidelines for assessing educational effectiveness.

6. The standards help to stimulate broad considerations of theological issues beyond the local concerns. Whenever an institution does not have some standards against which to measure itself, it is likely to become ingrown. That is, there is a tendency to withdraw from the rest of the world as if the graduates are going to serve only the institution. Therefore, the standards help the institution to find out how much it has grown and how much it still needs to grow, as well as showing the direction it needs to grow.

#### **B. Regarding the Self-Study by the Institution**

1. Self-study helps the professional body assume responsibilities in a more realistic way. It is most likely that the professor will take things for granted, which may lead to educational coldness. Self-study confronts each professor with a responsibility of looking into his own area of specialization in response to the questions posed by the agency.

2. It promotes group experience among the teachers, as they work together toward a common goal.

3. It is a training experience as each teacher shares and adds guidance of somekind in the small committees.

4. It promotes communication with other institutions. Teachers and administration are forced to find out from other schools what things they have in common and in what things they differ. Simple things like what kind of food the students are given in other schools, what kind of accomodation, how much counseling, what kind of facilities can be overlooked by institutions.

5. It helps the students feel a sense of belonging to the school in a direct way. Students are involved in the process themselves, in analyzing their own areas such as student council, extra-curricular activities, and their devotional lives as a body of believers.

6. The board of governors is faced with the question of the overall administration of the institution. They are forced to think seriously concerning promotion of the school, recruitment of the teachers and plans for their further training, paying the teachers, and supporting the institution to insure its continuation.

7. Self-study encourages the development of a good filing system which is one of the deficiencies of administration in the Third World theological schools.

8. Lack of job descriptions is another weak spot in educational administration in the Third World. Self-study encourages it as each of the workers is required to submit an outline of what he does. This not only helps the institution, but it also helps the individual workers as well. It helps them to assess their own achievements based on what they write.

9. It also helps the administration to look at the institution from a broader view. This way some of the neglected areas are pin-pointed through this process.

10. Self-study is the best way to know whether you as a body of workers are capable of running the institution or not. To give lectures in the class is one thing, but to maintain the institutional goals and high academic standards is another. These aspects are not realized until one begins to measure his abilities against external criteria.

11. An accrediting agency can better assess the teachers through the self-study report than through mere presentation of their academic credentials.

12. Self-study can also help the accrediting body to evaluate their predetermined standards by the report given by the institution of what has actually taken place over against their formulated theories.

13. Self-study becomes a reference material for other institutions which are seeking accreditation.

14. It makes the administration much easier for future personnel than it was for the pioneers. That is, they don't spend much time developing policies and goals since they have them already. Instead they begin where the work is and move toward higher goals. This process is the most important of all the other steps leading to accreditation.

### **Regarding the Results as Seen in the Graduate**

The most difficult thing here is to establish the connection between accreditation and the caliber of the graduates. This weakness comes as a result of training church workers in isolation from their field of work. A good example is sending the nationals overseas for their undergraduate degrees. After getting the degrees some are unable to relate to their own people. Others do not return to their countries to serve. These are weaknesses, but accreditation can be a real strength in encouraging the accredited institutions to unite their efforts to sponsor graduate schools in their several countries. In this way the students receive their ministerial training in the context of the country.

Another way of avoiding these weaknesses is by helping the accredited institutions to lay more emphasis on practical training rather than on theoretical impartation of knowledge. This not only helps to produce graduates to the needs of the people, but it also promotes a better communication of faith to the needs of the people. In trying not to lose the accreditation the school is able to maintain both spiritual and educational alertness and soundness.

As teachers make plans to continue education, some specialize in certain areas. All these benefits are first received and digested by the students. It means that the institution is able to supply the church with the right kind of training.

It is the responsibility of the accrediting agency to help the institution to maintain sound procedures of admissions. The applicants must be evaluated in terms of Christian character and experience prior to entering the institution for training. There should also be a clear evidence of call to the ministry. All this is to guard the school against taking in students who do not have a real commitment to the Lord. For when this is allowed, it is the church that eventually suffers and in reaction the institution is no longer valued.

Once the students have been admitted, counseling (spiritual nurture) should be taken seriously and prayerfully. It should be seen as a way of continuing what the admission procedure had started. This is to help the individual students discover and develop their spiritual gifts. A further step is to enable these students to employ their gifts for the building up of the body of Christ. Discipline must be maintained in order to ensure faithfulness. CABC points out that, where possible, disciplinary action should be taken in consultation with the student's church or sponsoring body.<sup>9</sup> The key point is the spiritual life of the graduates rather than academic achievement. It is only when the latter is controlled by the former that the servant of God is effective.

Therefore the strength of accreditation can be seen in the graduates when the accredited institution provides education that is needed. The needed education is that which is accompanied by servanthood and humility, faith and love. It is that which turns students toward the church or the world taking full account of the needs of each – as to the church, maturity, and to the world, salvation (not in weapons or social service, but in Jesus Christ). Again, the emphasis in training should not be leadership, but servanthood. When the graduates go out expecting to be leaders and they do not advance quickly enough, they wage war against the church, and the church wages war against the institution. In trying to justify itself, the institution may begin to blame accreditation for not being helpful to the program.

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9. "Standards and Procedures for Accreditation Postsecondary Level and Secondary Level," (Caribbean Association of Bible Colleges, First Edition, 1979), p. 7.

### III. THE WEAKNESS OF ACCREDITATION

There are three areas of possible weakness in accreditation.

#### Regarding the Standards

The main questions to be asked in relation to the accreditation standards are: Whose standards are they? What theological absolutes do they represent? How flexible is the agency regarding these standards? These questions must be considered by the accrediting agencies before they sit down to evaluate Third World theological education. In failing to consider these questions the agencies are in danger of the following weakness:

1. The weakness of extremes. There are two extremes in applying the predetermined standards to a foreign institution. The first extreme is the one whereby the institution is not allowed to question any of the standards or procedures. Instead it is forced to measure its work against the agencies' "calibrated yard stick" whether in agreement with the purpose of the institution or not. This kind of extreme is seen in the government accrediting agencies. It is also possible in theological training. The second extreme, as it has been pointed out, is that the accreditation can move so far toward the concept of evaluating an institution or program in terms of its own statement of scope and purpose that no meaningful comparisons can be made.<sup>10</sup> Whenever the accrediting agency takes the first extreme, it owns the institution and can direct it to train students in isolation from the church. Whenever it takes the second extreme, it becomes an honorary thing instead of being earned by the institution through hard work. But I believe that these weaknesses can be avoided by utilizing the standards along with the already established standards of the school in respect to the primary mission, and then, by making comparisons, to determine a more effective approach to theological education.

2. The problem of meaning. It has been pointed out that in the past accreditation has tended to define quality of education in terms of specific objective criteria (Ph.D's for the faculty, number of books in the library), but the validity of these criteria is open to question.<sup>11</sup> What may seem to define quality education in one situation may be deficient education in another. This must be taken into consideration by accrediting agencies in determining educational standards.

3. The problem of escalation. There is that danger of raising the standards of education so high that you cripple the church with intellectuals who know nothing about the church. This danger is usually encountered whenever the school's interest changes from that of the lost sheep to that of meeting the demands of accreditation. Also, emphasis on intellect results in two levels of people in the church, namely, the officers

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10. Theological Education 14. 1978: Issues in Accreditation, Autumn, 1977, Vol. XIV, No: 1,

11. Ibid.

and the subjects, the superior and the inferior, the leaders and the led, the holy and the profane. While this may be a failure of the institution, accreditation serves as the catalyst.

4. Accreditation can be faced with the problem of getting schools interested in what they are trying to do. This is more real where the accrediting agencies are invited by the missionaries to the school without informing the church. Things do not move smoothly because of ignorance on the side of the sponsor, which is the church.

5. The danger of sophistication. Not only is there the problem of escalation of educational standards, but also there is a danger of sophistication of the program so that those who cannot meet certain criteria are ruled out. In America you ask a seminarian why he is going to school and he will respond, "to get a degree so that I can be a pastor, or youth leader, or a teacher." If the degree fails, the future of that person is threatened. The question is, Is it the degree or the program which prepares the student for the work? These are some of the inevitable weaknesses which the accrediting agencies must deal with.

The term "accreditation" can imply different things from what the church expects the school to accomplish. Therefore care must be taken in this matter. The agencies should not be so rigid in their standards that they rule out the possibilities of mature entry. There are people who do not have the academic qualification to enter theological college for training, but these people have church experience, good Christian character, are devoted to the church work, have mature age (over 30 years), and have demonstrated competence in the field of academics. Many secular universities in the Third World consider such people. Does this mean that agencies are not interested in people but in programs? It is encouraging that many accrediting agencies are open to such an idea though with some exceptions.

### **Regarding the Self-Study**

The major questions are: What difference does accreditation make since we are the ones doing the work? What will we get after all this trouble? The work of self-study can become tedious unless the person steering the wheel knows which way to go and how to go that way. People get tired and discouraged. The period of accreditation is so short that the institution keeps working for the accreditation rather than doing the work for which it was established. After the first task of self-evaluation is completed and the school is accredited, it is necessary to allow enough time, longer than three years, between one self-evaluation and the next. Correspondence will definitely continue, but not continual self-study. Accreditation should not be the main burden of the school. Instead, it should seek to relieve the school of the burden. Self-study is time consuming and care must be taken not to over burden the school doing the same thing each year. Time should be allowed for the agreed upon policies to be applied and examined, in order to determine their effectiveness.

## CONCLUSION

In spite of the weaknesses discussed earlier, accreditation associations are rendering great services to the church in the Third World. They have called Third World theological schools to begin looking into their programs with a more critical eye. This look is resulting in significant things as these schools become known to the rest of the world. Graduates find it easy to transfer their credits without difficulties. Accreditation is going to enable some theological schools, which are not allowed by their governments to grant degrees, to link up with overseas schools to award degrees for them, while training is done within the ministry context. Another possible result of accreditation is that accredited schools in a given area can amalgamate to sponsor a graduate program within the continent or country. This will help keep the nationals within their area of ministry so that the church does not suffer "brain drain".

I am not opposed to overseas training. I do not believe it is right to stop it, and I do not think we could stop it even if we wanted to. We have no right to stop it because to do so is to contradict the doctrine of the universal church. Servants of the Lord need to be exposed to the world beyond their local areas. One way of doing it is through education. Having schools in one's home land up to the graduate level can be a sound filtration system to determine those who want to serve the Lord and those who want to serve mammon. Accreditation associations can help Third World accredited theological colleges and the sponsoring churches to arrive at the state of uniting their effort to sponsor graduate schools. But overseas training cannot be discontinued. Instead I would encourage periodic sabbaticals for those nationals who are already in the ministry to go overseas for more training and to be able to interact with other cultures in a formal setting. These people should be those who have demonstrated faithfulness to their call and service to the Lord of lords.

The accreditation agency should remain as an adviser to the institution. But the church must articulate its own purposes in theological training. Corrections must be made where such purposes fail to represent biblical absolutes.



# IS THERE SALVATION OUTSIDE THE CHRISTIAN FAITH?

Mark Shaw

## Introduction

It is a most puzzling climax. In **The Last Battle**, the final volume of C.S. Lewis' **Chronicles of Narnia**, Emeth, Seventh son of Harpha Tarkaan, life-long enemy of Aslan (The Christ-figure of Narnia), and worshipper of the false God Tash awaits his fate as he faces the victorious lion. Aslan's judgment is stunning:

"Child, all the service thou has done to Tash, I count as service done to me ... Not because he and I are one, but because we are opposites ... If any man swear by Tash and keep his oath for the oath's sake, it is by me that he has truly sworn, though he know it not, and it is I who reward him.

'But,' I said ... 'I have been seeking Tash all my days.'

'Beloved ... unless thy desire had been for me thou wouldst not have sought so long and so truly. For all find what they truly seek.'<sup>1</sup>

In this episode, C.S. Lewis, apologist, novelist, scholar and Christian humanist, boldly strikes a controversial chord that has stirred the church since the days of Justin Martyr (d. 165): the possibility of salvation outside the Christian faith. Students of church history will remember Justin's famous **Apology** and his answer to those who complained that Christianity was too recent to be considered universally true:

We are taught that Christ is the first-born of God, and we have shown above that he is the reason (Word) of whom the whole human race partake, and those who live according to reason are Christians, even though they are accounted atheists. Such were Socrates and Heraclitus among the Greeks, and those like them ...<sup>2</sup>

This sentiment that salvation is possible through sincere devotion and sound dialectic though rejected by the majority of the church fathers by no means disappeared.

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1. C.S. Lewis, **The Last Battle** (Penguin Books, 1956) p. 149.

2. Justin, **Apology** (c. 150) 1. xivi. 1-4. Quoted in Bettenson, **Documents of the Christian Church** (London: Oxford University Press, 1963) 2nd edition, p. 6.

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Dr. Mark Shaw is a lecturer in Church History and Theology at Scott Theological College and is on the Editorial Committee of EAJET.

Zwingli, fresh from the heady discoveries of humanist scholarship and evangelical theology picked up the theme. In the summer of 1531 he sent to Francis I, King of France, his **Exposition of the Faith**, a document intended to clear the reformed faith of charges against it and attract the French king to embrace it as his own. Nearing the end of the document, Zwingli states his view on those who one day will enjoy the bliss of Heaven:

You will see the two Adams, the redeemed and the Redeemer, Abel, Enoch, Noah, Abraham ... Hercules too and Theseus, Socrates and Aristides, Antigonus ... Louis the Pious and your predecessors the Louis, Pepins, Phillips and all your ancestors who have departed this life in faith. In short there has not lived a single good man, there has not been a single pious heart or believing soul from the beginning of the world to the end, which you will not see there is the presence of God. Can we conceive of any spectacle more joyful or agreeable or indeed more sublime?<sup>3</sup>

Luther was neither joyful nor agreeable about such a spectacle and felt that the Reformation principles **sola fides** and **solus Christus** had been betrayed. For Luther, salvation was exclusively through a theology of the cross which declared that God is not truly known if he is not seen in the face of the suffering Messiah as both simultaneously the wrathful judge and the merciful Saviour. He meets us only at the cross and never outside the Christian faith.<sup>4</sup>

While Luther still speaks for the majority of Evangelicals, C.S. Lewis' tolerant Aslan is a sudden reminder that growing numbers of twentieth century Christians, faced with close encounters with devout men of other faiths and sometimes no faith at all are taking a fresh look at the suggestion of men like Zwingli and Justin.

Third world Christians, particularly here in Africa where the gospel has penetrated only in recent centuries agonize over the question of the destiny of their ancestors and their concerns become those of the global body of Christ.

With these theological and pastoral concerns in mind, it is the purpose of this paper to listen to the contemporary Christian's growing discomfort with Luther's **solus Christus** and **sola fides** and to attempt a biblical-theological evaluation of the arguments which support the possibility of salvation outside the Christian faith.

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3. **Zwingli and Bullinger** ed. G.W. Bromiley, **Library of Christian Classics** (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1953) pp. 275-276.

4. For a discussion of the applicability of Luther's **notae exclusivae** [**Sola Scriptura**, **Sola Fides** and **Solus Christus**] to the modern debate over the salvific value of other religions. cf. Norvald Yri "Luther or Biblical Salvation" **East Africa Journal of Evangelical Theology**, vol 2, No. 1, 1983. pp 13 - 18.

## **The Case for a Broader View of Salvation: [I]: Voices of the Theological Left**

From both the theological left and right, flows a small but significant stream of articles, books and public pronouncements that attempt to build a case for a broader, more qualified view of salvation. Western theologians are no longer dominating the discussion of this issue. Africans, Asians and Latin Americans are expressing themselves forcefully and eloquently on the salvation question. Since we can only sample the contributions of a few theologians, mention will be made of a number of representative spokesmen positioned at various points along the left-right, north-south axis.

John Hick has been at the very front of radical rethinking about the gospel. His call for a broadening of the Christian concept of salvation rises from the facts of our modern age. Over 75% of the world is non-Christian. 98% of the time, a person's place of birth determines his religion. Serious study of other religions has made it impossible to be provincial about the superiority of Christianity. Migration to the west of millions of Muslims, Hindus, and Sikhs exposes us to the quality of their worship and lives. We are forced by the facts to reject the "older theology which held that God's saving activity is confined within a single narrow thread of human life, namely that recorded in our own Scriptures."<sup>5</sup> While he appreciates the attempt of liberal Christians to open the gates of Heaven to men of other faiths by saying that all men are saved by Christ working through the sacraments of their own particular religion he still detects the vestiges of the old religious imperialism. Such a view is based on the old dogma that "only Christians can be saved: so we have to say that devout and godly non-Christians are really, in some metaphysical sense, Christians or Christians-to-be without knowing it."<sup>6</sup> This is ptolemaic theology which falls into the myopic trap of making our particular religion the center of the spiritual universe. What is needed instead, according to Hick, is a Copernican revolution which puts the ineffable God in the center and relegates all religions to a fairly equidistant orbit around him. "He is the sun, the originative source of light and life, whom all the religions reflect in their own different ways."<sup>7</sup> To the modern Christian who asks a bit nervously about Jesus and his significance, taken this new view, Hick offers soothing assurances. Since higher criticism proves (albeit tentatively) that Jesus did not think of himself as God incarnate, we are thereby liberated from the necessity of defending the uniqueness and supremacy of Christ.

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5. John Hick, "Whatever Path Men Choose is Mine," in J. Hick and B. Hebble Twaite, Eds., **Christianity and Other Religions** (Collins, 1980) p 174. A valuable review of this book by R.R. Cook appears in **East Africa Journal of Evangelical Theology** Vol. 1, 1982, pp. 28—36.

6. **Ibid.** p. 180.

7. **Ibid.** p. 182

“We can revere Christ as the one through whom we have found salvation, without having to deny other points of reported saving contact between God and man.”<sup>8</sup> This opens up theology to a very bright future which most probably will lead not to a single world religion, but rather a pluriformity of faith where the various religions regard each other as of equal validity and quality and freely exchange elements of faith and worship.

Joining Hick on the theological left is Asian theologian, Raimundo Panikkar. Panikkar’s own religious pilgrimage from the faith of his Indian upbringing to Christian conversion in the west and finally a reconversion to Hinduism while still retaining his Christian identity is a fascinating study in the religious climate of our day. A Roman Catholic priest currently teaching in the department of religious studies at the University of California, Panikkar preaches that Christ saves the Hindu through the sacraments of Hinduism.<sup>9</sup> Enlarging on this view he asserts that

Christ is the only mediator, but he is not the monopoly of Christians and, in fact, he is present and effective in any authentic religion, whatever the form or the name, of the ever-transcending but equally ever-humanly immanent mystery ... The means of salvation are to be found in any authentic religion (old or new), since a man follows a particular religion because in it he believes he finds the ultimate fulfillment of his life.<sup>10</sup>

The Apostle Paul supports his view, Panikkar claims, for in Athens the Apostle came not to replace the Athenian’s religion but rather to disclose the Christ hidden at the center of their faith (Acts 17:23, “Whom ... ye ignorantly worship, him declare I unto you.”) The arrogance of **solus Christus** must end or at least be radically reinterpreted.

A more moderate, but still decidedly liberal view has been propounded from an African perspective by Patrick Kalilombe, Roman Catholic bishop and Bible scholar from Malawi. He notes that Vatican II has moved beyond the tridentine **extra ecclesiam nulla salus** and has affirmed the salvific value of other religions.

Those also can attain to everlasting salvation who through no fault of their own do not know the gospel of Christ or his church, yet sincerely seek God and, moved by grace, strive by their deeds to do his will as it is known to them through the dictates of conscience.<sup>11</sup>

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8. **Ibid.** p. 186

9. cf. R. Panikkar, **The Unknown Christ of Hinduism** (London: Darton, Longman and Todd, 1965) p. 54.

10. R. Panikkar, “The Rules of The Game” in Gerald H. Anderson and Thomas F. Stransky, Eds., **Mission Trends No. 5: Faith Meets Faith** (Paulist Fathers-Eerdmans, 1981) p 122

11. **Lumen Gentium** n. 16. Quoted in Patrick Kalilombe, “The Salvific Value of African Religions” in Anderson and Stransky, p. 51.

Kalilombe applauds this new attitude as being both more humble and more biblical. Missions have traditionally approached men of other faiths with an arrogant crusader mentality which refused dialogue and sought only to pin the victim under the weight of the superiority of Christianity. The passing of this attitude is accompanied by new insights from the Scripture. The Old Testament is the story of the struggle between the cosmic covenant of Genesis one to eleven (in which God seeks to save all men) and the later ghetto mentality of the prophets (aided by heavy handed priestly editors of the text) which claimed special spiritual privileges for Israel. Christ and Paul team up in the New Testament to renew the cosmic covenant and bury once and for all the ghetto mentality. God loves all men. He is positive about Gentile culture and religion. The light of Christ is present to all men in different ways. This is the message of the New Testament being rediscovered today. Christ saves men through African Traditional Religion. God is not partial.<sup>12</sup>

### **The Case For a Broader View of Salvation [II]: Evangelical Opinions**

Many features of the theological left are abhorrent to evangelicals on the right. They are less willing to submit the Scripture to the canons of comparative religion and consequently less willing to give up the uniqueness of Christ, or reinterpret his distinctiveness in a way which reduces him to a vague mantra actually standing for any religious instinct man may experience. Yet in spite of these important differences, some evangelicals agree with more liberal opinion that a new quest is needed for a broader view of salvation.

J.N.D. Anderson has called for a fairly moderate reappraisal of the traditional Reformation view held by most evangelicals. While affirming that there is only salvation through Christ, he asserts (noting Zwingli's precedent) that one can argue for salvation for those without explicit faith in Christ under the following conditions:

1. If one can assume that like Old Testament Jews the heathen turns to God not through his religious good works but rather through works of repentance and self-abandonment whereby he throws himself upon God's mercy. He cites the case of Cornelius as support concluding that whoever realizes his sin and abandons himself to God "would find that mercy – although without understanding it – at the cross on which Christ 'died for all.'<sup>13</sup>

2. If one can assume that God is able to speak directly to the human heart and reveal himself to those outside the mainstream of prophetic and apostolic witness (presumably men like Melchizidek, Job, Jethro, Balaam, Nebuchadnezzar, etc.).

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12. *Ibid.* pp. 52-68.

13. J.N.D. Anderson, *Christianity and Comparative Religion* (London: IVP, 1970). p. 102.

3. If one can agree with George Goodman in **The Heathen: Their Present State and Future Destiny** that “it is possible that an omniscient God will judge those who have never heard of Christ on the basis of what he knows would have been their response if they had heard.”

4. If one takes seriously the promise made in the Bible to sincere seekers such as Proverbs 8:17 “Those who seek me diligently find me.” (though he admits with Paul in Romans 3:11 that none seeks without the initiative of God’s grace).

To those who argue that such a position lessens missionary urgency, Anderson counters that weighty and sufficient incentives remain: God has commanded us to witness; the Cornelius category of heathen need explicit teaching to realize the fullness of joy that comes from a clear and conscious view of Christ; and finally, preaching is the common and proper means of salvation and presumably most would not find salvation without explicit teaching of the gospel. Thus Anderson calls for a modest re-evaluation of the Evangelical position.

More controversial are the fragmentary but highly suggestive statements of C.S. Lewis on the subject. In addition to the comments from **The Last Battle** already noted, Lewis in an essay in **God In The Dock** reacted to article XVIII of the Thirty Nine Articles of the church of England which curses anyone who claims to be saved by sincere devotion to another religion or by living up to the light of general revelation. Explains Lewis:

Of course it should be pointed out that though all salvation is through Jesus, we need not conclude that he cannot save those who have not explicitly accepted him in this life. And it should be made clear ... that we are not pronouncing all other religions to be totally false but rather saying that in Christ, whatever is true in all religions is consummated and perfected.<sup>14</sup>

While Lewis did not elaborate systematically on this position, scattered references in some of his writings suggest a few reasons for why he believed in salvation outside Christian faith. The first was an explicit reference in Scripture to forgiveness of those who reject Christ. Luke 12:10 is quoted in one of his essays with its promise that “Whosoever shall speak a word against the Son of man, it shall be forgiven him.” Lewis’ gloss on this text concludes that “Honest rejection of Christ, however mistaken, will be forgiven and healed.”<sup>15</sup> A second reason may lie in his view of religion. For Lewis, whenever religion (even Christianity) is an end in itself, it damns. But as long as it remains a means to know “the joy” (personal

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14. C.S. Lewis, **God In The Dock** (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1970) p. 102.

15. **Ibid.** p. 111.

encounter, delight and union with the triune God) then it can be a way God uses to draw men to himself. Aslan's dialogue with Emeth in **The Last Battle**, as we have seen, illustrates this view as does a conversation that occurs in **The Great Divorce**:

There have been men before now how have gotten so interested in proving the existence of God that they came to care nothing for God himself ... as if the Good Lord had nothing to do but exist! There have been some who were so concerned about spreading Christianity that they never gave a thought to Christ ... Never fear. There are only two kinds of people in the end: those who say "Thy will be done," and those whom God says in the end, "Thy will be done." All that are in hell choose to. Without that self choice there could be no hell. No soul that seriously and constantly desires joy will ever miss it. Those who seek find. To those who knock it is opened.<sup>16</sup>

For Lewis it seems that the desire for joy is the clue which reveals Christ's activity drawing a man towards himself although conscious faith in Christ may come only after death when the seeker stands face to face before the incarnate joy he had been groping for during his early pilgrimage. This leads to a third reason which may lie behind Lewis' broad view of salvation: his belief in purgatory. References to this are quite explicit in **The Great Divorce** but Lewis when questioned later denied that he held to the "Romish doctrine."<sup>17</sup> He seemed to conceive of it not as a place of torment but more as a time just after death when we are made ready to enter fully into the joy of God's presence. Could a non-Christian enter purgatory and there explicitly embrace the Christ he had failed to find in life? Lewis does not answer the question but leaves the door open. A character in **The Great Divorce** asks his heavenly guide the pointed question "is there a real choice after death?" The guide responds with a non-committal, "Ye cannot fully understand the relations of choice and time till you are beyond both."<sup>18</sup>

Charles Kraft of Fuller Seminary's School of World Mission agrees with both Lewis and Anderson that there is salvation outside the Christian faith. But while there is a certain tentativeness in both Anderson and Lewis, Kraft exudes confidence:

Can people who are chronologically A.D. but knowledgewise B.C. (i.e. have not heard of Christ), or those who are indoctrinated with a wrong understanding of Christ, be saved by committing themselves to

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16. C.S. Lewis, **The Great Divorce** in **The Best of C.S. Lewis** (New York: Iverson, 1969) pp. (56-)57.

17. R. Green and W. Hooper, **C.S. Lewis: A Biography** (New York: Harcourt, Brace, Javanovich, Inc. 1974) p. 234.

18. **Divorce** p. 154



faith in God as Abraham and the rest of those who were chronologically B.C. did (Hebrews 11)? Could such persons be saved by 'giving as much of themselves as they can give to as much of God as they can understand?' I personally believe they can and many have.<sup>19</sup>

Citing the opinions of both Anderson and Lewis, Kraft's own distinctive argument is to deny that there is any essential need for special revelation (i.e. knowledge of God's saving work in Christ) on the part of the pagan. Paganism through General revelation provides sufficient information to know God. "People," Kraft insists, "in non-western cultures, are not lost for lack of information but for lack of willingness to respond properly to what they may already know."<sup>20</sup> He builds his position on Henry Maurier's study, **The Other Covenant: A Theology of Paganism** (Newman Press, 1968) which stresses the continuity between Paganism and the Christian gospel. Kraft chides missionaries who preach and teach the New Testament information about Christ when what is really needed is simply stimulation of the pagan will to respond wholeheartedly to the light of general revelation. Presumably the missionary will encounter numbers of saved pagans whom he may disciple by teaching the Bible but his "evangelism" consists of motivating the pagan to be a more religious one. Melchizedek (Hebrews 7, Genesis 14), Abimelech (Genesis 20), Jethro (Exodus 3), Balaam (Numbers 22—24), Job and Naaman (II Kings 5) are cited as examples of those who were accepted by God while still within paganism.

The voices of left and right, north and south thus conclude to greater or lesser degrees that the contemporary Christian must answer "Yes" to the question "Is there salvation outside the Christian faith?" The leading arguments can be summarized as follows:

1. The pluralism of twentieth century global culture argues against any form of religious imperialism that would arrogantly restrict harmony with God to itself.
2. The most relevant view of salvation, consequently, is one which views all religions as having rough equality before God.
3. In Acts 17, Paul affirmed that Christ is hidden in pagan religion and supports therefore, the idea that the cosmic Christ saves men through their religion.
4. Authoritative councils of the Christian church such as the second Vatican Council (and we might add, the World Council of Churches) affirm salvation outside of Christian faith.

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19. Charles Kraft, **Christianity in Culture** (Mary Knoll: Orbis, 1979) p. 254.

20 **Ibid.** pp. 254-255.

5. Salvation in the Old Testament was largely repentance and throwing oneself on God's mercy. God will therefore accept the Gentile who approaches him in this way.

6. In the case of those who never hear the gospel preached the possibility of direct revelation cannot be ruled out.

7. God in his omniscient foreknowledge can detect those who would have complied with the gospel had they heard. With this knowledge he may well redeem, after death, all in this category.

8. The sincere seeker is promised in Scripture that he will be rewarded. Though his quest may not lead to explicit faith in this life it may in the next.

Such is the case for salvation outside of Christian faith. How strong is it? Can it hold up to an evaluation from a biblical-theological perspective?

### **Evaluating the Case For a Broader View of Salvation**

Geoffrey Bromiley, echoing an insight of Karl Barth's reminds us that "for the church to rush into action without considering what it is doing theologically is the height of folly"<sup>21</sup> We might add that in certain cases it would not only be folly, but suicide.

If the church is going to witness to, dialogue with and serve in a pluralistic world she must make sure about "what we are doing theologically" in order to be faithful to Christ. For purposes of clarity we will respond in turn to the eight arguments as summarized.

1. We are told that the facts of a pluralistic world makes the Christian insistence upon faith in Christ alone an act of inexcusable arrogance. This is certainly a serious charge and it must be admitted that there have been representatives of the gospel who have looked down with disgust at other faiths. This was a charge against the early church as it advanced in a pluralistic Roman empire. The true Christian position is that we approach other faiths from a position of weakness. The nobility of thought, the sensitivity to the spiritual dimension, the lofty ethics, and intensity of zeal and devotion in other religions may surpass that of the Christian. The Christian looks up at other religions around him and rejects them not out of arrogance but out of humility. Christ reveals to him that religion however noble, however lofty is not the place where God has chosen to meet man. Leslie Newbigin pictures the world's religions as a staircase reaching toward God, adorned with spiritual achievements of all kinds. But "the central paradox of the human situation is that God comes to meet us at the bottom of our stairways, not at the top, that our ascent towards God ...

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21. G.W. Bromiley, *Introduction to The Theology of Karl Barth* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1979) p. 52.

takes us further away from the place where he actually meets us ...”<sup>22</sup> The theology of the cross, Luther declared, not the theology of glory leads us to the place of cleansing and mercy. Justification by faith is the great scandal of religion. Man’s work will not be accepted. God will not be pleased except by his own work. When medieval Catholicism attempted to climb the staircase to turn Christianity into a religion of achievement the Reformers cried out at such arrogance and clung to the theology of the cross.

But what of religions which reduplicate the emphasis on grace, which call for passivity and not activity in order to experience union with God? Some point to Mahayana Buddhism and the mediatorial work of Bodhisattvas. Others note the Bhakti doctrine of Hinduism. These are said to be expressions of **Sola Gratia** as fully as any Luther described. But in reality the similarities are only superficial. In mysticism, both of ancient and modern kinds the quest is for direct union with God whether by God’s action or man’s. As Emil Brunner shrewdly observes:

However different all these types of modern religions may be from the one another, on one point they are all agreed: guilt, the negative human situation caused by disobedience, and forgiveness of guilt, the new situation caused by God’s act of removing the obstacle and healing the breach, play no part in them ... Religion of immediacy ... ignores the central fact of human existence, that sins separate us from the holy God.<sup>23</sup>

For the Christian, then, there is no question of playing “my religion is greater than yours.” The Christian’s objection to other faiths is that they project the very arrogance of which they accuse Christianity. A communication has been received through a line of Hebrew prophets that the wrath of God lay upon man but that reconciliation would be brought by his only son. The very mixing of cultures in our society, pointed out with such statistical accuracy by John Hick, means that the same communication has come to the attention of the world’s faiths. But they still climb their staircase, pile up their achievements or wait passively for the union with God they so presumptively expect and ignore the message. One of the most religious men of the first century gave his own inspired testimony to the arrogance of religion and the humility of the cross when after surveying his stunning spiritual achievements and qualifications he concluded:

I consider them rubbish, that I may gain Christ and be found in Him not having a righteousness of my own ... But that which is through faith in Christ – the righteousness that comes from God and is by faith. (Phil 3:8-9)

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22. L. Newbigin, “The Gospel Among The Religions” Anderson and Stransky, p. 18.

23. Emil Brunner, **The Scandal of Christianity** (Richmond: John Knox Press, 1965) p. 20,21.

Christianity rejects other faiths because they are not weak enough to hold out empty hands to receive the work of Christ.

2. We are further told that the most appropriate theological stance for the Christian in the later twentieth century is one modelled after the Copernican perspective, one that is God-centred and sees all religions as orbiting around the divine center in rough equivalence. This certainly has an attractive ring to it. What religiously sensitive person does not want to be God-centered? It certainly appeals to the modern man today. In a casual conversation on a bus one would expect that if the subject of religion came up it would be met with the protocol of tolerance. "I like to think that though we come from different faiths," our genial busmate might exclaim, "It is the same God whom we all worship." John Hick's Copernican revolution in theology seems to be taking place. But how God-centered is such a view? Notice what has been thrown out of court before discussion even begins:

a) Truth rests on "what I like to think": Modern pluralism makes me want to think God is like this or that. Statistics make me want to think that religion is to be this certain way. Man determines by his wishful thinking, self-composed philosophies, interest in global unity, etc. that he wants a comfortable, tolerant religion. That God has spoken distinctly and propositionally beyond the vague impressions gleaned from general revelation and has commanded religion to be a certain way or be condemned is dismissed as offensive to modern ears.

b) No God such as the Bible teaches can exist: How embarrassing the God of the Bible becomes when brought into modern religious debate. His intolerance of other faiths is infamous. His first two commandments required his people to be forever suspicious of other religions. He unblinkingly participated in the slaughter of the priests of Baal at Mt. Carmel. His perpetual harangues through the prophets against religious tolerance in Israel is still shocking to read. Christ's unfortunate tirades against Judaism and Paul's description of Gentile religions as superstitious (Acts 17) and idolatrous (1 Thess 1) add up to damning evidence against the biblical God who insists that one of his central attributes is jealousy. This will not do. The Hindu God, the mystic God, the god of the history-of-religions school of thought, the god of the philosophers: all of these will do. The God of the Bible, however, is quietly shuffled off the stage and some more palatable replacement is presented to the waiting crowd. His incarnation in Christ is consequently rejected.

We can only conclude that modern theologian-philosophers who call for a God-centered view of religion actually mean a God that agrees with their ideas and instincts about what God should be. The real center of such a

**Acts 17:16-31**

1. Paul was infuriated by the idolatry of Athens (v. 16) (parozunato — greatly distressed)

2. In response he carefully chooses a proper point of contact. Refusing to build up their worship on understanding of Zeus or Apollo he makes ignorance the point of contact: "What you admit you don't know, I have come to tell you about." (v.23)

3. This ignorance is a guilty self-inflicted one because the general revelation of nature is clear, but the Greeks chose to respond idolatrously to what even their poets professed to receive (v 24-29)

4. God has previously despised and disdained (huperidein — huperorao, to disregard out of contempt), your guilty ignorance but now offers you a chance to repent (v. 3) before judgement, through the risen Christ (v. 30,31)

**Romans 1:18-32**

1. Paul affirms that God's wrath is on human religion because they are attempts at God-suppression (1:18)

2. Gentile man does not truly know God. He is ignorant because he has exchanged the truth of God for a lie (v.25) and is without understanding (31)

3. This ignorance is guilty because general revelation eloquently speaks of God's glory but men respond idolatrously to this (v. 19-23)

4. God has previously given Gentiles over to their folly (v. 24,26,28) but now offers the gospel to the Jew first but also Greeks (v.16)

**Acts 14:14-17**

1. Paul's response to worship of Zeus (of whom he was regarded an incarnation) was outrage and distress (v.14)

2. You Gentiles by worshipping Zeus and Hermes are worshipping vain and empty things not the true God (v.15)

3. This ignorance is guilty because he has not left himself without a witness in nature (v.17)

4. God let the Gentiles continue in their idolatrous and empty religions until now when he led us to preach the gospel to you (v.15,16)

Paul adopted a consistent approach to Gentile faiths which was not flattering. Seen in context, Paul's statement in Acts 17:23 does not affirm the truth of pagan religions. Rather this statement confirms their guilt.

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1. Paul affirms that God's wrath is on human religion because they are attempts at God-suppression (1:18)

2. Gentile man does not truly know God. He is ignorant because he has exchanged the truth of God for a lie (v.25) and is without understanding (31)

3. This ignorance is guilty because general revelation eloquently speaks of God's glory but men respond idolatrously to this (v. 19-23)

4. God has previously given Gentiles over to their folly (v. 24,26,28) but now offers the gospel to the Jew first but also Greeks (v.16)

**Acts 14:14-17**

1. Paul's response to worship of Zeus (of whom he was regarded an incarnation) was outrage and distress (v.14)

2. You Gentiles by worshipping Zeus and Hermes are worshipping vain and empty things not the true God (v.15)

3. This ignorance is guilty because he has not left himself without a witness in nature (v.17)

4. God let the Gentiles continue in their idolatrous and empty religions until now when he led us to preach the gospel to you (v.15,16)

Paul adopted a consistent approach to Gentile faiths which was not flattering. Seen in context, Paul's statement in Acts 17:23 does not affirm the truth of pagan religions. Rather this statement confirms their guilt.

Their religion represents a rebellious response to God whose glory is arrayed before them in nature, history and conscience. Carl F.H. Henry is correct when he declares that "Panikkar superimposes a special meaning on the Acts passages that they do not have, for they in no way refer to a normative witness in the non-biblical religions."<sup>25</sup>

4. What of the fact that the Roman Catholic Second Vatican Council and the Protestant World Council of Churches (Bangkok '73) have given their approval to the idea that salvation can be obtained outside of the Christian faith? For someone who stands in the stream of historical Protestant faith, the decrees of councils, though never lightly taken, must submit to testing by the Word of God. It would be a simple matter then to dismiss this argument on the grounds of **Sola Scriptura**. But there is a deeper issue than needs to be discussed. Roman Catholicism and modern liberalism (and certain strands of evangelicalism) while vehemently disagreeing on a number of crucial issues have been accused of buying into very similar presuppositions regarding man. This is often identified as the nature-grace issue which posits an enlarged ability of the natural man (even in the fallen state) to know God and do his will. God's role of providing assisting grace was made compatible to this humanistic interpretation of God's nature and abilities. Medieval Catholicism in particular held that since man has a natural desire for God and capacity for union with God only the slightest help was needed from above to trigger a co-operative process of "salvation by slow ascent in which 'works' – the personal response to inward sanctifying grace – played a part in the person's acceptance before God."<sup>26</sup> By man "doing what was in him" God would meet him half way and reward him for devotion and zeal. It is only a small step to the twentieth century position that those who live up to the light they have are in the stream of salvation although they may pass through this life as anonymous Christians.

This humanistic premise was attacked by Luther in his famous response to Erasmus entitled **Bondage of the Will** and by Melancthon in **Loci Communes**. Luther denied the proposition that after the fall man's nature is able and willing to know God or co-operate with his grace. Luther insisted that on the part of man nothing precedes grace except a will in rebellion against grace.<sup>27</sup> This is a radical rejection of the humanist view of the freedom of the will. Man in his fallen state has sold his capacities into slavery and whatever pangs he may feel for God are overwhelmed by a greater sense of repulsion and loathing (Eph 2:1-3, Romans 1:18-32, Romans 3:9-20). Melancthon spoke for the movement when he described fallen man in the following way:

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25. C.F.H. Henry, **God, Revelation and Authority** Vol VI (Waco: Word, 1983). p 365. See also Byang Kato's useful discussion of Acts 14 and 17 in **Theological Pitfalls in Africa** (Nairobi: Evangel Publishing House, 1975) pp. 115-121.

26. David Wells, **The Search for Salvation** (IVP, 1978) p. 155.

27. Quoted, *ibid.* p. 156.

The miserable human heart stands like a desolate, deserted, old and decaying house, God no longer dwelling within and winds blowing through. That is, all sorts of conflicting tendencies and lusts drive the heart to the manifold sins of uncontrolled love, hate, envy and pride ... When we speak about this great ruin of human powers, we are not talking about free will, for man's will and heart are wretchedly imprisoned, impaired and ruined, so that inwardly man's heart and will are therefore offensive and hostile to (God's law) and man cannot by his own inward natural powers be obedient.<sup>28</sup>

A radical transforming grace which ushers into the heart of the kingdom of light is therefore needed. A gentle push in the right direction would not do. Dead men do not walk. Blind men cannot see. Without this radical view of sin the Reformer's distinction between general and special revelation and law and gospel cannot stand. Man's knowledge of God through nature teaches only law (i.e. what you must do to earn God's favour). But special revelation equals the gospel of salvation by faith alone. The law of works (religious, social, moral etc.) since the fall, cannot lead men to God by simply activating their natural abilities. Rather it only reveals "that his capacity to sin is humanly unbreakable and that his rebellion is incorrigible." In contrast to the dead end of general revelation and law-keeping, the gospel through the Spirit's regenerative work in the soul fully redeems man and reconciles him to God.

But how did the Reformers find such a profound doctrine of sin and grace? Only by accepting the supremacy of Scripture in the area of truth. When Luther looked at his life **Coram Deo** (i.e. from God's perspective, not man's, as recommended only in the Scriptures) he was forced to abandon an optimistic humanism with its shallow sin and shallow grace. Once again we suspect that the nature-grace error is still the fundamental root behind growing humanistic views of salvation in the post Vatican II Catholicism and in much of contemporary Protestantism.

5. But can't we say that salvation in the Old Testament, such as in the case of Abraham, consisted largely of repentance and throwing oneself upon God's mercy? Won't God surely accept the modern Gentile who is informationally B.C. though chronologically A.D.? Isn't paganism informationally sufficient to save? Isn't it really a question of repentance and self-abandonment? Both Anderson and Kraft have appealed to this argument. The great strength of the argument lies in its attempt to stay within the bounds of Scripture. Most adherents of this view reject salvation by works, and affirm that Christ alone saves. They feel that the analogy between Old Testament salvation and modern Gentile self-abandonment is a strong one which stays within the limits of **sola gratia** and **solus Christus** (through not **sola fides**). Yet questions remain:

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28. *Ibid.* p. 157.



a) Is Abraham really a proper paradigm for salvation outside explicit faith? I think not. God's dealing with Abraham establishes the necessity of justification by faith in the explicit promise of God. Genesis 15:6 represents Abraham's experience of salvation (i.e. acceptance by God). Two important phrases should be noted: 1) **He believed God.** Ten years had passed since God had promised Abraham an offspring through whom God would bless the whole earth (Genesis 12). He was beginning to waver in his faith. Now God was renewing the promise (v. 4-5). Abraham's response was to say "Amen" (Hamen); in effect meaning "I believe this promise will be established." Abraham sensed the reality of God's promise to such a vivid degree that he regarded it as good as done. Abraham was abandoning himself not to a vague hope of mercy but to the clear promise of God given through special revelation. 2) **He was reckoned righteous:** "Reckoned" (Kashev), whenever it is used in the Old Testament, means to be regarded as someone that one is not. For example in Genesis 31:15 Laban threatens to 'reckon' (Kashev) his daughters as strangers if they go against him. Previously Abraham had not been regarded by God as righteous for his piety (leaving Ur, loyalty to Lot) partly because there were always off-setting sins on his part (e.g. lying). He is finally justified for trusting an explicit promise of God in the coming son of blessing. Paul in Romans 4 and Galatians 3 regards this justification as the key point in Old Testament salvation history. Abraham was chosen by God's grace and was given a promise of a future redeemer (note, that in light of Genesis 5:29, Abraham would have understood the son of blessing to be one who was going to remove the curse). To enjoy Abraham's salvation, then, one must hear the promises of God, of a redeemer and believe it is so. Anderson's and Kraft's vague repentance and throwing oneself on God's mercy do not find support in the case of Abraham. We should rather assume that this is the normal and accepted pattern of salvation through the Old Testament. This was true both for Israel and for those on the fringes (Job, Jethro, Abimelech, Ninevah, etc.).

b) No theology of salvation outside of Christian faith can be built on the case of Melchizedek. We do know that he was a king-priest of Salem who was a representative of Yaweh. Elaborate theories of his priestly connections with pagan Canaanite religion are not only impossible to establish but also biblically improper. Why? Does not the writer of Hebrews see the genius of Melchizedek as a type of Christ in the very fact that we are ignorant of his history (Hebrews 7:3 "Without father, or mother, without genealogy, without beginning of days or end of life.")? We do not know what his connections were with paganism except that he was a priest of "God most high" (Heb 7:1). Biblical commentary on Melchizedek seems to shut the door on the kind of speculation engaged in by proponents of the broader view.

c) Old Testament salvation does not, therefore, prove that paganism is informationally adequate, the distortions and idolatry of paganism are

held up as notorious in the Old Testament. While redemptive analogies (a la Don Richardson's **Peace Child**) may be present and therefore ultimately useful in understanding the gospel, such elements are in their original settings misunderstandings and therefore deceptive. The fallen nature renders him unable to respond properly to God. He suppresses the truth and erects rebellious religious systems (often of noble insights and high morality) that are perfectly designed to act out the lie that God is on his side and can be reached by man's best efforts. Kraft suggests that we stimulate this process. Produce more religion. Help man to bow down to his idols. Christ will save him by accepting the best response the pagan can offer. This can only be regarded as a biblically irresponsible position in light of Romans 1:18 ff.

d) This argument is without clear support in the New Testament and is consequently weakened by its hypothetical and speculative character. "What if" questions are important but we can never treat answers as though they carried the weight of Scripture.

6. What of the possibility of direct revelation imparting a saving enlightenment to those who have never heard? Is it not possible that God saves infants and imbeciles that way? If so, why not the uninformed pagan?

This is an improvement over the previous argument particularly in that it denies the adequacy of general revelation and-or pagan religions as a basis for the need of repentance and throwing oneself on God's mercy that supposedly characterizes salvation outside the Christian faith. Many conservative Evangelicals would find it possible to agree with Bruce Demarest's point that "given the fact that God is the sovereign God of Heaven and earth and that he is free to act in ways that please himself, it would appear difficult to rule out the possibility that in exceptional circumstances God might choose to reveal himself in some extraordinary way independently of gospel proclamation."<sup>29</sup>

Demarest maintains that no compromise would be made with human ability and no denial is implied that it is still a Messianic revelation that the selected pagan would receive.

Strong precedent exists for this argument within the historic Protestant tradition. Calvin cautiously held that "God can act in other modes towards men if he so wills ... without using the medium of biblical testimony."<sup>30</sup> He did insist, however that extraordinary revelation to the heathen does involve communicating Christ to him. Thus he clung to the necessity of faith in Christ though produced in an unusual way through the Spirit's direct work.

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29. Demarest, p. 260.

30. Cf. Wilhelm Niesel, **The Theology of Calvin** (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1980) pp 51,52.

The Westminster Confession of Faith has two statements that apply to salvation by extraordinary revelation. First, in chapter X (“of effectual calling”) section III we read that “elect infants dying in infancy are regenerated, and saved by Christ, through the Spirit, who worketh when, and where and how he pleaseth; so also are all other elect persons who are incapable of being outwardly called by the ministry of the Word.”

Robert Shaw in his commentary on the Confession explains that “the Holy Spirit usually works by means; and the word read or preached in the ordinary means which he renders effectual to the salvation of sinners. But he has immediate access to the hearts of men, and can produce a saving change in them without the use of ordinary means.”<sup>31</sup> The position here is essentially an outworking of Calvin’s views. Two critical points need highlighting. The first is the freedom of the Spirit. The Protestant pattern of authority as Bernard Ramm has ably demonstrated has always been Christ speaking in the Scriptures through the Spirit. A corollary of this pattern of authority has been biblical preaching. The Confession here is not straying from the established authority pattern. It is simply denying in this instance the corollary of preaching. It insists that the Spirit can implant directly without external means the biblical Christ to elect persons. And this is the second point. God’s unconditional election grounds these extraordinary works of the Spirit firmly in God’s grace. Human merit and self-righteousness is firmly excluded. I’m not sure that this is the case with Anderson’s understanding. No mention of election is made.

The second statement can be read as a response to those who insist that such direct revelation outside of preaching is impossible. In chapter XIV, Section I the Confession states that “the grace of faith, whereby the elect are enabled to believe to the saving of their souls, is the work of the Spirit of Christ in their hearts, and is ordinarily wrought by the ministry of the Word ...” Is Shaw correct when he sees in the word “ordinary” an attempt by the Westminster divines to protect the possibility of extraordinary revelation? He appeals to I Thess 1:5 “Our gospel came not unto you in word only, but also in power and in the Holy Spirit.” Doesn’t this verse imply a distinction between the work of preaching and the work of the Spirit? Although the work of the Spirit of God is normally linked to the word (Romans 10:17 “faith comes by hearing and hearing by the word of God”) Shaw warns us of the dangers of a religious rationalism that forgets that the more ultimate cause of faith is the power behind the word – the Holy Spirit. In this way then, the Confession points to the salvation of elect infants and adults (both the infirm and uninformed) who are given saving faith in Jesus Christ by direct operation of the Spirit and without external preaching of the Word. Biblical evidence of spiritual life in John the Baptist and Jesus Christ while still in the womb may partially validate this confessional position.

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31. Robert Shaw, **The Reformed Faith** (Inverness: Christian Focus Publications, 1974 – Orig. 1845) pp. 122, 123.

But having said all this, can we really be comfortable with this position? I must admit four hesitations remain:

a) The position is without clear and unambiguous Scriptural support and therefore highly tentative.

b) Does not Hebrews 1:1-2 with its insistence that former ways of revelation have ceased since the full and final revelation of the Son, raise serious questions about the validity of direct revelation in our time?

c) Aren't we still forced to admit that preaching is the norm and only certain means of saving knowledge? Isn't that what Paul was affirming in 1 Corinthians 1:21 when he stated that "God was pleased through the foolishness of preaching to save those who believe"?

d) Isn't the test of such extraordinary revelation to an elect adult to measure his response to the gospel? No one who consciously rejects Christ or (as Kraft believes) has seriously distorted views of Christ has any right to be regarded as saved. Wasn't this the vindication of Cornelius' Abrahamic faith in the promise?

With these hesitations in mind, I must admit an appreciation for this line of thinking and recommend that evangelicals seek to explore the question of the salvation of the pagan within this stream of thought.

7. I find the suggestion that the omniscient God will judge those who never hear the gospel on the basis of how they would have responded had they heard to be totally unacceptable for the following reasons.

a) The biblical doctrine of sin tells us in advance how everyone would respond – total rejection.

b) It smacks of the Catholic nature-grace error with its misconception that basically good people with a little push of God's grace would ascend to embrace him.

c) This is surely salvation by works. The whole scheme assumes that salvation ultimately depends on man's choice and not God's. It sacrifices God's freedom on the altar of human autonomy.

8. What of the promises to the sincere seeker? Is not the case of Cornelius instructive on the question of salvation outside of explicit faith in Christ?

It must be admitted that the Bible does have quite a bit to say about the sincere seeker. But it also has a great deal to say about the plan of salvation. The true seeker is one who is simply in early stages of the Spirit's

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32. Lewis in Aslan's controversial speech in **The Last Battle** seems to be paraphrasing the Bhagavad Gita IV, II.:

"Howsoever man may approach me, even so do I accept him; for, on all sides, whatever path they may choose is mine."

transforming work. The Spirit's grip will not let him go till he has been justified, sanctified and glorified. In the back of the seeker before the dawn of time is the mystery of God's loving election in Christ. The true seeker will find Christ and his fullness. This would lead us back to what we have already said about direct revelation. We appeal therefore, that our theology of the seeker be firmly enclosed within the full biblical plan of salvation and not made an exception to it (save for the fact that the saving gospel comes without medium of preaching).

But this seems to be just what Anderson, Kraft and Lewis seem unwilling to do. Most seekers are not moved by saving grace but simply a general conviction of sin and need. This only reliable test of a true seeker is if he finds Christ. The perpetual nibblers, the incurably curious are like Bunyan's "Talkative" -- often in the company of believers but moving in the opposite direction and to an ultimately opposite destiny. This distinction is not clearly made. Lewis is perhaps the most vague on this. His suggestion that the religious seeker who explicitly rejects Christ may still be accepted by God (possibly after some sort of purgatorial experience) is a triumph of the imagination over the authority of Scripture. It owes more to Hindu mystics than Hebrew prophets.

What of Cornelius? Doesn't Peter say that he is accepted by God because of religious good works? Isn't this the case of a seeker saved by works of devotion? Peter's comments in Acts 10:34-36 on the case of Cornelius proves three things: a) **God does not show favoritism** (v. 34) Election to salvation is not limited to Israel. Cornelius proves that there are elect people from among the Gentiles (For the primacy Peter gives to election in his doctrine of salvation cf. 1 Peter 1:1-2). b) **God accepts those who fear him and do righteousness** (v. 35) Is this not a paraphrase of Micah 6:8, "Do justly, love mercy and walk humbly with God." Do not miss the inherent contradiction of this verse. The one who does righteousness (on his own) is therefore self-righteous and has cause to boast and claim merit before God. He therefore cannot walk humbly (or truly fear God properly -- a God who rejects and punishes the self-righteous). Only the regenerative work of the Spirit of God could debase a man in his own eyes while producing righteous behaviour. God accepts the righteous fruits of his own grace working in the lives of his elect. c) **This message [fear God and do righteousness] is shorthand for the gospel.** (v. 36) Peter calls v. 35 "God accepts those" ...the gospel of peace through Jesus thus making clear that Cornelius' godly fear and righteousness were a fruit of election and regeneration issuing in explicit faith in Christ. Because Cornelius accepted Christ, Peter could see that God truly accepted Cornelius. Therefore the

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case of Cornelius proves that God will save Gentiles who accept his son as Saviour but as Carl Henry observes "Contemporary non-biblical religions do not duplicate such a situation, however."<sup>33</sup>

**Conclusion:**

While our investigation has turned up some promising notes, we are forced to conclude that the case for salvation outside Christian faith has not been well served by the majority of arguments that have been so far put forth. If we want to give a credible word of hope to Christians here in Africa concerned with the question of the ancestors we must do so within the Reformer's exclusive notes (grace alone, Scripture alone, faith alone, Christ alone) and not outside of them. The spokesmen we have listened to in this study all offer views that in various ways and to various degrees require us to step outside these safeguards of the gospel. Perhaps the final point of a study such as this is to remind evangelicals of the certainties which Scripture presents to them. "The overwhelming biblical datum" says Demarest, "is that all people are lost and need to come to Christ for salvation."<sup>34</sup> We must continue to tackle the questions posed by our time but not at the expense of the agenda set by our Lord.

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33. Henry pp. 368-369.

34. Demarest, p. 261



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**The Extension Movement in Theological Education**  
(Revised Edition) by F. Ross Kinsler  
(William Carey Library, Pasadena Calif. 1981)  
Price \$6.95 294 pages

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Dr. Ross Kinsler, in his book **The Extension Movement in Theological Education** calls for the renewal of the ministry. The revised edition contains important new contributions to our understanding of the significance of the extension movement in the renewal of ministry and mission in the 80's.

The papers in this book were written over a period of eight years and are based on the author's experience in Theological Education in Guatemala. The papers do not fit a systematic treatise, but they do fit together and find their continuity in a growing understanding of theological education and the nature of ministry.

Part one contains six different expositions of the fundamental concepts and visions of the extension movement. These papers were written to raise questions, provoke discussion, and suggest areas for experimentation, not to provide pat answers or easy solutions.

First the author deals with bases for change in theological education and asks the questions, "What is the ministry?" "Can people participate fully in theological study and ministry?" "Who are the leaders?" "How can leaders be trained?" "What kind of theological education can we afford?" "What are the goals of our training programs?"

Dr. Kinsler states there exists a false dichotomy between clergy and laity. He uses Eph. 4:11-16 as a basis for a call to equip the saints for the work of ministry. He states in conclusion that the traditional training patterns reinforce the dichotomy between clergy and laity and make churches dependent upon highly trained professional pastors. "Theological education by extension on the other hand," he says, "breaks down the dichotomy between clergy and laity by encouraging all kinds of leaders to prepare themselves for ministry. It stimulates the dynamics of ministry at the local level by training those men and women in the context of their own communities and congregations. It enables the congregations to develop their own leadership for ministry, so that they do not need to depend on outside highly trained professional clergy." (p8)

Historically the academically oriented system of training clergy tends to produce a clergy preoccupied with privilege and position at the expense of dynamic corporate ministry. The extension movement, on the other hand, provides theological education without destroying the dynamics of leadership formation within the congregation.

Dr. Kinsler states, "Traditional seminaries and Bible Institutes tend to follow the elitist trends of our societies, and they perpetuate the image of education as the accumulation of information. TEE has broken with these traditional structures and concepts in an attempt to define education in terms of life and ministry." (p19)

"The purpose of TEE," according to Dr. Kinsler, "is to extend the resources of theological education to the functioning and developing leaders of congregations and to encourage and enable local leaders to develop their gifts and ministries without leaving their homes, jobs, communities and local congregations." (p31)

Dr. Kinsler writes about the various dimensions of TEE and how it extends geographically, chronologically, academically, socially, ecclesiastically and numerically. He outlines the three essential elements of TEE, ie, self-study materials, practical work, and regular seminars, and contrasts TEE with other types of theological education.

Dr. Kinsler clearly shows that TEE has come on the scene not only to provide an alternative approach to ministerial training, but also to challenge established assumptions about training and about the nature of ministry itself. He asks pertinent questions such as: "How should we conceive of theological education?" "What is our understanding of the nature of the ministry?" "What constitutes the church?" "How is the church to carry out its mission?" His thoughts and conclusions need careful consideration in the context of the church in Africa.

Part II presents four papers that "address regional issues in the current dialogue on alternatives in theological education and describe how TEE is being or can be adapted to meet those concerns." (Intro.) The chapter on TEE in Africa, which deals with what is happening and some basic issues and challenges, is of value to those serving with the church in Africa. His recommendations at the conclusion of the chapter should be considered by all those working in the African context.

Part III brings together different kinds of tools for change and development in theological education. It includes materials for workshops on TEE.



The book has a strong bias toward the extension method of theological education. The arguments are well stated. Because the book is composed of papers which have been printed separately over a period of eight years there is some repetition.

This book is relevant in its call to renewal in the ministry and its challenge to recognize new alternatives in ministerial formation. Its usefulness in Africa lies in the extent to which its message is adapted to and implemented in the African context.

In his introduction Dr. Kinsler states, "the extension movement challenges and humbles because it brings down the high altars of academic prestige, professional privilege, clerical status and institutional presumption. It goes against the elitist tendencies of our societies and against the selfish bent of natural man. It calls in question our own position and self image in the light of Jesus' example and his commandment to his disciples: "It shall not be so among you ... whoever would be great among you must be your servant." (Mk. 10:43)

The question is, is the church ready for it?

Dick Dunkerton, National Co-ordinator  
TEE/AIC, KENYA.

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**From Sabbath to Lord's Day**  
A Biblical, Historical, and Theological Investigation  
Edited by D. A. Carson  
(Zondervan, Grand Rapids, 1982) Pp. 444, \$10:95

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The question of the Sabbath versus the Lord's Day is being raised now and again but answered with little satisfaction. This volume edited by Donald Carson tackles the question biblically, historically and theologically. In his preface Carson writes "This book began as a research project on 'Sunday' sponsored by the Tyndale Fellowship for Biblical Research in Cambridge, England, in 1973. (p.11).

The book features articles contributed by seven scholars who were at that time doctoral or post doctoral research students (p.11). It is an outstanding volume which offers intellectual stimulation. The volume is supplemented by excellent and extensive endnotes which include books and articles by both liberal and conservative scholars. It also contains indexes of authors, subjects, scripture, apocrypha, pseudepigrapha, Josephus, Philo, Rabbinic literature, Dead Sea scrolls and those anonymous and pseudonymous sources from the patristic age. The book promises "to provide a synthesis that at least offers a basic model for theological and ethical reflections" (p.17). Despite the plurality of authors, the argument is progressive and delivers what it promises.

The first article is by Harold H. P. Dressler who teaches at Northwest Baptist Theological College in Vancouver, B. C. Its title is "The Sabbath in the O.T." Harold limits his material on the O.T. stressing the pentateuch (p.22). In his introduction, he summarizes five theories held as to the origins of the sabbath (Babylonian, Lunar, Kenite, Socioeconomic origin, Calendar origin). He dismisses these theories and explains the sabbath as a "perpetual covenant" between God and his people (Israel) and not a universal ordinance for all mankind, (p.34). The sabbath provided both spiritual and physical renewal and expressed social concern and compassion (p.35).

The second article "A Summary of Sabbath Observance in Judaism At the Beginning of the Christian Era" was written by C. Rowland, Dean of one of the Colleges in Cambridge. Like Dressler, Rowland sees no universality of observance. He writes that there is "No evidence that 'philo' distinguished the Sabbath law as universal, rather than mere ancestral custom" (p.33). This leads him to conclude that "the complexities of Jewish sabbath practices are to be understood as sincere attempts to translate the revealed will of God into the complex social setting of the Hellenistic World" (p.54).

The third article "Jesus and the Sabbath in the Four Gospels" was written by D. A. Carson, Associate Professor of New Testament at Trinity Evangelical Divinity School in Deerfield, Illinois. Carson does a thorough exegetical study on the passages in the four Gospels that indicate Jesus' attitude toward the sabbath. "In the synoptic gospels Jesus himself has the authority to override the sabbath because of his work" (p.68). The sabbath pointed to the gospel rest (p.75) which is intrinsically bound up with God's eschatological purpose of salvation" (p.85). Yet in his investigation Carson sees "no hint anywhere in the ministry of Jesus that the first Day of the week is to take on the character of the sabbath and replace it." (p.85).

Max M. B. Turner who is a Librarian at London Bible College and also lectures in New Testament wrote the fourth article "The Sabbath, Sunday, and the Law in Luke/Acts." He observes that the son of man has authority that transcends the law and the institutions revealed therein" (p.108) and secondly, that the Jesus of Luke's portrait subordinated the sabbath to the demands of his own mission. In doing this Jesus inaugurated a new covenant (p.113).

The fifth article "The Sabbath/Sunday Question and the Law in the Pauline Corpus" was written by D. R. De Lacey who teaches at Ridley Hall, Cambridge. De Lacey writes, "as to the law it is simply to demonstrate the existence of our sins, to condemn us as a result, and also to provoke our sin" (p. 175). A christian is obligated only to fulfil the law of love by walking in the spirit (p. 175). He is no longer bound by external stipulations in the matter of festivals (p.183). In his final observation the writer says "Paul's contribution to our quest, then, is limited but of significance. While he forbids us from stating that "par excellence," he also forbids us from imposing such observance as duty upon our fellow believers. Since, at least in much of the world, Sunday is allowed to the majority of us as a day suitable for worship, we may surely gratefully receive it as such; but our study of Paul forbids us from erecting any theological edifice upon this convenient, but fortuitous fact." (p. 184-6).

The sixth article "Sabbath, Rest and Eschatology in the New Testament" was written by Andrew T. Lincoln who is at St. John's College in Nottingham. He opens by saying "with regard to this work of creation, God's rest was final and grounded in the completion and perfection of that work; with regard to humanity, this rest pointed forward to a future state that it was to share" (p.198). He then cites several passages which unfold the meaning that this sabbath has become the salvation rest of the true sabbath "brought by Christ" (p.215). As to the question of the Lord's Day replacing the sabbath he writes: "The O.T. sabbath is not transferred to the Lord's Day. The Lord's Day is commemoration of the true sabbath rest Christ has brought through his death and resurrection, and under the word of God and through mutual exhortation, they will be encouraged to continue in this rest so that their participation in its eschatological fullness will be assured" (p.217).

The four articles which follow were written by Richard J. Bauckham who lectures in the Department of Theology at the University of Manchester, England. On the choice of Sunday and not any other day he writes "It was the need for a regular and frequent time of christian worship that led to the choice of a day of 'the week'. Commemorating the resurrection, if it was a motive, would be the reason for choosing 'Sunday' rather than another day" (p. 238). Christians came to regard Sunday as the distinctive day for christian worship. (p.239). The Lord's Day worship is eschatologically orientated. In the time of the conflict of sovereignties the church cannot meet with the Lord without the prayer "come Lord Jesus" and the expectation of what may be called the eschatological Lord's Day, the day when every tongue will confess that Jesus is Lord" (p.245).

In the article "Sabbath and Sunday in the Post-Apostolic Church" Bauckham observes that "at the beginning of the second century, Sunday worship was already established as the universal christian practice. The activity of christians on this day "is analogous to the activity of the "priests" on the mosaic sabbath; it is the service of God in worship. It is the priestly activity of worship that has been transferred from the sabbath to Sunday" (p.284).

In his third article "Sabbath and Sunday in the Medieval church in the West " the writer traces through the Augustine and the spiritual sabbath; Early medieval sabbatarianism; Thomas Aquinas and Scholasticism. During this period Sunday is held as a day of rest and worship.

His final article "Sabbath and Sunday in the Protestant Traditions," analyses sabbatarianism in early Protestant theology, represented by Luther and Calvin. Then he gives a very brief history of the seventh-day Adventists and how they took Sunday observance as a mark of the apocalyptic beast and the "seal of God (Rev. 7) as the Seventh-Day-Sabbath (p.334). The S.D.A.'s base their belief on a conviction that the seventh-day sabbath is immutable moral law (p.334). "Those who keep the commandments of God and faith in Jesus" are the "last-day sabbath-keeping remnant." (p.334). This doctrine is very much challenged by Bible believing christians.

The final chapter "From Sabbath to Lord's Day: A biblical and Theological Perspective" written by A.T. Lincoln, serves as a summary of the book. Lincoln discusses topics such as:-

- The Seventh Day and creation
- The Fourth commandment and the Decalogue
- The sabbath in O.T. History and in the Intertestamental period
- The Gospel's depiction of Jesus' Relationship to the sabbath
- Sabbath Observance in the N.T. Church
- The Decalogue and the law in the New Testament
- The Sabbath commandment and the Decalogue in the Post-Apostolic Church.

- The Prominence and observance of the first day in Early Christian Literature.
- The significance of the First Day.
- The Normativeness of observance of the First Day
- An Evaluation of sabbath-transference Theology and of the significance of Fourth Commandment in the light of the Debates of church history.
- Similarities and differences between sabbath and Lord's Day.
- Lord's Day, Rest and Worship.

He emphasizes meaningful structural worship as a priority for the Lord's Day. In his conclusion he writes "Celebration of Resurrection in Sunday worship will not allow the concerns of the rest of the week to be forgotten but will express the integral connection between worship of the Lord and all areas of Christ's Lordship; including every part of the believer's life ... When the significance of the Lord's Day is grasped, every day is transformed, so that in fact it can be said each day, "This is the day which the Lord has made; let us rejoice and be glad in it" (Ps.118:24) (p.405).

In spite of weaknesses which some will notice in the volume, the book as a whole is very helpful and worth purchasing for your Library.

Jacob Kibor, Scott Theological College.

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## Christ the Lord

Edited by H. H. Rowdon (IVP, Leicester, 1982) pp 344, np.

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I am delighted to review this book and to add my appreciation to one who taught and inspired so many. A glance at the select bibliography gives an indication of the significance of his contribution to New Testament scholarship. Some of these will remain standard reference material for both scholars and students, others will be treasured by Pastors and Bible students worldwide.

Donald Guthrie was one of the first students at London Bible College and received the rare distinction of being asked to join the teaching staff before he graduated. For the rest of his career he remained with the college playing a part that increases in significance until his retirement in 1982. His concern for people as well as for academic excellence had no small part in the growing recognition of the College.

An appreciation of the rich variety of his contribution and the warmth of his concern for others takes the place of a preface. The essays, which centre around the Person of Christ, are a tribute from colleagues, students and friends.

In view of growing criticism of the incarnation Howard Marshall examines how far this doctrine is present in the N.T. He shows that the emphasis of the N.T. is on the fullness of his deity with the clearest statement in Jn. 1:14, though the concept of incarnation is integral to and assumed by the other writers. The contribution of R. T France is basically the 1980 Laing Lecture in which he examines the 'underlying attitudes ... which treat Jesus as divine', which were expressed in worship of him, and existed in embryo from the beginning in the experience of Jesus. Ralph Martin returns to familiar territory in discussing the setting of the Christological hymns.

The next two essays look at the title the Son of man. F. F. Bruce examines its background in the Gospels, Qumran and Jewish literature. It was not a current title so Jesus was free to give it what content he chose, in particular linking it with the Isaianic suffering Servant of the Lord. Starting from the Davidic royal psalms, Robert Rowe traces a somewhat laborious (and not entirely convincing) argument to prove that Daniel's 'son of man' is messianic.

D. A. Carson selects five titles to disprove the thesis that 'the Gospel of Matthew is studied with Christological anachronisms'. Though Matthew does reveal his Christological commitments, he is not anachronistic, but points forward to the full understanding of the early church.

Gordon Wenham draws on the insights of the social anthropologist Mary Douglas regarding the symbolism of the O.T. cleanness laws (examined in more detail in his NICOT commentary on Leviticus) to show that the underlying value system of these laws (particularly in God's character as the giver of life and wholeness) is the basis of Christ's healing ministry. There is continuity and discontinuity with the old, with the new revelation that God's character is now seen to be redemptive as well as holy. David Wenham looks at the problem that Mark 13:30 seems to suggest that expected the second coming within a generation and was therefore wrong. He argues that verses 28-32 describe the fall of Jerusalem within a generation but leave the time of the end unknown.

Geoffrey Grogan's thesis is that the account of Simeon in Luke 2 interprets Isaiah Christologically. His argument is thin in places, though his main point is clear that these verses are deeply influenced by Isaiah. The next essay, by Max Turner, traces the worship of Jesus back to the start of the church emphasising the importance of the ascension and the outpouring of the Spirit (as the Spirit of Christ) at Pentecost.

Two essays follow which deal with aspects of Paul's understanding. What is significant for Richard Lacey are allusions to O.T. passages referring to God which Paul sees as appropriate to refer to Christ so witnessing to his deity. His primary concern is with the phrase 'One Lord'. John Balchin deals with Wisdom and Christ, countering J. D. G. Dunn's position that Paul was instrumental in helping the development from inspirational to incarnational Christology, demonstrating that the identification of Christ with 'wisdom' occurred early, that Paul had addressed Christ as divine since the Damascus Road and that the roots of this understanding go back to Jesus himself.

Leslie Allen gives us a masterly study of the meaning and importance of Psalm 45:6-7 (particularly in support of the vocative 'O God' in v.7) and the significance of its use in Hebrews 1:8-9 as reflecting the conviction that the Psalm looks forward to the exalted Lord Jesus Christ, and as having a profound influence on the rest of the letter. For David Carnegie the hymns in Revelation are the author's composition, not being borrowed from Christian worship though they do bear witness to it; of more importance is their witness to the deity of Christ who is worshipped as God and in terms reserved for God.

A fine study of the Christology of Islam by Peter Cotterell shows how and why this is irreconcilable with Christian Christology. Richard Sturch in a logical analysis of the statement 'Jesus is God' finds that it needs the qualification 'and man' added to it for it to be correct. However, his argument is not always seen to be consistent. For instance, it is not at all

clear why the objections (on p.328) to saying 'Jesus is God' do not apply in the same way to saying 'The Son' or 'The Word is God'; why does the former need some form of qualification but not the latter?

The remaining three essays deal with Christological understanding at different historical times. Tony Lane gives us an admirable defence of the Chalcedonian Definition. Its purpose was to protect against heresy which it certainly does, its weakness is that it underplays Christ's human limitations. The starting point for Christology should be the historical Christ rather than the eternal Trinity. For Klaas Runia the weakness of Karl Barth's Christology is that he opens the door to universalism by emphasising the Godward aspect of reconciliation so that it applies to all people. H. D. McDonald examines the kerygmatic Christology of Bultmann to show that it is not Christology but the subjective soteriology of a Theology that is 'no longer Christian'. The result is philosophy rather than theology.

A recurring theme in these essays is to note how the N.T. writers refer to Christ in ways that are reserved for God alone in the O.T. There is little of the unevenness which often mars such a collection of essays; the main disappointment is Ralph Martin's essay entitled 'Some reflections on New Testament hymns', these reflections are a rather lightweight culling from his other work.

One curious omission is noted. Two of the studies deal with the present century, one with the early church; but I missed one dealing with the period of the reformation.

This 'modest contribution to theological scholarship' is both a major evangelical contribution to the current debate on the person of Christ (as the dust jacket claims) and a worthy tribute to an outstanding scholar and theologian.

Colin Densham, Moffat  
College of Bible



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**Radical Hospitality**  
by David and Ruth Rupprecht  
(Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing Co., Phillipsburg, New Jersey,  
1983). 118 pp, US \$4.95.

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Surprisingly, **Radical Hospitality** wasn't written to put a "guilt trip" on every believer who doesn't feel they have an open heart or an open home. In fact, I felt they were telling me that unless I felt a particular call to this special ministry, I had better not even consider it.

Radical hospitality is not having your neighbor over for a meal to let them see what nice people African Christians can be, or even inviting church visitors home for a Sunday meal, or having the visiting missionary and his twelve kids for the weekend. Radical hospitality is opening your home and your life day after day, hour after hour, to people who nobody else wants and nobody else can handle. (Often not even their families). It's living with the stranger and the outcast, and it's opening yourself up for almost certain failure. The book is not an account of success stories. But the point is, God is not checking out success, but faithfulness and obedience.

In its 118 pages of easy reading, the authors use four couples and their own home and their local churches as examples of what can be done and how to go about doing it. Almost every chapter of the eleven chapters ends with some helpful and practical steps to take and suggestions to follow.

The most radical aspect of this radical book is the importance placed on making this ministry of hospitality directly accountable to, and woven into the leadership and ministry of the local church. It's not some "outgoing" couple's bright idea, but the necessary response of the Christian church to the bruised, broken and battered of our society.

The book is filled with warnings. Four that stood out in this reviewer's reading were:

1. The husband and wife must be equally committed and gifted for this kind of ministry. "Nothing can more quickly drive a wedge between them than this kind of ministry."
2. "There's no point in going into this for glory but be open for criticism: charges of abandoning your own family, creating your own cult and harboring drug addicts ..."

3. Establishing terms of cooperation and goals for the new resident and even a contract for working and living together should be the first priority. The newcomer should be willing to submit to authority and work toward change. No person can live without responsibility and respect.

4. "Pray without ceasing ... and you will pray!"

The challenge seems to be for the African pastor to look for and cultivate within his church, homes where the needy can go for shelter and healing. From among the leadership to build a caring community that the surrounding constituency can see, lives out the gospel of the kingdom.

The biblical principles are sharp, the practical helps are clear, the insights deep and the challenge is great. Not an easy calling, but in our wounded and fragmented society, a needy one.

Lois Shaw, Scott Theological College

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### **Learn to Read the Greek New Testament.**

(Exeter: Paternoster Press, First Edition, 1979; Third Edition, Revised,  
in one volume, 1982) UK £ 14.60

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One of the hurdles most theological students face is the learning of New Testament Greek. For some the task is almost unmanagable. Therefore, any method promising a simplification of the process sparks interest.

Dr. Ward Powers, head of the Department of New Testament Language and Literature at Sydney Missionary and Bible College in Australia, has produced a book designed not only as a textbook for students training for the ministry but also for lay persons wishing to gain some competence in New Testament Greek.

Dr. Powers makes wide use of modern linguistic principles in developing his method. That he is well-qualified to develop a new approach based on modern linguistics is indicated by his B.A. in Greek from the University of Sydney, M.A. in linguistic Science from the University of Reading, and his Ph.D. in New Testament Research from the University of London.

The method Powers uses is based on six principles explained on pp 5-6 of the book:

(1) Framework Learning

The student is introduced quickly to the whole framework of New Testament Greek needed to begin reading the New Testament. The framework is filled out as the student continues to encounter the elements of Greek in subsequent exercises of reading the New Testament.

(2) Natural Language Acquisition

Minimum emphasis is placed on rote memory and maximum emphasis on exposure to the Greek of the New Testament.

(3) Immediate Introduction to the Target Material

From the very beginning all examples and exercises are taken from the Greek New Testament.

(4) Low Threshold of Utility

Most Greek courses require lengthy study of grammar before the student applies his knowledge to the New Testament. The Powers' method is prepared so that after two or three lessons the student is already beginning to appreciate the nuances of the Greek New Testament.

(5) Morphological Analysis and Pattern Recognition

The student is instructed in the use of linguistic science in order to be able to recognize the recurring patterns in words so that rote learning of basic paradigms is minimal. Here Powers is at his best.

(6) Progressive Presentation Followed by Systematic Revision

In the beginning course the student is introduced to all the basic elements in a progressive way in increasing complexity. In the intermediate course the basic elements are presented more comprehensively and everything on each section of grammar is dealt with in one place. Thus a systematic revision is provided.

Powers includes both a beginning course and an intermediate course in this volume as mentioned above. The beginning course is designed for 25 hours of actual class time. The intermediate course is done in conjunction with reading through the Gospel of Mark.

The appendices contain valuable suggestions for both teachers and students and helpful explanations of phonemes and morphology. The footnotes are a mine of information for even advanced students of New Testament Greek.

Although this reviewer has not had opportunity to test the method in the classroom he is impressed that it would work and would encourage teachers of New Testament Greek in Africa to begin experimenting with it. One somewhat prohibitive factor may be the price- UK£14.60. Those with access to U.S. dollars may order the book through William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co.

Gary Isaac, Scott Theological College

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**Hermeneutics: Principles and Processes of Biblical Interpretation.**

By Henry A. Virkler.

(Grand Rapid: Baker Book House, 1981). 255 pp. \$12.95

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Henry Virkler, professor of psychology at the Psychological Studies Institute in Atlanta, Georgia, U.S.A. has given us in this volume a well organized popularization of Walter C. Kaiser, Jr.'s teaching on hermeneutics. Virkler writes from a clearly evangelical position, arguing strongly for inerrancy and "singleness of meaning" in his introductory chapter.

This volume has the strengths of the clear, thorough method set out in Kaiser's **Toward an Exegetical Theology**. Virkler adds several features which make it attractive as a basic textbook. These include 1) reader/student-oriented objectives at the beginning of each chapter, 2) chapter summaries, and 3) exercises, labeled "BTs" (Brain Treasures), at the end of most chapters, giving the student/reader an opportunity to apply what he has learned.

In his chapter on Theological analysis, Virkler discusses several representative theories conceptualizing the nature of God's relationship to man. He considers dispensational theology, Lutheran theology, and covenant theology. Finding all of these inadequate he suggests the "epigenetic model" by which he means what other writers refer to as "organic unity". This model stresses progressive revelation and attempts to be a "middle road between dispensationalism and covenantal theology" (p.134).

Being somewhat new on the scene, the epigenetic model is yet untried. One need not agree with Virkler's (and Kaiser's) new model to utilize the helpful, systematic process of biblical interpretation laid out in this volume. As a well organized popularization of Kaiser's work this book is highly recommended.

Rev. Robert C. Singleton,  
Nairobi International School of Theology

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## Discipleship

Edited by Billie Hanks Jr. and William A Shell  
(Zondervan Publishing House, Grand Rapids, 1981). 190 pp

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The phenomenal growth rate of Christianity in Africa is a matter of great praise to God. Recent work by David Barrett and others has documented that over half the population in Africa is at least nominally Christian with the percentage rising steadily.

But this growth, when coupled with minimal discipleship and the absence of a strong biblical theology for Africa, has created an inherently dangerous situation. Is the stage well set for universalism in Africa (Byang H. Kato, *Theological Pitfalls in Africa*, p. 11)? Will the Church in Africa degenerate into nominal Christianity, complacent in its formalism, struggling merely to maintain structures but with no spirituality, no vision for the lost or impact on society?

The answer must lie in the development of a discipleship ministry in the Church. This is the thrust of this small (190 pages) but challenging book edited by Billie Hanks Jr. and William A. Shell. This book was not written for Africa, (are there any books written on this subject from within the Church in Africa?) but one cannot help but being struck by its pertinence for the continent.

All the contributors (Robert E. Coleman, LeRoy Eims, Walter A. Henrichsen, Gary W. Kuhne, Dawson Trotman, and Gene Warr) have been actively involved in discipleship programmes and in most cases are well known to North Americans through their writings.

The book begins with a call for "the vision for multiplication". This is a vision which has become well articulated through the Navigators movement. This is followed by three chapters from Robert Coleman's well known book, **The Master Plan of Evangelism** in which he gives the biblical basis for discipleship.

Having established basic principles it is natural the book continues with chapters on methodology, follow-up, apprenticeship, and concludes with "the vision for discipleship making". Although there are inherent drawbacks of a compilation of this type, the overall result reads well and builds on what goes before it.

Despite words to the contrary in the introduction (p.18) this book is not heavy reading but it is certainly a call for a serious commitment to the Lord

and in this sense is radical or "tough" reading. There must be few in the church in Africa who could read the book and not feel challenged to deeper involvement in the ministry of discipleship.

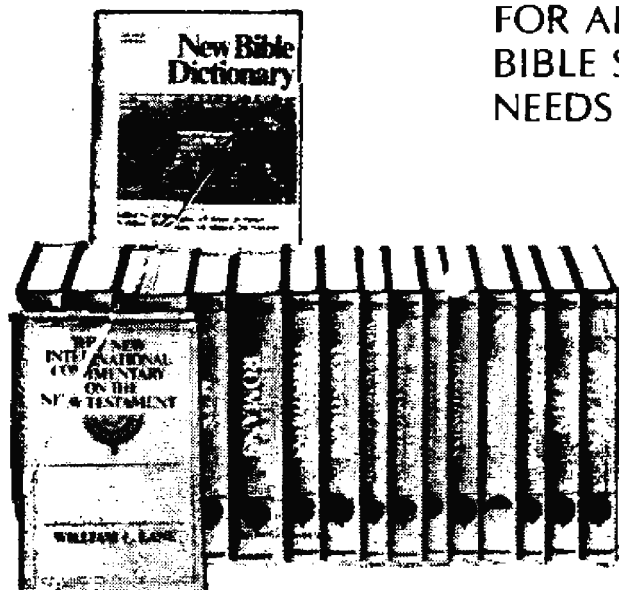
This reviewer has far too little experience in discipleship to quibble with any details of the book, but merely would like to ask the question, "Is the strong emphasis on one-to-one discipleship patterns a product of Western individualism or is it truly biblical and a relevant pattern for Africa? As a corollary", in the African context where so much emphasis is placed on groups and community, should more stress be placed on group discipleship patterns? How can discipleship methods be contextualized?

The fact that most of the illustrations are drawn from North America and the book was primarily intended for a North American audience, does not detract from its usefulness in Africa. It is not by any means a textbook on discipleship, but it certainly is warmly recommended as a book to fire one to read further on this subject and also to commit one's own life more deeply to a ministry of discipleship.

Peter Maclure, Ukamba Bible Institute

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