Ted Ward once stated in these pages that “it will take brave and visionary change” for modern Christian missions to survive (January 1982). He targeted issues such as overreliance on institutions, which too often are embarrassingly dependent on outside money, require expatriate leadership, create dependence, and overturn indigenous folkways and values. And he noted the refusal of many missionaries to see and acknowledge their political meaning in a world that is nationalistic, defensive, and religiously polarized, a world “where every human act has a political meaning.” He charged that Western missions evidenced “inadequate willingness or capacity to adjust to the conditions requisite for . . . survival.”

Now, nearly twenty years later, Ward once again identifies key issues, such as those just mentioned, in the theme article of this issue: “Repositioning Mission Agencies for the Twenty-first Century.” Problems identifiable two decades ago are still with us, and Ward calls for rigorous evaluation and repositioning by mission executives and their boards. But he also identifies innovations that show promise of new levels of integrity, adaptability, and effectiveness. Finally, he affirms the stance that concluded his earlier article: “The work of Jesus Christ will continue—this assertion is an issue of faith. One dare not make the same assertion for even the most persevering missionary society. It is the church that our Lord promised to build, not missionary societies.”

Three case studies follow, presented by widely respected mission agencies that have invested heavily in efforts to reposition their societies for the world of the twenty-first century. It is instructive to analyze them in tandem with the issues outlined by Ward.

Also in this issue of IBMR readers will welcome new offerings in the mission legacy series: James H. Grayson explores the little-known record of John Ross, a nineteenth-century Scottish missionary in Northeast Asia; and John Roxborough introduces us to another Scottish leader, Thomas Chalmers.

“My Pilgrimage in Mission” brings us the retrospect of C. Peter Wagner. Although best known for his partnership with Donald McGavran in the church growth stream of mission theory and practice, we learn that in more recent years Wagner has twice moved to quite different ministry emphases.

Together, all these essays illustrate how the global environment changes over time, requiring substantial change in the forms and structure of Christian witness. Sooner or later we are brought to one of Ward’s basic conclusions: As the generations pass, “new models of ‘missionary’ are demanded.”
Repositioning Mission Agencies for the Twenty-first Century

Ted Ward

Since the steady crescendo of expansion after World War II, American mission agencies have been awash in an environment of change. Most mission agencies have experienced one or more rise-and-fall cycles of available candidates, funds, and deployment opportunities. There are general patterns and similarities from one organization to another, although far more often the ebb and flow must be explained by the particulars of local churches’ motivations, denominational policies, characteristics of given overseas fields, and the vagaries of sociopolitical climate, natural climate and disasters, and the increasingly turbulent patterns of intertribal tension and ethnic warfare. Some mission work is stimulated by disaster and wanes during periods of relative calm. One missionary organization will be inspired into creative ventures by the very same political circumstances that will drive another organization into withdrawal or diversion.

In an attempt to draw some useful generalizations, this essay reflects on the purposes most commonly undertaken by missionary organizations, especially those historically described as sending agencies; describe the ways in which these purposes relate to current situations in our shrinking world; and examine the changing characteristics of the sociocultural contexts of missions. These issues will then be submitted to at least three tests:

1. Do our organizational patterns, management styles, and strategies of mission reflect the lessons learned from colonial and postcolonial experiences?
2. Are the church’s global scope, its international partnerships in mission, and the necessity for a serving posture adequately reflected in the managerial decisions about missionary deployment?
3. Are our organizations taking adequate account of the upsurge of local-church participation and ad hoc missionary initiatives?

Since very early in the modern missionary movement, the mission agency has taken on the role of the business and communications secretary for the missionary, representing and advocating for the best interests of the mission of the church, the missionary, and the agency itself. Following is a list of the tasks and the needs commonly fulfilled by the mission agency. The items are sequentially listed, in general, from the earliest and most common tasks up to the more recently identified roles and needs that have been added to the mission agency’s work list.

Sending

The sending of missionaries is not a single process. It involves at least three tasks.

Recruiting. Perhaps the most important part of the recruitment task is determining what sources will be emphasized. At first, local churches and denominational councils were the primary arena for the recruitment of missionary candidates. Having moved away during this century from the local approach because of the need for large-scale coordination, the pendulum is now swinging back as local churches, especially larger ones, take a more direct hand (sometimes unilaterally).

Selecting. The steadily more assertive posture of mission agencies has centered on the issue of appropriateness for given sorts of missionary service. Across the past 200 years, and especially as mission agencies have come to be seen more in their managerial and technological functions, screening of potential personnel has become much more pervasive. The difficulty of assessing spiritual gifts and the pressure to deploy younger missionaries have caused a shift from literal biblical criteria in favor of measurable competencies and traits.

Deploying. Formal corporate decision making about locations and situations wherein missionaries may be productive, over against the more open approach (“wherever God calls”), has long been a tension in mission management. To a greater extent than many missionaries are prepared to accept, the mission agency usually has a determinative role in the decisions about where missionaries will be stationed, what work is to be done, and how project funds and technical support will be allocated. As the role of the mission agency has become steadily more proactive and determinative, this source of conflict has created a sharp division between those who make choices pragmatically and those who rely on intuitive and inspirational feelings about the leading of God.

Overseeing

Accountability. Affixing accountability of the missionary, by urging or requiring some sort of periodic review of financial and job-related performance, has been a long-standing function of the mission agency. While some missionaries resist any accountability other than directly to God, the experiences of totally independent and free-lance missionaries have demonstrated the need for accountability to wise and knowledgeable referees. But tensions today are increasing, particularly over the increasingly technological and bureaucratic nature of managerial oversight, represented by standardized report forms, formal travel reports (rarely used by leaders as a basis of informed interaction with the missionary), and busywork procedures such as requiring preapproval of events and expenditures.

Management. Managing missionaries and mission projects is a prerogative usually assumed by the mission agency and often delegated to selected missionary councils or leadership groups on the field. In general, the larger the financial exposure or risk, the more likely the agency is to take dominant responsibility.

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Intermediacy

Establishing communications between mission and supporting constituencies emerged very early as a task for the mission agency. Especially in the earlier days, limited communications and the time it took to travel great distances left a great load on someone, and the mission agency became the continuing carrier of this burden. One aspect is the need to represent the mission and its missionaries to governments and regulatory agencies. Everything from immigration and naturalization regulations, to passports, visas, residency permits, taxes, school loans, and the many dozens of other hidden tasks require time and skill, which, realistically, is best provided by the agency.

Support

The word “support,” in the language of missions, is used in two ways. When used alone, it means primarily financial support. When used with a modifier, usually “prayer,” the emphasis is on emotional and spiritual support. Mission boards and executive officers have almost always taken seriously their responsibility to assist in encouraging prayer support and to exhort the immediate constituencies to maintain and expand their financial support. Individual missionaries participate in this process with more or less help from their mission agencies. In some cases, almost the entire responsibility is carried by the agency, especially within the larger denominations.

Centralization

While centralization rarely has been a stated purpose or intention, it has, de facto, been at the heart of the mission board idea. Both denominational missions and other organizational modes have embraced the idea of unification and organizational centralization of the missionary enterprise. Thus the mission agency’s executive officers and board are afforded a substantial span of authority in decision making, a determining control of communications, and command of the criteria-setting for recruitment and deployment. The result is unification and sometimes a higher degree of managerial coherency. Cost savings and increased access to services are also affected as centralized purchasing and centralized service personnel or service contracts (e.g., for counseling, missionary children’s education, continuing education needs, retirement plans, insurance, and tax advice) make available the variety of resources expected by people in a highly specialized technological society.

Impact of a Shrinking World

Of the vast array of influences toward change in the mission of the church across the past two centuries, three seem especially important as the twenty-first century approaches. Mass technologies. Although now familiar and well understood, modern transportation and communication technologies
have not yet been fully taken into account in terms of mission organization and management.

The most obvious changes across the two centuries of the modern missionary movement have resulted from mass technologies. The speed and convenience of travel have dramatically transformed the functional size of the world. Similarly, innovations in communications, and now the significant slashing of communication costs, have reduced the primary effects of isolation and decision-to-implementation lag. It is much easier to come and go for much less reasoned purposes. Frequency of supervisory contacts is more common, and interactions with come and go and for much less reasoned purposes. Frequency of supervisory contacts is more common, and interactions with come and go and for much less reasoned purposes.

The assertion that Christianity is a white man’s religion, heard earliest from the Chinese, is a fundamental stumbling block wherever the Gospel is carried. Unless the cultural baggage of Western philosophy, democracy, materialism, militarism, and racism is laid aside—over and over again, because it creeps back in—the Western role in the international and intercultural mission of the church will very likely wane in the next century.

Colonialism Lives

Warning against recurring colonial assumptions is still needed. The assertion that Christianity is a white man’s religion, heard earliest from the Chinese, is a fundamental stumbling block wherever the Gospel is carried. Unless the cultural baggage of Western philosophy, democracy, materialism, militarism, and racism is laid aside—over and over again, because it creeps back in—the Western role in the international and intercultural mission of the church will very likely wane in the next century.

The insidious colonial assumptions that inhabit and inhibit Christian missions include the following: “Missionaries can go anywhere they wish.” Yes, in the modern era missionaries can go anywhere, even if it means taking on a cover or disguise. But this assumption is based squarely in the ethos of colonialism; it is based on the presumed rights and the actual power of people from a dominant society to enter wherever and whenever they choose within the empire. To some mission agencies and churches, any resistance or delay is interpreted as evidence of satanic works against the Gospel. When will it become clear that resistance to outsiders and their agendas is an ordinary characteristic of a people’s sense of dignity and humanity? Even Christians do it! Why do those who carry the gospel message assume that they have a right to do to others what they would not allow others do to them?

Rediscovery of the importance of frontier missions in the past twenty-five years has stimulated the assumption that missionaries can go anywhere. Indeed, some of the more valuable deployments of missionaries are on the frontiers of evangelization and church planting. But the limits on these open frontiers are often more severe than in the past. The easier frontiers are used up and gone. The new frontiers are in situations and among people who are the hardest ever to reach, especially among the urbanized subcultures, rich and poor. Appropriate background, experience, education, and motivation for these frontiers are sadly lacking among American missionaries. Indeed, many American missionaries cannot go just anywhere without some fundamental changes in themselves that lie far deeper than willingness.

“Missionaries can do anything.” “Missionary” is a term loosely applied to people who go from one place to another with the intention of furthering the Gospel. This breadth of definition, combined with an increasing willingness to travel to seek a clearer view of God’s will in one’s own life, has led to all sorts of unnecessary investment and misdirected effort. In today’s world constraint is far more important than exuberance in the deployment of missionary resources. Doing things that local people should be doing, doing things that really don’t need to be done, and doing things in ways that are culturally inappropriate and even resented are just a few of the unfortunate consequences of this very Western assumption about willingness, eagerness, and omnifunctional competency.

The presumption of the versatility of missionaries is another of the foundational assumptions underlying the bad habit of
sending unprepared and inept people into situations that demand greater expertise, insight, and interpersonal sensitivity. The work of missions in the twenty-first century is apt to be at least as demanding as anything seen in the twentieth century. There will be fewer places to hide the inept. One of the toughest tasks of missionary managers in the years ahead will be selection and assessment of readiness in people who want to become missionaries. Western nations cannot send their second best. Heretofore it has been an unwritten rule that recruitment is more important than critical screening. No more.

“We are here to build things for God.” Founding and building properties for institutions that are assumed to serve the church is a long-standing Western contribution to mission. Brick-and-mortar projects, including the infrastructure for individual churches, denominational office complexes, clinics, hospitals, and schools of various sorts (primary and secondary schools, colleges and universities, Bible colleges and theological seminaries), can sometimes help. In the past they were usually greeted with enthusiasm. Today both the mission agencies and the established churches in many regions are aware that they can also hurt the church in the long run, creating deeper dependency, saddling local churches with embarrassments that they cannot afford to maintain, coming into conflict with government plans for education or health services, and actually inhibiting evangelization and the development of effective relationships between the churches and their communities.

Using stewardship as an excuse for seizing a controlling posture in every partnership. The habit of insisting on the rights of authorizing the budget and monitoring the expenditures has destroyed many relationships between the mission and the church-on-the-field. As local Western churches are becoming more directly involved in fiscal and personnel support for overseas projects, this budgetary tyranny has become stronger than ever. Surely, responsible handling of resources dedicated to God requires vigilance, but God is not honored when control is a stronger value than trust. Part of the solution is avoiding the sort of flimsy joint project that clearly lacks responsible management on the field.

Flying high the denominational banner. No longer does a Baptist name on a church assure that it is substantially different from the church down the road that calls itself Assemblies of God. No longer does every Wesleyan church hold tightly to a grounding in Wesley or every Calvinist church assert its several points of historical Calvinism. Observers overseas are noticing that denominational names are more commonly used by the outsiders (missionaries) than by those who constitute the emerging Christian communities. Local Christian leaders often point out that regardless of the historical divisions and designations within the church at large, there is more that makes us distinctive and gives us identity under the name of Jesus Christ than any distinction that denominational designations can suggest. When the contrast between Christian and Muslim or Christian and Buddhist is at stake, the label “Presbyterian” does not help much. In today’s world many Christians find it far more important to identify with other Christians precisely because they need to stand together as Christians.

This trend toward minimizing historical distinctions and categories imposed from Western church history has been hard for many missionary organizations to swallow. They feel threatened because for many in the Western church missions as a category of social activity is an extension of the fondness for competitive team sports. We cheer for the Cubs, not the White Sox; the Cowboys, not the Broncos; the Free Church, not the Nazarenes. When we can’t wave our own home-team banner, we lose interest in the game.

**SOP, PDQ, ETC, and FYEO**

**SOP:** *Standard operational procedure.* Once an organization has established its norms for operation, almost every management detail settles into dull uniformity. Employees—and usually clients—are expected to operate by the standard operational procedures. It is assumed that standardization will make doing business simpler, more predictable, and more easily communicated, especially to newcomers.

This assumption creates havoc among new missionaries, whose distrust of the ways of the past underlines their sense of their own creative possibilities (sometimes exaggerated). At a deeper level, the mission that persists in blindly perpetuating habituated practices is doomed to a decline because of the resultant nonresponsiveness to nuance and change. Furthermore, there are many essential competencies and sensitivities that those leading the missionary enterprise blithely assume are well in place, when in fact their functional absence creates raw sores. For many missionary organizations standard operational procedures are a millstone around the neck.

**PDQ:** *Pretty darn quick.* The cult of efficiency has made deep inroads into the churches of the West; it determines the causes these churches are willing to support. When lay leaders, especially, discuss missions, the negative side of the conversation very often focuses on costs and outcomes: “Why does it take missionaries so long?” “Why does it cost so much?” “Why can’t they just decide what to do and get out there and do it?”

Communicating the realities of today’s world and the requirement for careful and graciously nonmanipulative (usually slow) agreements across cultural lines is more difficult than ever before. Willingness to help is surely a desirable attribute for a missionary, but perhaps in today’s world of missions it is equally important to show willingness not to help when that is more appropriate. The assumption that one should hit the ground running produces an overeager, often overbearing, posture. Getting the picture, letting others tell about what is happening and why, and avoiding the temptation to dump ideas all over people demands patience and time.

How can the supporters of missions be brought to understand the realities of intercultural and interchurch relationships? Whatever the answer, it must come to grips with the preference in many Western churches for doing things PDQ.

**ETC:** *et cetera, et cetera.* Some organizations bravely outlive their purposes. One of the oddest moments in missions history was the closing of one of America’s first missionary agencies, the Sandwich Islands Mission. This group had been formed in Boston early in the nineteenth century for the purpose of evangelizing the people of the Sandwich Islands. Before forty years passed, the members of this organization deemed their mission accomplished, and thus they dissolved the corporation.

Today’s mission agencies, apparently wishing to avoid that precedent, have grasped immortality by creating ever larger and more complex goals. There is a sort of *et cetera* habit in contemporary organizations, whether the corporation is for profit or nonprofit. The overextending caused by unbridled expansion and diversification has been the downfall of notable manufacturers, service corporations, and merchandisers. Missions are not immune.

**FYEO:** *For your eyes only.* As the world has polarized into geopolitical camps, the tendency toward secrecy, manipulative
cleverness, and distrust has been deeply embedded into intercultural relations. In the interests of truth and trust, it is time for Christians to become more trusting of one another, regardless of ethnicity or nationality, and for Christian organizations, especially mission agencies, to minimize the sort of suspicious privacy and secrecy that causes far too many documents to be stamped FYEO. This is a costly habit because far too many decisions are made without bringing the issues into the fresh air. Cooperation is enhanced by openness; overuse of confidentiality breeds distrust. Competitive secretiveness in the service of the Prince of Peace is out of place and unbecoming.

New Circumstances, Emergent Forms

Today the global environment in which Christian mission operates includes increased resistance to missionaries who represent old images and models and who have “missionary” as their visa identity. Mission agencies may find themselves beating their heads against the wall and wasting strong human and physical resources in order to preserve traditions and old habits. Clearly, new models of “missionary” are demanded. New understandings of the relationships and roles of outsiders in a more tribalized world are needed. What is even more needed is for mission agencies to face up to the all-too-common ineffectiveness of their missionaries. It is unwise to resist, ignore, or explain away the evident needs for changing recruitment standards, deployment practices, missionary description, and presumptions about styles of evangelization and church planting.

There is also a notable openness on the part of non-Christians to help from outsiders, even if such helpers are Christians. Some mission agencies are so tied to their own past that a visit to Vietnam, for example, attracts them, like moths to a flame, back to their former properties. Soon they start nagging their hosts to hand back the old land deeds. The old ways, the old uses of property, the acquisition of stuff, and the claims of rights jeopardize the future with the very people who are now open enough (often at some risk to themselves) to invite and relate to former missionaries and mission agencies. If we were to react more sensitively to these now-frequent offers of friendship and relationship, God’s hand would be far easier to see. In China, for example, agencies that have been willing to broaden their definition of “missionary” and to accept identification and registration as a language-education agency or a resource development group are discovering important new sectors of openness to the Gospel. But agencies that stubbornly insist on their old designations, agenda, and methods are sitting at the border pouting.

Another hard-to-miss development is the increased willingness of North Americans to undertake short mission experiences. Thousands of North Americans are pouring into the arena of international and intercultural missions through various forms of short-term missionary events ranging from agency-sponsored tours of the mission field to work teams building bunkhouses for church-related camps. Although in the case of some of these people, at least in the short run, such experiences may be a waste of the time and resources of the mission agency, for many of these Western adventurers such overseas junkets are the spark that ignites mission consciousness and awakens a concern for more effective forms of missionary presence.

For slow-minded mission agencies the short-term phenomenon will be an increasing nuisance. But for creative agencies, ways are already being found to encourage and support these activities as additional species and types of Christian relationship and development. Procedures are being developed for dealing with the issue of how the on-site missionaries can be assisted in handling the stress caused by the floaters.

The underlying problem from the start of the current short-term missionary avalanche has been an oversimplification, namely that there are two kinds of missionaries, short-term and real. The rediscovery of the short-term category—the Book of Acts suggests that the apostle Paul was probably the first short-terminer—has brought many more Americans into firsthand contact with the overseas ministries of the church. The trend is likely a consequence of the need to redress the remoteness of missions from the churches and the increased affluence of American Christians. As a result, there are more and more local mission committees in churches that include at least a half-dozen members who have been there. All in all, more good than harm has resulted, though in the years ahead, missionary organizations that do a more thorough and thoughtful job of articulating the workings of long-term and the short-term missionaries will set the path toward a more effective use of resources. Meanwhile, the old-timers tend to see themselves as the real missionaries, too often demeaning, avoiding, or misusing the naive and sometimes demanding short-termers.

But there is another sort of short-term missionary reemerging: the highly competent specialized fellow laborers whose gifts and expertise are made available to the church communities of the world in genuine partnerships—responding to invitation, planning, and negotiation. The trend is to utilize such persons in small teams, usually composed of peer partners from at least two nations. The church’s crying need for leadership development throughout the world is being addressed through this process far better than by sending in one after another ill-equipped and inexperienced teacher of canned curriculum for leadership in the church.

Innovations that attempt to take account of such developments can be done cautiously. Following are some of the matters of important renewal and refinement of missions for the next century. Each is so important that careless, shallow, or inept handling could set back the progress of any mission agency.

Short-term Mission Discoverers

The integration of short-term persons, with all their typical handicaps and inadequacies, not the least of which is the lack of time for learning language or culture, into the whole network of relationships of the people of God worldwide can surely be accomplished more productively than at present. Too much emotional stress has been stimulated by the quasi-intellectual debates about the relative value and the cost-benefit ratio of short-term missionaries. The more difficult and more worthy question is how best to deploy short-term persons of various sorts. What might happen if mission agencies in full cooperation with local churches were to reconceptualize “short-term missionary” into “short-term discoverer”? These willing and usually well-motivated people, whose meager background, linguistic shortcomings, cultural innocence, and anxious personalities require special accommodations, can be developed into a valu-
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**Tentmaker Witnesses**

Various sorts of vigorous adults with significant experiences behind them and well-advanced spiritual maturity are now taking their places in all sorts of mission roles. Sometimes they are affiliated with a mission agency; more often they are unaffiliated because mission agencies are preoccupied with their more customary recruits, deployments, and relationships. Often these volunteer specialists are either not available for long-term or permanent relationships with a given agency in a given place, or their particular gifts call for an itinerant role that is not of much interest to the agency (which starts every relationship by dividing the missionary community into “career missionaries” and “short-termers”).

Nevertheless, the expansion of these new species—tentmakers, moonlight missionaries, and contracted specialists—is so substantial that new mission agencies are forming around them, representing a marker on the trail where tradition has delimited the old path away from new needs.

**Multicultural Collaborators**

Another innovation is the use of international task-force teams. Teamwork has proved to be extraordinarily difficult for Western missionaries. The obvious necessity of inventing some sort of basis to share the territory and the task with missionaries from other countries and cultures has forced this issue. But Americans, for example, are rarely experienced in team relationships except in competitive sports. We tend to be loners. Sometimes we are prepared to use helpers, but the relationship works best—in our eyes—when we make the assignments.

The multicultural reality of today’s worldwide mission force compounds the problem. Many people in the world, not just Westerners, find it difficult to work as peers or subordinates to people of another language, culture, or race. While this is a problem that Christian transformation can deal with, many missionaries have not yet sought the spiritual resources to enter into this transformation. In many, many situations, intercultural teams have fallen apart. Indeed, three couples from Texas or from Iowa expecting to work together as a team are more likely to fall apart than not.

At least part of the solution lies in the representations of cultural diversity and the style of teamwork demonstrated in the central office of the mission agency. In these centers it is typical to hear a good line being advocated about intercultural acceptance and the importance of teamwork, but the overwhelming majority of faces seem very pale, and after the collective “amen” for the platitudes, all return to their respective cubicals and the teamwork idea is left for the field people.

**Virtual Missionaries**

If anyone doubts the effects of technological change, a reckoning of the number of computers and computer-driven devices that affect everyday life will settle the issue. What really startles is the awareness that all of this has happened within the past twenty to twenty-five years. Any image of the next century must place the computer, especially in its role within communications, close to the center. For one thing, e-mail and the telephonic uses of e-mail technologies will be dramatically enlarged. It will be possible to carry on rather intimate, confidential conversations with any of a vast array of people across the globe while sitting in a lounge at the airport. This will surely open up new and more expeditious ways to conduct Christian mission.

Surely the most responsible forecast in reference to computers and communication is that every mission agency needs to assign two people to accept the responsibility, along with their other tasks, to read regularly in the field of communications technology, attend one new technology exhibition each year, and inform the rank and file within the mission of the most promising computer applications for the mission of the church. To do less is to run the risk of being last to grasp the really important transformations.

**Minimal Management**

Formalizing the management of missions has steadily increased over the twentieth century, bringing depersonalization and eroding the quality of relationships. All sorts of problems in mission management can be traced to distances between decision making and the context of the problem. Within business and industry there has been a substantial investment in research and high-level think-tanking concerning the need to move decision making toward the field context without losing access to the resources and personnel who carry the responsibility of defining and maintaining the coherence of the organization. Within mission agencies, some recognize this problem and are exploring it; others play a vigorous game of high-speed ping-pong trying to anticipate the angles of the in-coming ball. Worse, other agencies define the issue as a need for micromanagerial adjustments, and thus they tinker.

Perhaps the major guideline needed is to move toward minimalizing of management hierarchies. If a pencil needs sharpening, do it. It shouldn’t take two levels of authorization. If a bridge is to be built, the whole organization should know about it and line up, not to impede or over regulate, but to support those who will build it. Administrators of mission agencies, if they seek appropriate counsel and advice from within and from outside the mission organization, should be able to reconceptualize their style and paradigms of mission management.

**Conclusion**

We must anticipate transformations in the organized enabling of the mission of the church. If the dominant paradigms of habituated missions are not challenged, mission organizations will fall out of touch with those they represent or those to whom they minister, and their mission will become more harmful than helpful. Although it is wise to assume an ongoing need for long-term, fixed-place, and institutional missionaries, the needs are changing quantitatively and qualitatively. Some guidelines are offered for the next few years as we turn the corner in missions.

1. Build competent teams of consultative missionaries and make them available for collaborative planning with leaders from other missions, from supporting churches in the sending base, and from emerging churches in other nations.
2. Learn to work in response to, and in partnership with, initiatives from churches in other places.
3. Give priority to requests for partnerships that bring outside resources to bear on a short-term basis to augment, not replace, local resources.

4. Put major emphasis on developing local leaders in emerging churches.

5. Be ready to pull out and wait for the next moment of call.

6. Maintain a resource base that is not necessarily on the field but is ready to serve a wide variety of fields.

Missionary work is now being carried out in new ways. And the new ways often turn out to be the really old ways. The apostle Paul, for example, was a highly itinerant missionary, working with a series of different partners. He rarely stayed anywhere very long. He planted churches and left them to the care of the Holy Spirit long before they were strong (Titus 1:5). He invited his associates to undertake itinerant teaching ministries to strengthen and straighten out the new churches, and they all kept moving.

In the past 200 years, the so-called modern missionary era, the standard style of missions has usually involved sitting in place, digging in deep, and persisting until we judge that the church is strong enough to stand alone. What lessons have been learned from such examples as the churches in China and Burma? These churches were considered weak and unready, but left to the Holy Spirit’s care, they experienced great growth.

As always, change comes at great price, but lack of change is even more costly. The changes that mission agencies are willingly and thoughtfully implementing today are too few and too slow. Many opportunities may be lost because of rigidity and timidity.

We do not create opportunity for mission; it is God who is the creator of the mission of the church, and the twenty-first century is in God’s hands. We need not fear losing an opportunity. Our rightful role is to commit ourselves to the leading of the Holy Spirit, read the signs of the times, and, wherever possible, establish new models of mission in response to the guidance of the Holy Spirit and the disciplines of the Holy Scriptures.

Positioning LAM for the Twenty-first Century

Paul E. Pretiz and W. Dayton Roberts

In 1921 Harry and Susan Strachan founded the Latin America Mission (LAM), originally the Latin America Evangelization Campaign, to conduct cooperative evangelistic efforts in the Spanish-speaking world. Headquartered in Miami, LAM is engaged not only in direct evangelism but also in supportive ministries (a seminary, schools, literature, radio) and ministries reflecting holistic concerns (a hospital, care for high-risk children). Approximately 300 LAM missionaries are at work in twelve countries. U.S. address: LAM, Box 52-7900, Miami, FL 33152.

The Latin America Mission has consistently endeavored to position itself for the future. The turn of the century will see a continuation of past efforts to discern God’s will for LAM’s ministry. During 1999 a Strategy Planning Committee has been especially active, building upon the work of task force studies that date back to 1996.

Originating as an evangelistic organization, LAM did not contemplate founding churches but, rather, helping existing churches grow and evangelize their communities. But two church denominations nevertheless were born out of LAM witness, one in Costa Rica with over 100 congregations, and one in Colombia with more than 500. To this evangelistic and church conscious­ness were added holistic concerns, through medical and child­care institutions. In addition to its four general goals of evange­lism, discipleship, leadership formation, and compassionate care, LAM priorities at the present time are to challenge, encourage, and support the Latin American church in its cross-cultural missionary outreach, and to minister to the multitudes of high-risk street children produced by today’s massive urban growth throughout Latin America.

Fostering a Climate of Change

Change takes place best where there is a climate for change, where change is encouraged from every organizational corner, from the board to personnel on the front line. Old-timers in Latin America will remember the Spanish chorus: “¡Cambios hay, mas Cristo siempre permanece fiel!” ("Changes there are, but Christ always remains faithful!") Members of the LAM family have jokingly seized upon the first two words for their unofficial motto: “Cambios hay.” Everybody has had to live with changes—of structure, strategy, and activity, if not of purpose. For years the mission’s Board of Trustees has had a standing committee on the future, which has concerned itself almost entirely with plans, dreams, goals, and aspirations.

Evangelical church members in Latin America numbered not more than 300,000 in the 1920s, when LAM was founded. It was only natural that foreign missions, rather than national churches, initiated changes and shaped the course of evangelicalism in Latin America. LAM was itself an innovation, for the founders introduced a change in evangelistic methodol­ogy. Bringing evangelicals together for united citywide cam­paigns was new. Harry Strachan was an outside change agent; his vision, however, was not formed in a North American board room but in the arena of his former field experience in Argentina.

Even in the early years, LAM’s administration was field oriented. Field missionaries took the lead not only in planting churches but also in establishing various institutions. The home office in the United States was only a “branch” to raise funds and meet legal requirements.

In the mid-century decades, Kenneth Strachan, son and successor of the founders, dreamed of LAM becoming the Latin...
American (adding the “n”) Mission, supported and operated by Latins or in full partnership with them. In the 1970s many mission agencies struggled with a sometimes painful indigenization process. However, to give nationals a voice in American missionaries in its membership. The mission granted autonomy, not only to the already indigenized LAM-related churches but also to the supportive parachurch ministries it had established: a seminary, a publishing house, a radio station, and other operations. These newly independent ministries remained associated for several years in a federation called CLAME—Community of Latin American Evangelical Ministries. CLAME attempted to preserve in the fellowship of autonomous entities some of the common values of the parent mission. Although not always successful in this objective, CLAME sparked rapid maturity and growth.

For a few years after divesting itself of its field ministries as a result of the creation of CLAME, the U.S.-based LAM felt off balance, unsure as to the initiatives it could now take within the new structure. As the mission began a process of repositioning—a process that continues to this day—it focused on defining its “missiological principles” and operational values. The following were adopted:

1. **Evangelism** is LAM’s priority.
2. The church is central in LAM’s strategy (as it is in the plan of God).
3. The church needs to be mobilized for evangelization, involving all believers and resources.
4. It is incumbent upon all members of Christ’s Body to seek and preserve its unity and to recognize and cooperate with other members of that Body.
5. LAM pledges commitment to the work of the Holy Spirit as he reveals himself among God’s people and in the world.
6. The demonstration of Christian love and social responsibility is an important aspect of the church’s mission.
7. The [Latin American] church must express the Gospel in the context of its own cultural background and contemporary situation.
8. Administrative integrity and accountability is required of a mission for effective ministry.

The U.S. LAM recovered its right, as it were, to take initiatives, especially as it made a conscious effort to keep its collective ear to the ground in Latin America. Beginning in the 1970s Latins were invited to become members of the U.S. board. More recently, selected field missionaries also became participants. Decisions were made to enter into major urban areas, and this led to the founding of Christ for the City, International, now a separate entity. The mission has also taken steps to address the problems of street children and to promote the training of Latins who have been called to missionary service.

Missionary personnel are still being seconded to LAM-founded ministries that request such help. But LAM-USA now also seconds personnel to ministries that it did not establish, like the International Fellowship of Evangelical Students. National Christians are establishing indigenous parachurch ministries, and LAM happily seconds personnel to them; the Seminario Evangélico de Caracas is an example. This year a further service to mostly non-LAM agencies was our participation in a major management seminar, Instituto Forum Latinus, to upgrade the administrative skills of Latin American ministry directors. Keeping LAM’s History Relevant

Giving field ministries freedom to respond to new situations and injecting more field input at the board level has not meant that there was no conceptual framework within which the LAM operates. When for many years the mission was centered in Costa Rica, the physical presence of its leaders, the weekly missionary prayer meetings, and other contacts meant that an ethos was communicated in formal and informal personal ways. On occasion, Kenneth Strachan would articulate his vision for a “Latinamericanization” of the mission and creating partnership links between LAM and the national churches. His insights regarding the mobilization of the church gave birth to the Evangelism-in-Depth movement, which represented a return to and intensification of Harry Strachan’s original vision for uniting local churches in citywide evangelistic efforts.

Some of the historical and foundational concepts of the mission got into print in a series of background papers that were required reading for new personnel. Later, in the 1980s, the missiological principles already mentioned were developed.

As the links between the missionaries and their earlier leaders became clouded with the passage of time, other efforts were made to orient an increasingly dispersed personnel to the LAM ethos. In 1989 all LAM missionaries were brought together in Metepec, Mexico, for an extended retreat. An LAM history video was produced, which is still used in the orientation of new missionaries.

Regional meetings of missionary personnel in three zones were also helpful. And most recently, conferences of specialists engaged in particular types of evangelism and mission work have been introduced. For example, the first of these was a weeklong workshop in Costa Rica on child care and street children.

The in-house publication of books offered an interpretation of the mission’s historical context and its response to challenges. In addition to what was included in the LAM magazine Evangelist, editor John Maust published two contextual books, one of them entitled Cities of Latin America. Two more were authored jointly by LAM former president C. L. “Mike” Berg and Paul E. Pretiz, focusing on the evangelical movement in Latin America: The Gospel People (1992) and Spontaneous Combustion: Grass-Roots Christianity, Latin American Style (1996).

The LAM’s seventy-fifth anniversary in 1996 provided an occasion to make history relevant with the publication of One Step Ahead, by W. Dayton Roberts, the story of the mission’s early years under Harry and Susan Strachan, emphasizing LAM’s openness to innovation. Since then, two books authored jointly by Pretiz and Roberts have appeared: Uncharted Waters (1997), the story of the LAM’s restructuring to turn its ministries over to Latin American Christians, and Like a Mighty Army (1998), the story of Evangelism-in-Depth. The first of these two books expounds and illustrates Ken Strachan’s principles of Latinamericanization and partnership, while the second illustrates the principle of mobilization of the church for evangelization.

Struggling for Alignment

When Kenneth Strachan took over the general directorship of the LAM in 1951 following the death of his parents, the mission was at a crossroads. The evangelistic campaigns had been virtually abandoned ten years earlier because of World War II travel restrictions and the age and falling strength of Harry Strachan. In addition to its existing institutional work in Costa Rica and the
Strachan pondered LAM's future. Should he follow his father's evangelism, its current emphasis was holistic mission. Kenneth broadly oriented pattern of ministries that prepared for and opening of a new field in Colombia, the LAM had recently initiated a radio station, a publishing house, and a camping program. While its founding purpose had been continental evangelism, its current emphasis was holistic mission. Kenneth Strachan pondered LAM's future. Should he follow his father's evangelistic burden, or should he pursue his mother's more followed up the outreach of the evangelistic campaigns?

Strachan's solution was to revive the evangelistic campaign ministry and, at the same time, classify the LAM's activities in several divisions—Communications, Literature, Education, and Evangelism. His goal was to make evangelism the central thrust of LAM's ministry, aligning the work of the other divisions in support of the total evangelistic thrust of the mission. Evangelism-in-Depth represented his best effort in this regard, and both the Literature and Communications divisions found ways to help Evangelism-in-Depth accomplish its goals. But it must be admitted that the fourfold division never seemed to jell just right. And some important local ministries, such as the hospital and a children's home, were left out.

After Strachan's untimely death in 1965, the decade of Evangelism-in-Depth made its mark on the history of evangelization in Latin America. This emphasis was followed by the CLAME experience, which, by giving autonomy to all ministries, wiped the slate clean, so to speak. Thus, LAM was poised to open a fresh chapter in its missiological evolution, although even through the 1980s the "mission of the mission" was not altogether clear.

In recent years LAM has again redefined its vision, refined its mission statement, specified more clearly its goals and objectives, and clarified its strategies and its relationships to partner ministries. With a full-time director of partnership relations, considerable progress has been made in this direction.

In addition to LAM's efforts to maintain a climate for change, to reinforce its historical ethos, and to align its ministries, some specific planning for the future has been taking place. In 1999 a staff Strategy Planning Committee with an outside facilitator developed short- and long-range plans for the mission, based on the findings of 1996 and 1997 task force teams.

The product of the Strategy Planning Committee was circulated to the LAM family (board members, staff, and field missionaries) and opportunity was given for the family to respond and contribute recommendations at a "Family Fest '99" gathering in Florida in June 1999. This major event was also a spiritual retreat, and it provided opportunity to meet and share with the mission's new president, David R. Befus.

The Spirit's Unexpected Intervention

The unexpected intervention of the Holy Spirit is the final factor in the LAM's positioning of itself for the future. The senior Strachans struggled with a dilemma not greatly different from that later faced by their son Kenneth. Scarcely had they arrived in Costa Rica to set up headquarters for their continental evangelistic campaign ministry, when they were confronted with the heart-rending condition of the street urchins of San José, their adopted base of operations. The children clearly needed medical, social, and spiritual help, but the Strachans' calling was to mass campaigns, not orphanages. Yet were they not obliged to respond to a need where God had placed them?

After six years of struggle over the mission's priorities and the prodding of God's Spirit, LAM established a home for needy children, along with a hospital and a seminary, among other things. They did so, without slowing the pace of continental evangelization.

Neither concern for people's needs by itself nor evangelism alone is an option. Both are essential. And the "mission of the mission"—of any mission—is to be sensitive not only to the requirements of alignment in strategy but also to the sovereign interventions of the Holy Spirit, which may lead in unexpected directions. Again and again, LAM has experienced such intervention. Occasionally we have ended up in blind alleys, but by and large when we have responded to opportunity—whether in the pastors' associations of large cities, among the unruly urchins of the streets, or in the classrooms of theological seminaries—God has shown that openness to the leading of his Spirit is a sine qua non of mission strategy.

We believe we have been called to be both evangelistic and holistic. This is our preparation for the future.

In February 1999 former LAM missionary David R. Befus was installed as president. Inasmuch as the original version of this essay was presented at a mission executives conference in December 1998, the authors have invited Dr. Befus to add his own observations as LAM moves into the next century.

The Latin America Mission is beginning the year 2000 with three new programs:

First, the service delivery systems of the LAM are being renewed through new systems, equipment, and personnel. The accounting and donor relations systems are being completely updated. The physical plant and equipment are being upgraded, and the policies and procedures are under review by a staff that includes approximately 50 percent new hires.

Second, the missionary force is expanding, with a goal of 300 new missionaries in the next three years. A listing of opportunities for service is posted on the Internet, and new assignments with indigenous Christian organizations in countries other than Costa Rica, Colombia, and Mexico are being developed, to make the LAM into a truly Latin American mission.

Third, a deliberate program of assisting national missions in Latin America is being developed to assist Latin Americans in missionary service in the world. This plan includes systems for cosponsorship in mission related to funding, preparation, logistics, and member care. It also contemplates that the LAM will take an aggressive approach to business and microcredit platforms for outreach, combined with donated support methodologies.

It is anticipated that the above three programs may greatly impact the outreach of the LAM in the next decade. The image of the Latin America Mission may evolve from the concept of mission "to" Latin America into an image of mission "to and from" Latin America.

—David R. Befus, President
SIM’s Agenda for a Gracious Revolution

Jim Plueddemann

We need a gracious revolution in our thinking about world missions. We are not likely to be effective in the next century by merely becoming more efficient within the old paradigms. Mission boards, churches, training schools, and mobilizing organizations need a new paradigm to guide their agenda. As I describe three common mission paradigms—Factory, Wildflower, and Pilgrim, each of which have influenced me at different times—I admit that, for the sake of clarity, I may be presenting extremes. In any case, I believe we must leave the first two paradigms behind and move on to become pilgrims in mission.

The Factory

The dominant assumptions underlying some contemporary missions are rooted in what I call the factory paradigm. The industrial revolution gave us this paradigm. The factory metaphor places a high value on precision, quantitative goals, predictability, efficiency, and control. It moves planners to set goals that can be easily measured. They want to know exactly what the final result will look like, when it will be accomplished, and how much it will cost.

Such a mind-set within the Christian community affects the way we look at the task, strategies, leadership, and evaluation of mission. When we aim only at what can be measured, we ignore the more important goals of character, discipleship, and holiness, which we cannot predict or quantify without falling into legalism. Factory thinking forces us to aim for goals that can be accomplished in a specific time frame. It inhibits vision for the qualitative development of people, of the church, and of society.

Fortunately, most factory-minded missiologists also have a genuine love for the Lord and a deep passion for the church, helping each other follow the map of the Word of God. Because Pilgrim missionaries are not surprised by difficulty and ambiguity. They are motivated in their service by a vision of the kingdom.

An Agenda for Revolution

We in SIM need a gracious revolution as much as any mission, a revolution based on the pilgrim paradigm. Our direction can be outlined in the following twelve-point agenda.

Vision

The pilgrim missionary is driven by a vision of what God can do for people, for the church, and for society. Pilgrims invite lost people to join them on the road to Christ, involve them in a community of believers, and help them to become all God intends them to be. They challenge them to follow the map of the Word and to become lifelong obedient students of Jesus.

For the last five years SIM has been conducting vision seminars in its candidate classes, leadership development courses, and field conferences. We also conduct regional vision consultations for missionaries and church leaders in South America, West Africa, East Africa, and Asia. When SIM field directors report to the International Council (which meets every three years), they talk about their vision and the indications they see that the Lord is fulfilling that vision. The desire to enhance our vision has been the driving force for SIM in its mergers with the Andes Evangelical Mission (1981), International Christian Fellowship (1989), and Africa Evangelical Fellowship (1998).

In all our efforts, while we encourage after-the-fact numbers to describe results, we focus on inner qualities that describe more intuitive paradigm, has gained strength. This model emphasizes personal experience, emotions, spiritual warfare, and inner healing. While the paradigm may provide a corrective to the factory model, I question the extent of its integration with biblical teaching, and I fear it may blindly build on contributions from existentialism and Freudianism. Wildflower missionaries often prefer a “go-with-the-flow” approach to missions; they are so embedded in the existential present that they have little time for future planning, or they may assume such thinking is unspiritual. If factory-oriented missionaries have their day planned in fifteen-minute intervals, wildflower missionaries seem to be blissfully unfocused on the calendar. One manages by objectives, the other by interruption. Wildflower missionaries have many strengths and bring spiritual vigor to missions because their flexibility and people orientation enhance their ministry. The danger is that they may lose the foundation of biblical Christianity, become inward looking and lack strategic planning for world outreach.

The Pilgrim

A better mental image is that of pilgrimage. Pilgrims have a visionary goal and a sense of direction, but they realize that the path often leads through rugged mountains and foggy swamps, bringing unexpected joys and sorrows. Pilgrims travel together, helping each other follow the map of the Word of God. Because pilgrims have a sense of direction, they are better able to decide if an event is an unfolding opportunity or a sidetrack interruption. Missionary pilgrims are not surprised by difficulty and ambiguity. They are motivated in their service by a vision of the kingdom.

The Wildflower

In reaction to the factory model, the wildflower metaphor, a

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pilgrims marching toward a vision of the future. We ask, What difference does our ministry make in the lives of people, in society, and in the church? As we become ever more efficient and technologically competent at doing secondary things, I fear we might lose our vision for the work of Christ's kingdom. Instead of church growth in mere numbers, we need a vision for a glorious church, without spot or wrinkle or any other blemish, holy and without fault. Instead of completing a precise task by a specific date, pilgrim missionaries have a dream of what people might look like if they enrolled as students in the lifelong school of discipleship and more consistently evidenced the fruit of the Spirit.

**Strategy**

It is not enough to have a vision. Strategic plans—action steps—are necessary. In a world of constant change and uncertainty, vision provides a foundation for pilgrim missionaries who dream of creative, innovative, and even audacious strategies. When missionaries unwittingly work from a factory paradigm, they are tempted to aim at programs or methods rather than eternal results. For example, the vision for a theological school should be more than to double the size of the library or build a new chapel. Vision foresees Christ-like qualities in students and the influence they will have on the church and society.

In each SIM vision seminar during the last five years, we have discussed and planned action steps. A pastor's library project, which provided about 20,000 small theological libraries and training sessions for pastors in Nigeria and South America, grew out of a vision for powerful preaching by better-equipped pastors. Out of a vision for the majestic Andes mountains ringing with the praises of redeemed Quechua grew a radio ministry for that people group. Out of a vision to reach upper-middle-class people of Lima, Peru, grew a Christian TV station. Out of a vision to reach Muslim beggar boys grew a friendship and feeding program.

**Leadership**

All pilgrims are called to be both leaders and followers in the body of Christ. The doctrines of the priesthood of all believers and of spiritual gifts mean that each pilgrim is responsible to lead by taking initiative to help others in the body of Christ. Since no person has all the gifts needed for the pilgrim band, there are times when all pilgrims need to follow other spiritually gifted pilgrims. There is often a need for a person to coordinate the gifts of other pilgrims. A coordinator does not take the place of Christ, the true Head, but has special abilities to maximize the effectiveness of other pilgrims. The most appropriate style for the pilgrim coordinator is team leadership. The pilgrim coordinator needs to be proactive, pushing the process of visionary thinking and action, while trusting the insights of others.

The primary focus of factory leaders is simply to use the person to accomplish the task. Task-oriented leaders tend to use a controlling style that stifles the development of people. Wildflower leaders seek to develop the person but often ignore the task. In contrast, the primary focus of pilgrim leaders is to use the task of world missions to develop other pilgrims.

**Evaluation**

Pilgrims use evaluation not to place blame for past failures or for boasting but rather to help colleagues do a better job next time. Many times the results of ministry are serendipitous—wonderful and unexpected. Thousands of people in a resistant people group decide to follow Christ. Revival breaks out in a Bible college. A women's fellowship group in Africa catches the vision for supporting their own missionaries to a neighboring country. Evaluation in these cases is not to transfer to humans the credit that belongs to God alone but rather to rejoice in what God has done. Similarly, when results are discouraging, the purpose of evaluation is to figure out what might be done to improve the situation the next time, not to assign blame for failure.

SIM is in the process of changing ministry evaluation forms to focus on three questions: What was your situation? What was your vision? and What did you do to get there? We ask about indicators of results in the hearts of people and look for ways to improve the strategy in the coming months. Under the wildflower paradigm, evaluation tends to focus on how people feel about themselves; attention is concentrated on interpersonal relationships. Evaluation under the factory paradigm, in contrast, is often threatening because it measures specific outcomes in comparison to predetermined goals.

**Evangelism**

John Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress* illustrates that evangelism is a necessary—indeed urgent—step in helping pilgrims flee the City of Destruction, enter the gate of salvation, and leave their burden of sin at the cross of Christ. Although the global Christian community has grown rapidly over the last century, due to population growth, there are today more people outside the gate than ever before. As a result, evangelism is needed as never before. Evangelicals working from all three paradigms place a strong emphasis on evangelism. While factory-oriented missiologists have been somewhat mechanical in their approach, they have provided a most valuable service in pinpointing areas of need and drawing attention to unreached peoples. Missiologists working under the wildflower paradigm have helped to emphasize the joy of the Lord for new believers and have encouraged greater creativity in expressions of worship. SIM acknowledges its debt to these streams of mission influence and seeks to be faithful as pilgrims in evangelism.

Along with our related national churches, SIM regularly asks if there are unreached people groups in our areas of responsibility. A high percentage of our missionaries are working with unreached people groups, and we have recently entered some of the most needy areas of the world.

**Discipleship and Church Growth**

When Bunyan's hero, Christian, flees the City of Destruction, enters the gate of salvation, and leaves his burden of sin at the cross, he is just beginning the next stage of the journey. Evangelism is a most necessary and crucial step, but it is not sufficient. The most urgent need in world missions is the task of helping pilgrims become disciples, learning to obey everything Jesus commanded. There may be as many as 1 billion lukewarm, nominal Christians in the world today. Transformed by Christ, these pilgrims could evangelize their world and flood the earth with justice. Rwanda, Congo, Liberia, Colombia, China, and the United States would become models of justice and peace. Racism, ethnocentrism, and poverty would end as people began to evidence the fruit of the Spirit in their communities.

Growth in grace and in the knowledge of Jesus is an inner, qualitative process that is difficult to predict, control, and measure. It does not fit the factory paradigm. But world evangelization by itself is not the fulfillment of Christ's Commission. Christ commands us to make disciples who will obey everything he commanded. This is a lifelong process, not a precise task that can be finished by the year 2000 or any time before Christ returns.
Church growth as defined by logarithmic graphs and ten-year projections has never been a New Testament ideal for a church.

**Theological Education**
Visionary theological educators see teaching as an opportunity for fellow pilgrims to spend time in what Bunyan called Interpreter's House. Solid biblical content is taught to help pilgrims find the right path, discover resources to win spiritual battles, and catch the vision of the ultimate goal. Teaching Bible content is a means, not an end. The implicit curriculum for the pilgrim educator is the development of a caring community of disciples learning to obey all Jesus commanded. Wildflower educators often downplay the need for formal education or emphasize personal experience over theological reflection and biblical interpretation. Factory-oriented educators preoccupy themselves with behavioral objectives, test scores, and outward compliance with course requirements.

There are about 18,000 students in SIM-related theological schools or extension programs. A high percentage of our missionaries are involved in pastoral education. We also have worked in a low-profile manner to help promote renewal in theological education. We have encouraged international accrediting in Africa and South America, promoted Theological Education by Extension, and helped to publish the writings of theologians from the Two-Thirds World. We have led seminars for theological educators from dozens of countries, urging a quiet revolution in theological education. But I am afraid that the factory paradigm is still common in SIM-related theological education.

**Meeting Human Need**
Pilgrims are concerned about poverty, sickness, injustice, and hopelessness; the Holy Spirit helps them respond with love and practical action. Both factory- and wildflower-oriented missionaries also have a heart for helping people in need. The factory paradigm, however, tends to see the task in terms of doing things for people, like giving them pills, fertilizer, roads, and wells. It tends to measure results in terms of economic indicators, the number of schools, and so on. Wildflower-oriented ministries tend to give aid based on the emotions of the moment rather than on the long-range development of people in need. But all real development is human development—development that leads people to become all God intended for them.

Even though we can cite many failed efforts from SIM's past, we hope we have been learning from our mistakes. We support programs that involve people in their own development, such as People Oriented Development in Nigeria and the Niger Integrated Development team, and helping churches minister to the poorest of the poor, for example, in Guayaquil, Ecuador. It is most fulfilling to see the churches we helped to plant catch the vision for meeting human need through their own development projects.

**Mission and National Church Relationships**
Pilgrim missionaries have the task of planting and nurturing churches in other cultures, while avoiding the temptation of trying to run them. Missionaries need to get out of leadership positions in national churches as soon as possible. Growing churches need to be self-supporting, self-governing, self-propagating, and self-nurturing. At the same time, however, we must confess that an "independent" church is an oxymoron. How can members of the universal body of Christ in one country be independent of the rest of the body? The ideal relationship is one in which the national church and the foreign mission work together in a loving, trusting, and interdependent relationship, each fulfilling complementary functions, neither dominating the other.

Missions working from a factory paradigm seldom see a loving, interdependent relationship as the goal. They are primarily interested in evangelism and precise time-specific targets. For example, they may say that when 20 percent of a people group have become Christians, then 95 percent of the missionaries need to be moved to a new field. Such a strategy may avoid some tensions of church-mission relationships, but it also misses the joy of cross-cultural discipleship and the excitement of partnering together to reach the rest of the world.

SIM at times has had problems with national church relationships. Sometimes we have held control too long and hindered the development of the national church. But there also have been times when we lost our identity as a cross-cultural mission and fused with the local church. This has meant losing our distinct function as a cross-cultural mission. Through channels such as Evangel Fellowship, which every two years brings together leaders from SIM-related fields, we are endeavoring to develop healthy interdependent relationships.

**Mission Church Relationships**
The home-based sending churches and mission boards have an interdependent relationship. Each needs the other. It is not healthy for a sending church merely to send the missionary and the monthly support and not be involved in the care, encouragement, and prayer for that missionary. Likewise, it is difficult, inefficient, and usually ineffective for local churches to send isolated missionaries around the world. Mission boards provide not only logistic and spiritual support but also structures for field-based visionary planning and for accountability. For individual churches to send missionaries around the world would be like local towns sending their own soldiers into war and having the soldiers report back to the mayor of their home town rather than to the officer in the field. Such a plan not only would be more expensive, it would create chaos in the battle. Sending churches and mission boards are mutually dependent on each other.

Churches and mission boards with a factory paradigm have a more difficult time with an interdependent relationship. Factory-oriented mission boards have a passion for control and may feel threatened by local churches wanting to take more initiative. Factory-oriented church mission committees may feel threatened by the mission board and resent the fact that they use so much money for administration and don't consult them for every strategic move on the field. The pilgrim paradigm is driven by vision and has a higher tolerance for the more ambiguous relationship of interdependence.

SIM is learning how to listen to sending churches. While the missionary is the primary contact with supporting churches, we can learn much from listening to highly motivated mission pastors and committees. In the past two years, leaders of SIM have hosted significant meetings with missions pastors and laypeople from major missionary-supporting churches in five key cities. The purpose is not to indoctrinate them about SIM but to listen to their vision and problems and ask if there are things we can do to help them. Several major initiatives have resulted from these meetings.

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neither could reach on their own. The Gospel will be preached in all the world with much more power and credibility if it can be preached by Bolivians together with Australians and Nigerians. It is difficult for a Muslim to say that Christianity is a Western religion when he is hearing the Gospel from a team made up of missionaries from Japan, Canada, and Ethiopia. An ideal is for Christians from any country to be able to share the Gospel together in any other country.

The factory paradigm places a high value on efficiency and getting the most results for the least amount of money. Advertisements in major magazines like Christianity Today challenge churches to simply send their money to support national evangelists because it is cheaper or more efficient. While there may be situations where churches in more-developed countries should send money to support national evangelists, the process is loaded with danger. Seldom does the national church feel the responsibility to pick up the support of the evangelist when foreign funding is eventually cut off. Often the local evangelist does not feel accountable to the local church. Moreover, sending churches in the West do not get the blessing of sending their own daughters and sons to their “Judea, Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.”

SIM-related churches in Nigeria and Ethiopia each have more than 1,000 cross-cultural missionaries, supported primarily by local churches. The national church leadership group, Evangel Fellowship, has a subcommittee called Evangel Fellowship International Missions Association (EFIMA), which exists to help the mission boards that grew out of SIM-related churches. At our last meeting we discovered that thirteen of the SIM-related national churches have functioning mission boards.

**Revival**

Pilgrims need regular renewal. It seems that the normal tendency is for missionaries, supporting churches, and field churches to lose their way and fall into the Slough of Despond, to be tempted at Vanity Fair, chained in Doubting Castle, or captured by the Giant of Despair. We become discouraged and begin to fight with each other. Revival helps us to get back on the pilgrim path.

Revival is not the ultimate goal for the church any more than getting back on the track is the ultimate destination of a derailed train. Without revival, however, we get stuck with all kinds of problems for a long time.

Factory-oriented churches either try to control revival or are afraid it will become too emotional. Wildflower churches may at times think that the emotional high of revival is the ultimate goal rather than a means for pilgrims to get back on the path of worship and service. Pilgrims seek daily revival as the Spirit uses the Word to challenge and correct those who stray from the path.

In 1998 and 1999 SIM set aside the ten days between Ascension and Pentecost for fasting, confession, and obedience to the Word. Guided by the model of revival in Nehemiah 9, we included confession, worship, prayer, and obedience. We used e-mail as the primary means of encouraging the mission family each day to continue to seek the Lord.

We now have four couples who travel around the SIM world as international pastors. Many times the Lord brings renewal during the annual spiritual life conferences held on each field. Many in SIM have told me that they are praying daily for revival in SIM, in our supporting churches, and in the thousands of SIM-related churches in Africa, Asia, and South America. May the Lord graciously give us profound times of refreshing and renewal.

What might happen if churches, missions, and schools would catch a vision for a gracious revolution in world missions? Could it be that the twentieth century, an amazing century of progress in missions, will be seen by historians as a mere prologue to the astounding growth of biblical Christianity in the twenty-first century? May it be so.

**Announcing**

The next conference of the International Association for Mission Studies will be held near Johannesburg, South Africa, January 21-28, 2000. The theme of the conference is “Reflecting Jesus Christ: Crucified and Living in a Broken World.” The new e-mail address of Klaus Schäfer, general secretary of IAMS in Hamburg, Germany, is: iams@emw-d.de

**Personalia**

**Died. John C. Bennett, 47, president and chief executive officer of Overseas Council International (OCI), August 25, 1999, of heart attack in Indianapolis, Indiana. Bennett joined OCI in 1990 and served as president since 1995. Before joining OCI he served as president of Advancing Churches in Missions Commitment (ACMC) in Chicago, Illinois, where he was instrumental in the founding of the organization. He earned a B.A. from University of California, Irvine in 1973, an M.A. in Intercultural Studies from Fuller School of World Mission in 1977, and a Ph.D. from the University of Edinburgh, Scotland, in 1992, with a notable dissertation titled “Charles Simeon and the Evangelical Anglican Missionary Movement.”


**Died. Dom Helder Camara, 90, retired Roman Catholic Archbishop of Olinda and Recife, Brazil, August 27. Camara played a leading role in the creation of the National Conference of Brazilian Bishops in 1952 and in the development of the Latin American Conference of Bishops. He was known and beloved for his identification with the impoverished people of northeastern Brazil.**
How Mennonites Repositioned a Traditional Mission

Stanley W. Green

The largest denomination of Mennonites, with the longest history in North America, is known as the Mennonite Church. Around the turn of the century the denomination established a sending agency, the Mennonite Board of Missions (MBM). Today approximately 80 career missionaries of this board and more than 30 tentmaker missionaries are serving in 27 countries around the world. The denomination has seminars in Elkhart, Indiana, and Harrisonburg, Virginia, each with a strong missions program. U.S. address: Mennonite Board of Missions, Box 370, Elkhart, IN 46515.

During the administration of my predecessor as director of the Mennonite Board of Missions, a number of areas were identified that suggested a need for change. Included were the desire to bring together, for missiological reasons, the home ministries and overseas ministries divisions; and to redesign, for reasons of organizational effectiveness, a divisional committee structure that functioned alongside the board of directors. The members of the board often felt that they had no choice but to function as a rubber stamp for committee recommendations, since the board members' knowledge of the agency’s programs was limited by the structures that were in place. My predecessor’s announcement of his resignation came in close proximity to the identification of these needs, prompting the board to defer making any changes until a new administration was in place.

When I arrived at MBM in 1993, I was awed by our mission legacy. At the turn of the century, except for a limited mission initiative in Indonesia led primarily from the Netherlands, Mennonites were essentially a North Atlantic people of European ancestry and cultural identity. One hundred years ago, in response to a famine, the first mission workers were sent by North American Mennonites to India. Soon others followed, going to reflected among Mennonites as an enthusiasm for relief and service. This emphasis resulted in a trajectory that involved a slow but steady decline of traditional church-planting mission, with a countervailing dramatic growth of relief and service as represented in the programs of the Mennonite Central Committee. As the end of the twentieth century approached, few people in the MBM administrative offices could remember a year that had not registered a decline in contributions. Something had to change.

The Change Process

As the administration and the board began the task of discerning what changes were necessary, we saw that acting on the options that had already been identified would possibly make us more efficient, but we were not persuaded that these changes would address the fundamental challenge of connecting new generations of Mennonites with a renewed vision and commitment to mission. We began to glimpse the possibility of a more profound change that would in fact help us to accomplish our primary objective of bridging a mission vision across the generations. We recognized that we would have to bring about a major reorientation, a systemwide change that would yield new assumptions and impact every facet of the organization.

In October 1993 I brought to the MBM board of directors a proposal recommending a consultancy that would help us design a process of change. By the end of that year, the board had appointed the Task Management Group (TMG) to manage the exploration of the change that was needed. This group consisted of persons from every level in the organization: support staff, program managers, department directors, divisional vice presidents, as well as a member of the board and representation from MBM’s constituency.

In early January 1994 outside consultants Norman Shawchuck and Gustave Rath met with the TMG for two days and dealt with two general areas: (1) an orientation to the environment in which all mission agencies presently do their work, and (2) how MBM might design and carry out its study. Some of the dynamics of the global environment that we noted were:

1. A national trend toward localness.
2. A distrust of institutions and bureaucracies.
3. Declining interest and support for denominations and denomination-centered programs—programs created “up there” and carried on somewhere “out there.”

Following this work, the TMG developed a proposal incorporating the design for the research project and a plan for acting on its findings. By late February 1994 I was prepared to bring a recommendation to the board of directors that MBM be authorized to conduct a broad-scale study of its mission, relationships, and work. Authorization, including a budget of $68,000, was granted and the project begun.

The study was named Cana Venture, and its participants came to be known as the Cana Venture Management Group (CVMG). The name, drawn from the account of Jesus’ presence at the wedding in Cana and his miraculous turning of water into wine (John 2:1–11), was chosen to signify the bringing of new life

The failure of nerve for evangelism was reflected among us as an enthusiasm for relief and service. Argentina, then Brazil, and ultimately to all six continents. From this worldwide web of witness, the Mennonite community was profoundly transformed. There are now more Mennonites of color than otherwise. What a remarkable legacy!

But would it be continued in a new century? That question exercised the new administration. Previous generations, in particular the World War II generation, were unquestioning and generous in their support and commitment to mission. The baby-boomer generation that followed, however, was ambivalent toward mission. The aftermath of two world wars, the era of Vietnam, and the social dislocation of the 1960s and early 1970s impacted Mennonite youth just as it did their counterparts in many mainstream denominations. The failure of nerve in regard to evangelistic mission that plagued other church groups was

Stanley W. Green, a native of South Africa and former missionary to Jamaica, is President of the Mennonite Board of Missions.
and joy to the future ministries and organizational system of MBM. We wanted to hold on to the promise that the best days in mission vitality and impact were not behind but ahead of us. The CVMG defined its vision for its work as follows: “To enable MBM to effectively respond to the mission vision of the Mennonite Church, and to bring new life and joy to our mission outreach.” We also developed a covenant that, along with commitments to listen sensitively and take seriously the feedback from our constituency, declared that we were willing to “let go of the past if needed . . . to create a new future with new images and metaphors . . . to allow for the transformation of ourselves personally and of the organization . . . to make adequate time and space for discernment in our group . . . to be persons who listen.” J. Robert Charles was recruited to serve in a half-time capacity as the Cana Venture project manager.

On August 5, 1994, Shawchuck and Associates (S&A) was retained to consult with MBM in the construction, implementation, and analysis of an information gathering process to include focus groups, a questionnaire survey, and a final written report of the research results. After training of staff and volunteers, thirty-two focus groups were conducted with a strong attempt to include primarily people in the age-range 18–45. The central question in the focus groups was, “What programs and activities must MBM be involved in, in North America and overseas?” In addition, survey questionnaires were sent to 3,500 persons (four questionnaires to each of MBM’s 850 supporting congregations). The questionnaires contained several modules covering general impressions of MBM, ideas for new programs, current programs that should be discontinued, how MBM should spend a defined contribution, whether MBM should spend less money overseas, and so forth. Much of the research was conducted during the fall of 1994. At the February 1995 board meeting of MBM, S&A delivered a report on the findings and a compilation of the feedback.

Emerging Themes

Four major themes emerged from the listening process.

A call for partnership. We heard a desire for more direct involvement in mission by congregations; an interest for MBM to be a partner to do mission with, rather than for, Mennonite congregations and conferences.

A hunger for spirituality. We heard a call to seek creative and faithful ways for spiritual vitality and disciplines to inform our work as a mission instrument of the Mennonite Church.

A need for communication. We heard the desire for clearer, more frequent, and more personal communication with the Mennonite Church, along with a call for more mission education.

A call for short-term and youth opportunities. We heard a call to create opportunities for short-term mission engagement and exchange, gearing many of these opportunities to youth and young adults in Mennonite congregations.

Implications for MBM

Feedback from the Cana Venture process made it clear that the stakeholders in MBM’s future are different from their predecessors. Their environment has been impacted by a growing sense of alienation born of rapid technological advances, a loss of transcendence that has its corollary in the secularizing effects of materialism, individualism, localism, pluralism, and a distrust or suspicion of big and seemingly remote institutions. These environmental forces have their counterpoint in a growing spiritual hunger, a yearning for community, and a quest for significance.

We understood from the feedback that MBM must:

- Anticipate a radical transformation of the organizational system and its image. We needed to be willing to adapt our self-identity from that of a centralized bureaucracy that “owned” the mission (we designed the initiatives, recruited the workers, deployed the personnel, and then courted and cajoled congregations to support our program) to a more decentralized, networking entity focused on developing synergistic partnerships with regional Mennonite conferences, congregations, and international partners.
- Lead in developing a compelling theological articulation of the church’s call in mission and design an effective mission education initiative for building awareness and response in churches.
- Develop effective and imaginative ways of communicating the stories and challenges in mission.
- Increase the number of short-term options available, particularly for youth and young adults.
- Recover a holistic vision for mission that enthusiastically embraces ministries in evangelism and church planting while retaining a sincere commitment to ministries of justice and compassion as integral components of a biblical mission vision.

Given these findings, we discerned a threefold mandate from our constituency:

Mission vision development and communication. MBM is uniquely positioned in our constituency to provide initiative and coordination for the development of an overarching, undergirding mission vision. Our positioning also fits us for providing the instruments (strategy, contacts, expertise, and personnel) for communicating that vision in order to stimulate interest and commitment.

Program design and implementation. MBM’s rootedness in history led us to identify those segments of current program and mandate that would need to be continued. MBM would need, in a transitional phase, to continue to carry responsibility for program design and implementation, since congregations and conferences would not have developed the instrumentalities or the competencies to host the level of programming necessary.

Mission in a partnership modality—linking, connecting, facilitating. As MBM moved from the current reality toward the future that the Cana Venture feedback required, the organization would increasingly function to develop linkages and networks, connecting vision and resources in a partnership modality.

The report was formally received at a meeting comprising two broadly representative groups of board members and staff from all levels of the organization. An organizational design and program task group was constituted to design a new organizational architecture based on the implications of the feedback as well as to review program fit. A second group received a mandate to develop a new vision and strategic intent for the organization as well as to define new policies consistent with the new reality.

Changes Take Hold

The first group led in the development of a new organizational vision statement as well as a new statement of organizational values. The new vision statement reflected the need to provide
leadership in fostering a global mission focus in congregational life, in planting mission interest, commitment, and initiative in the heart of every congregation. It reads: "By the power of the Holy Spirit, MBM will shape a vision for global mission, and partner to implement programs of evangelism and service, mobilizing church members to share God's healing and hope through Jesus Christ."

The second group developed a new design that gave MBM three new divisions (in place of the former Home Ministries, Overseas Ministries, and Administration/Resources): Partnership Services, Global Ministries, and Mission Advocacy and Communication.

On June 7, 1995, the CVMG formally disbanded. The divisional committees also ceased meeting as of the June 1995 board meeting. At that meeting, the board established a Reorganization Working Group to implement the recommendations for organizational redesign, in line with a proposed implementation schedule. Each new division was charged with developing a new divisional mission statement, divisional strategies, and departamental objectives to fit the new organizational design and priorities.

With the revisioning of the work of each of the divisions, focus was given to finding ways to effectively respond to the priority issues that emerged from the Cana Venture process. Listed below are some of the ways that we addressed those issues in the new organizational form:

**Partnership.** We provided training for key staff in partnership development and resourcing. We developed workshops for training congregations in the partnership modality. A major think-piece was developed for organizational and extra-organizational reflection. All staff were oriented and trained in the implications for partnership for our work processes. We dedicated an issue of our mission magazine to popularize and inform our constituency about this new direction. Currently, there are sixteen partnerships formed or in active formation, with a number of others in the conversation stage. We recruited and identified a variety of partners for the projects we became involved with: congregations, clusters of congregations in geographic proximity, conferences (juridical/administrative units), ecumenical entities (other denominational or inter-Mennonite groups), parachurch agencies; likewise, we identified overseas congregational, conference, denominational, and ecumenical groups (e.g., we are working with more than two dozen African-initiated groups in Benin).

In the conceptualization and design of these partnerships, we were informed by the Mennonite International Study Project report written by Nancy Heisey and Paul Longacre. This two-year project, of which MBM was one of the sponsors, involved nonadministrative dialogue and discernment with leadership from representatives of the global church family in forty-five countries. It included face-to-face interviews with 1,450 overseas Mennonites, who were invited to offer what they "would want to say to North Americans committed to mission at the end of the twentieth century." The report culminates with a response by the sponsoring agencies, recognizing that "the energetic spirit and the gifts of Christians in new and historic Christian communities around the world bring fresh dimensions to the task of mission. They are asking North Americans to join with them and to offer to them our resources as together we are renewed and empowered for the work of the kingdom in the decades ahead. The challenge is to see the global church focus its resources on the mission task worldwide."

**Spirituality.** As we engaged our constituency in deciphering what all this meant, it was clear that there was a perception that MBM was less than enthusiastic about calling people to personal transformation through faith in Jesus Christ. This insight prompted us to dedicate the first issue of a new mission magazine to the articulation and exploration of a holistic mission vision. We developed a slogan—"the whole Gospel for a broken world"—which we incorporated in our speaking, in our letterhead design, and on mugs and t-shirts (distributed at the biannual convention, attended by 7,000 people). And we sought partnerships specifically focused on church planting and evangelism (Dagestan, Senegal).

**Communication.** Much of the feedback we heard made it clear that at least 50 percent of our constituency had little or no information about MBM and that they preferred a personalization of communication. We totally revamped our communication with the constituency. We introduced a new mission magazine, Missions Now. The magazine’s mission focus was popularized, and the graphics were designed to appeal to young adults. We also entered cyberspace at www.thirdway.com, and we substantially increased news items submitted to church publications and increased people contacts with the constituency.

**Short-term and youth participation.** In the last two years, we have doubled some of our short-term opportunities. We developed a partnership with others to launch a Great Lakes Discipleship Center to train youth for short-term assignments.

Through the Cana Venture process we heard many things from the church, and by the grace of God and the permission of our board, we undertook the above-detailed transformation of the organization. For two years we were in the wilderness. The year we spent preparing for the transformation, there was hope among some, cynicism among others (who said, "We'll experience some tinkering but little real change"), and resignation among yet others. In the year that we designed a different organizational reality and began to fully implement the changes, there was great anxiety and stress. Those were difficult days, wilderness times. We had left behind the familiar, and we were not yet where we wanted to be. Our only currency was vision. The changes did not come easily. In 1996, we still saw a decline in contributions, but the gradient had moved toward a more level pitch. In 1997 and again in 1998 we received $100,000 more than in 1996. We are encouraged by the fresh energy with which staff members are embracing their tasks and the interest in the constituency in our communications and possibilities for partnership. Instead of looking back to the golden days, many in the staff, constituency, and board are looking forward with great hope and vision for the possibilities before us.

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My Pilgrimage in Mission

C. Peter Wagner

The apostle Paul began his pilgrimage in mission on the very day of his conversion to Christ. On his way to Damascus with the intention of doing as much damage to the Christian community as he could, he was confronted directly by Jesus, who said, among other things, “I will deliver you from the Jewish people, as well as from the Gentiles [read nations], to whom I now send you” (Acts 26:17 NKJV).

I identify with Paul. I was not brought up in a Christian home. When I left home as an adult, I had no background in the church, in Sunday school, in prayer, in the Bible, or in religion in general. I was a committed heathen, dedicated to fulfilling the desires of my flesh in as respectable a way as possible. But when I met Doris, the woman I immediately knew I was going to marry, things changed radically. I learned that her nonnegotiables for a spouse were that he be a born-again Christian and that he be a career missionary. I was willing for both, considering them a small price to pay for gaining that woman. So as we knelt in her family’s farmhouse in upstate New York in 1950, she led me to Christ, and I committed my life to be a missionary the same night! Thus began my pilgrimage in mission.

I also identify with another characteristic of the apostle Paul. As he was recounting to King Agrippa his conversion and his call to mission, he added, “I was not disobedient to the heavenly vision” (Acts 26:19 NKJV). As I write this reflection, I am a few months away from completing fifty years since I first received my heavenly vision, and I can truthfully say that I have not deviated to one side or the other. Contributing to the fulfillment of Jesus’ Great Commission has been the driving passion of my life since day 1 of my new life in Christ.

I knew I would need training for the career to which God had called me. At the time, we lived in New Jersey, and word had come that a new school, Fuller Theological Seminary, had been founded out on the West Coast. The Christian leaders I looked up to at that time were fundamentalists and separatists. Among them Fuller Seminary was declared to be a dangerously liberal institution, out of bounds for true believers. True to my tendency to take risks and color outside the lines, Doris and I decided to pack up our goods and drive across the country to Pasadena, California. I enrolled in Fuller, and she enrolled in Biola College, then located in Los Angeles.

By the time I graduated from Fuller, I had learned quite a bit about missions, mission fields, and mission boards. It had come to my attention that SAM (then the South American Indian Mission) was looking for an agricultural missionary who would go to Bolivia. Since Doris and I both had backgrounds in agriculture, we signed up. In 1956 we climbed down from a truck in Santiago de Chiquitos, at the end of the road in eastern Bolivia, to begin our careers as field missionaries. From that point, the next four decades took me through five significant pilgrimage milestones.

Missionary to Bolivia

Sixteen years of cross-cultural ministry in Bolivia turned out to be essentially sixteen more years of training. Although our years of service left some positive residue, it is embarrassing to look back and realize how little our investment of time, money, and energy actually produced. Missionary education in those days was sparse and superficial. Today students at Fuller receive more training in their first six weeks than I received in my three years in seminary.

My first term in the arid jungles of eastern Bolivia turned out to be general missionary work. The agricultural calling was short lived, since, even before I had mastered Spanish, I was assigned to be the director of a new Bible institute for training pastors. No one else on the field had graduated from a seminary, and I was considered the most qualified. So I proceeded to translate the Fuller curriculum into Spanish—and wondered why we had so little success in training effective pastors.

The Bible institute was then relocated to San José de Chiquitos, and I did evangelistic work and planted a church there. It was a struggling congregation, and when we left, I wondered if it would even survive. But it did, and now thirty-five years later, under Bolivian leadership and in a more receptive social environment, it is doing well for a church in a rural community. I am an inveterate networker, so I pioneered the first association of Protestant churches in the region. I can only chuckle when I recall that, in order to help the association function as I thought it really should, I translated Robert’s Rules of Order into Spanish!

For my second term of service, I transferred from SAM to the Bolivian Indian Mission (later Andes Evangelical Mission, now incorporated in SIM International) and moved to the city of Cochabamba in the Andes mountains. I taught in a seminary there, again using what was essentially a North American curriculum. Eventually I was asked to become the field director, so I combined mission administration with seminary teaching. Continuing my networking role, I was instrumental in founding ANDEB, the interdenominational evangelical association of Bolivia, and the Latin American Theological Fraternity, both of which continue active today.

Donald McGavran and Church Growth

I spent my furlough of 1967–68 doing a degree in missiology under Donald McGavran at Fuller’s newly established School of World Mission. This was a life-changing experience. McGavran’s paradigm of measuring the effectiveness of missionary work essentially in terms of multiplying Christian churches in number and in size made sense to a career missionary who had become disenchanted by clichés that faithfulness was somehow more important than success on the mission field. I had few questions
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about my faithfulness to God but many questions about why what I was doing wasn’t working very well.

McGavran’s missiological pragmatism pointed the future direction of my pilgrimage in mission. If God wants the lost sheep found, let’s do what it takes to find them and bring them into the fold. If this task involves stimulating people movements or using numbers or gauging receptivity or identifying un reached people groups or dismissing unproductive missionaries or incorporating anthropological insights or redefining evangelism and mission or rejecting universalist theology or advocating the homogeneous unit principle or scorning biological and transfer growth or drawing a line between discipling and perfecting—so be it! If increased numbers of lost souls were saved and brought into life-giving churches, I was ready for all of the above and more.

McGavran invited me to stay in Pasadena in 1968 to join him, Alan Tippett, and Ralph Winter on the new School of World Mission faculty. I did not feel the time was right for that, but after I had served as a visiting lecturer from time to time, Doris and I did make the move from Bolivia to California, and I joined the school in 1971. I spent most of the decade of the 1970s teaching what I now call technical church growth and also helping to bring the church growth movement into the American church scene. My first book on American church growth, *Your Church Can Grow*, was released in 1976, and it is still in print.

A Paradigm Shift

I have used the adjective “technical” to modify church growth because around 1980 it had become clear to me that there must have been a concomitant spiritual dimension to church growth that Donald McGavran had not particularly emphasized in his teaching and writing. As I began to dialogue with McGavran on this subject, I found him to be cordial but cautious. I soon realized that if I pursued this fairly uncharted area of church growth, I would be on my own.

Ironically, the process that resulted in my paradigm shift began at the urging of McGavran himself. While I was a field missionary in Bolivia, I was not simply noncharismatic (a stance required by the two mission agencies under which I served), but I was anticharismatic. I had become a chief adversary of the Pentecostal leaders in Bolivia. But when I studied under McGavran, he taught me that the most productive church growth research methodology was to study growing churches. One of the immediate and distasteful implications of this point was to have to admit that the fastest growing churches in Latin America were the Pentecostal churches!

So, my work was cut out for me. First, I had to make friends with my Pentecostal adversaries. Then, I had to research those churches earnestly, which I did. I was surprised at the quality of the believers and the leaders that I found there. I thought I would have plenty of theology to teach them, but instead I found myself learning new theology that turned out to be more biblical than any of mine. I soon realized I was getting in touch with the cutting edge of the kingdom of God at the time, and I recorded my findings in a book, *Look Out! The Pentecostals Are Coming!*

I did not begin teaching what I was discovering until 1982, when I invited my old friend, John Wimber, who had recently founded the Vineyard Christian Fellowship of Anaheim, to come to Fuller and to join me in teaching a course called “Signs, Wonders, and Church Growth.” My colleague Charles Kraft and I attended Wimber’s sessions with some guarded skepticism, but before the course was over we had both gone through a life-changing paradigm shift that caused us to be open to the contemporary, immediate ministry of the Holy Spirit.

Through the decade of the 1980s, I increasingly added spiritual dimensions such as healing the sick and casting out demons to the technical aspects of church growth that I had been teaching. As time went on, I felt better able to understand how church growth in the Book of Acts generally took place with supernatural manifestations (like healing) preparing the way for the word to be preached and accepted by nonbelievers. Healing the sick and casting out demons in seminary classroom settings caused a bit of furor for a season within Fuller Seminary, especially the School of Theology, but today they are perceived to be accepted, or at least tolerated, components of missiological education.

Prayer and Spiritual Warfare

In 1987 I began asking what role prayer might have in world evangelization. At the time, I was a charter member of the Lausanne Committee for World Evangelization, and in just about every Lausanne gathering Vonette Bright would admonish us that if we were more intentional in our practice of prayer, we could speed the completion of the Great Commission.

My research into prayer soon led me to study the specific kind of prayer used in spiritual warfare. In the Lausanne II Congress in Manila, held in 1989, several workshops dealt with a higher-level kind of spiritual warfare directed against what we began to call territorial spirits. This interest led in 1990 to the formation of the International Spiritual Warfare Network, which, upon the invitation of Luis Bush, was incorporated into the AD2000 United Prayer Track under my leadership. Through the decade of the 1990s the worldwide movement of prayer and spiritual warfare on behalf of world evangelization has grown exponentially.

I began organizing courses on prayer and spiritual warfare and spiritual mapping and identificational repentance into my program at Fuller Seminary. By then I had been appointed to the Donald A. McGavran Chair of Church Growth. I wrote several books to report what I had been finding, the centerpiece of which was the six-volume *Prayer Warrior* series. I convened a meeting in South Korea in 1993 of the International Spiritual Warfare Network, attended by 300 specially invited leaders from all continents, and a second gathering in Guatemala City in 1998 that was attended by 2,500 leaders. All this activity was designed to push back the forces of spiritual darkness enough so the light of the Gospel could penetrate the unreached people groups, especially in the 10/40 Window. Documented results of this intense, decade-long prayer initiative have been most gratifying.

The AD2000 Movement, by design, discontinues after the year 2000. Since this included the AD2000 United Prayer Track, I had to determine whether I would simply phase it out or transition it into another, more permanent ministry. I chose the latter, and I moved my family to Colorado Springs in 1996 in order to join Ted Haggard of New Life Church in founding the World Prayer Center. The center is developing rapidly as an international switchboard for intercessors in at least 120 nations of the world in order to increase the quantity and the quality of prayer for the lost people of the world and for the measurable advance of the kingdom of God in our generation.

The New Apostolic Reformation

As I continued to research the growth of Christian churches around the world, I began to notice, in 1993, a highly significant
trend. I refer to the emergence of the New Apostolic Reformation. Here is my attempt at a concise definition of this movement:

The New Apostolic Reformation is an extraordinary work of God at the close of the twentieth century that is, to a significant extent, changing the shape of Protestant Christianity around the world. For almost 500 years Christian churches have largely functioned within traditional denominational structures of one kind or another. Particularly in the 1990s, but with roots going back for almost a century, new forms and operational procedures are now emerging in such areas as local church government, interchurch relationships, financing, evangelism, missions, prayer, leadership selection and training, the role of supernatural power, worship, and other important aspects of church life. Some of these changes are being seen within denominations themselves, but for the most part they are taking the form of loosely structured apostolic networks. In virtually every region of the world, these new apostolic churches constitute the fastest growing segment of Christianity.

In order to discover more about how these apostolic movements function, and in order to get to know their leaders, I convened a National Symposium on the Postdenominational Church at Fuller Seminary in 1996. Five hundred leaders came, with forty-three of them sharing in some platform time. I got to know enough of them personally to do a book, The New Apostolic Churches, in which, after my introductory chapter, eighteen of these leaders wrote chapters describing their own networks.

Of all the groupings of churches I have studied through the years, the churches of the New Apostolic Reformation best combine what I have been teaching, namely the technical dimensions of church growth with the spiritual dimensions. I am currently becoming so involved with these new apostolic movements in so many ways that I anticipate that this fifth milestone of my pilgrimage in mission may well be my last. This year I submitted to a publisher the manuscript of a textbook, Churchquake! The Explosive Dynamics of the New Apostolic Reformation.

The year 1999 is also the year I move off the Fuller School of World Mission faculty after thirty years in order to give myself full time to teaching in the stream of the New Apostolic Reformation. I have accepted the status of visiting lecturer on the faculties of several of the existing new apostolic schools, and I also have founded a broad-based practical ministry training institution called the Wagner Leadership Institute.

It is a fact that thousands of leaders of the New Apostolic Reformation here in our nation and in virtually every part of the world, some of them extraordinary leaders and megachurch pastors, find the traditional educational system of seminaries and Bible schools totally inaccessible. The Wagner Leadership Institute will have no academic requirements for entrance into any of its programs; the faculty will be successful and effective apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors and teachers; the educational environment will be one of impartation of anointing and skills for ministry and not simply the transmission of information; there will be no resident students or geographic limitations (an Australian branch is the first international center to receive a franchise), and the student body will be limited to those active in ministry, not admitting preservice candidates. The Wagner Leadership Institute will not seek academic accreditation but will use the newly formed Apostolic Council for Educational Accountability as a creative alternative.

It has been an exciting pilgrimage since I promised the Lord in that farmhouse in New York almost fifty years ago that I would serve him in mission. And I honestly expect the next few years to be the most productive and fulfilling of all.

The Legacy of John Ross

James H. Grayson

Although John Ross (1842–1915) is not one of the best remembered names in the history of Christian missions, he deserves to be recalled as one of the most effective missionaries of his generation. Making his home in China for almost four decades, he became the father of Protestant churches in both Manchuria and Korea. He had a grasp of eleven languages, made significant contributions in Bible translation and commentary, opened new vistas in the theory and practice of missions, and held novel ideas about Chinese history, culture, and religion. The story of this pioneer missionary with broad-ranging theological and intellectual interests constitutes a neglected chapter in the history of Northeast Asia missions.

Early Life and Education

Ross was born on July 6, 1842, at Easter March near the village of Balintore north of Inverness on the Moray Firth in northeastern Scotland. The family home, Broomton Cottage, still exists. His father was a tailor and his mother a schoolmistress in the nearby village of Fearn. In the small, rural world of northeastern Scotland in the mid-nineteenth century, a family whose father and mother had a skilled trade or a profession would have been unusual. Although John Ross did not come from a family of wealth or great education, his family was uniquely situated as leaders of the local community, aware of the wider world.

Three factors had a formative influence on Ross as he grew into adulthood. First was the fact that the area in which he grew up was still a Gaelic-speaking region, and he spoke Gaelic as his first language. Because of his family's background, Ross must have known some English before he went to school and certainly spoke English from his early school years. The experience of having had to learn to speak two very different languages at an early age would have assisted him in learning other languages when he was much older.

The second factor was Ross's awareness of the wider world beyond the narrow confines of his village. Being the son of a tailor and of a teacher, he no doubt glimpsed this wider world from
having heard the conversations of people who would stop by his father’s shop, or from comments of his teacher-mother. Furthermore, Balintore was not a remote village off in the Highlands of Scotland but a fishing and farming community located next to a major waterway through which passed commercial ships on their way to and from the Continent. The Moray Firth was visible from Ross’s home, and the sight of ships going in and out must have made the young man dream of places further afield.

The third major influence on his life was his church. The Rosses were not members of the established Church of Scotland but belonged to the smaller United Presbyterian Church of Scotland. The United Presbyterian Church was noted for its enthusiasm for mission. Moreover, the presence of more than one denominational church in his local area may have influenced Ross to think of the need for cooperation rather than denominational competition.2

We know nothing more about Ross’s formal education other than that he attended the theological hall of the United Presbyterian Church between 1865 and 1870. During that time he served as a church worker in various United Presbyterian churches, including Lismore, Glasgow, Inverness, Stornoway in the Outer Hebrides, and Portree on the Isle of Skye. His sense for a missionary vocation seems to have been stimulated by a talk given by Hamilton M. MacGill, the secretary for the foreign mission board of his denomination, when MacGill spoke to the students at the theological hall in September 1868. After hearing this talk, Ross struggled with the idea of ministering to the Gaelic community in Scotland or of going to either India or China.3 At the end of more than three years of deliberation and consultation with MacGill, he finally opted for overseas work in China.

Once this decision was made, everything fell into place very rapidly. Ross was formally appointed by his denominational mission board to work in China on February 27, 1872; he was ordained a United Presbyterian minister on March 20 of the same year; and he married M. A. Stewart on March 27. The Rosses set sail for China shortly after their marriage and arrived at their mission station in Chefoo (Yantai) on the Shantung (Shandong) Peninsula in August 1872.4

Missionary Career

At the time of the Rosses’ arrival in China, Chefoo was the center of United Presbyterian Church missionary work headed by Alexander Williamson (1829–90), who was also concurrently the representative of the National Bible Society of Scotland in North China. Williamson was widely traveled and had visited Manchuria several times. During his trips Williamson had made a point to visit the customs station between Ch’ing, China, and Choson, Korea—the Kaoli-men, known to Westerners as the Corean Gate. As the Choson dynastic government strictly excluded foreigners, Williamson’s visits to Manchuria and the Corean Gate convinced him of the need for a missionary presence in Manchuria and for missionary efforts toward Korea. Upon the Rosses’ arrival in Chefoo, Williamson stressed to them the needs of Manchuria and the urgency to make a decision to relocate there before the waters of the Po Hai (Bo Hai) Bay froze over, making the passage impossible.5 With this urging, within a month of setting foot in Chefoo, the Rosses relocated to Ying-k’ou (Yingkou), the treaty port for Manchuria at the mouth of the Liao River.

In late February 1873 Mrs. Ross gave birth to their son, Drummond, and she died shortly afterwards.6 Ross appears to have dealt with his grief by becoming more vigorously involved in his missionary activities. During the early 1870s he concentrated on further language studies and plans for the development of missionary work in Manchuria and in Korea. During this period, he evidently formed the idea that the best way to evangelize the “Hermit Kingdom” of Korea was to translate the New Testament into Korean. By mid-1874 he had acquired a good grasp of Mandarin, a knowledge of written Chinese sufficient to enable him to read the Confucian classics, and a working knowledge of the spoken Manchu language. Early on, he undertook a number of extensive journeys to gain familiarity with the terrain and populace of the vast interior area of Manchuria. He also made two special visits to the Corean Gate, once in October 1874 and again in April-May of 1876. 7 On his 1876 journey to the Corean Gate, Ross acquired the services of an herbal medicine merchant named Yi Ungh’ an, who was to act as his first language teacher and helper in Bible translation. Thus, within two years of his arrival in Manchuria, Ross had resolved upon a plan not only to evangelize the northeastern part of the Chinese Empire but also to penetrate the closed society of the Korean peninsula by disseminating copies of Christian Scripture.

In 1876 Ross published a Chinese language textbook entitled Mandarin Primer, the format of which formed the basis for his language studies with Yi Ungh’an. In 1877 he published the Corean Primer, the first textbook of the Korean language, which was intended as a teaching aid that missionaries and commercial traders would need when Korea opened to the outside world. The volume was revised substantially and republished in 1882 as Korean Speech, with Grammar and Vocabulary.

Ross’s language study and the translation of the New Testament into Korean did not interfere with his strategy for missions in Manchuria. By 1875 he had established himself in Mukden (modern Shenyang) and had been joined there by his sister Catherine, who had been sent out to look after his infant son, and by John MacIntyre (1837–1905), who had been transferred from the Shantung peninsula. Ross felt that for an effective witness in Manchuria it was imperative that there be a Christian presence in Mukden, the capital and “second city of the empire.” A missionary presence in Mukden was only one of the three elements of Ross’s mission strategy for Manchuria.8 He determined that it was equally important to establish a Christian presence in the major towns on the road leading up to the capital from the treaty port of Ying-k’ou. These towns were to be secondary or regional bases from which would radiate knowledge of the Gospel.

The third element in his plan was the most important and had the most far-reaching influence—his dependence for primary evangelistic work on the use of Chinese converts as preachers and evangelists. Key to the work in Mukden was the preaching and evangelistic efforts of Ross’s Chinese assistant, Wang Ching-ming. Likewise, Ross very early on appointed Chinese Christians to work in the towns along the route from Ying-k’ou to Mukden. By taking this approach in the first stage of mission,
Ross laid the basis for an independent Christian church in Manchuria.

During the same period, Ross worked out an agreement with John MacIntyre to divide the work in Ying-k'ou and Mukden on a six-month rotational basis. Significantly, he had also come to an agreement for working cooperatively with the missionaries of the Presbyterian Church of Ireland, who had been established in Ying-k'ou well before the arrival of the Rosses.

From the start of the translation work on the Korean New Testament until its completion, ten years elapsed. In the first phase, January 1877 to March 1879, Ross had primary responsibility for the supervision of the team of Korean translators. When he left for furlough in Scotland in March 1879, John MacIntyre, who up to this point had had a lesser role in the work, took charge for two years, April 1879 to June 1881. In the final phase, July 1881 to the end of 1886, Ross finished the work. While on furlough, Ross attempted to get the National Bible Society of Scotland interested in the publication of a Korean New Testament, but the society provided only a sum for the creation of the printing type for the text. The actual cost of printing parts of the New Testament was covered through the generosity of the Christian philanthropist Robert Arthington.

Throughout the period of translation, Ross and MacIntyre supervised a team of translators the composition of which varied over the years; we are aware of the names of only a few of them. The work of translation drew basically on the Delegates Version of the Chinese Bible, with subsequent comparison with the Greek and English versions. Four complete translations of the text appear to have been made before the first portions of the New Testament (the Gospels of Luke and John) were printed in 1882. The early translations were in the P'yongan provincial dialect of northern Korea, from where most if not all of the initial translating team had come. When the translation work of the entire New Testament was completed in 1886, Ross attempted to counteract the criticism of provincialisms in the text made by Horace G. Underwood (1859–1916) by employing three or four Koreans from Seoul to make it more in accord with the standard grammar of the metropolitan region.

The importance of the Ross version of the New Testament in the history of the Korean church cannot be overstated. Portions of it circulated in the Korean communities in Manchuria and in the Korean peninsula well before the arrival of foreign missionaries in 1884 and 1885; and it was the only complete translation of the New Testament until 1906, when a translation done by the missionaries in Korea and their Korean colleagues was published. Korean scholar Choi Sung II states categorically that the Protestant church in Korea began with the distribution of the Ross translation of the Bible.

Ross's relation with the foreign missions committee and his home church in the early 1880s was tense. He was criticized by the committee, in the words of its secretary, Hamilton M. MacGill, for not concentrating on “direct mission work.” His work on the translation of the Korean Bible and other scholarly pursuits were not seen to be contributing to his proper missionary activities. Moreover, in 1882 Ross came into such conflict with the committee over the purchase of a certain property and use of funds he had received from students at the United Presbyterian theological hall that he felt impugned and considered resigning. In spite of these disagreements, Ross’s views on the prosecution of missionary work came to be highly regarded. A major instance of the trust placed in Ross’s judgment can be seen in the outcome of a disagreement he had with his mentor Alexander Williamson. Within a few years of his settling in Manchuria, Ross proposed that the center of the denomination’s activities in China should be relocated from Shantung to Manchuria, and this was strongly resisted by Williamson. But, whatever misgivings the home committee may have had, Ross’s view prevailed. By 1882 there were seven missionaries in Manchuria, more than in the Shantung Peninsula.

Ross was busy during his furlough of 1879 to 1881 seeing to the publication of two historical works, which must have been written, if not completed, by early 1879. Because Manchuria was the homeland of various tribal peoples whose empires had greatly influenced the course of both Chinese and Korean history, Ross saw Manchuria as playing a historically pivotal role in the geopolitics of Northeast Asia. It was Ross’s view that what happened in Manchuria would affect not only the course of the political events of his day but also the course of the development of the Christian church in Northeast Asia. As there was no history of Northeast Asia in any European language, Ross wrote a twovolume history of the region, using Chinese-language historical sources. Because ancient Korean kingdoms had dominated significant portions of Manchuria, he began by writing the History of Korea (1879), which focused as much on the Manchurian hinterland as it did on the Korean peninsula. He next turned his attention to the rise of the contemporary Manchu state with The Manchus; or, the Reigning Dynasty of China (1880). (It was for these works as well as for his translation work that he had received reprimands from the missions committee for not being involved in “proper” mission work.) It is clear that the undertaking of these extensive scholarly endeavors, and the views that are expressed in the historical books, represent Ross’s understanding of a comprehensive mission strategy.

Throughout the 1880s Ross’s missionary interests were twofold: the completion of the translation of the Korean New Testament, and the provision of higher theological education for Chinese Christian workers. The latter issue became increasingly important as Ross saw that in order for the Chinese church to sustain indigenous development, there would have to be a regularized program of instruction for church workers. Given the Presbyterian emphasis on the role of elders in the church, a high degree of religious training was as necessary for the lay leadership as it was for the ordained clergy. The first formal program of theological education was instituted in 1887, which led to the ordination of the first Chinese pastors in 1896. To further regularize the formal education of the clergy, a theological program was instituted in 1894, and a theological college was founded in Mukden in 1898, to which Ross was appointed the first principal, a post which he held for many years. This institution initially had two lecturers, including Ross, but was expanded to include four other missionaries. The two-year program covered scriptural studies, biblical theology, systematic theology, and pastoral studies. Much of Ross’s final years as a missionary were taken up with the administration of the theological college, the expansion of the physical plant, and the

Ross believed that what happened in Manchuria would affect the course of the church throughout Northeast Asia.
development of the theological curriculum. However mundane this work must have seemed in comparison with the pioneer and exploratory missionary work in which he had been engaged before, it derived from Ross’s concern for the development of an indigenous clergy. The development of an institutional program of theological education in this period would have been particularly difficult inasmuch as the decade from the mid-1890s to 1905 saw three major conflagrations—the Sino-Japanese War, the Boxer Rebellion, and the Russo-Japanese War—all of which greatly affected Manchuria.

Ross’s later years as a missionary from the mid-1880s onward involved a commitment to ecumenical effort. As far back as 1874, when it seemed as if there would be insuperable problems in working out a way to allot mission duties between the Irish and Scottish missions, it was Ross who suggested that the best way would be to merge the mission into one. This goal was achieved in 1887. The reason for this ecumenism was not just to have a harmonious working relation with a fraternal denomination but to help establish a single Church of Christ in Manchuria. An independent presbytery for Manchuria was established in 1890, and its first act was to state that all future meetings would be conducted in and recorded in Chinese. These developments flowed from Ross’s commitment both to ecumenical activity and to the development of local leadership. This latter point is especially stressed by Choi Sung Il, who states that in his conduct of missionary affairs, Ross left a lot of leeway to the local evangelists because he believed that self-propagation required self-government.

Ross’s final years as a missionary saw a flurry of writing on missiological and historical subjects. In 1897 the Bible Commentary Committee, a nondenominational panmissionary body, set to work writing Chinese commentaries on all the books of the Bible. Ross was asked to write commentaries for the Books of Job and Isaiah in the Old Testament and the Gospel of Matthew, the Epistle of James, and other epistles in the New Testament.

During the last fifteen years of his life, Ross wrote four books, one of which was published posthumously. Two of these books are standard missionary works dealing with issues arising from his efforts in Manchuria. The last two books especially reflect Ross’s role as an original thinker who based his ideas on meticulous and solid research. In Mission Methods in Manchuria (1903), he elaborated on some of the policies he had used when beginning the work in Manchuria. Choi Sung Il summarizes these as being three basic principles: send only the best trained and most competent candidates to the mission field, station missionaries only in principal settlements to provide supervision and support for local evangelists and preachers who have charge of individual churches, and encourage modes of expression and means of evangelism that are modeled on local precedent.16 In The Marvelous Story of the Revival in Manchuria (1908), Ross discussed the revival movement that swept through the churches in Manchuria in 1907 and 1908.

In The Original Religion of China (1909), Ross argued on the basis of his reading of ancient Chinese texts, both historical and Confucian, that the earliest form of religious belief in China was not polytheism but monotheism. In so doing so, he took a view contrary to the ideas of religious evolution stemming from Edward B. Tylor’s Primitive Culture (1871) but bearing striking similarities to a view of primitive monotheism propounded by Andrew Lang in The Making of Religion (1898) and the position elaborated in the twelve-volume study by Wilhelm Schmidt Der Ursprung der Gottesidee (1926–55). In The Origin of the Chinese People (1916), Ross again takes an original point of view, contrary to contemporary received opinion, that the Chinese were a single ethnic group since the earliest historic period.

Failing health required Ross to retire in 1910 to Edinburgh, where he attended the Edinburgh World Missionary Conference. During the five years of his retirement before his death, Ross maintained a home in Edinburgh and a farmhouse, Old Shandwick Farm, in his native village of Balintore. While resident in Edinburgh he was an elder in the Mayfield United Free Church. He died August 6, 1915, and was buried in Newington Cemetery, Edinburgh.17

The Legacy of John Ross

The visible legacy of John Ross is the Protestant church in Manchuria and Korea and the first Korean translation of the New Testament. A secondary legacy consists of the materials he wrote that contributed to the work of a new generation of missionaries. This contribution was acknowledged by the early Methodist missionary to Korea William B. Scranton (1856–1922), who praised Ross for teaching the first missionaries Korean through the Corean Primer, for providing them with a foundation in biblical Korean through the translation of the New Testament, and for giving them the first converts, who became the missionaries’ earliest coworkers.

Ross’s spiritual legacy is more ineffable and difficult to define. Clearly it includes the way he conducted his missionary activities and his attitudes toward the people among whom he lived and worked. Choi Sung Il expressly states that it was Ross’s confidence in the early Chinese and Korean Christians that contributed to the growth of Christianity in Manchuria and Korea.18 For Choi this view is summed up in Ross’s translation of the New Testament as a means for the self-evangelization of Korea, and in his emphasis on self-reliance, self-propagation, and self-government. Choi feels that it was because Ross imbued the early Korean Christians with these principles that the first five Korean congregations were founded by Korean Christians and not by foreign missionaries.19

Ross should also be remembered for his contributions to missiology, the ecumenical movement, and his original ideas about the origin of the Chinese people and Chinese religion. As a deeply committed Christian missionary, he took a lively interest in the religious and cultural affairs of China and obviously felt at home there. There is a story told in his home village of Balintore that one day, after his retirement, he was speaking with some farmers from the village. The farmers looked incomprehendingly at him until his son, who was at his side, nudged him and reminded him that he was speaking in Chinese! The story is an indication of how at ease he had felt in China that even in his twilight years he could not distinguish whether he was speaking in Gaelic, English, or Chinese.20

Notes


2. Most of the information in this section was obtained from personal interviews with older members of the Balintore community, especially with the shopkeeper Hugh Ross (no relative), in 1978.


GLOBALIZATION OF PENTECOSTALISM
edited by Murray W. Dempster, Byron D. Klaus, and Douglas Petersen

This book marks a milestone in the emergence of Pentecostal scholarship. Perhaps for the first time knowledgeable Pentecostal teachers probe the dawning globalisms of the Pentecostalisms that circle the world. With an instructive symmetry readers will find an unparalleled garden of analysis, scholar to be sure but not without a few irrepressible and characteristic breakthroughs of Pentecostal piety. The tradition survives, even in the hands of its serious scholars.

Russell P. Spittler, Provost and Professor of New Testament, Fuller Theological Seminary

MISSION AS TRANSFORMATION
Vinay Samuel & Chris Sugden

Mission as transformation has been a struggle for evangelicals. Our Two-Thirds World colleagues have patiently assisted many of us to the table. This book provides a gathering place for the seminal papers and discussions that are part of this twenty-five year journey.

Bryant Myers, Vice President, World Vision International
6. Ibid.
9. Ibid.
11. Ibid., p. 110.

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Selected Articles by John Ross


Writings About John Ross

The principal written resources for the life and work of John Ross are contained in the archives of the United Presbyterian Church of Scotland and its successor denominations, which are held in the National Library of Scotland in Edinburgh, and in Ross’s reports to the mission board in Edinburgh, which were printed in the United Presbyterian Missionary Record and its successor publications. Certain information about Ross’s early life in this article were obtained from interviews with villagers in Balintore in 1978.

The Legacy of Thomas Chalmers

John Roxborogh

Parish minister, popular preacher, social reformer, lecturer in moral philosophy, economics, and theology: Thomas Chalmers was an outstanding Scottish evangelical spokesman in a golden age of intellectual and social development. He led his generation in giving theological expression to issues of ecclesiastical power, social responsibility, and the worldwide mission of the church. He is also remembered for vivid sayings such as “the Christian good of Scotland,” “the expulsive power of a new affection,” and “show me a people-going minister, and I will show you a church-going people.” His ideas on welfare and community responsibility are still debated. His name is invoked in causes from theories of creation to the prevention of cruelty to animals. A theology chair is named after him at the University of Edinburgh. As subsequent generations have asked questions about science, Calvinism, church and state relations, church union, the ambiguities of social welfare, or the relationship between religious and national identity, they inevitably revisit his ideas.

Chalmers is remembered particularly for his role in the events leading to the formation of the Free Church of Scotland in 1843, though this event should not overshadow his integration of ideals from both parties involved in the so-called Disruption: the socially liberal Evangelicals, and the politically conservative Moderates. He contributed to changing theological attitudes. His preaching, social concern, parish experiments, and interest in Bible societies and missions made him famous in Britain, well known in North America, and respected in France. His holistic philosophy, as well as his enthusiastic, experimental approach to mission, was reproduced and expanded by his students who became missionaries, educators, and church leaders around the world.

Thomas was born on March 17, 1780, the sixth child of John and Elizabeth Chalmers, in Anstruther Easter, a small fishing and coastal trading village on the southeast coast of Fife. His father had inherited a dye-and-thread works and general merchant’s business. Though the business was in decline, Thomas was brought up in a comfortable middle-class home. A precocious child, at the age of 11 he was sent to St. Andrews University with his older brother. In 1803 he became minister in the rural parish of Kilmany, not far from St. Andrews. He quickly became a controversial figure because he seemed to desert his parish during the week to teach mathematics and chemistry at the university.

In the months following his thirtieth birthday he experienced an evangelical conversion, and the change in his conversation and preaching attracted attention. He became an enthusiastic supporter of Bible societies and took an interest, at first guarded, in Baptist and Moravian missions. In 1812 he married Grace Pratt. It was a happy marriage, and their six daughters helped form a lively and hospitable household.

In 1815 Chalmers responded to a call to the Tron Church in central Glasgow. His reputation soared following a series of midweek sermons on astronomy and Christian faith, and in London and Edinburgh he drew crowds wherever he preached. At the same time, he felt distracted by civic responsibilities and was concerned that his middle-class congregation was not touching urban poverty. When the Glasgow City Council erected the new parish of St John’s, he negotiated to take it on as a self-contained area in which he could demonstrate his social theories.

Chalmers believed that civic programs for the poor, supported by tax revenues, generated unrealistic expectations, and it was not difficult to collect evidence in support of his assertion. His answer to middle-class fears of an aggressive, immoral, and religiously underclass was to re-create an idealized rural parish community in defiance of population growth, mobility, and structural unemployment. His ideas were vigorously defended long after it was clear that at best they required a Chalmers to make them work.

With a sense of urgency and a remarkable team, Chalmers energetically set about building schools, meeting with elders, putting social work in the hands of deacons, and introducing information on overseas mission in order to stimulate mission at home. His elders included people like William Collins, who established a publishing company financed with the profits of the Chalmers’s sermons on astronomy.

St. John’s Parish was divided into districts, and Chalmers, with his elders, deacons, and Sunday school teachers, systematically visited homes and set up Sunday schools. Determined to keep relief work among the poor within the funds available from church offerings, the deacons were careful with the aid they distributed. Each situation was investigated, and the possibilities of help from families and friends explored. Charity was held to be a neighborly obligation, before it was a church responsibility (never mind a city council responsibility).

By his church-based approach Chalmers believed he avoided the situation in which poor-relief became an impersonal right, rather than something based on relationships and charity. People who were able to give even small amounts to good causes such as missions and Bible societies were less likely to succumb to poverty through drink and dissipation. His vision was something many wanted to believe, whatever the evidence that it could not cope with the scale of the problems developing around them.

The “St. John’s Experiment” had considerable merits. He did grow a church. He did help people educationally, spiritually, and socially. He did make the mission of the church much more than the activity of his minister, however much people were initially attracted by his fame as a preacher. His development of a casework approach became part of the history of social work. He inspired other churches to face the challenge of poverty out of a process of visitation and social investigation. He was no armchair theorist. At the same time, many of his claims were simply wrong. His notion of the economic independence of the city parish was never realistic. Parish boundaries were meaningless other than for determining areas of responsibility. The situation he negotiated where one parish could retain excess income, yet charge excess need to the city, reduced the pool of funding available to the city as a whole. Visiting deacons and their investigations were more personal than official handouts, but they were still not the relationships of an intimate rural
parish. Despite his best efforts, the Sunday congregation came largely from outside the parish itself.

Chalmers was hardly the last person to be carried away by his own rhetoric or to describe his church in terms of the vision in his heart more than the reality on the ground. In the case of the St. John’s Experiment, at least the theory and the reality are well documented, and the effort is still worthy of careful study.

In 1823 Chalmers suddenly left Glasgow to teach moral philosophy at St. Andrews University. Many were surprised he was deserting a project that still needed his direction. Others were alarmed that he was giving up his ministry to teach secular subjects. The university did not share his evangelical enthusiasms but hoped his popularity would attract students. It did. They came from around Britain in one of the largest intakes the school experienced that century. Students not only were awed by his passionate reconciliation of economics, ethics, philosophy, and theology; they also stimulated one another in Christian vision and commitment to overseas mission. Visitors such as Joshua Marshman and Robert Morrison brought news and missionary experience fresh from India and China. The missionary theories and practices of the Moravians, Baptists, the London Missionary Society, and the Church Missionary Society were dissected and compared. From among Chalmers’s students came the first generation of Church of Scotland missionaries to India, particularly Alexander Duff.

From among his students came the first generation of Church of Scotland missionaries to India, particularly Alexander Duff. Not least of what they took with them was the conviction that all truth was God’s truth and the warm experience that Christian faith could and should be actively related to all of society.

Chalmers’s relationship with his students was deep, lifelong, and rewarding. But his relations with many of his colleagues soon soured. St. Andrews was in a measure corrupt, and in 1828 he accepted the chair of divinity. By this time he had a better relationship with Edinburgh Moderates than with their counterparts in St. Andrews.

As a key leader among the Evangelicals in Edinburgh, he could only further enhance his national role. Quickly that role became political. Chalmers was moderator of the Church of Scotland in 1832 and soon took on the unofficial mantle of leadership of the Evangelical party. Scotland’s cities were expanding, and the church needed to respond. There was also a sense of competition. Independent or voluntary churches, Baptist and Congregationalist, as well as Catholic and Episcopalian, had been growing rapidly. Where these drew on newly prosperous classes, their independence was economic as well as ecclesiastical. Other groups of Presbyterians were also increasing. As an established church, the Church of Scotland expected government support to build and staff new churches. Changing attitudes to Catholics and Nonconformists, and the increase in the franchise from the Reform Act of 1832, however, made it difficult for the government to aid one church and not another. While old assumptions about government responsibilities for the established church had residual credibility, Chalmers was not alone in failing to take adequate account of the new political realities.

Since the beginning of the century the Evangelical party in the Church of Scotland had increased in power, and in 1834 it gained a majority in the General Assembly. In a series of acts it gave greater authority to parishes over their choice of minister and gave votes in church courts to ministers in chapels, most of whom were Evangelical. A few Moderates noted that property rights were involved and doubted whether the General Assembly had the authority it claimed. As disputed cases went to court and worked their way by appeal to the House of Lords, the sequence of decisions portrayed the church as a creature of the state. By defying these decisions, the Evangelical leadership of the church, including Chalmers, was cast in the position of lawbreakers. Both sides claimed high moral ground, and those in the middle found it difficult to mount an alternative. Parliamentary action was needed, but members of Parliament sitting in England had little understanding of Scottish resistance to Erastian assumptions, and less still of how far Scots were capable of going on points of principle.

From 1834 Chalmers realized that the church would have to raise its own funds for church extension. Catching a mood and inspiring others as he had earlier at St. John’s and among his students at St. Andrews, in six years he and his committees financed over 200 hundred new churches. As they did, the clouds of dispute gathered with the courts, the government, and within the church.

In the 1830s the unity of the Church of Scotland came from its historic role as the national church, its commitment to mission at home and overseas, and the need to respond to the threat of independent groups. By 1840 it was a question how much longer these factors could resist the forces of fragmentation. Early in the decade there was an eerie mixture of cooperation and conflict. Evangelicals and Moderates frequently functioned like political parties in mutual opposition. For a time they were surprisingly united in church extension at home and mission overseas, both means of proving their spiritual viability to the independent churches. At the same time, court cases pitted Evangelical and Moderate against each other. The populist base of the Evangelicals, and the tradition of being a government party remembered by the Moderates, meant they were divided over the role of the state. Questions of power and of principle were intertwined, and Evangelicals saw their dreams of an evangelical established church being compromised by Moderate betrayal, court interference, and state indifference. Moderates saw their compact with the state being destroyed by lawless “wildmen.” Propaganda from both sides stereotyped the weaknesses and failures of the other and still provides entertaining if sad and unreliable reading. In this situation Chalmers was brilliant as an organizer and a preacher but unreliable as a negotiator. Dealing with successive governments, he lost the confidence of both Whigs and Tories at Westminster, but he was not wrong in his perceptions that Whigs could no longer help the church, and the Tories would only do so at the price of political interference in church affairs.

Reading of the Convenanters and about the Scottish Reformation, Chalmers gained a heightened sense of the cost and necessity of taking a stand on matters of principle. At the same time his sense of the value of a national church was tempered by his appreciation for what other churches were doing. In the end his commitments to mission and principle were stronger than his commitment to any particular church, national or free. Despite a passionate, if ironic, belief in the benefits of established churches (poor relief was better without civic aid, but spiritual needs
required positive state assistance), Christian mission could survive without the support he believed was their right.

By early 1843, despite a number of attempts, successive governments in England had failed to resolve the Scottish church issue. English incomprehension was almost total, and Scots themselves were divided. Moderates and the government believed a split was unlikely to be serious. For their part Evangelicals thought they had the numbers to enact a voluntary disestablishment. A court decision against the legality of chapel ministers voting in church courts removed this possibility. Despite some conservative political instincts, Chalmers had long shown himself capable of defying authority. On May 18, 1843, he was the leading figure in the Disruption, as over a third of the ministers and people resigned from the Church of Scotland to form the Free Church. If the Disruption was not the only major event of the period, it is appropriately seen as a watershed in Scottish history and in the history of Presbyterianism worldwide.

After the Disruption, Chalmers maintained his belief in the value of a national church empowered to evangelize the whole nation, and he strove to make the Free Church of Scotland that church in all but government support. He welcomed the possibility of cooperation and even incorporation with other like-minded churches. His fund-raising skills, oratory, and personal stature were essential to the remarkable success of the Free Church, but his vision was broader and his theology more flexible than that of its initial leadership. In his retirement he put his energies into the West Port Church in an impoverished area of Edinburgh, as well as keeping up his traveling, speaking, and correspondence. He died at home in Edinburgh, May 30, 1847. His funeral was a national event, drawing thousands from across the divisions of Scottish life.

Chalmers’s Legacy

The legacy of Chalmers is considerable. His papers, the majority of them now in New College Edinburgh, include some 16,000 items, and are a major archival source for British church and social life in his lifetime. The churches built by his fund-raising in the 1830s and by the Free Church from 1843 number in the hundreds. He is remembered in institutions wherever Scots migrants have taken themselves. His name remains big enough to conjure with, even if it is sometimes used in ways that do not do justice to the context and balance of his original concerns.

Chalmers’s popularity transcended divisions that, if he did not cause, he had at least failed to prevent. People who saw through his social analysis acknowledged him as the greatest preacher of his time. His efforts were often admired when his conclusions were not followed. Then and now, people have not argued about whether he was a significant person but whether he made the contribution they would have liked him to have made. Some see him as the evil genius who failed to save the church from the tragedy of the Disruption. For many he is the hero who delivered from systematic theology. (He also prayed to be delivered from mathematics, a unique temptation in the history of Scottish spirituality, unless it is shared by Pascal!) It was obvious to his colleagues and students that his passions were more about the content of theology than about the application of what he believed the Christian message to be. Someone who told students never to preach Calvinism (by which he meant predestination) was not in the process of rethinking its finer points. What marked him out was his social concern and his leadership.

Yet there was not a lot wrong with his well-documented theological reading, nor with his mind, though his mind was often on other things. When an American visitor began discussing Calvin, Chalmers could not lay his hands on a copy of the Institutes, neither are they listed in the catalog of his library. Chalmers left others to keep up with what was happening to theology in Germany. He had devoured philosophy in his youth, and there was nothing lightweight about his study. Yet it is perhaps not surprising that James McCosh’s sympathetic analysis saw him reconciling the theology and philosophy of Scotland but did not see him contributing much to either. How one judges this issue may depend on whether one thinks that Chalmers solved the difficulties, or just regarded them as of lesser importance. Perhaps he read the needs of his times fairly well.

There is more than a little irony in the situation. The theological history of nineteenth-century Scotland is one in which the dominant theme appears to be the weakening of traditional Calvinism, along with the study of people judged to be heretics in their own time, if harbingers of future trends. This is not a complement that is extended to Chalmers. In the categories of traditional theology, people on the fringe such as Erskine of Linlathen, Edward Irving, and John McLeod Campbell are seen to be the representatives of the future. All these, helped amazingly by D. L. Moody, are noted for their contribution to the breakdown of the old Calvinism. This development can be seen in the rise of liberal idealism, in the heresy trial of William Robertson Smith, and in the passing of the Declaratory Acts, which distanced churches from narrower interpretations of the Westminster Confession. Whatever Evangelicals said about Moderates, the heretics of the later part of the century are from the Free Church, not the Church of Scotland. The heretics of the
first half of the century also counted themselves Evangelicals, and they all had close associations with Chalmers. Irving had been Chalmers’s assistant at St. John’s, Chalmers corresponded with Campbell and was a good friend of Erskine. A more liberal attitude toward the confession is clear enough in Chalmers’s writing, teaching, and preaching.

Perhaps because it was known that his heart concerns lay elsewhere and his sympathies lay in dangerous directions, this theological legacy has been left out of the story. It would be too much for the Free Church to admit that their hero might be soft on Calvinism. Whether explicable or not, the omission is not justified by the evidence of what Chalmers actually did to shape Christian faith and action in his lifetime. His beliefs and values proved more enduring than those both more and less conservative, and in the large-heartedness of his spirit to which many referred, he contributed to a change of theological temper. His immediate successor as professor of divinity in the Free Church was of the old school, but after him came Robert Rainy. Rainy’s actions in dealing with William Robertson Smith in 1880 and in supporting the Declaratory Act of 1892 indicate someone whose theological attitudes pointed to the future, for good or ill. That they have very traceable roots in Chalmers’s teaching and example is not often stated.

It is important for the evangelical tradition that it can own Chalmers as a model of what a key stream of that tradition is about. He believed in a free Gospel. He believed in education. He was impatient of creeds and tolerant of Catholics. He was excited by science. His sense of the foundational importance of the Bible included an awareness that its inspiration related “not to the thing recorded, but the truth of it.” Church order was something for people to decide. He saw theology as historically conditioned. He thought in terms of general principles as well as concrete details. He had an eye for the important questions of his time. He was impatient of creeds and tolerant of Catholics. He was influenced by Methodists and Moravians and was a friend of Anglicans, agnostics, Baptists, the first British charismatics, Quakers, a good number of Moderates, and not a few judged to be heretics. If Scots and others find they cannot study the nineteenth century and the mission of the church without studying Chalmers, it is not a bad situation to be in.

Selected Bibliography

Works by Thomas Chalmers

Chalmers Papers, New College Library, University of Edinburgh.


Works About Thomas Chalmers


Reader’s Response

To the Editor:

It is unfortunate that Gordon Kaufman’s God-Mystery-Diversity: Christian Theology in a Pluralistic World should be so summarily dismissed in Donald G. Bloesch’s review (April 1999). Kaufman deserves more than the glib charge that “for faith in Jesus Christ he substitutes faith in interreligious dialogue.” Kaufman does indeed champion such dialogue, with “unrestricted openness” on fundamental questions. And he does recommend that all positions be considered on “equal terms.” Does Bloesch think meaningful interreligious dialogue is possible on unequal terms?

The reviewer’s last word on the book is that it shows “the bankruptcy of a liberalism that ineluctably leads into postmodernism, thus subverting the claims of historic Christian faith.” One hopes that so categorical a rejection contains its own unintentional clues to the reader that perhaps the book deserves serious attention.

Rudy Nelson
Associate Professor Emeritus, English and Religious Studies
University at Albany
Albany, New York

Reviewer’s Reply:

In real dialogue we do not set aside our presuppositions but bring them to the table. I grant that our interlocutors should have an equal voice, but surely, as Christians, we cannot regard other religions as equally valid, since we believe that Jesus Christ is the only way to salvation. We can possibly find points of convergence in the areas of personal and social morality, but the doctrine of the incarnation contradicts the understanding of God in all nonChristian religions. While nonChristians are persons made in God’s image and potential brothers and sisters in Christ, we cannot surrender the Christian claim that religious allegiance apart from Christ rests on a delusion. Our mission is not simply to learn but also to witness, yet in a spirit of humility and love, knowing that our perception of the truth is itself a gift of grace to undeserving sinners.

Donald G. Bloesch
Emeritus Professor of Theology
University of Dubuque Theological Seminary
Dubuque, Iowa
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Jesus has been, and remains, the heart of the Christian mission, for he is the core content of the Christian message and its bearers' prototype. Those committed to Christology and Jesus' own view of his mission.

Christian missions have a stake in deJonge's content of the Christian message and its fruit of a lifetime's careful, judicious study of the New Testament in its historical setting. As in his Christology in Context: The Earliest Christian Responses to Jesus (1988) and Jesus, the Servant Messiah (1991), here too he refuses to contrast sharply early Christology with Jesus himself, as is frequently done today. Instead, this recently retired professor at Leiden, Netherlands, begins with three early interpretations of Jesus' death (God's rejected envoy, God's suffering righteous servant, and his death for others) and works back to Jesus' own self-interpretation, carefully guiding the reader through the relevant texts, including those from early Judaism. He concludes that Jesus "was convinced of the speedy and complete realization of God's kingdom and of his own vindication after his death," though "in what terms he expressed this, we do not know for certain" (p. 30; also p. 112). Neither Jesus nor the early Christians saw him as an envoy from God but as the final, definitive messenger of God to Israel. In light of the resurrection, the early believers "realized that his personal vindication and the complete break-through of the kingdom were two separate events, though... intrinsically connected." Ever since, Christians have lived in an "interim" between Jesus' resurrection and his parousia (p. 14), developing the various Christologies implied in Jesus' self-interpretation and taking to the world the news of what God has done, and still does, through him. Though the book generally bypasses Jesus' mission as expressed in his deeds, it will repay any thoughtful reader.

—Leander E. Keck

Leander E. Keck is Winkley Professor of Biblical Theology, Emeritus, at Yale Divinity School, where he also served as dean from 1979 to 1989.


"I have lost the simple faith," Frank Rawlinson, long-term editor of the Chinese Recorder, admitted to his wife in 1927 (p. 86). And indeed he had, along with hundreds, perhaps thousands, of other American Protestant missionaries in China in the early twentieth century. Lian Xi tells their story, showing how their priorities changed from predominantly evangelical to humanitarian ones.

This thoroughly researched, concisely written monograph is divided into two parts. In the first Xi examines the theological evolution of three influential figures: physician Edward Hicks Hume, editor Frank Joseph Rawlinson, and educator Pearl Buck. Each reacted against his or her conservative upbringing for different reasons, and each embraced modernist principles for different reasons too. But ultimately all reached the same conclusion: that the old absolutist distinctions between civilization and barbarism were no longer intellectually credible or morally tenable. In the second part of the book Xi widens the focus, discussing the dismantling of sectarian distinctives, the impact of Chinese nationalism on Western theological presumptions, the forging of a union of world religions, and, most intriguingly, the "reflex influence" (p. 207) of liberal missionary ideas on the culture back home. Although parts of this story have been told before (notably by William R. Hutchison), Xi adds depth and texture. We learn, for example, of the insistent role of money, and that the main driving force behind these changes was not theological revisionism but the cumulative effect of living for many years among a people who proved to be kind, tolerant, serene, and unafflicted by Western notions of sin and guilt. Xi overdraws the contrast between old-style evangelicals and new-style liberals—the former were more, and the latter less, appreciative of Chinese culture than he allows. Nonetheless he makes it clear that missionaries, like thoughtful Christians everywhere, had to make their peace treaties with the modern world one by one, each in their own way.

—Grant Wacker

Grant Wacker, Associate Professor of American Religious History, Duke University, is a coeditor of Church History: Studies in Christianity and Culture, with particular interests in the history of evangelicalism and the missionary experience.


This book finds a way between philosophical analysis of the North American postmodern context and practical how-to's of doing evangelism. Craig Van Gelder's training in urban studies and work in congregational missions shows clearly in his development of the volume from conferences sponsored by the Gospel and Our Culture Network in 1996.

The essays make a central argument: the contemporary context requires the church to engage in a critical and constructive theology that will result in a new focus for ministry and a vision congruent with current realities. Major cultural shifts have taken the church from the centers of power and influence to the margins. The church no longer wields authority on questions of meaning and identity; it no longer forms the locus of social life or holds the ear of the populace on political issues. Rather than lament the loss of centrality, the authors see an opportunity for rethinking the Gospel, ministry, and the theology of the church itself.

Revisioning North America as a mission context leads to an emphasis on
engaged listening and empathy, a missionary approach used in other cultural contexts. Discovering difference—hearing voices of plurality, poverty, and pain—spawns new ways of responding to the Gospel. Defensiveness yields to compassion. Congregations receive as well give. New ministries are born in contexts. Discovering difference—hearing voices of plurality, poverty, and pain—outworn attitudes. Rethinking disciple-ship as radical love (p. 138) in a society engaged listening and empathy, a risk is first taken up by the writers, who model for us ways to begin revising theological constructs in the light of the “manifold nature of experience” (p. 144) as not easy tasks. Other voices need to be heard—and will be—as this book enables educators, pastors, and congregations to rediscover the Gospel in our changing world and respond with confident witness.

—Frances S. Adeney

Frances S. Adeney is Associate Professor of Evangelism and Mission at Louisville (Ky.) Presbyterian Theological Seminary. She was the Brooks Professor of Religion at the University of Southern California (1997–99) and also served as a Presbyterian mission coworker in Indonesia to help develop a graduate program in religion and society at Satya Wacana Christian University in Indonesia (1991–96). Her recent publications include contributions to Ethics and World Religions: Cross-Cultural Case Studies (Orbis Books, 1999).


This study by Werner Raupp from Tübingen is the first historico-critical biography of Christian Gottlob Barth (1799–1862), who is one of the great figures of German ecclesiastical historiography. Based on material from 80 archives around the world (pp. 177–197), this study characterizes Barth as an international figure of the “antimodern” revivalist movement of the nineteenth century and as a “tireless manager of the Kingdom of God” (p. 152).

Born and educated during the pietistic age in Württemberg, Barth influenced German-Protestant piety in various ways: as author for the young and general public, lyrical poet and preacher, as well as one of the first to promote home missions and as the founder in 1833 of the “Calwer Verlag” (Calwer Publishing House), which still exists.

As a journalist, Barth promoted overseas missions by helping to establish a classification of mission journalism. Thus, he was initiator of the widely circulated Calwer Missionsblatt (1828), also of the first mission bulletin for children (1842), and the first scholarly missionary periodical Beleuchtungen der Missions-Sache (1842). His greatest success was the little book Dr. Barth’s Bible Stories, that had 483 editions and 87 translations; it was one of the most widely circulated books in the nineteenth century. Barth supported the Basel Mission and eventually became the executive head of this influential missionary society (pp. 145–153).

Barth’s activities and way of thinking were influenced by the neopietist movement and the doctrine of the eschatological history of salvation from Johann Albrecht Bengel (1687–1752) and Friedrich Christoph Oetinger (1702–1782), the leaders of pietism in Württemberg.

—Thomas Habighorst

Thomas Habighorst lectures at the adult education center in Bielefeld, Germany.
This history of Protestantism in the province of Tucumán, in Northern Argentina, was developed from material originally prepared for a consultation in the University of Tucumán. The author has been a professor in the same university and has published extensively about the history of Protestant missions in Latin America. Though the first Protestant missionaries arrived in Tucumán in 1898, the author has been able to trace back Protestant presence back to the colonial period after the Spanish occupation in 1543. The story is well researched and organized in two parts with a total of fifteen chapters and eight appendixes. Powell has delved into both primary and secondary sources and provides a fluid narrative enlivened here and there by valuable anecdotes.

Powell tells this story as a participant-observer. He was born in Argentina of missionary parents from Canada. Arriving in Argentina in 1921 as independents, they later worked with the Plymouth Brethren. This history allows Powell to write as an insider but also to keep a critical distance from his object of study. At several points, especially commenting on missionary methods, Powell offers critical remarks, but he avoids unnecessary criticism even when he deals with issues of confrontation between the predominant Roman Catholic Church and the struggling Protestant minority. The book is written for the general public, and footnotes as well as appendixes and a glossary provide information for the non-Protestant reader.

In his prologue to this book, Arnoldo Canclini, a member of the Argentinean Academy of History, expresses his hope that historians in other parts of Argentina will follow the example of responsible and serious research provided by this book.

—Samuel Escobar

Samuel Escobar is Thorneby B. Wood Professor of Missiology at Eastern Baptist Theological Seminary in Pennsylvania and was a missionary in Argentina from 1960 to 1978.

Essentials of Spiritual Warfare: Equipped to Win the Battle.


Three Crucial Questions About Spiritual Warfare.


Scott Moreau is an associate professor of missions and intercultural studies at Wheaton Graduate School. His book, designed for the average churchgoer or new Christian, could alternatively be titled, "Steps to Victorious Christian Living," since its focus is on the believer's struggle.
to successfully combat Satan’s attempts to gain a spiritual foothold in his or her life (Eph. 4:27).

Moreau sets forth his understanding of spiritual warfare within a three-part framework. First, the believer is to engage the truth, that is, allow the truths of Scripture regarding God’s character and purposes, the victory of Christ on the cross, the provision of the Spirit, our new position in Christ, and the menacing reality of Satan to become life-governing values. Second, spiritual-warfare disciplines such as prayer, confession, praise, worship, and dedication of resources enable the child of God to “strip off” the old sinful habits and “put on” the new clothes of godliness. Third, the believer should exercise his or her authority in Christ to “bind” Satan, that is, to limit, constrain, and even stop his work in the lives of others. Only cursory attention is given to the distinctive issues swirling around the modern spiritual-warfare movement such as binding territorial spirits and the efficacy of identification repentance.

In each section Moreau aims for application on four distinct but interrelated levels or “fronts”: the personal, the interpersonal, that of the local church, and the systemic (or cultural).

Clinton Arnold, associate professor of New Testament at Talbot Theological Seminary, seeks to provide thorough if not definitive answers to three “crucial questions” about spiritual warfare. First, What is spiritual warfare? Arnold appeals for a balanced approach to understanding evil that takes into account the flesh, the world, and the devil as a “three-stranded rope.” One sound implication of this perspective is to recognize the validity of deliverance ministry but only in conjunction with sound therapy and a solid discipleship follow-up.

The second question is more controversial: Can a Christian be demon possessed? Evangelicals are split on this issue, a divergence explained in part by confusion over the word “possession,” which seems to denote ownership as well as control. While Arnold denies that the child of God can ever be owned or claimed by Satan, he does believe that demons can both spatially inhabit the believer’s body and control his or her actions. This reviewer does not believe that Arnold makes a convincing case for demons’ spatial occupation of Christians (pp. 88-97) but concurs that demons can exert a significant amount of influence over believers when they yield to anger, lust, pride, and other ungodly impulses. As a result, Arnold does see a legitimate role for deliverance ministry, that is, the exorcism of demons not only from unbelievers but also from demonized believers. Nevertheless, he identifies a number of excesses characteristic of contemporary deliverance ministry that must be avoided (pp. 129-38).

The third question is, Are we called to engage territorial spirits? Here Arnold provides the finest discussion in print of what has come to be termed “strategic level spiritual warfare” (SLSW). After a close look at the major related biblical texts and evidence from church history, Arnold concludes that the believer has no calling to directly engage territorial spirits (whose existence he recognizes), that is, discerning, naming, or tearing down territorial strongholds. Yet this chapter does not take primarily a demolition approach to SLSW. Arnold endorses the spiritual-mapping approach of George Otis, which seeks to develop a spiritual profile of a city or area in order to aid culture-specific evangelization and discipleship. Furthermore, the modern activity known as identification repentance is viewed as positive if focused on representative corporate confession of

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October 1999

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Territorial Spirits and World Evangelization: A Biblical, Historical, and Missiological Critique of Strategic-Level Spiritual Warfare.


Chuck Lowe’s new volume represents the most thorough and incisive critique to date of “Strategic-Level Spiritual Warfare” (SLSW), especially as advocated by C. Peter Wagner of Fuller Theological Seminary. Lowe comes to the topic as a New Testament scholar (he completed a Th.D. under Leon Morris) and as a missionary (he has served with OMF for fifteen years in Singapore).

Lowe would agree with Wagner on many points—such as a belief that demons do all they can to oppose the mission of the church and the view that evangelicals have not taken spiritual warfare seriously enough. But Lowe has serious complaints about the theory and practice of SLSW.

First, Lowe takes exception to the notion of “territorial” spirits. On the basis of the biblical evidence and a study of animistic cultures, he contends that spirits are not geographically specific. He also argues that the practices of discerning territorial assignments, endeavoring to find the names of spirits, and aggressively going on the offense against them is misguided and not supported by Scripture. He is concerned that SLSW draws far too much on beliefs about the spiritual realm borrowed from animistic religions.

I find the essence of Lowe’s analysis quite sound and hope that practitioners of SLSW give serious attention to what Lowe has to say. But is Lowe correct in asserting that Christians are not called to go on the offensive against Satan? Is not the very act of evangelizing an aggressive maneuver against the domain of darkness and represents “a plundering of the strong man’s house” (see Mark 3:27)? Also, what is the role of the Holy Spirit in imparting guidance on how the church should pray and engage in mission? Lowe never addresses this topic, yet it is central to the SLSW approach.

—Clinton E. Arnold

Clinton E. Arnold is Professor of New Testament and Director of the Th.M. program at Talbot School of Theology, La Mirada, California.
Prophetic Pentecostalism in Chile: A Case Study on Religion and Development Policy.


Frans H. Kamsteeg, lecturer in the Department of Culture, Organization, and Management, Free University, Amsterdam, spent a year in the Santiago metropolitan region studying Misión Iglesia Pentecostal. In 1952 this church broke away from the Pentecostal Methodist Church, the major expression of Chilean Pentecostalism. It became moderately ecumenical, political, and prophetic.

In this study for his doctoral dissertation Kamsteeg traces the vicissitudes of the church in the attempts of its leaders to turn the congregants from being what he terms apolitical and non-ecumenical toward "theology, ecumenism, and social action" (p. 101). The church increased from 120 members in 1952 to about 2,000 in the early 1990s. But Kamsteeg notes a steady decline of the church in numbers and support for activism among many members.

The author is unusually clear in his writing style and in the methods and problems, strengths and weaknesses, of his study. In his anthropological narrative he furnishes a vivid picture of leader-led attempts at church reform, especially during the Pinochet era (1973–90) and the transition to democracy in the immediate post-Pinochet period. The main value of the work lies in being a development agency study. Kamsteeg delineates well the relations between an indigenous church, its affiliated aid organization, and an international aid group. The changes in politics, funding philosophies, and respective aims of donors and recipients show the risks and possible rewards of such relationships.

But the study is atypical of Chilean Pentecostalism, severely limited in length of study, and not well integrated with research on Latin American Pentecostalism since 1995. Furthermore, some analytic categories are debatable. For example, is there a unitary Pentecostal "habitus" (p. 31ff.)? Rowan Ireland's excellent work in Brazil shows clearly distinct types of internal orientations ("conversions" in Ireland's terms), not hinted at by Kamsteeg.

The study would have benefited by a more systematic description of present-day Chilean Pentecostalism, which is experiencing the problems of aging churches. Kamsteeg mentions the important study of the Institute for Public Studies that shows that less than half of Protestants (most of them Pentecostals) do not attend church every Sunday. But the institute's study also leads one to major issues of the larger Chilean Pentecostal churches, including the drifting away of young people and middle-class professionals from churches and cleavages between pastors and congregations in social-class outlooks and in moral teaching and observance. Some of the problems of Kamsteeg's prophetic Pentecostal church are far from unique.

—Edward L. Cleary, O.P.

Edward L. Cleary, O.P., is Professor of Political Science and Director, Latin American Studies Program, at Providence College, Providence, Rhode Island. He was a missionary in Bolivia for eight years until 1971.


The sixteenth and the seventeenth centuries have been called the Jesuit epoch of Asian mission history. Great personalities such as Francis and Jerome Xavier, Matteo Ricci, and Roberto de Nobili come to mind. Unfortunately, Alexandre de Rhodes, S.J. (1593–1660), one of the greatest missionaries in Vietnam and the author of the first theological work in Vietnamese, is usually missing from the list. Thanks to Peter C. Phan, professor of religion and culture at the Catholic University of America, Washington, D.C., Alexandre de Rhodes has finally received his rightful place among his conferees.

Phan’s book has two parts. The first half provides an introduction to the situation of Vietnam, to the life of Rhodes, to his missionary strategies, to the history, structure, and method of catechisms, and to the theological message of his own catechism, which was a model of inculturation at the time. This part concludes with an excellent bibliography. Part 2 is an English translation of the Latin and Vietnamese texts of de Rhodes’s Cathechism (pp. 211–315).

De Rhodes served during two periods in Vietnam: from 1624 to 1630, and from 1640 to 1645; each period ended with his being expelled. He organized a kind of religious institute of catechists, which he had in view in writing his great work.

As far as inculturation is concerned, Ricci’s influence on de Rhodes is evident, as seen, for example, in de Rhodes’s approach to the meaning of heaven and the cult of ancestors. But de Rhodes distinguishes himself from Ricci by writing explicitly and at length about the passion and death of Jesus. As Phan explains, inculturation according to de Rhodes uplifts and improves native culture one-sidedly. There is no mutual challenge, correction, or critique, as modern theologians of inculturation teach. Notwithstanding this difference, the work of de Rhodes was in his days remarkable, and he was a pioneer in catechesis. One has to be very grateful to Phan for this great contribution to the history of Vietnam and to the history of catechetics.

—I r nulf Camps, O.F.M.

The Sound of the Harvest: Music’s Mission in Church and Culture.


In today’s “global village” there is a tremendous ferment in music, not least of which occurs in the church. Nathan Corbitt, who worked for more than a decade in Africa and who presently serves as professor of communications and music at Eastern College, near Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, has ably captured representative sounds of the worldwide church through stories and illustrations and has provided creative ways of thinking about music.
in Bolivia, a legacy sometimes overlooked in the history of Christian missions. The story swirls around the visionary life and ministry of the Canadian pioneer, Archibald Reekie, who arrived a century ago in Oruro, Bolivia, to preach the Gospel and plant churches. Although impervious to earlier attempts at mass evangelism, Oruro, because of certain liberal, anticlerical movements, was a city ready for political and social change. Reekie, although strongly evangelical, eschewed confrontational evangelism and wisely employed Gospel-centered education and response to felt needs as means toward the establishment of churches.

The rest of the story relates the gradual emergence of national churches and schools that has resulted in a strong, indigenous Baptist Union, which has incorporated other Baptist initiatives from Brazil and the United States. It also affirms the socially aware and patient mission philosophy of the Canadian board as it struggled with the perennial questions of how to balance education and evangelism and when to initiate missionary devolution.

The story is not without its vicissitudes. Martyrdom suddenly becomes a part in the exciting chapter on

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Lila Balisky is an instructor in the area of worship and music at the Evangelical Theological College in Addis Ababa. She and her husband, Paul, have served with SIM in Ethiopia since 1967.

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Bridging Cultures and Hemispheres: The Legacy of Archibald Reekie and Canadian Baptists in Bolivia.


William Brackney, principal of McMaster Divinity College, Ontario, Canada, and a team of Canadian and South American Baptist missiologists have published a brief, well-documented book that chronicles the saga of Baptist beginnings in Bolivia, a legacy sometimes overlooked in the history of Christian missions. The story swirls around the visionary life and ministry of the Canadian pioneer, Archibald Reekie, who arrived a century ago in Oruro, Bolivia, to preach the Gospel and plant churches. Although impervious to earlier attempts at mass evangelism, Oruro, because of certain liberal, anticlerical movements, was a city ready for political and social change. Reekie, although strongly evangelical, eschewed confrontational evangelism and wisely employed Gospel-centered education and response to felt needs as means toward the establishment of churches.

The rest of the story relates the gradual emergence of national churches and schools that has resulted in a strong, indigenous Baptist Union, which has incorporated other Baptist initiatives from Brazil and the United States. It also affirms the socially aware and patient mission philosophy of the Canadian board as it struggled with the perennial questions of how to balance education and evangelism and when to initiate missionary devolution.

The story is not without its vicissitudes. Martyrdom suddenly becomes a part in the exciting chapter on
the tragedy of Merk'Amaya, written by a Bolivian pastor who was a young eyewitness. Emancipation becomes a part in the fascinating story of the liberation of the serfs and the agrarian reform in Huatajata. The Canadian Baptists anticipated and greatly influenced the abolition of serfdom in Bolivia through the Peniel Hall experience. Overall, Bolivian and Canadian Baptists have greatly influenced the civil rights movement in Bolivia, as attested in this story.

In short, this book is a wonderful case study for a missionary practitioner. Reekie's philosophy of mission, fostered at the missions-minded McMaster University in Canada, was surprisingly contextual for that early date. In fact, Samuel Escobar, the noted Peruvian missiologist, in a closing chapter, gives it high missiological marks. The Bolivian Baptist development, especially in this written account, "reeks" with cross-cultural wisdom and daring.

It is certainly worth a thoughtful read for any missionary or missiologist.

—Justice C. Anderson

Justice C. Anderson is Professor of Missions, Emeritus, at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, Fort Worth, Texas. He served as a Southern Baptist missionary professor in Argentina, 1957–74.


For a number of years, William Pickard has been concerned with the development of religious pluralism in America. His background as a missionary and professor of religion and philosophy gives him a unique perspective on the issues with which he grapples in this book.

The title of this volume, Offer Them Christ, comes from John Wesley's counsel to Francis Asbury as the latter sailed for America in 1771. It also carries the implications of mission that is central to the theme of the book—Jesus Christ. The author states in his preface that "increasingly I began to feel that not to be a missionary, whether in my home state of Alabama or in some faraway country overseas, was not to be a part of the church" (p. xii). After some years of service in a pluralistic world, he became increasingly convinced of the centrality of Christ. But he also concludes that "we certainly must do away with the arrogance that has inhered in both the so-called 'exclusive' and 'inclusive' positions in missiology that have plagued Christians across the years" (p. xiii).

The author centers his views in a personal Christ who is risen and living today. He states, "I make no claim for Christianity. It is relative to all other religions...my only absolute is Jesus Christ, the Word (God) become flesh" (p. 17). At the same time, he argues effectively that a Christian can still be open to dialogue with respect and honor for the other person.

In chapters 1–3, the focus is Christology. Chapter 4 amplifies Jesus as Savior as the locus of all Christian communication. Chapter 6 deals in greater detail with what constitutes the Christian world mission in this age of religious pluralism. Here again the centrality of a personal Christ is to be "introduced" in
our own testimony that we "have met him, know him, love him, and have experienced his love, and know he can stand on his own" (p. 113).

In the final chapter, the life and work of Dr. E. Stanley Jones is used as a model of the Christian approach in a pluralistic world. His method of evangelism is given in a broad outline summarized by the title of this book.

The book offers hope and a non-threatening methodology for presenting Christ in an increasingly pluralistic world. I recommend it highly.

—Norman E. Allison

Norman E. Allison is Director of the School of World Missions at Toccoa Falls College, Toccoa Falls, Georgia. He served as a missionary with the Christian & Missionary Alliance in the Arab Middle East for ten years.


African indigenous churches represent a compelling African response to Christianity. The development of these churches is a ringing affirmation of the selfhood of the church within the African continent.

African Initiatives in Christianity seeks to tell the story of these churches through the testimonies of the dramatic personae in this particular ecclesiastical tradition. In a radical departure from the all too common polemics and pontifications, this work shows a real appreciation of the genius, diversity, and creativity of these churches. Even a cursory reading of this book will reveal that African indigenous churches have provided a suitable ecclesiastical setting where Africans can feel at home and also "enjoy" Christianity. They are legitimate responses to a Christianity that so often gives the appearance of a moribund antiquarianism, bereft of people's feeling, spirit, spontaneity, and affections.

This book opens with a very compelling foreword by Walter Hollenweger, urging scholars to move beyond the common vituperations against these churches and investigate what these churches can contribute to the viability and integrity of the ecumenical movement. The seven chapters of the book provide a lucid examination of the complexities and challenges of African indigenous churches.

The essential fact that runs through this text like a crimson thread is that these churches have a significant contribution to make to the ecumenical movement. They cannot be ignored or taken for granted. It is also a fact that their less conceptual forms of communication such as dance, hand clapping, visions, dreams, prophecy, and other participatory patterns are very appealing to Africans.

This is an important book. It carefully spells out the promise and problems of these churches. It also has a credible insider perspective, which is a sine qua non to a sensitive African church historiography.

—Akintunde E. Akinade

Akintunde E. Akinade, from Nigeria, received his Ph.D. in ecumenical studies at Union Theological Seminary in New York and teaches world religions at High Point University, High Point, North Carolina.

Now the very best of the IBMR "Mission Legacies" are gathered in this attractive, durable hardback from Orbis Books. Included are the founders and most prominent leaders of the Christian missionary movement from the late 18th century to the present: John R. Mott, Pope Pius XI, Ruth Rouse, William Carey, Francis X. Ford, Roland Allen, Hendrik Kraemer, StephenNeill, E. Stanley Jones, Joseph Schmidlin, Wilhelm Schmidt, Alan R. Tippett, Max Warren, Helen Barnett Montgomery, Lucy Waterbury Peabody, John Philip, David Livingstone, Charles Simeon, and many more. Authors of these biographical sketches are a veritable "who's who" of church historians, including Dana Robert, John C. Bennett, Karl Müller, SVD, Lesslie Newbiggin, A. Christopher Smith, Eric J. Sharpe, and Jean-Paul Wiest. With biographical and bibliographic information available nowhere else, Mission Legacies belongs in every theological library and on the bookshelf of every student of World Christianity and mission.
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