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PREFACE

← In this thesis, the author describes and evaluates the missionary evangelism methodology practiced by the Latin America Mission and known as Evangelism in Depth. The Latin America Mission is an interdenominational missionary society with headquarters in San Jose, Costa Rica and with a ministry that reaches into all of Latin America.

← The description of Evangelism in Depth is detailed, with particular stress placed on its field application in the several Latin American countries where it has been used, namely, Nicaragua, Costa Rica, Guatemala, Honduras, Venezuela, Bolivia, and Dominican Republic. However, the author also gives due consideration to the theory of the program, and to the background that led to its adoption by the Latin America Mission.

← The evaluation measures the worth of Evangelism in Depth by the Word of God especially, but also in the light of modern Latin American history and experience. Also, before drawing his conclusions, the author includes a survey of other opinions about the program. He has a special concern to understand the significance of the program for Lutheran evangelism in Latin America.

← Since for some time the author has been active in missionary work in Latin America, the subject of evangelism in that area is of personal concern. By means of this study, he seeks to learn how his own evangelism ministry and that of his Lutheran colleagues may be more effective.

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~~CHAPTER I~~

THE BACKGROUND OF THE PROGRAM

1.1 ^{May, Canada} ← The Latin America Mission

← A brief acquaintance with the Latin America Mission aids in understanding its Evangelism in Depth program. This missionary society was founded by a Scotch Presbyterian with the name of Harry Strachan. For eighteen years he and his Irish Anglican wife named Susan had served as missionaries in Argentina under the Evangelical Union of South America, a well-known interdenominational mission society with its headquarters in England. Then, the Strachans believed that God was leading them to resign from their mission in order to found another interdenominational organization with the purpose of performing "a continent-wide evangelistic ministry." Accordingly, in the year 1921, they established The Latin America Evangelization Campaign, the original name of the Latin America Mission. Others joined the Strachans, and together they sponsored union evangelistic campaigns throughout the South. They also desired to remain free of ties to any particular Latin American church body in order that the new mission might be a service organization to the Church at large. Robert Hall Glover and J. Herbert Kana, in their distinguished history of missions, evaluate the new missionary organization as follows:

STRACHAN

- 1(1) Mr. Strachan and his colleagues were not interested in beginning a new mission. They were burdened for the evangelization of Latin

(A Vision Becomes Flesh, Latin America Evangelist (March-April, 1961), p. 5.)

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quotation mark not,
always ever

America and were content to allow existing missions to absorb their converts. Such largehearted men are rare even in missionary circles. Consequently there is hardly a mission of any size in Latin America which does not count among its members converts won in the many campaigns conducted by the Latin America Mission.² (- - -)

← The objectives of large-scale evangelistic campaigns throughout the continent and of service to the Church at large have characterized the Latin America Mission until the present time. In addition, other characteristics have been added, such as, the policy of "accepting Latin Americans in partnership as members and officers of the mission."³ (- - - -) Other groups had hired nationals as, say, evangelists, but it was quite another thing to accept them into positions of equal status and function along with the missionaries. The present general director of the mission clarified the motive behind this policy when he wrote:

1(2) Neither is He honored by the inability of missionaries and nationals in many parts of the world to work together amicably in a demonstration of that unity which God gives to those who stand together on the level ground at the foot of the Cross. We shall not try to place the blame for the fact that 'Missionary, go home!' signs are raised not only by godless governments, but also by national believers. But we declare our conviction that any bitterness on one side or the other cannot be the will of God.⁴ (- - - - -)

← Closely related to this point is the policy concerning the relation of the mission to the national churches that eventually developed under the ministry of the Latin America Mission. Respect and confidence have characterized this relationship, as may be seen in the following statement by a mission spokesman:¹⁽³⁾ "It is our conviction that the Lord is not honored by the paternalism which has sometimes characterized mis-

²Robert Hall Glover, The Progress of World-Wide Missions, revised and enlarged by J. Herbert Kane (New York: Harper & Brothers, Publishers, 1960), p. 419.)

³"A Vision Becomes Flesh," Latin America Evangelist, p. 5.)

⁴Horace L. Fenton, Jr., "Here We Stand," Latin America Evangelist, (September-October, 1965), pp. 6-7.)

sionary work in the past, with missionaries dominating and directing the affairs of the local churches, and with an implicit doctrine of white supremacy and of North American superiority pervading the relations of missionaries and the national Christians."⁵ (

← Still another feature that has become peculiar to this mission is expressed as follows: "It is progressive in policy, using all effective means consistent with Biblical norms to accomplish its task."⁶ (This feature becomes evident when one surveys the various activities that have been undertaken by the Latin America Mission. The Church at large has been served not only through union evangelistic campaigns, but also through the Seminario Biblico Latinoamericano located in San Jose, Costa Rica. Students from all over the continent have attended this interdenominational theological school, which had its beginning as a Bible school in 1923. The Editorial Caribe, also owned and operated by the Latin America Mission, has published books and Sunday School materials that have been used widely throughout Latin America. This and other Protestant literature has been distributed through Latin America Mission bookstores located in San Jose, Costa Rica; Sincelojo, Colombia; Panama City; and in New York City, for the Spanish-speaking community of that metropolis. Still another outreach of this mission has been the TIFC radio station in San Jose, Costa Rica. Two particular mission fields have been adopted by the Latin America Mission, namely, Costa Rica and Colombia. In Costa Rica, the ⁽⁴⁾ Mission has not only carried out evangelistic work, but it has also maintained an orphanage, a hospital, and a combination primary and secondary school. The churches that have been

⁵(Ibid., p. 6.)

⁶("A Vision Becomes Flesh," Latin America Evangelist, p. 5.)

formed have now organized themselves into The Association of Costa Rica Bible Churches. In Colombia, ten primary schools, two high schools and a Bible school have been operated by the mission, in addition to the evangelistic outreach. At the present time, 170 missionaries work under the Latin America Mission. The main office is located in San Jose, Costa Rica, but there are also several regional offices, including the United States office at Bogota, New Jersey. Two periodicals published by the mission, the Latin America Evangelist and El Mensajero Biblico--The Bible Messenger--are well-known in the United States and Latin America respectively.

← The doctrinal statement of the Latin America Mission indicates its conservative theological position:

1. (4) We believe the Bible to be the divinely inspired and authoritative Word of God, the only infallible rule of faith and practice.
- ← We believe in one God, creator and sustainer of the universe who eternally exists in three persons: Father, Son and Holy Spirit.
- We believe in the deity of the Lord Jesus Christ, His virgin birth, sinless life, redemptive death, bodily resurrection, present exaltation at God's right hand and His personal, premillennial return.
- We believe that all men have sinned and therefore are guilty before God and are under His condemnation.
- We believe that through the death of His Son Jesus Christ, God in love provided an atonement for sin so that, through repentance and saving faith in Christ, man is delivered from the judgment of God and born again into life eternal.
- We believe in the deity and personality of the Holy Spirit who works in men to bring them to salvation through Christ and who dwells in believers, equipping and empowering them for a life of holiness and fruitful service.
- We believe that the Church is composed of all true believers and that the mission of the Church, with Christ as its head, is to communicate the Gospel of Christ to all the world.
- We believe in the resurrection of the body, the everlasting punishment of unbelievers and the everlasting blessedness of believers in the presence of Christ.⁷ (
- For some years, the Latin America Mission has belonged to the Interdenominational Foreign Missions Association, that communion of in-

(⁷Latin America Mission, Introducing the Latin America Mission (San Jose, Costa Rica: Editorial Caribe, 1965, A.))

terdenominational or so-called "faith" missions of North America. In recent years, the mission also joined the Evangelical Foreign Missions Association, representing the mission concern of the National Association of Evangelicals. The mission has not moved in the circles of the World Council of Churches. Still, when the Second Latin American Evangelical Congress, sponsored by these Latin American Protestants who do sympathize with the W.C.C., convened in the city of Lima in 1961, an article written by the general director of the Latin America Mission was used as a study document, and the general director himself accepted an invitation to be one of the main speakers. Furthermore, a few months prior to the congress, the mission in its annual meeting made the following resolution: "In view of the prayer of our Lord (John 17:21), the exhortation of the Apostle Paul (Ephesians 4:3), and the special circumstances in the part of the world where we labor, we declare our continued desire to cooperate with the sincere, true and wise efforts to promote the visible unity of the body of Jesus Christ in Latin America." Clearly, the Latin America Mission belongs to that group within Christianity sometimes known as the Nonhistorical Churches-- which contribute 75% of the Protestant missionary force in Latin America today. However, not all of these church groups are as open to cooperation as this mission.

1.2

← R. Kenneth Strachan and Associates

The Evangelism in Depth program of the Latin America Mission be-

Minutes of the 1960 Annual Meeting of the Latin America Mission, cited by Wilton M. Nelson, "Separation or Cooperation?" Latin America Evangelist (September-October, 1961), p. 7.)

R. Kenneth Strachan, The Missionary Movement of the Non-Historical Groups in Latin America, Paper read before the Study Conference of the Committee on Cooperation in Latin America, Buck Hills Falls, Pennsylvania, November 10-12, 1957 (New York: Committee on Cooperation in Latin America, 1957), p. 9.

gan in the soul of R. Kenneth Strachan, the son of the founder of the ^{new} mission. The program cannot be fully understood apart from its living relation to him, for which reason a brief survey of this devoted and gifted life is included.

Strachan was born in Argentina in 1910, while his parents still served under the Evangelical Union of South America. He was only a boy when he gave his heart to Christ. The early teens were spent in Costa Rica, where his father had established the headquarters of the new ^{mission} mission, as well as the Bible institute that is now the seminary of the Latin America Mission. That is, for the first fourteen years of his life he lived in Latin America, surrounded by missionary activities. Then, his parents sent him to the United States to Wheaton Academy and Wheaton College in Illinois, for his high school and college education. Of course, Wheaton College is a well-known center of conservative Christianity in the United States. In both the ^{Academy} Academy and the ^{College} College, he demonstrated fine athletic ability and good scholarship when he cared to study. However, a rebellious spirit made adjustment to regulations difficult, and finally he quit college before graduating. The independent spirit of the father had been inherited and perverted by the son. The senior Strachan urged his son to enroll at the well-known conservative school, Dallas Theological Seminary, even though Kenneth had not finished college. Kenneth acceded, and, after returning to and graduating from Wheaton in 1935, he received the B.D. degree from Dallas Seminary in 1936. Two decades later, Wheaton College was to forgive his misdemeanors and recognize his merits by awarding him the LL.D. degree.

In 1936, Strachan joined the Latin America Mission, and, for his first assignment, he was asked to teach in the Bible institute in San

Jose, Costa Rica. Once again his rebellious spirit interferred, prompting him to seek enlistment in the Royal Canadian Air Force. This was a serious case of irresponsibility. Many must have wondered if anything good would come of such a young man. But God spoke to him and through a public confession of his sin and a renewed consecration to Christ, God granted him a turning point in his spiritual experience. In 1940, Strachan married Elizabeth Walker, to which union God granted six children.

← Upon the death of his father in 1945, Strachan was elected as Co-director of the Latin America Mission. Then, in 1950, he was given the responsibility of General Director, which function he carried out until his death. In addition to administering and developing the activities of the Latin America Mission as they have been outlined above, he was also active as a board member of the Interdenominational Foreign Missions Association. He found no difficulty moving among the elite of Latin America, and, at the same time, the people of the masses sensed in him a friend. There is every indication that his colleagues had a profound respect for him, even as his reputation in Latin America missionary circles is well-founded.

← The writer can personally testify to his breadth of vision and concern, for, in 1951, he had correspondence with Strachan and finally met him in his home in San Jose, Costa Rica. Strachan was representing a Methodist missionary in northeast Panama who desired that the writer and his mission take charge of an Indian field that had been started but could no longer be maintained.

← Poor health hampered Kenneth Strachan during the last several years of his life. He was in the United States on rest leave from the Mission when he learned that he was dying of cancer, whereupon he re-

quested to be buried in Costa Rica. Last year he went to his reward. Several thousand accompanied his body to its final resting place. One of his colleagues paid this final tribute:

(7) Greatness is nurtured in flexibility. Ken's mind was constantly on the move. No one in my experience illustrated so perfectly Emerson's maxim that 'a foolish consistency is the hobgoblin of little minds.' My own young life had been stored up by what I thought were God-given and hence inflexible principles. I was often frustrated, therefore, by the way in which Ken's attitude and policy in mission work would change between our frequent consultations, and for a long time I resented it. Finally, however, I came to realize that this was the price of creativity, the corollary of vision. And it was this willingness to admit he had been wrong, or that today's solutions demand something other than yesterday's solutions, which place Ken Strachan in the vanguard of missionary thinking and left the rest of us far behind.

Mention shall be made of but four missionary associates of Strachan who have remained, since his death, to guide the Latin America Mission. David M. Howard, in charge of the work of the Mission in Colombia, is Assistant General Director of the Mission. W. Dayton Roberts*~~***~~ ~~is in charge of the Division of Evangelism~~, is Associate General Director of the Mission. Roberts works closely with Ruben Lores, a Cuban, who has been assigned some of the duties that Strachan formerly carried out, with the title of Acting International Director of Evangelism in Depth. Finally, Horace L. Fenton, Jr. fills the position of General Director of the Latin America Mission. He comes from a Presbyterian home. He received his education at Wheaton College and at Princeton Theological Seminary. He has served with the Mission for the past seventeen years, the last four of which, previous to his present assignment, were spent in the New Jersey office of the Mission. In addition to his duties with the Latin America Mission, he is book editor of the new Evangelical Missions Quarterly, and

¹W. Dayton Roberts et al., "What Kenneth Strachan Meant to Me," Latin America Evangelist, (May-June, 1965), p. 7.)

he holds the position of board member in both the International Foreign Missions Association and the Evangelical Foreign Missions Association.

1.3

Dissatisfactions

The following are the particular circumstances that led up to the Evangelism in Depth program of the Latin America Mission:

Over the years, the Latin America Mission has tended to give one emphasis and then another in its work. Arthur F. Glasser, North America director of the China Inland Mission Overseas Missionary Fellowship and also a close friend and observer of the Latin America Mission -- at the present time he is a committee member of the R. Kenneth Strachan Memorial Fund for World Evangelism -- summarized these characteristic emphases as follows:

1(8)

In the early days of the Latin America Mission, emphasis was placed on the Spirit-filled missionary and his evangelistic campaigns. As time went on this was supplemented with radio and literature outreach, and the effort to reproduce the same pattern through development of a national counterpart to all of these activities. Training nationals was assigned a high priority.

Then after World War II, a sense of dissatisfaction and failure about the results and prospects of the witness of the mission, as well as that of Protestant missions in Latin America in general, settled upon the leadership of the Latin America Mission. They had labored hard. They had done good work. Indeed, they had led the way in a number of respects among the Protestant missions in Latin America. A large mission program had resulted. There had been converts, and national churches and church bodies had appeared. A faithful witness had been given. Services had been performed to the needy about them. Still, in spite of positive results for all their good efforts, what had been accomplished appeared so

²² Arthur F. Glasser, "New Dimension in Evangelism," Latin America Evangelist (November-December, 1961), back cover.

meager in the midst of the huge Latin American community around them. Strachan explained the general sense of frustration at that time, when he penned, "For servants of the Church in lands where the Christian community is small and its witness weak, and where the encounter with the overwhelming forces of unbelief and rejection constitute a daily and discouraging experience, this necessity of redefining evangelistic responsibility and fixing priorities becomes the compulsive, imperative, inescapable task of the hour."¹² (12)

← Several reservations and questions in particular bothered the Latin America Mission leaders at that time. "Foremost," wrote Strachan, "was a growing sense of dissatisfaction with the organizational structure of the foreign missionary society as an instrument, with the established national church, for meeting adequately the modern challenge of evangelism."¹³ (13) He meant that the method of the cooperative evangelistic campaign, which he had observed and in which he had participated in all the major Latin American cities for many years, had proven inadequate and had not accomplished enough in view of what remained to be accomplished. These campaigns had been preponderately the effort of the foreign mission, and so, the theory, the financial backing, and the personnel had been largely foreign. He also meant that the enthusiastic confidence that had been placed in mass media, that is, radio and press, in the work of evangelism, had not produced the results that were hoped for. He further meant that the pleas for and increase of more missionaries, which had characterized the Latin American Mission, had not proven the answer to

¹² Kenneth Strachan, "Call to Witness," The International Review of Missions, LIII, No. 210 (April, 1964), ~~191~~. See appendix p.

¹³ Ibid., p. 192.

the evangelism problem.

Strachan pointed out yet another area of reservation for the Latin America Mission leaders, as follows:

(11) An equal source of concern was the pattern of church life, perhaps a missionary legacy, which was becoming increasingly common and which, it seemed, represented one major cause for the relative failure of the Protestant churches to witness effectively to the world around them. It was distressing to see churches facing inward, dedicating more and more of their time and energies to self-centered programmes Of even greater concern was the growing tendency to depend upon a professional ministry.¹⁴ (op. cit. p. 193)

That is, Strachan and the others noticed the beginnings of static church life in their own fields and in those of others. The members seemed unwilling to witness and work for Christ in the community. At the same time, the missionary leaders observed that there was an unmistakable North America character and pattern to the life and ministry of the national churches, and they wondered if this foreignness of the churches did not repel rather than attract the public.

Strachan continued, "A question was also raised by the multiplicity of Protestant bodies and agencies in Latin America and the general picture of division, competition and confusion which was presented not only to opponents, but also to the indifferent public at large and to hosts of well-disposed friends and potential converts."¹⁵ The Latin America Mission leaders realized that, although Catholicism—the traditional church in Latin America—does have its subdivisions, such as, the Jesuits, the Franciscans, the Carmelites, and so forth, at the same time it does publicly express its unity. And, by way of contrast, Protestants have been so divisive in appearance. Surely, Strachan reasoned, this appearance must prevent many from acceptance of Biblical Christianity.

¹⁴(Ibid.)

Op. cit p.

¹⁵(Ibid., p. 193.)

Again, "the resurgence of the Roman Catholic Church in Latin America . . . presented a new challenge to the evangelical movement and raised again the necessity for a careful redefinition of Protestant approach and relationship."¹⁶ (---X---) He no doubt referred to renewed efforts on the part of the Catholic Church to secure more priests for Latin America. He certainly was thinking of the new position of political power to which the Catholic Church of Colombia had attained, and which had expressed itself in terms of persecution of the Protestant church, during and after the Second World War.

Still another reservation concerned "the prolific increase and spread of the sects, creating problems of relationship and adding to the general confusion and disorientation."¹⁷ (Strachan #12 ref) They noticed the Jehovah's Witnesses group, for instance, increasing by twelve times every ten years in the Caribbean area, and by fifteen times in South America.¹⁸ (---18---)

Further, "the relentless permeation of Marxist and socialist ideas into a soil made fertile by economic pressure and political instability"¹⁹ (---19?---) preoccupied the Latin America Mission leaders. Unstable politics had long characterized Latin America. Then, especially since the Mexican Revolution of 1910, a new unrest of a social and economic nature had begun to spread throughout the continent. The masses, that since colonial times had been subjugated by the semi-feudal aristocracy, had started to wake up and to speak out for land and justice based on equality. The masses had lost faith in the traditional leaders, both those of

¹⁶Ibid.

¹⁷Ibid. (Strachan, Kendall?)

¹⁸Latin America Mission, Evangelism-in-Depth (Chicago: Moody Press, 1961), p. 19.)

¹⁹Strachan, "Call to Witness," The International Review of Missions, LIII, No. 210, 193.)

the Conservative Party which represent the position of the Catholic Church, and those of the Liberal Party who champion political liberalism of the French and American types. They had turned to new parties of the people and to Socialism and Communism which by now had sent agents and literature to win the loyalty of those who demanded change. Even before Fidel Castro, leftist activity had been taking place throughout the continent, and the Latin America Mission leaders feared what eventually did take place in Cuba.

← Finally, Strachan was aware that "over all was the spectacle of a continent caught in the throes of an unparalled population explosion."²⁰ (same page) If the Protestant missions could not then accomplish the evangelistic task, what were the prospects of doing it in the future in a continent whose population was growing at the rate of 2.6 per cent--faster than that of any comparable area in the world?²¹ (. 21 - - -)

← These reservations and questions, then, weighed heavily on the minds and hearts of the Latin America Mission leaders after World War II. They prayed. They read. They thought. They deliberated. These men made a point of visiting the work of other missions and churches with the objective of learning from them. For instance, they introduced themselves to the work of the Assemblies of God in El Salvador and came away amazed at the rapid growth. They also acquainted themselves with the work of the Foursquare Gospel Church in Panama, and with the Pentecostal work in Chile, other efforts that had succeeded in advancing rapidly.

← In 1954, Kenneth Strachan was still seeking the answer to the prob-

²⁰Ibid.

²¹Myrtle M. Clemmer and Stanley W. Rycroft, "A Statistical Study of Latin America," Occasional Bulletin, XIII, No. 5 (May, 1962), 14.

lem of his mission and of the Protestant mission in Latin America. Ac-
 cordingly, before a retreat for mission executives, held at Lake Geneva,
 Wisconsin, and sponsored by the Evangelical Foreign Missions Association,
 he stated, ("Whatever the way, it would seem that some way must be found
 to bring the national church and its leaders into partnership in the plan-
 ning and execution of all missionary--not merely church endeavor in each
 respective field."²²) The answer he sought--Evangelism in Depth--would
 soon be clear.

²²R. Kenneth Strachan, "New Emphasis in Missions," Occasional
 Bulletin, V, No. 13 (November 12, 1954), 6.

2

THE THEORY OF THE PROGRAM
~~CHAPTER II~~

2.1 THE KEY CONCEPT ~~THE THEORY OF THE PROGRAM~~

The Key Concept

← In 1957, Kenneth Strachan gave an address at the Study Conference of the Committee on Cooperation in Latin America, held at Buck Hills Falls, Pennsylvania. In the course of that address entitled "The Missionary Movement of the Non-Historical Groups in Latin America," and speaking of the rapid growth that has characterized the work of some of these churches, he stated, "It would seem that the growth of each group is related directly to its effectiveness in mobilizing its total membership in continuous evangelistic endeavor, regardless of its particular doctrinal emphasis or methods or church polity or denominational distinctives."¹ Total mobilization of the Church—this proved to be the concept that unlocked the full program of Evangelism in Depth.

← The following year, Strachan wrote an article for Christianity Today entitled "Tomorrow's Task in Latin America"—it was later picked up by the organizers of the Second Latin American Evangelical Congress, held in Lima, Peru, in 1961, and used as a study document. In this article he gave one of the first fuller expressions of the theory of the new program. Touching on the mammoth task remaining in Latin America, he

1. Kenneth Strachan, The Missionary Movement of the Non-Historical Groups in Latin America, Paper read before the Study Conference of the Committee on Cooperation in Latin America, Buck Hills Falls, Pennsylvania, November 10-12, 1957 (New York: Committee on Cooperation in Latin America, 1957), p. 9.)

wrote, "The most obvious deficiency of evangelical forces is the lack of a concerted movement to finish the job in their own territory."² Then, he expressed the key concept, stating, "I believe the main reason [for not being able to complete the evangelism task in the respective territories] is our failure to mobilize our entire evangelical forces in constant evangelistic endeavour. We have depended too much on the foreign missionary and too much on the full-time Christian worker."³

← Again, in 1964, Strachan stated the key concept in retrospect of his theory now put into practice, in an article for The International Review of Missions. He wrote that "the expansion of any movement is in direct proportion to its success in mobilizing its total membership in continuous propagation of its beliefs."⁴ *(See Appendix pp. ...)* To this he added the following:

2.(3) Once this conclusion was phrased, it was no great surprise to discover that it led back directly to the norms and practices of the first-century Church. Further reflection suggested the additional truth that for an expanding movement to retain its essential Christian character, its witness must be carried out in conscious submission to the Word of God and to the energizing and directing operation of His Spirit. Apart from this, any movement, no matter what its outward profession or success, will ultimately depart from course and cease to be truly Christian. But the key to successful expansion is the continuous witness of the totality of the disciples."⁵

← It is apparent that the first conclusion reached by Strachan was basically a phenomena of social change, and not something necessarily Christian. To be sure, he had observed the active laity in the rapidly growing Pentecostal work in El Salvador. However, he had also seen the

²R. Kenneth Strachan, "Tomorrow's Task in Latin America," Christianity Today, III, No. 6 (December 22, 1958), 3.)

³Ibid., p. 4.

⁴R. Kenneth Strachan, "Call to Witness," The International Review of Missions, LIII, No. 210 (April, 1964), 194.

⁵Ibid.

same principle at work in the Mormon expansion in the continent through lay missionaries. He had even recalled that the amazing spread of Communism in this century has been accomplished by a Party in which all the members work arduously and devotedly. From this, he simply concluded that in any human society, a cause expands as the believers of that cause, led by their leaders, communicate their convictions to their fellows.

← In terms of the Christian church, the concept of total mobilization focuses on the layman and on his active participation, not only in the worship and life of the congregation, but also in its ministry to the community. And this holds true for both the layman in the sending churches of the Christian mission and for the layman of the younger churches of the world. The concept means that in addition to the missionary and the national pastor, the layman must participate in evangelism if this ministry is to be successful. No number of missionaries and no amount of modern technique and mass media can substitute for this. The native pastor, far from being the authorized agent of the evangelistic outreach of his congregation, is rather the organizer of his people for this function. The spontaneous Gospel witness on the part of the laymen to their families and countrymen constitutes the most effective communication of the message.

← Did Strachan and his colleagues mean that the essential cause of the expansion of the Church resides in a principle of sociology? No. They simply observed that phenomena of social change in and according to which the Holy Spirit extends the Church. God does not violate the human when in the world He undertakes to relate it to Himself. This being the case, those who work with Him in His evangelistic purposes must not only know the Holy Spirit but also, man and the society of which he forms a

part. Accordingly, one of the Latin America Mission spokes^eman wrote as follows concerning the expansion of the Church through Evangelism in Depth in Nicaragua:

2(4) I wouldn't want to give you the impression that by some clever idea or strategy the church can forget the divine, supernatural factor and always be sure of success. What happened in Nicaragua was obviously the Holy Spirit's miraculous work, and without Him the cleverest, most Scriptural, best organized strategy would be a failure.

2.2 (Mayzumi) → The Basic Principles

← The first conclusion about total mobility led Kenneth Strachan and his friends to lay down several basic principles or premises on the basis of which to develop a plan of action.

2.2.1 The Mobilization of Every Christian

← Strachan stated the first principle as follows:

2(5) By the Holy Spirit working in and through him, every Christian without exception — according to his gifts and situation — is called upon to be a witness for Christ. This is the key to fulfilling the Great Commission. The evangelization of each country or region then rests with the totality of the believers in that area, and the primary task of their leaders is to mobilize and train them for continuous, purposeful witness in every area of life.

This is the aforementioned key concept in the Christian setting.

2.2.2 The Witness^W within the Framework of the Local Church

← The second principle was expressed by Strachan in the following way:

2(6) This daily witness of the individual must center in the fellowship of communal witness. The local church is the strategic unit for effective, continuing witness. This involves a recognition of the true mission of the local church as a testifying community set down in the world not for purposes of self-seeking or self-defense but for disinterested service and faithful witness in a climate of

(“They Shook the Country,” Latin America Evangelist, (March-April, 1961), p. 3.)

(R. Kenneth Strachan, “Some Fundamentals,” Latin America Evangelist, (March-April, 1963), inside front cover.)

true spiritual worship and genuine fellowship. ⁸ (*Ibid.*)

← God does not will that the local congregation be characterized by a static existence. That is, the congregation is not to be self-centered and thus indifferent to the religious needs of the community around about it. Nor is it, out of fear or a sense of inferiority, to content itself with a defensive stance in relation to its environment. As far as Latin America is concerned, up until recent times, the Protestant congregations in many places have existed in an unfriendly environment characterized by unwilling tolerance and, at times, by persecution. The Latin American Catholic Church, of course, has set the direction of this hostility. However, the absence of a witnessing local congregation is not always due to internal factors, such as, fear of its environment. For, the missions often so stress their own evangelism function that the evangelistic ministry of the local congregation is slighted. For instance, in certain nonhistoric church circles of the United States, there has prevailed a type of evangelism unrelated to the local church, and this, no doubt, has been transferred to the mission fields where representatives of these circles serve. Whatever the cause of the static congregations in Latin America, this situation had to change, according to the Latin America Mission leaders, if the evangelism responsibility of the missions and the churches was to be fulfilled. For, the total Christian witness is to have as its point of reference the local congregation.

← In terms of evangelism, the local congregation is the particular team to which the witnessing Christian belongs. In the local congregation he receives encouragement to serve Christ in the hostile world. In his local church, he is trained for his particular contribution to the evan-

gelism mission. The fruits of his evangelism efforts are conserved in the local congregation.

2,2,3 The United Witness of the Entire Body of Christ

← Kenneth Strachan stated this principle as follows:

2(7) This individual and communal testimony must relate fruitfully to the total witness of the entire Body of Christ. Therefore in some practical way, without compromise or blurring of truth, with full respect for conscientious differences and distinctives, but in obedience to Christ's command and in response to His earnest prayer for the Church, some tangible witness must be given to the unity of the Body of Christ.⁹

← That is, all of the Protestant denominations in a given area must cooperate in the work of evangelism. This is so because of the magnitude of the task which no single society or church can possibly accomplish alone. However, another and more impelling reason exists for cooperative evangelism, namely, to demonstrate the universal quality of the Gospel.

Of this Strachan writes:

2(8) It is equally a matter of the precise nature of the witness that the Church is required to give. If there is only one Lord and Saviour and only one Gospel, then how can hundreds of different groups stressing their distinctives in isolation from each other give a clear and convincing testimony to the uniqueness of that Gospel? Effective witness thus requires some tangible demonstration of unity.¹⁰ (Type Ref. 7 here)

For this reason, our Lord prayed "that they may all be one . . . so that the world may believe that thou hast sent me."¹¹ For this reason, Paul urged the young Ephesian church within its pagan environment to be "eager to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace."¹²

← Such cooperation must be of such a nature as to require recognition of and respect for the doctrinal convictions and special gifts of the respective groups. None must be asked or expected to compromise his

⁹Ibid.

¹¹John 17:21.

¹⁰Ibid.

¹²Eph. 4:3.

cherished positions. This means that what is done together between different denominations will meet with the approval of all, at least as to the main and basic points. As to secondary points, we ought to be "ready to sacrifice our little ends for the sake of the 'Big End'."¹³ Of course, this principle does not suggest the cessation of the denominational evangelism program; it rather urges that public witness be given by occasional union evangelism efforts. Furthermore, within the union evangelism effort, there will be ~~some room~~ ~~available~~ for ~~the~~ distinctive denominational emphasis. That is, during certain phases within the united effort, at one and the same time, different denominational contributions will take place.

2.2.4 The Aim to Reach the Entire National or Regional Area

← Of this principle, Kenneth Strachan stated the following:

2/9) The witness of all individuals and communities must aim at nothing less than total and complete outreach. . . . For that reason it is advisable to think in terms of natural geographic areas, in which the precise responsibility for complete outreach and the problems that pertain can be faced and discharged by the resident Christian forces.¹⁴ (See Appendix pp. . . .)

← The command of Christ to evangelize envisions "the whole creation"¹⁵ and "all nations,"¹⁶ which the Church must take seriously. Although the elder Strachan had dreamt of the entire continent, his son and friends thought it more practical to think in terms of a given republic or, in the case of the larger republics, regions within them. The Church dare not be at ease nor content herself with having done well in a limited

¹³Strachan, "Tomorrow's Task in Latin America," Christianity Today, III, No. 6, 6.)

¹⁴Strachan, "Call to Witness," The International Review of Missions, III, No. 210, 195.)

¹⁵Mark 16:15.)

¹⁶Matt. 28:19.)

area, if within the republic, areas remain unevangelized. The principle of total outreach also embraces every sociological group within the nation, such as, the different classes which are well marked in Latin America, and the different Indian tribes. Total outreach means that every family must be approached with the invitation of Jesus Christ.

2.2.5

The Adoption of an Overall Strategy

← The Latin America Mission looked back on the adoption of this principle as follows: "It was our conviction that the individual activity of all the believers and all the local churches and the co-operative efforts of the sum of the different churches had all to be related to one over-all plan of strategy that would aim at nothing less than the total and effective evangelization of the territory selected."¹⁷

← The effort to reach the entire area under consideration, involving the totality of the Christian forces, must be organized and coordinated, so as to avoid confusion and overlapping, and so as to achieve maximum effect. The basic method in the overall strategy will be the verbal preaching of the Gospel. However, other means will complement the evangelistic preaching of the Word, such as, the use of mass media and the utilization of the printing press. Every available means and ability will be employed in the effort.

← However, proclamation by the Christian deed of mercy ought to be included in the evangelism program. It is to be directed toward the alleviation of social need in benefit of both the non-Christian and the Christian public. Concerning this, W. Dayton Roberts wrote:

2(11) Activities of this sort successfully relate the Gospel to the social as well as the spiritual needs of the country. They, too,

¹⁷Latin America Mission, Evangelism in Depth (Chicago: Moody Press, 1961), p. 29.)

must be planned and coordinated, but never substituted for the direct verbal testimony to the saving power of Jesus Christ. An apostolic balance in social concern can greatly deepen and enhance the evangelistic outreach.¹⁸

2.3 *Cape* → The Plan of Action

← Having established the basic principles, the Latin America Mission leaders were considering a concrete plan of action, when the Billy Graham Evangelistic Association sponsored its first crusade in the Caribbean area. This crusade took place in 1958. Kenneth Strachan was able to observe it first hand, and he and the Latin America Mission leaders took fresh courage concerning the vision of their own work. As the men continued in prayer, they finally came up with the following plan of action:

2.3.1 The First Stage: Mobilization

← This stage constitutes the preparation phase of the program. It, in turn, contains several parts.

The endorsement of the major denominations. -- ^{is sought} In this first step, the Latin America Mission representatives propose the evangelism program to the missionary and national church leaders of a given republic. Without the support and cooperation of the leaders, the program cannot be undertaken.

The opening of the program office in a strategic center. -- Having secured the consent of the church leaders, the Latin America Mission representatives or advisors set up an office in a city, likely the capital of the republic chosen for the evangelism effort. The office remains open for the duration of the program.

The retreat for missionary and church leaders. -- The leaders of all the

¹⁸W. Dayton Roberts, "New Dimension in Evangelism," Latin America Evangelist (November-December, 1965), p. 15.)

missions and churches in the republic or region selected, along with the Latin America Mission advisors and perhaps some guest preachers and Bible teachers, gather for a retreat. The wives of the leaders also participate. The retreat is held at a location removed from the work centers of those who attend so as to facilitate concentration on the matters at hand. This gathering lasts for several days so as to have sufficient time for prayer, Bible study, a fresh examination of the evangelism task that remains to be accomplished, and a complete orientation of the program to be undertaken. Perhaps the principal objective of the retreat is to impart a renewed concern, if necessary, for the evangelization of the area concerned. If the leaders do not have this concern, they will not be able to impart it to their people.

The election of the National Coordinating Committee.--The local leaders then elect a National Coordinating Committee under whose direction the program will be carried forward, in conjunction with the Latin America Mission advisors. In addition to the Coordinating Committee, other committees are named which will cover such aspects as finance, publicity, music, training of laymen for participation in the program, literature, visitation, physical arrangements, regional affairs, and so forth.

Promotion.--A further aspect of preparation is promotion within the Protestant community. It is carried out in several ways. For instance, the churches and denominational conventions receive visitors who explain the program and impart inspiration for it. If radio broadcasting facilities are available, regular promotional programs may be prepared and given. Many Latin American republics now have Protestant radio stations which can facilitate this type of promotion. Then, the organizers and leaders of the evangelism effort publish a small but attractive newspaper for the

duration of the effort. This newspaper, entitled En Marcha which means (Evangelism in Depth) On the March, is designed for the Protestant public, and, in addition to information and promotional articles, it contains numerous pictures of the evangelism program activities taking place throughout the republic or region.

The organization of prayer cells.--"Most important," Strachan wrote, "would be the formation of hundreds of small prayer cells." ²⁵ *See Appendix pp. ...* These cells are formed in the Christian community throughout the nation, and they function for the duration of the effort. This aspect of the preparation aims at imploring the blessing of God on the evangelism program.

2.3.2

The Second Stage: Training

Having completed the mobilization stage, the plan enters a training stage. A Latin America Mission publication described this phase in the following way:

2 (2)

If Evangelism-in-Depth were to be a success, it would be necessary, leaders saw clearly, to make each Christian recognize that the Great Commission was directed personally to him, and to give instruction not only in the basic tenets of the Gospel but also in the best methods of sharing it with others. These two important objectives would be accomplished by means of the intensive training classes for believers which were to take place before the evangelistic campaign.²⁰

That is, this second training stage aims at training the laymen of the churches for active participation in the evangelism program. As for methods to be taught, the instruction concerns personal evangelism, visitation evangelism, active participation in the crusades, and active participation in the follow-up work.

← In some situations, it is possible to train the laymen on an in-

¹⁹ Strachan, "Call to Witness," The International Review of Missions, III, No. 210, 196.)

²⁰ Latin America Mission, Evangelism in Depth, p. 56.)

terdenominational basis. Otherwise, the training takes place on a denominational basis. The training course involves eight or twelve lessons over a period of two months.

2.3.3

The Third Stage: Evangelism

When the mobilization and training ~~stages~~ are terminated, the actual work of evangelism begins. The various evangelism activities follow a general sequence, although variations may occur. Also, spontaneous evangelism activities which have not been planned by the advisors and coordinators but which these leaders are happy to see, ~~occur~~ are encouraged. The activities that follow may last over a period of six months.

The house-to-house visitation.--Of this activity, W. Dayton Roberts wrote,

"It is evident that this house-to-house ministry is the very heart of Evangelism-in-Depth."²¹ ~~For this the church members have been trained, and for this they have been waiting. These laymen~~ are divided into teams of two, and then each team receives an assigned territory around its local church. When teams finish the territory around their local churches, they will be given assignments where no church exists. The aim is that the coverage of the nation or region be as complete as possible. The teams distribute a Bible portion and a tract in each house or apartment visited; the national program office provides the literature for the visitation campaign. The teams also invite the people to attend forthcoming evangelistic meetings, or they inform about local church activities. But the teams do more: they give a personal witness about the power of the Gospel, and they are prepared to then and there press home the claims of Christ on those to whom they are speaking. If there is respon-

²¹W. Dayton Roberts, "Is the Job Finished?" Latin America Evangelist, (March-April, 1963) 7, p. 2.)

siveness on the part of the person or persons visited, the visit may end with a prayer and personal commitment to Christ.

The local evangelistic campaigns.--At this point, each cooperating congregation sponsors an evangelism crusade or series of meetings in its church building. The crusade may last for a week or more. The aim of these series of meetings is to preach the Gospel to the unconverted and unchurched of the community. The Latin America Mission advisors and the national coordinators are ready to advise the local churches concerning their local campaigns and to help them secure the services of outside evangelists, musicians, and other personnel. These local crusades take place simultaneously throughout the republic or region.

The special evangelism efforts.--After the local campaigns have finished, a variety of special evangelism efforts take place, aimed at preaching the Gospel to different groups in the republic or region. For instance, special efforts are made to reach the children, young people, women, and so forth. For work with these groups, specialists in these respective fields are called in, and these direct the conventions, rallies, retreats, classes, and so forth, involved. Another type of special effort concerns people living in distant rural areas, in connection with which some kind of social assistance is included. Jail visitation and special school programs take place during this phase of the program. Mobile audio-visual units participate at this point and cinema evangelism is carried out. In general, the special efforts phase seeks to complement and fill in the rest of the overall program, so that no segment of society misses the evangelism impact.

The regional evangelism campaigns.--Regional evangelism crusades now take place. These are evangelistic preaching missions designed to reach the

unchurched community. All the participant congregations in a given area sponsor and support these campaigns. The crusades often take place in state capitals or other such larger population centers. The national program office helps the regional crusade committees so far as evangelists, musicians, and other participants are concerned. These regional campaigns last for a week or more. Most often, they are carried out on an inter-denominational basis.

The national evangelism campaign.--The national evangelism campaign held in the capital of the republic is the climax of the whole program. It is sponsored and supported by all the participant congregations of the different denominations in the republic. It lasts two or three weeks. Outside evangelists and participants are brought in for this final effort. The meetings are held in a large stadium or coliseum rented for the occasion. Every available means for advertisement is employed. On the last day of the crusade, Protestants from throughout the nation parade through the streets of the capital to the site of the meetings. They remain for the final meeting, after which the evangelism stage ends.

2. 3. 4

The Fourth ^Q State: Follow-Up

Once the evangelism stage is completed, the final stage of follow-up begins. The prayer cells continue to function as the people pray for the conservation of the results. Workers visit the new converts and others who have shown an interest in the Gospel, in an effort to see them attached to one of the Protestant congregations. The churches may use correspondence courses in an effort to conserve results. Finally, the Latin America Mission leaders expect that different forms of evangelism activity will continue. One of the chief goals of the program has been "to leave behind a Christian Church that would engage in continuous evan-

gelistic action. And the attainment of this last objective would be the real measure of success.²² (

~~The Finances~~

The finances needed for the program come from both the Latin America Mission and the local cooperating churches. The Mission pays the salaries of its own personnel sent in as advisors, ~~the office expenses,~~ the honoraria and travelling expenses of the visiting evangelistic team members who participate in the campaigns, and the retreat expenses. The local churches and missions pay all other local expenses, as well as provide hospitality for the visiting evangelistic team members.

~~The Advisors~~

The Latin America Mission provides advisors for the program in general and for each of the major phases in particular, such as, visitation, prayer cells, training, and so forth. Between six and thirteen advisors, depending on the size of the program, participate. In general, the local leadership, such as, members of the National Coordinating Committee, is on a volunteer and part-time basis.

~~The Name~~

← The name of this program, Evangelism in Depth, attempts to describe its underlying theory. Concerning this, W. Dayton Roberts penned:

2(13) To add the dimension of depth to any evangelistic enterprise, we must take the spotlight off the pulpit and put it on the pew, away from the evangelist and onto the individual believer. Our thinking about evangelism must not be limited to a specific campaign in a single place, within the four walls at a particular time. Rather it must be rooted in the total experience and witness of each Christian, and it must strive to give depth to the evangelistic message, the evangelistic activity, and the evangelistic agent. It must go deep into the needs and experience of people, strengthening their Christian faith, their evangelistic zeal, their pursuit of holiness. Evangelism-in-Depth seeks to relate evangelism to the total life of

²²(Latin America Mission, Evangelism in Depth, p. 31.)

the believer and of the church, and suggests some techniques which make this a feasible objective.²³

This, then, is the theory of the program known as Evangelism in Depth. But does it work? Does it stand the stern and touchstone test of reality in Latin America? What happened when it was taken out of the prayer chamber and committee room? We must now turn to the field application of this evangelism program.

²³(Roberts, "New Dimension in Evangelism, Latin America Evangelist, pp. 13-14.)

square Gospel, Moravian Missions, Protestant Episcopal Church National Council, United World Mission, and National Baptist Convention. The two Moravian groups have the largest sister church bodies. Although there is an organized Lutheran immigrant community in Managua, the group depends on the itinerant services of the Lutheran World Federation pastor in Costa Rica.

3.2 Costa The Latin America Mission Preliminaries

In 1958, the Latin America Mission leaders made an investigation trip to Nicaragua. The following reveals some of the encouraging factors that they discovered as they considered this country as a possible site for the trial effort of the new evangelism program:

- 3(2) Neighboring Nicaragua presented a possibility. It was near enough. The Protestant movement in the country, while not large, was fairly robust and Nicaraguan Christians were characterized by a simple faith and ready spirit. Some fourteen Protestant groups were at work in the country, representing the usual differences in theological and ecclesiastical conviction and outlook. But the obstacles to co-operation were not insurmountable. Moreover, in spite of the customary political unrest, there was a prevailing liberal atmosphere that offered ample guarantee of religious liberty. Finally, and most important, was the fact that Nicaraguan Christians themselves were convinced that God's time had come for a forward evangelistic thrust of some sort.² later

At the same time, they found the following negative factors: "On the other hand, the size of the country (larger than the State of Pennsylvania and practically the size of England), the limited resources of the Nicaraguan churches, and the fact that in those same days the Church of Rome had launched a nation-wide 'Holy Mission', [sic] called for a careful consideration and counting of the cost."³ In regard to the Catholic effort, one hundred visiting priests had recently entered the republic.

²R. Kenneth Strachan, "Call to Witness," The International Review of Missions, LIII, No. 210 (April, 1964), 197-198.

³Ibid., p. 198.)

Finally, "the assurance that this was the direction in which the Lord was leading"^(#274) caused the Latin America Mission leaders to decide on Nicaragua.

← In 1959, the Latin America Mission officially presented the proposal of an Evangelism in Depth effort to the Evangelical leaders of Nicaragua, and it was accepted enthusiastically.

← Having received this endorsement and invitation, Strachan and his colleagues returned to Costa Rica, and, in the fall of that year, they drew up their plans. Juan M. Isais, a Mexican missionary of the Latin America Mission, who had been stationed among the Latin American community of New York, was asked to serve as the National Coordinator of the effort. William L. Thompson and Dorothy Andrews also were assigned as a part of the coordinator staff. John Thomas of another mission, the Latin American Prayer Fellowship laboring in Mexico, was secured as coordinator of house-to-house visitation. Finally, two men working with the Navigators group, George Sanchez and Sam Clark, agreed to participate as leaders of training classes and follow-up work. When the campaign phase was reached, fifteen others travelled to Nicaragua to join the staff.

← Then, in October, 1959, the Isais family moved to Managua to set up the Evangelism in Depth office. Right from the beginning, the spirit of campaign and the sense of Divine drama, even in such details as setting up an office, characterized the ~~Latin America Mission coordinators~~ ^{undertaking;} as the following report reveals:

3(4) The central office had to be set up, no small job in hot, leisurely Managua. In God's providence, a Baptist layman offered rent-free the use of a house fairly near the center of town. A telephone number was secured at a time when it seemed impossible. A post office box was rented, also an apparent impossibility. Water and electricity were contracted. Crude unpainted tables and chairs were bought at the market to serve as office furniture. A refrigerator, set of

(Ibid.)

comfortable chairs, mimeograph, clock, file cabinet, and typewriter of several vintages were borrowed. Maps of Nicaragua were tacked on the wall. Volunteer recruits were lined up and put to work, one in particular from the National Evangelical Church serving faithfully as unpaid office girl for several months of the campaign. The office, with its big cloth sign outside saying 'Evangelism-in-Depth--Through God We Shall Do Valiantly,' soon became something like Grand Central Station, . . .

3.3

The National Committees

The national committees had already been named and were now beginning to function. As for the National Coordinating Committee, a Baptist banker by the name of Rodolfo Mejia was appointed president. The vice presidents were Risael Lopes, the pastor of the largest Central American Mission congregation in Managua, and Napoleon Tapia, a Baptist businessman and politician. Gilberto Aguirre, another businessman and member of the Central American Convention, served as treasurer. Other members of the committee included Pablo Abreu, in charge of the Church of God work in Nicaragua; Ignacio Hernandez, a Nazarene pastor in Managua; Allen Tolle, an American missionary in charge of the Foursquare Gospel work in Nicaragua; and Nazario Escobar, a pastor and founder of a group of independent churches. The names of the committee members reveal the large number of Latin Americans involved.

Other committees in charge of prayer, finance, publicity, hospitality, music, training, literature, visitation, local campaigns, physical arrangements, volunteer office help, radio and television, statistics, and so forth, were appointed. In addition, population centers that had been chosen as locations for regional evangelism crusades had their own special committees.

The following are two realistic reports on the significance of

(Latin America Mission, Evangelism in Depth, (Chicago: Moody Press, 1961), pp. 42-43.)

3/4

all this organization:

3 (5) It was a wonderful thing to have so many Christians assigned to definite responsibilities. Outside of Managua, often it represented the first time Christians had been given a specific job to do, and doing it on an interdenominational basis helped strengthen the new bonds of unity.

The other:

3 (6) Each committee was sent a mimeographed list of instructions and suggestions which, if followed to the letter, would have resulted in a well-organized, effective campaign. But in Latin America perhaps more than in other parts of the world, the personal touch is all important, and everything was terribly new to the people. Some committees didn't function at all. Everything depended on who belonged to them and how much time the coordinator was able to give them.

In one small committee, two of the pastors had been on the opposite sides of a church split that had occurred some years before. However, now they showed no animosity but, on the contrary, demonstrated their oneness in Christ, even though others involved in the division were not yet on speaking terms.

3.4

The Prayer Cells

The National Coordinating Committee was assigned the organization of the prayer cells throughout the country. The assignment consisted of making contact with all the Protestant churches in the country and of urging the members to form themselves into small neighborhood prayer cells that should meet daily, if possible, for the duration of the effort. This phase of the program began on New Year's Eve, 1959, with Watch Night prayer services in each church. In some cases, these prayer services were on an interdenominational basis.

3.5

The Publicity

On New Year's Day, 1960, the leaders and their helpers began the distribution of 100,000 free pocket-size calenders with Scripture verses

(⁶Ibid., p. 38.)

(⁷Ibid., pp. 38-39.)

on the back. As of the same day, 10,000 Protestant homes displayed an attractive window poster which read, "For a better nation, God says, 'If my people . . . shall humble themselves and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land' (II Chronicles 7:14)."⁸

Two red luminescent bumper signs were also displayed by the Protestant owners of bicycles, motorcycles, automobiles, taxis, and micro-buses. The texts read, "Only Jesus Saves"⁹ and "Problems? The Bible Has the Answer."¹⁰ The Latin America Mission explained the significance of the use of these signs as follows:

3 (8) Car owners . . . knew that such a label on their expensive piece of property would be an invitation to troublemakers to damage the cars. But--what was more important, their property or their Christian testimony as part of Evangelism-in-Depth? To our knowledge, not a single Christian family decided not to use the car signs.

Again: "More than one person who called out in derision, 'Only Christ does not save!' to a passing car, was left with seeds of doubt and curiosity in his heart, which eventually would lead to seeking the true teaching of the Bible on the subject."¹² This significance of the signs and their use stems from the traditional and dominant Roman Catholic setting in which Protestants have often been considered intruders and schismatics, and in which the mediating virtue of the saints and the Virgin Mary is popular.

The Latin America Mission, for its part, contributed to the publicity with the biweekly newspaper called En Marcha and with 2,000 large posters which outlined the program activities and contained the phrase,

⁸Quoted in ibid., p. 41.

⁹Quoted in ibid.

¹⁰Quoted in ibid.

¹¹ibid., pp. 41-42.

¹²Ibid., p. 42.

"Evangelicals of Nicaragua United!"¹³

The integrating line on all the publicity was Evangelism a Fondo, that is, Evangelism in Depth.

3.6

The Retreat for Leaders

All of the Protestant groups working in Nicaragua were represented at the retreat sponsored by the Latin America Mission and held near Masatepe from January 4-8, 1960. Some 250 pastors, missionaries, lay leaders, and wives attended. The site of the retreat was a rustic coffee plantation. The day and evening sessions were devoted to prayer, devotions, the explanation of the program, and instruction in evangelism. Warm fellowship took place between the meetings. A Latin America Mission reporter described the final service:

3(9) On the last night there was an all-night prayer meeting. About eleven o'clock we all gathered in the arbor and began singing. The service closed the next morning somewhere between five and six. I thought it would drag, but it didn't. There were times of testimony, there were long periods of prayer, there were times of song, there were messages. The very last thing, just as daylight was becoming clear all around us, we had the Lord's Supper together--nationals and missionaries from twelve different groups, worshipping together in the sacred communion.¹⁴

3.7

The Training Phase

The months of January and February of 1960 were set aside for the training of laymen to participate in the evangelism effort. The leaders chose thirteen strategic centers in the republic in which to give the instruction on an interdenominational basis, and the plan included that, in addition to the main centers, subsidiary locations be included for training classes to be given on a congregational basis. That is, visiting teachers taught the course in the main centers, and local pastors taught their own people in the subsidiary locations. The course involved eight

¹³Quoted in ibid., p. 40.)

(¹⁴ibid., p. 53.)

weekly classes. Even though, as a rule, the people are poor, the Evangelism in Depth leaders charged a fee for the instruction, for the following reasons:

3(10) To make the lessons mean more to each participant, and to eliminate at the outset those of marginal interest, it was boldly decided to charge an enrollment fee, to include the cost of the booklets and materials each member would receive. This fee scarcely covered actual cost, but it made each participant aware of the importance of the instruction.¹⁵

Each student received two Navigators Bible study booklets, along with a corresponding packet of cards with Bible verses printed on them, and he was to fill in the lessons and learn the assigned Bible verses for each class. That is, the course in all the centers was one and the same. The lessons took up the following topics:

- 3(11)
- Why every believer should be a fruitful Christian.
 - What are the requisites for being a fruitful Christian?
 - The Word of God in the life of the believer.
 - Prayer in the life of the believer.
 - The testimony of the fruitful disciple.
 - The disciple and personal work.
 - The disciple in the care of new believers.
 - The disciple as a counselor.¹⁶

Sergio
3(12) { The following results of these courses were noted by the Latin America Mission advisors: "Pastors found that whereas before the training period it had been difficult to find even one or two officials of the church qualified and ready to help in the work of visitation, now a good majority of the total congregation was ready to pitch in."¹⁷ This was the case

¹⁵Ibid., pp. 58-59.)

¹⁶Quoted in ibid., p. 58.)

¹⁷Ibid., p. 61.)

with the courses taught in the main centers chosen. However, concerning the courses taught by the local pastors in the subsidiary locations,

"With few exceptions these were not properly organized or supervised."¹⁸

3.8

The Visitation Phase

After the training of the laymen had been completed, the Evangelism in Depth leaders organized their forces for the visitation campaign. The aim of this phase was "to bring a word of testimony and leave a Gospel portion in each of the estimated 226,000 houses in the republic."¹⁹ First, they chose certain strategic centers for intensive visitation. They could undertake no more in view of the limited time--two weeks--set aside for this phase of the program, but they hoped that, once Evangelism in Depth was finished, the local Christians would continue until all the houses had been visited. Several outside organizations made valuable contributions during this phase of the effort. For instance, the American Bible Society not only provided the Bible portions for the distribution, but also lent its agents from Honduras and Guatemala. Also, the Moody Literature Mission and other organizations provided the tracts for this phase of the program. Finally, the teams went out two by two to assigned areas.

Just how did they approach a given house? The following eye witness report of the method employed by the coordinator of this aspect of the program, John Thomas, gives the answer:

3 (B) I watched John closely as he knocked on the door. He explained to the lady of the house that he was one of a group from the local Baptist congregation and that they were visiting the homes of the city in order to make a present to each family of a portion of the Word of God. 'Could we come in,' he asked, 'and explain the contents of the little booklet?' The lady received us politely and in no time we were seated in the sala and launched upon a discussion of the

¹⁸ Ibid., p. 105.)

¹⁹ Ibid., p. 65.)

Gospel.²⁰

The following is the experience of a Nicaraguan visitor:

3(14) There was one humble believer in the C.A.M. church in Managua, . . . who went out to visit and found himself in front of an elegant home. He looked down at his threadbare clothing, symbol of his uneducated, poor status in life, and knew he was completely out of place in ringing that doorbell and trying to witness for Christ. But--he had promised the Lord to cover this area! Almost trembling, he rang the bell. It turned out to be the home of a prosperous lawyer. More important, it turned out that God had prepared the lawyer's heart to be interested in the Gospel!²¹

During the course of the visitation phase, conversions were reported. Among the houses visited, there were "many in villages hitherto untouched."²² In general, all felt encouraged about this phase of the program; however, there was "a marked slacking up in visitation once the initial effort had come to an end."²³

The Regional Campaigns

3.9) In March, 1960, thirteen regional evangelism campaigns of two weeks duration were organized and carried out in the Nicaragua Evangelism in Depth effort. The following were the strategic centers chosen for these crusades: Masaya, Bluefields, Puerto Cabezas, Juigalpa, Masatepe, Diriamba, Esteli, Leon, Somoto, Matagalpa, Cornito, Granada, and Rivas. For these campaigns, the Latin America Mission coordinators had secured the services of evangelists, musicians, and a chalk artist, from Colombia, the United States, Guatemala, Costa Rica, and Ecuador. The regional committees advertised their meetings with handbills and street banners. In all of the crusades, the Christians sang the following theme song composed by Isais:

3 (15) We shall win Nicaragua for Jesus

²⁰ Ibid., pp. 64-65.

²¹ Ibid., p. 73.

²² Ibid., p. 66

²³ Ibid., p. 106.

If together we battle for Him;
 All the nation shall honor the Saviour
 And show forth His great power over sin;
 To the fight, then, with holy devotion,
 Preaching Christ to the lost everywhere!
 Loyal Christians, unite!
 Save our land for the Right!
 For Jesus will soon be here!²⁴

← The Masaya campaign drew national attention, although not of the kind that the regional committee had planned for. Three small congregations of the Foursquare, Nazarene, and Baptist denominations had joined hands for this crusade. They had rented a plaza for the meetings, and secured the services of an evangelist and a ~~Spanish~~ musician. In order to attract attention, the Protestants had staged a parade, and they had played Protestant music over a loud speaker before the evening meeting. On the first night, a large crowd had assembled, and some had even responded to an invitation to believe in the Christ of the Bible. Then, Catholic opposition drew up and distributed a flyer in the town. In addition to threatening the excommunication of those who facilitated and attended the meetings, the flyer contained these words:

3 (16) Much less will Nicaragua ever progress. Perhaps for this reason we are moving every day nearer chaos, because PROTESTANTISM is for Nicaragua a social scar, a bubonic plague, and with the so-called FREEDOM OF WORSHIP it has intruded like poverty.²⁵

← But this was not all. The Latin America Mission coordinators reported:

3 (17) On Tuesday night a Spanish priest, who was directing the Holy Mission at that time, passed by the meeting place followed by a small caravan of cars and bicycles. They honked their horns at top volume in an effort to drown out the voice of don Pedro [the speaker]. A few minutes later they returned with reinforcements and this time tried to drive at least one truck right into the meeting to disturb it.²⁶

²⁴ Ibid., pp. 14-15.

²⁵ Quoted in ibid., p. 77.)

²⁶ Ibid., pp. 77-78.

Still, the attack was not over, for Nicaraguan newspapers had been informed of the happenings, and they appeared with front page headlines like, "Missionary priest assaulted in Masaya by group of evangelists,"²⁷ and "Catholics of that locality yesterday prepared a serious protest."²⁸ That is, the facts had been twisted. All of this further aroused emotions, and disturbances continued throughout the week.

Even though the Nicaraguan Protestants had throughout their history experienced Catholic opposition, the magnitude of this intent discouraged the Masaya regional committee. They would have moved to one of the church buildings for the remainder of the meetings, had not Isais encouraged them to be firm. They did remain firm until the end of the campaign and thus won not only a moral victory but a victory for religious liberty. Furthermore, in spite of all the disturbances, one of the members of the Masaya committee could report, "Every night souls who were convinced of the divine truths went forward manifesting their disposition to accept Christ as personal Saviour. About 80 people made this decision."²⁹

The leaders of the Diriamba campaign reported the following concerning the man contracted to prepare the street banners:

3 (98) A local sign painter agreed to do the job, although he was not an evangelical. Later the experience brought him results: The Catholic priest called him a traitor and refused to allow him to participate in a friend's wedding; so the young painter decided to give a hearing to the Gospel and was soundly converted in the campaign!³⁰

In Bluefields, the campaign was conducted in the English language, since the majority of the population consists of West Indies negroes. The local churches of Bluefield had not worked together in public prior to this

²⁷ Quoted in ibid., p. 78.)

²⁸ Quoted in ibid.)

²⁹ Quoted in ibid., p. 80.)

³⁰ Ibid., p. 85.)

time. In Puerto Cabezas, three languages were used in the evangelism campaign, namely, the Spanish, the English, and the Indian language called Miskito.

← The regional evangelism endeavours were organized undertakings. However, from time to time the Latin America Mission advisors reported unscheduled activities, such as the following:

3 (19) There were often times when informal, interdenominational Gospel teams banded together to preach and visit an unevangelized area. On New Year's Day, a Baptist pastor, a C.A.M. missionary and a C.A.M. pastor went to the lonesome town of La Gateada, visited house to house and held a meeting. Nine accepted Christ and a family offered its home for any future meetings.³¹

The National Campaign

3:10 ← After Easter of 1960, the Evangelism in Depth effort in Nicaragua reached its climax in the three-week national evangelism campaign held in Managua. By way of preparation for this, 5:30 A.M. prayer meetings were organized in the churches. The committee decided to hold the meetings on the athletic field of the local Baptist school, and this, in turn, entailed building a platform, installing lights and a sound system, bringing in benches, and so forth. The team chosen to lead the meetings included the following: for evangelist, Jose Maria Rico, a Nicaraguan ex-priest who had been working as a missionary with the well-known interdenominational Bolivian Indian Mission; the chalk artist, Victor Carrido of the Latin America Mission; for soloist, George Sanchez of the Navigators; for song leader, Juan Isais; and for master of ceremonies, Baptist banker and president of the National Coordinating Committee, Rodolfo Mejia. A union choir was prepared to sing nightly.

← The committee used posters for publicity. Also, the Nicaraguan

³¹Ibid., p. 73.

Gospel Radio Station gave continuous coverage concerning the campaign. In addition, there was a half-hour television program featuring the chalk artist, which served to advertise the crusade. Concerning the commercial newspapers and radio stations, the Latin America Mission coordinators reported that "in spite of an obvious reluctance on the part of both the press and the radio stations to grant the legitimate use of such media-- here and there notices were secured."³² Another report told of the following unusual and effective means of advertising:

3(29) One big boost in publicity came when the committee was able to secure the services--freely offered--of a friendly pilot in the Nicaraguan Air Force to drop fliers announcing the meetings over every section of the city. Nearly 400,000 pieces of literature were dropped in the course of the crusade and did a great deal to alert the public to what was going on.

Over the years, liberal-minded military men, especially the younger officers, have often shown friendship toward Protestant missions.

Then, perhaps the best publicity of all happened in an unorganized way--the traditional opposition. It started with a telephone call for the evangelist on the afternoon before the opening meeting. The Latin America Mission reported it as follows:

3(30) 'Hello,' he said politely, and then froze and turned pale at the torrent of abuse and denunciation that came over the wire. He was, said a feminine voice, guilty of the greatest immoralities, unspeakably vile, a renegade and a breaker of homes. And he was warned that if he persisted in preaching that night in that Protestant meeting, she would make known to the newspapers the worst of personal charges.³⁴

Some Latin Americans deeply resent a man who renounces the priesthood. In addition, a man called to warn Rico of possible personal attack that night. Although the pastors were requested to be on the alert for any trouble, no violence occurred at the meeting. However, on the following day, the news-

³² Ibid., p. 93.

³³ Ibid., pp. 93-94.

³⁴ Ibid., p. 95.

papers of Managua did attack Rico. "He was an imposter, he had been expelled from the ministry for incompetence and immoral conduct--so charged prominent ecclesiastical authorities,"³⁵ the Latin America Mission coordinators reported. Later in the week, a daily carried a large photograph of the campaign platform and rows of empty seats--obviously taken in the afternoon--and claimed that the Protestant crusade had been a failure. All of this only amounted to extra publicity for Evangelism in Depth, as the following report of the coordinators indicates:

3(2*) The result of such unfair attacks was what might have been expected. Popular sympathy was aroused on behalf of the visiting evangelist; the crowds turned out night after night, growing steadily; time was secured over four commercial stations in addition to YNOL for remote control broadcasting of the message each night. All over the city and throughout the republic thousands tuned in to listen to the famous sermons which were being criticized so vigorously by the indignant local clergy.³⁶

One highlight of the last week of the campaign was an invitation to the team and committee members to visit Luis Somoza Debayle, the President of the republic. The following is a report of that visit:

3(23) It was a memorable visit with the president and the members of his cabinet--one that lasted well beyond midnight. The president wanted to see one of the chalk drawings and the magic black light of which he had heard. There was also a song that he had been hearing repeatedly over the radio and that he liked very much--'How Great Thou Art.' The conversation went on to the effect of the Gospel in transforming the lives of people, and time flew by as questions were asked.³⁷

The parade, reported as follows, was still another climactic event of the campaign:

3(24) [The parade] took place the afternoon of the last day of the crusade as some seven to eight thousand Nicaraguan Christians carrying banners and texts marched proudly through the main streets of the city singing the choruses and hymns that had been on their lips through all the joyous months of campaigning. Block after block, twelve abreast or more, they marched and sang, while the populace of Managua looked

³⁵Ibid., p. 97.

³⁶Ibid.

³⁷Ibid., p. 98.

on and pondered.³⁸

Over seven thousand people attended the closing meeting of the campaign, and with this the public phase of Evangelism in Depth in Nicaragua was over.

3.11

The Follow-up

The local churches were in charge of the follow-up, but they were not left to their own resources. Rice agreed to remain in the country for six weeks for local evangelism efforts of three days duration. "It was thought," the Latin America Mission advisors said, "that such meetings would serve as a bridge from the big crusades to the smaller and regular order of meetings in the church sanctuaries."³⁹ Other churches organized meetings with other special speakers for the same purpose. Furthermore, Clark of the Navigators remained for three months after the other Latin America Mission workers left, in order to "visit the churches, encourage the pastors in the work of visitation and follow-up, and in every way possible seek to spark a continuing witnessing activity on the part of each Christian in his church."⁴⁰

3.12

The Finances

Although the Evangelism in Depth effort in Nicaragua cost twice as much as the initial calculation, the total bill came to no more than \$40,000. The Latin America Mission paid \$25,000 of this, and the local churches and missions contributed \$15,000.

3.13

The Summary

Three weeks after the close of the effort, Latin America Mission leaders met with the Nicaragua pastors and committee members in order to

³⁸Ibid.)

³⁹Ibid., p. 100.)

⁴⁰Ibid.)

make an appraisal of the Evangelism in Depth program. The local reactions were enlightening. For instance, concerning the significance of the retreat for leaders, the Latin America Mission advisors noted the following opinion:

3 (25) The phase of the overall effort which drew the greatest commendation was the pastors' retreat held at the very beginning. The historic gathering of an overwhelming majority of the Christian workers of all the evangelical groups in the country to confront the challenge of a nation-wide witness and to consider a concrete practical plan for carrying it out was of incalculable significance for the history of the evangelical movement in Nicaragua.⁴¹

From this the Latin America Mission advisors deduced, not only the importance of the retreat, but also the importance of including the lay church members on the local level in some kind of ministry of renewal.

The following is another important evaluation on the part of local leaders: "The visitation program was hailed by the pastors as one of the best features of the entire movement. Many were the testimonies of church members awakened and blessed and new souls won to the Lord."⁴²

Of course, the local leaders praised the united campaigns, and there was no denying their importance from the standpoints of evangelism and ecumenicity. At the same time, the Latin America Mission coordinators reported that "the biggest danger in connection with them was the tendency of the Christians to consider them as the chief end and goal of the entire effort of Evangelism-in-Depth,"⁴³ whereas "these crusades were designed to serve as a stimulus to the personal witnessing and visitation which would both precede and follow such meetings."⁴⁴ Also, some of the local pastors complained that some of the visiting evangelists "pressed unduly for decisions, confusing outward manifestations for an inner work of grace

⁴¹Ibid., p. 103.

⁴³Ibid.

⁴²Ibid., p. 106.

⁴⁴Ibid.

and, as a result, had offended some of their listeners.⁴⁵ The suggestion was made to replace the traditional raising of hands and coming forward to an inquiry room with "a short aftermeeting for interested people and a program of personal follow-up visitation."⁴⁶

Was the response obtained by such an invitation method lasting? Concerning this, the Latin America Mission coordinators reported the following:

3(26) For months afterward Nicaraguan pastors told L.A.M. leaders of the continuing results. Some said its impact seemed to be snowballing. An unprecedented number of seekers were visiting churches all over the republic, fruit from the unforgettable days of Evangelism-in-Depth, as the pastors put it!⁴⁷

The Latin America Mission itself believed that the effort had been a success. The following three quotations sum up their own appraisal of Evangelism in Depth in Nicaragua:

3(27) There was first of all the amazing success in mobilizing a great majority of the total evangelical membership in the country from practically every church and denomination.⁴⁸

There were many other worthwhile things accomplished: an undeniable evangelistic outreach and impact upon the entire country, from the president on down; the training of hundreds of lay Christians for active service in their own churches; the vision imparted to scores of laymen; the new hope and energy instilled in more than one pastor who came to see his congregation in a new light--a community of everyday Christians brought together by Grace to serve and witness for Christ.⁴⁹

Perhaps the greatest accomplishment of all was that the effort in Nicaragua, with all its defects and imperfections, its inadequate forces and material resources, had nevertheless demonstrated what could be done by the Christians in one republic effectively to reach the entire country for Christ if there was a will and a clear plan of work.⁵⁰

⁴⁵Ibid., p. 107.

⁴⁶Ibid.

⁴⁷Ibid., p. 104.

⁴⁸Ibid., pp. 109-110.

X ⁴⁹Ibid., p. 111-112.

X ⁵⁰Ibid., p. 112.

- ← Let the summary statistics have the final word:
- ← 500 prayer cells organized.
- ← 2,000 Christians instructed in the training courses.
- ← 65,000 homes visited.
- ← 195,000 Bible portions and tracts distributed.
- ← 126,000 people who attended the campaigns (aggregate attendance).
- ← 2,500 professions of faith.

25% COTTON

EXCELLENCE

FOR RIVER

↓
4
THE APPLICATION,

4.1 COSTA RICA.

CHAPTER IV

THE APPLICATION OF THE PROGRAM IN COSTA
RICA, GUATEMALA, AND HONDURAS

Costa Rica

← Costa Rica, the scene of the second Evangelism in Depth effort sponsored by the Latin America Mission, is but one third the size of Nicaragua. As for population, at the time of the evangelism effort, that is, in 1960-61, it ascended to 1,200,000. Basically, the population lives off the land, and, happily, land distribution since colonial times has been more equitable in Costa Rica than in any other Latin American republic. That is, motive for social and economic unrest has been less in this republic than in other places of the continent. As for the cultural level of the people, about 80% enjoy literacy. Costa Rica leads all other Central American countries so far as railway and highway communications are concerned. Finally, government, with its seat in the capital, San Jose, has been relatively stable for over three-quarters of a century.

← Six years ago, sixteen missions were at work in Costa Rica, and the country had a Protestant communicant membership of 16,000. As for Lutherans, the Lutheran World Federation ^{had} provided a pastor for a European diaspora congregation. Concerning the Protestant Church, the Latin America Mission reported that the "Evangelicals of the country had long been guilty of an underdog complex, afraid to do much of anything that

might attract the attention of authorities.¹ However, after these Christians had followed the developments of Evangelism in Depth in neighboring Nicaragua, they urged the Latin America Mission to sponsor a similar effort among them, and 95% of the congregations pledged their cooperation. The Latin America Mission, for its part, could not deny their earnest plea.

← Once again, Juan Isais served as the Latin America Mission coordinator of the Evangelism in Depth effort. First, he organized the National Coordinating Committee which was composed of two representatives from each denomination or group. This committee elected the following officers: the Methodist pastor Carlos Luis Jimenez as president, the Central American Mission pastor Rafael Baltodano as vice president, the Central American Mission pastor Jose Ramon Aguilar as the recording secretary, the Baptist pastor Adrian Gonzalez as corresponding secretary, and the TIPC radio station manager Franklin Cabezas as treasurer. As for the organization of the committees, one difference from the Nicaragua arrangement concerned denominational activity. The Latin America Mission advisors explained it as follows:

4 (1) Cities where more than one evangelical group had a church were organized as united regional centers, including Costa Rica's miniature metropolis, San Jose. But other towns and areas, where only one denomination was preaching the Gospel, would be the responsibility of a denominational committee named to direct all the activities of that particular group. The result was a strengthening of Evangelism-in-Depth on a denominational level, and as it turned out, a wider outreach into even the tiniest hamlets of the country.²

The organization of the prayer cells was in charge of Christine Thor of the Latin America Mission. The one-day retreat in October, held

¹Latin America Mission, Evangelism-in-Depth (Chicago: Moody Press, 1961), p. 123.)

²Ibid., p. 119.)

at a Southern Baptist retreat center, drew 300 pastors and leaders from eleven denominations and five interdenominational groups. On that day, the first issue of En Marcha appeared.

← The first public activity of the effort was a Reformation Day rally, held in a downtown San Jose theater with the name la Reforma--the Reformation. Two thousand people attended to see the presentation of the National Coordinating Committee and a documentary film of the Nicaragua effort, as well as to hear the messages. To be sure, there could have been no more fitting date for the beginning of the effort designed to proclaim the message of the Gospel to Costa Rica.

← The training phase consisted of two weekly classes over a five week period. The course was taught in eleven different centers of the republic.

← The visitation phase began in January, 1961, for which the American Bible Society, the Moody Literature Mission, Christian Service, the Bible Meditation League, the Scripture Gift Mission, and other organizations provided Bible portions and literature. Some participating congregations met with an unexpected response to their visitation program, as may be seen by the following report:

4(2) Another Latin America Mission-affiliated group, in Desamparados, was amazed to see its tiny Sunday School double in attendance after the visitation campaign began. The pastor, Fabriciano Chacon, concluded that while the town had always been considered a 'hard' field, apparently the 'hard' ones had actually been the Christians who had not gone out to preach Christ to their neighbors.

Another report concerning the visitation phase is of significance, reading as follows, "Even in the most fanatical towns, opposition was slight."

⑤ "Latin America News Front," Latin America Evangelist (March-April, 1961), insert.)

④ Latin America Mission, Evangelism-in-Depth, p. 123.)

The tolerant spirit of John XXIII, who in 1959 had called for the Second Vatican Council, had begun to affect all quarters of the church, even the most conservative quarters.

← The leaders of the Costa Rica effort made an important addition to the program to follow immediately after the visitation phase and to be of particular concern to the denominations. The Latin America Mission explained it as follows: "Shortly after the visitation campaign got on its feet, churches were encouraged to invite guest speakers for local evangelistic campaigns. Each denomination was responsible for this phase."⁵ Of course, such an arrangement would not only make for greater evangelistic impact, but it would also be more acceptable to groups of a strong denominational character. The Latin America Mission sister churches took advantage of the new local campaign phase as follows:

4(3) L.A.M. churches enjoyed visits from nine Nicaraguan pastors who had experienced Evangelism-in-Depth in their own parishes last year, plus a pastor from Honduras, two Bible Society workers, and two Spanish-speaking pastors who took 'missionary journeys' from New York City.⁶

← Still another addition to the program occurred in the Costa Rica effort, namely, endeavors to reach special groups. The Latin America Evangelist reported that these special endeavors included "a myriad of activities for children, young people and university students."⁷ Concerning activities for children, the magazine reported:

4(4) More than 150 Good News Clubs for children were organized in Christian homes, involving the training of hundreds of teachers, helpers, and hostesses. Mr. and Mrs. Larry Lorensen of Child Evangelism Fellowship headed up this project. Daily Vacation Bible Schools were also promoted throughout the nation.⁸

⁵"Latin America News Front," Latin America Evangelist, insert.

⁶Ibid.

⁷Ibid.

⁸Ibid.

There was also a rally for children in the National Gymnasium, a large arena in the capital. Concerning evangelism among the university students, a Protestant fellowship group at the University of Costa Rica distributed 4000 New Testaments to fellow students and 350 Bibles to the professors. In addition, the Martin Luther film was shown in public theaters for which university students were given a special invitation, and permission was obtained for a student rally in the university auditorium. Of course, such special activities and endeavors made the evangelistic outreach more complete.

Following the endeavors to reach special groups, ten regional evangelism campaigns, carried out in population centers where more than one denomination labored, took place.

The two-week national evangelistic campaign, held in the month of April, was the high point of the Costa Rica effort. The series of meetings took place in the National Gymnasium with a capacity of 6000 people, but only after the Protestant leaders had endured weeks of negotiations with the National Sports Commission before permission had been granted. The leaders advertised the campaign through the press, radio, and television, and the meetings were broadcasted by both a commercial station and the Protestant station TIFC. Concerning the use of television, the Latin America Mission advisors reported:

4(5)

Maybe time could be secured on the television station, people said, but the program would have to be 'cultural' with no direct mention of the Gospel. Juan Isais visited the owner of the station and in no time had a contract for a weekly telecast, unashamedly evangelical, at the best time of all [sic] 9:00 to 9:30 on Saturday nights!

Such incidents as this make up the drama of Protestant advance in modern

(Latin America Mission, Evangelism-in-Depth, pp. 124-125.)

Latin America. As for the team members of the national campaign, the leaders secured the services of Fernando Vangioni of the Plymouth Brethren Church in Argentina; John Moximan, a chalk artist from the Voice of the Andes radio station in Ecuador; and the former opera singer Francisco Bilbao from Chile.

← During the progress of the national campaign, a press controversy took place concerning the use of the National Gymnasium by Protestants, but especially concerning the late withdrawal of permission for a parade which public authorities had previously given to Protestants. Prior to that time, Protestants had never been granted permission for a parade. It was to have been the climax of the Evangelism in Depth effort and to have marked the seventieth anniversary of evangelical work in Costa Rica. In spite of Protestant appeals to both the president of the republic and to the supreme court, the cancellation of the permit was upheld. Government authorities defended the cancellation as a measure to prevent disorder in a pre-election year. At the same time, the Latin America Mission reported that "an official declaration of the Roman Catholic Church admitted manipulation of government authorities to revoke the parade license which had been granted and countersigned a month earlier."¹⁰ Another aspect of the controversy was related by the mission as follows:

4(6) Story of the week in Costa Rica was that the president of the SIP (Interamerican Press Society) Ricardo Castro Beeche and his pro-government daily 'La Nacion' remained silent while most other news-papers sided with the Protestants to denounce the government's pusillanimous and anti-constitutional attitude. Editor Castro Beeche, as SIP president, has been travelling up and down the Americas defending minority rights and fighting government censorship.¹¹

¹⁰ "Latin America News Front," Latin America Evangelist (May-June, 1961), p. 13.)

¹¹ Ibid.)

Put simply, the debate was another incident in the struggle for religious liberty in a traditionally Catholic country. In the midst of it all, attendance increased at the campaign meetings, and "scores came forward nightly in response to the clear presentation of the Gospel by Argentine evangelist Fernando Vangioui."¹² ()

Statistics of the Costa Rica effort include the following:

1,000 prayer cells organized.

4,000 lay workers instructed.

176 Bible clubs and Daily Vacation Bible Schools conducted.

100,000 Bible portions and 300,000 tracts distributed.

The Latin America Mission gave the following early assessment of the lasting results of the effort:

4 (7) New believers in substantial numbers are reported by pastors to have swelled attendance at their churches.

More evangelistic zeal among church members is also seen by the ministers. Many believers testify that the visitation program was the greatest experience of their Christian life.

Follow-up of interested individuals contacted during the visitation and evangelistic campaigns continues, with many finding Christ.

TV series begun during the San Jose campaign has been taken on by a number of local churches in a rotation system, assuring continuation of the witness at the prize Saturday night hour of 9:00-9:30.

Good News Clubs, originally scheduled for five weeks in January and February, persist as a permanent part of the outreach of children in many congregations.

Unity in Christ is more palpably sensed among Christians of different denominations, fruit of the united evangelistic effort.¹³ ()

In the light of the foregoing, it is not surprising that the Latin America Mission, in its mission directors' meeting of September, 1961, took the following action:

4 (8) That as we have prayerfully considered the ministry of Evangelism-in-Depth in relation to the other ministries of the Latin America Mission

¹² Ibid.)

¹³ ("Latin America News Front," Latin America Evangelist (July-August, 1961), p. 13.)

and in the light of the critical days in which we live, we record our conviction that this program should be central and have priority. Therefore we commit ourselves anew to its faithful prosecution. ()

4.2

Guatemala

The third Evangelism in Depth effort sponsored by the Latin America Mission, in Guatemala, was a considerably larger undertaking in several ways. For instance, at the time of the effort, this Central America country had a population of 4,000,000 people, more than in Nicaragua and Costa Rica put together. Of this population 54% are Indian, and the remaining 46% are mestizo. The large number of Indians live in the rugged and volcanic highlands of the interior, where they retain the traditional cultural patterns in large measure. As might be expected, the illiteracy rate is high--70%. In spite of their large numbers, not the Indians but the rural land owners and urban elements have dominated the civil and political life of the republic. But their rule has been characterized by instability, so that when General Miguel Ydigoras assumed office in 1958 and endeavored to establish a democratic pattern, it was after the first free elections in 137 years. The seat of government is located in the largest population center, Guatemala City, with a population of 437,000.

The Latin America Mission also had a larger Protestant body with which to work, namely, 36,000 communicant members gathered into 1,100 organized and unorganized congregations, virtually 100% of which cooperated in the effort. The participating groups included Assemblies of God, Central America Mission, Church of God, Church of God Full Gospel, Emmanuel Mission, Foursquare Gospel, Friends (California), Independent Mission, Interdenominational Mission, Nazarene Church, Pentecostal Unification,

¹¹ Minutes of a 1961 Meeting of the Mission Directors of the Latin America Mission, Quoted in "Evangelism in Depth," Latin America Evangelist (January-February, 1962), p. 2.)

Presbyterian (United), Primitive Methodist, Southern Baptist, Spanish American Mission, Evangelical Schools of Central America, and other unaffiliated groups and organizations. These represent a variety of theological points of view, such as, Arminian, Calvinist, dispensational, and Pentecostal. The Lutheran Church--Missouri Synod, at work in this country, did not cooperate with the effort.

← In the fall of 1961, the Latin America Mission announced that the previously scheduled effort in Guatemala would have to be postponed indefinitely due to the poor health of Strachan who was to have participated in the effort, and due to a financial deficit incurred in the previous efforts in Nicaragua and Costa Rica. However, in the November-December issue of the Latin America Evangelist, it was able to report the following:

4(9) Reinstatement of the campaign is a result of divine intervention which met these needs. Through the prayers and practical concern of Christian friends, mission deficits were cleared during September, and the Lord has restored Dr. Strachan physically for activity in the campaign.¹⁵

Such behind-the-scenes conflicts and triumphs of faith are also a part of this and any other Christian undertaking.

← The Latin America Mission assigned thirteen coordinators to the Guatemala effort, several of which were loaned from other interdenominational missions--Berean Mission, Youth for Christ, and Central American Mission. Once again, Isais acted as the national coordinator. As for president of the National Coordinating Committee, Virgilio Zapata, the principal of an interdenominational Christian high school in Guatemala, was chosen. In addition to the central committee, thirty-two regional committees functioned in the Guatemala effort.

¹⁵"Latin America News Front," Latin America Evangelist (November-December, 1961), p. 13.

The retreat for leaders was only a part of a larger retreat for pastors of the entire Central America and Mexico area, sponsored by the World Vision organization of Bob Pierce. The retreat took place in the month of January, 1962, in Guatemala City. Over 500 Guatemala pastors and missionaries, out of a total of 1500 that gathered for the larger conference, participated.

Also in January, the leaders publicly inaugurated the Evangelism in Depth effort with a rally in a Guatemala City park. During this meeting, the national committee members were introduced to the 3000 Evangelicals in attendance. To begin with, the leaders printed 25,000 copies of En Marcha, but they soon had to increase the number to 40,000.

Two Latin America Mission coordinators were in charge of the organization of cottage prayer groups throughout the country. In connection with this phase of the effort, the leaders sponsored a daily radio broadcast named A Call to Prayer. The organization of the prayer cells took place in the months of February and March.

In April and May, training classes for pastors were set up in sixteen different points throughout the country. The 1000 pastors, then, gave the instruction in basic Bible truths and witnessing to the laymen. The months of June and July were devoted to house-to-house visitation and to evangelism campaigns in the churches. The following report of the Latin America Mission shows the close relation between the training, visitation, and local campaign phases of the effort:

4(10) June has been set aside for local evangelistic campaigns in every church in the country. Clark Scanlon of the Baptist Mission is chairman of the committee promoting these campaigns, in which believers will use what they have learned in the training classes--visiting, counselling, praying, inviting, especially their unsaved

relatives. ¹⁶ ()

Brief reports indicate how meaningful the phases of training, visitation, and local campaigns were to given denominations and to the Church as a whole. For instance, "Presbyterian churches of Guatemala City mobilized 300 couples on the opening Sunday¹⁷ of the visitation campaign. Also, "Christians of Quezaltenango visited every home of their city, began reaching out to surrounding country."¹⁸ Further, "A spot check of the statistical records of one denomination in the Quezaltenango area indicated the following jump in evangelistic activity as a result of Evangelism-in-Depth: December, 1961: 489 visits; July, 1962: 1,569 visits; October, 1962: 1,054 visits."¹⁹ Finally, as a result of the visitation and local crusade phases, the Latin America Mission reported "at least 10,000 conversions plus reconsecrations."²⁰ ()

← During the months of July and August, a variety of activities designed to reach special groups took place. For young people, a three-day youth congress, which drew audiences of up to 3,000, was held in Guatemala City. For women of the English-speaking colony, Bible classes were organized. For professional people, suppers including a Gospel message were organized. Workers visited the jails, and teams conducted evangelistic meetings in schools, factories, and public squares.

¹⁶ "Latin America News Front," Latin America Evangelist (May-June, 1962), p. 17.)

¹⁷ "Latin America News Front," Latin America Evangelist (July-August, 1962), p. 17.)

¹⁸ Ibid.

¹⁹ W. Dayton Roberts, "Is the Job Finished?" Latin America Evangelist (March-April, 1963), p. 3.)

²⁰ "What is Evangelism-in-Depth?" Latin America Evangelist (March-April, 1963), p. 5.)

Sorgina
41(11)

Several mobile audio-visual units, staffed by teams of five members, including twenty United States college students who had travelled to Guatemala for the summer, were employed with the aim of reaching into the rural villages. The following unpretentious report describes how they worked:

4-(12) The Central American Mission radio station, TGNP, as well as some of the local ones had given advance notice that we were coming. So we always had somebody waiting for us. We'd get in there in the middle of the day and after we'd made arrangement with the mayor, the chief of police, or whatever, getting permisos to broadcast music and show a film, we would begin to go around and broadcast band music and advertise throughout the pueblo the film that we were going to show that night.

.....
 Then later in the day, along about six o'clock at night we'd get out in the central park or plaza and we'd start setting up the equipment. There would always be a white wall some place. We'd set ourselves opposite it and play music, and the crowd would begin to gather. . . .

We would show the John Glenn film and then in between, while we were changing films, we would ask a local pastor to lead in prayer, make a few announcements, and then the gospel film. At the close of that we would pass out tracts and do personal work with those who responded to an invitation.²¹ ()

The leaders of the mobile audio-visual units reported that they showed films and preached to 51,000 people.

In the month of September, united regional evangelism campaigns were held in thirty-three cities. In these crusades, evangelists from other Central American countries and Mexico were secured for the preaching of the Word. Twenty-two parades formed a part of these efforts.

In November, the Evangelism in Depth leaders sponsored the four-day, city-wide evangelistic campaign in the Olympic Stadium of Guatemala City. The meetings were inaugurated by the president of the republic, Miguel Ydigoras Fuentes, before an audience of 10,000 people. The Latin

²¹Lester J. Scoerheide, "Reaching the Inaccessible," Latin America Evangelist (November-December, 1962), pp. 14-16.)

America Mission reported that the audience rose to their feet when the president entered the stadium "accompanied by a military band, top navy and army officials and a prominent evangelical congressman."²² The local newspapers gave the inauguration front-page coverage and "stressed the united character of the Evangelism-in-Depth effort."²³ Audiences of from 4,000 to 15,000 heard the evangelistic preaching of the Methodist Bishop Eleazar Guerra from Mexico and ^{of} Vangioni. In addition to special music, a choir of 300 voices provided the music.

On the morning of the last day of the campaign, the day scheduled for the parade as well as the final meeting, the Guatemala Air Force broke out in revolt against the government and fighting took place in the city.

At noon the government announced that it had the situation under control,

and immediately the Protestants began to assemble for the parade. Because of the unsettled conditions, most of the 75,000 people expected to participate could not do so. Still, the parade consisted of 15,000 marchers and twenty-eight floats, which ex-

tended over a distance of twenty-six blocks. A United States visitor reported this significant event as follows:

4 (13) The parade on Sunday afternoon, which took an hour to pass one observation point, brought tears to the eyes of onlookers from the United States. It was a strange mixture--beautiful floats and humble, barefooted Indian mothers carrying their babies; well-dressed middle class believers and those in tattered clothes; smiling, singing women and children and grim-faced men and grandfathers. They were there for all Guatemala to see, carrying signs and banners proclaiming Jesus Christ as the answer.²⁴

That afternoon, there could have been no more dramatic ending to the Evangelism in Depth effort. In spite of the light rain and the tense political

²²"Latin America News Front," Latin America Evangelist (January-February, 1963), p. 17.)

²³Ibid.

²⁴James W. Reapsome, "A Sunday to Remember in Guatemala," Latin America Evangelist (March-April, 1963), p. 16.)

situation, twice as many people were on hand than had attended on any night during the four weeks. Then President Ydigoras appeared. Christianity Today reported the event as follows:

4(14) The barrel of his sub-machine gun was still warm when Guatemala President Miguel Ydigoras Fuentes drove into the capital city's Olympic stadium. Some 30,000 of his countrymen stood and cheered while the determined, 67-year-old chief executive climbed out of his black Cadillac in the unmistakable image of an all-time hero for the Protestant minority in Latin America. Rifle fire which still crackled in the distance lent a seemingly incongruous backdrop to the biggest Protestant event in the country's history. But, Ydigoras, confident he had crushed a military revolt which had almost taken his life a few hours before, took a seat in the stands and witnessed the entire service.

.....
He was dressed in a black hat and black coat over a sport shirt with turtle neck sweater. Some 30 bodyguards accompanied him.²⁵
afternoon,

That ✓ 200 people responded to the altar call invitation.

Concerning finances, the Guatemala effort cost \$122,000 (U. S. currency), one third of which came from local sources. As for the local expenses, the Latin America Mission reported that "most local expenditures were borne by Guatemalan Christians."²⁶ The graph on the following page is a complete financial report of the evangelistic effort.

The Latin America Mission gave out the following summary statistics for the ten-month effort:

- 6,135 prayer cells organized.
- 40,000 laymen taught in the training phase, although only 5,000 took the final examination.
- 250,000 homes visited in 8,000 cities, towns, and villages by 5,000 laymen and leaders.
- 500,000 Gospel portions and 1,000,000 tracts distributed.

²⁵"Evangelism Under Fire," Christianity Today, VII, No. 6 (December 21, 1962), 33.

²⁶Roberts, Latin America Evangelist, p. 3.

EVANGELISM-IN-DEPTH, GUATEMALA (For the Year Ended November 30, 1962)

				TOTALS			
Acc't No.	Item	Notes	Receipts	Expenditures	Receipts	Expenditures	
520 - 10	Gift Income		\$ 54539 -	\$	\$	\$	
11	Designated by Board of Trustees		8811 -				
50	Earned income		938 -				
80	Other income		<u>927 -</u>				
	Total Income				65215 -		
521 - 1	Administration			12807 -			
2	Personnel - subsidies, honoraria, salaries			13610 -			
3	Hospitality			3246 -			
4	Transportation - International and local (1)			15365 -			
5	Properties - rentals, taxes, improvements			5316 -			
6	Materials - books, manuals, music			1415 -			
7	Publicity and Promotion (2)			10777 -			
8	Activities			353 -			
9	Miscellaneous			<u>3259 -</u>			
	Total Expenditures					66148 -	
123	Accounts receivable				2625 -		
389	Less specially designated funds				<u>- 1350 -</u>		
	Total Credits				66490 -		
	Total Debits					66148 -	
	Balance on Hand					<u>342 -</u>	
	<u>TOTAL COST OF EVANGELISM-IN-DEPTH IN GUATEMALA</u>						
	Direct expenditures by L.A.M.					66148 -	
	Maintenance of L.A.M. missionaries (3)					10836 -	
	Cost to other missions of personnel on loan					7560 -	
	Expended by Central Committee, Guatemala			29233 -			
	Expended by Regional Committee, Guatemala			<u>8250 -</u>			
	Total Expended by Guatemalans					37483 -	
	GRAND TOTAL					<u>\$ 122027 -</u>	

Notes - (1) Includes executive travel plus transportation to and from Guatemala for evangelists, musicians and team members. (2) Includes publication of 21 issues of EN MARCHA, fortnightly newspaper. (3) Includes support of Isais, Thor, Hornstra, Cruz (but not of missionaries on loan from other boards).

cover.) 21 "Evangelism in Depth, Guatemala," [Latin America Evangelist (March-April, 1963)], inside back

← 15,000 "residual conversions--not just raised hands."²⁸

Summary
4/15/63

W. Dayton Roberts, in an evaluation of the campaigns, reported the following: "The 'in-depth' aspect of last year's Guatemalan effort was particularly successful in the secondary cities and rural areas, they [the advisors] reported. The impact on the more sophisticated capital city was definite but less notable."²⁹ Concerning the effort as a whole, Roberts made the following general statement: "The conclusion is inescapable. Guatemala has been shaken spiritually during 1962 as never before. It has been a miracle, but it is a simple fact."³⁰ Who can deny it?

4.3 ← Measures for Enlargement of Ministry

← After the Guatemala effort, the Latin America Mission made two important decisions designed to enable it to spread the influence of the Evangelism in Depth ministry. Strachan explained this plan for enlargement as an imperative "for today's Latin America, and for the accomplishment of all that our Lord commands."³¹ First, it was decided that the function of the national coordinator be carried out by a resident of the country in which the campaign was to be held, and not by a member of the Latin America Mission. Thereafter, the Mission representatives would serve as advisors. In keeping with this, in 1963, the Mission conducted a series of brief institutes in countries where it expected to carry out

²⁸Ibid., p. 2.)

²⁹W. Dayton Roberts, "Christian Coordination," Christianity Today, VII, No. 25 (September 27, 1963), 38.)

³⁰Roberts, "Is the Job Finished?" Latin America Evangelist, p. 1.)

³¹R. Kenneth Strachan, "1964: The Greatest Challenge," Latin America Evangelist (September-October, 1963), p. 2.)

Evangelism in Depth programs, for the purpose of finding local leaders who could serve as coordinators. These coordinators were then brought to Costa Rica in the fall of 1963, for an intensive course in coordination procedures. The second decision made by the mission was to carry out Evangelism in Depth efforts in several countries simultaneously.

4.4 Honduras

Poverty, illiteracy (70%), and lack of internal communications characterize the Central American country of Honduras. The semi-feudalistic social and economic structure of the republic is the main cause of these ills of the people, and the lack of roads and railroads prevails in spite of the fact that 88% of the population is rural. The two million inhabitants of Honduras have lacked responsible and capable democratic leadership, and so have been condemned to live in one of the most backward republics of Central America. Tegucigalpa, with a population of 100,000, is the seat of government of this unfortunate little land.

Of course, Catholicism is the traditional religion; however, the constitutionality of religious liberty has permitted the presence of Protestant missions and churches. Protestant forces are divided into twenty different groups, in spite of the fact that the communicant membership does not reach 10,000. Sixteen of these groups decided to cooperate with the Evangelism in Depth effort. For the Honduras evangelism program, the Latin America Mission assigned Rodolfo Crus and William Cook as the chief advisors. The local churches chose Enrique Penalva as their coordinator.

The public inauguration of the program took place in mid-September, 1963, in the city of Tegucigalpa. For this occasion, 800 people attended.

Immediately, the leaders began the work of organizing prayer cells. Although the prayer groups are not intended for the unchurched, "one en-

thusiastic group told how 44 non-Christians had been invited to the prayer meetings and had been given a Gospel witness.³² Indeed, "from the very start conversions were reported in cells scattered all over the country."³³

Beginning in October, 425 pastors were instructed in eleven different centers, so that they, in turn, might take the leadership in the training phase of the program. One training class for laymen was held in the national penitentiary.

In the same month of October, a revolt overthrew the government of Ramon Villeda Morales. Christine Thor, in charge of the organization of prayer cells, reported one incident in those tense days:

4(16) Bill and Sheila Burchett and I are living on the second floor of a house, the first floor of which is used as a chapel . . . This morning just before Sunday School a jeep and a truck with 20 or 25 well armed soldiers drove up . . . [one] trained a machine gun on the front door and put a soldier on guard, with his gun pointed directly at the door. The house was pretty well surrounded. Bill opened the door and invited the soldiers in. They had come to search the house because they had heard that the occupants were helping the guerrillas and that several boxes were supposed to have been delivered . . . which they wanted to inspect. Ten or eleven soldiers entered the house and searched it from top to bottom. They were very courteous . . . I gave them Scripture portions and tracts and they thanked me and left.³⁴

Before the fighting was over an estimated 500 people were killed, and the tense political situation prevailed throughout the remaining months of the evangelistic effort.

In the visitation phase, literature in Spanish, English, and two Indian dialects was distributed. One Latin America Mission advisor re-

³²"Latin America News Front," Latin America Evangelist (November-December, 1963), p. 17.

³³Latin America Mission, Honduras, A Report of the Evangelism in Depth Effort in Honduras, 1963-1964 (San Jose, Costa Rica: Latin America Mission, 1964), p. 1.

³⁴Christine Thor, quoted in [no title], Latin America Evangelist (January-February, 1964), inside back cover.

ported the following:

4(17) Two of our workers have been carrying on a visitation campaign in four or five villages in a district along the north coast near Trujillo. The result has been the salvation of 35 persons, something unknown before in this area. ³⁵ ()

Most of the rural visitation was done by mule transportation. However, the Missionary Aviation Fellowship also participated in this and other phases of the effort in the rural areas.

← Local evangelistic crusades were held in 250 churches. Some of these campaigns were conducted among non-Spanish-speaking groups of Indians.

← The efforts to evangelize special groups included some significant innovations. For instance, the Southern Baptists lent their ~~own~~ half-hour of television time for special programs sponsored by Evangelism in Depth to reach the upper class. The upper class of Latin America is markedly exclusive, and it requires such special efforts to reach them. Again, a national youth congress sponsored, among other features, a parade which ended at a national monument in Tegucigalpa where the Protestant youth gave stirring speeches on the relevance of the Gospel for national life. On the next day, the local newspapers reported this event, for the sense of patriotism in the Latin America republics is unusually strong. The meetings of the congress, held in the national theater, were televised on the one station in Honduras. Still another unique type of activity during this phase of the program consisted of visits to rural areas made by teams of evangelists, doctors, and dentists. The Latin America Mission described this aspect of the effort as follows:

4(18) Many [Hondurans] are so isolated that medical care never reaches them. Borrowing an idea from the Costa Rican Evangelical Alliance,

'Good-Will Caravans' penetrated inaccessible parts of the country with help for the body as well as the soul. Twenty-two laymen, together with a doctor, dentist and dental assistant were air-lifted by Missionary Aviation Fellowship into out-of-the-way places. In one village, Christians had previously visited but had never been able to make headway. The Lord used the medical-evangelistic team to win some 30 people in that town. Today a church has sprung up in that place.³⁶ ()

← Even during the Christmas holidays, the Evangelism in Depth program continued. Advisor Cook reported on these activities as follows:

4(10) "Putting their training and enthusiasm to work, Honduras believers dedicated the closing days of 1963 to 'Operation Christmas,' a unique effort to present the heart of the Christmas message to relatives and friends through special greeting cards, musical programs, and suppers."³⁷

← After local evangelistic campaigns in 250 churches, the Evangelism in Depth leaders organized twelve regional crusades. The campaign at San Pedro Sula was exceptionally successful, according to the following account of the Latin America Mission:

4(10) In San Pedro Sula, second city in Honduras, lying in the heart of the banana belt, a choice location was found. Up to 3000 people attended nightly services held in the old army barracks facing the main square. There were no seats, no lights and no roof. But the members of the six evangelical churches worked together erecting a platform and counselling rooms, installing lights, and improvising seats for 2,000 from planks and cement blocks. The prayer cells were 'working' too. Then adults and children from the churches fanned out through the city visiting, inviting people and passing out fliers announcing the meetings. Over 950 decisions were recorded in this city of just 54,000 inhabitants. Ray Loyola of the Latin America Mission was the evangelist God used.³⁸

← The national campaign took place in the month of April, with 1500 people attending nightly to hear the preaching of Vangioni. The Latin

³⁶ Ibid., p. 2.)

³⁷ William Cook, "Honduras' Hour of Opportunity," Latin America Evangelist (March-April, 1964), p. 6.

³⁸ Latin America Mission, Honduras, p. 2.

America Mission reported the following concerning the response among society people:

4(10) A surprising number of well-to-do folks attended, after hearing Dr. Vangioni on the TV program. Several came to know Christ after quiet chats with him or with Ray Loyola. A supreme-court judge of the recently deposed regime, an army officer and many business men were won.³⁹

However, most of the 750 people who professed conversion during the national campaign went forward in response to the altar call. The parade included twenty-five floats and 4,500 marchers which covered a ~~two and~~ ^{two and} one-half mile ~~one-half-mile~~ route. Because some of the marchers carried radios and the HRVC radio station broadcasted the singing, all of the marching group sang the hymns and songs in unison. The attendance at the closing rally was 3,500. "According to Enrique Penalva, president of the national coordinating committee," the Mission reported, "it was the greatest united evangelistic effort ever held in Honduras."⁴⁰

← As for the follow-up, the Latin America Mission reported that "some of the missionaries will remain in Honduras for several months to help national churches integrate the large number of new believers into their fellowship."⁴¹

← The article "Honduras . . . Six Months ^{after}" published by the Latin America Evangelist is important. It contains the evaluation of Burnis Bushong, the national coordinator in charge of the follow-up phase, after he finished his assignment. As to the methodology in general, he stated, "I conclude that Evangelism-in-Depth is a sound, work-

³⁹Ibid., p. 3.

⁴⁰Ibid., p. 2.

⁴¹"Climactic Events of Evangelism-in-Depth in Honduras," Latin America Evangelist (May-June, 1964), p. 14.

able strategy.⁴² As to the lasting results of the effort, Bushong concluded the following:

4 (2)

The missions and churches that cooperated wholeheartedly in the Evangelism-in-Depth movement in Honduras have reaped a great harvest of souls.

.....
For example, we surveyed our field before Evangelism-in-Depth and found that there were believers in 70 towns. After one year of Evangelism-in-Depth, we have work in 120 places. Some of our churches doubled in size during the year. Some have had to start building programs. We could use 25 to 30 new pastors right now in our Honduras field.

.....
The same kind of solid growth took place with the other groups in the country. The united regional campaign in San Pedro Sula resulted in the conversion of as many new believers as the previous total church membership in that city.

In one Indian area known as Gracias a Dios, about ten per cent of the population accepted Christ during Evangelism-in-Depth.

The results of Evangelism-in-Depth are being felt even beyond the aspect of church growth. I find that public feeling about evangelicals is tremendously improved. I don't think the general public in Tegucigalpa had noticed evangelicals very much before they staged the final parade there. But by all odds it was the biggest parade Tegucigalpa had ever seen, even though evangelicals comprise only 1 1/2% of the total population.⁴³

The summary statistics for the eight-month effort are as follows:

15,000 people organized into 2651 prayer cells.

6,000 instructed in the training classes.

75,000 homes visited.

1030 population centers visited, 886 of which had no Protestant witness.

200,000 Scripture portions distributed.

5,000 professions of faith.

110 new congregations formed.

Beyond all doubt, this was a remarkable evangelistic effort.

⁴² "Honduras . . . Six Months After," Latin America Evangelist (March-April, 1965), p. 14.

⁴³ Ibid.

CHAPTER V

THE APPLICATION OF THE PROGRAM IN VENEZUELA,
BOLIVIA, AND DOMINICAN REPUBLIC

Venezuela

From the standpoint of population and territorial spread, Venezuela is the largest country in which the Evangelism in Depth program has been applied. This republic which embraces an area the size of Texas, Louisiana, and Arkansas, is the home of eight million people--a population which is growing at the annual rate of 3.3 per cent. Caracas, the booming capital of Venezuela, has one and one half million people. Of course, the prosperity of this country is based on its rich deposits of oil and iron. Because of this wealth of natural resources, as well as the proximity of the country to the Panama Canal and to Cuba, and its general importance in South America, Venezuela has been a special target of Communist subversion activity directed by Fidel Castro. Every form of underground activity has been employed by the local and infiltrated subversion elements, but so far the 4,000 soldiers actively engaged in opposing them and especially the traditionally democratic idealism of this land of Simon Bolivar have prevented them from leading Venezuela into the Communist orbit. In recent years, the government has initiated extensive measures of social reform, and illiteracy has been reduced to 30%.

Although Protestant numerical strength in relation to the total population is minimal, the morale of the Evangelicals is high. They num-

bered no more than 16,000 communicant members in but 500 organized and un-organized churches, and they served no more than 220 of the 23,000 cities, towns, and villages of the country, when the Evangelism in Depth effort began. There were no more than twenty-six churches in Caracas, with a membership amounting to only one third of 1% of the total population of that metropolis. Still, in 1964, the leaders of virtually all of the churches had the courage to undertake the evangelization of their land.

← In Venezuela, the Lutheran World Federation helps to maintain seven pastors who serve 3000 European diaspora Christians speaking eight different languages. Also, the Lutheran Church--Missouri Synod works in and out of Caracas.

← The effort began in January, 1964, with Jonas Gonzalez and Rafael Baltodano leading the Latin America Mission advisor team of eight. In the same month, the organization of the prayer groups took place. One prayer group of students from the University of Merida contained five medical students.

← The training phase of the Evangelism in Depth program in Venezuela took place in the months of February and March. The advisors and local leaders organized institutes for the training of 900 leaders who, in turn, would instruct the members of the local congregations.

← In May, 12,000 Protestants started the house-to-house visitation campaign, and the response of those visited was immediate. Latin America Mission advisor Gonzalez wrote, "Christians began their visitation effort on May 3, and reported that 2000 persons received Christ as their Saviour that same day."¹ Another Latin America Mission news release informed,

¹Jonas Gonzalez, quoted in "Latin America News Front," Latin America Evangelist (September-October, 1964), p. 18.)

"One church in Maracaibo reported 178 won to Christ in the month of May alone."² Even if campaign enthusiasm and losses are taken into consideration, still these reports by a head Latin America Mission advisor indicate an unusual responsiveness in Venezuela. A Presbyterian pastor who participated in this visitation phase gave the following detailed description of one of his experiences:

5(1) I came to a very poor house, the essence of loneliness and misery. A senora appeared, looking alone and forsaken. She invited me to come in. When I told her the message of the Cross, she interrupted, [sic] Look, Reverend, do you really believe that if there were such a life of joy and peace as you're describing I would be in this condition? Several weeks ago I lost my 12-year-old son--he died of a heart ailment. My husband took the money from the boy's policy and then abandoned me for another woman, leaving me with nine children. To make matters worse, my mother is dying with cancer.' Thus she described her tragedy and began to wail.

But before comforting her in her grief . . . I told her my own experience--the one I had lived through. As she heard how Christ gave me peace and how I found the solution to my problem, the Holy Spirit prepared the heart of that woman so that she accepted Christ.

June was the month dedicated to evangelism campaigns in the local churches, and once again, the participating congregations experienced a remarkable responsiveness in the respective communities. The Latin America Mission reported, "Conversions were reported at the rate of more than 26 per church during this phase of Evangelism-in-Depth."⁴

Efforts to reach special groups were made in the Evangelism in Depth program in Venezuela. For instance, early in 1964, the leaders organized eleven Bible camps for young people in different parts of the country, with a total attendance of 1000. These camps had as their pur-

²"Evangelism-in-Depth: Triumphs and Plans," Latin America Evangelist (January-February, 1965), p. 17.)

³Quoted in Jonas Gonzalez, "God's Miraculous Hand is on Venezuela Today," Latin America Evangelist (November-December, 1964), p. 8.)

⁴"Evangelism-in-Depth: Triumph and Plans," Latin America Evangelist, p. 18.

pose, not only to give the youth a spiritual retreat but also to train them for participation in subsequent Evangelism in Depth activities. Then, in the months of July and August, teams of Protestant young people put their training into practice, according to the following report:

5(2) Three hundred young people's societies have before them the goal of carrying out short meetings--'lightening campaigns'--in the whole country. One church is holding 21 meetings of this kind every week. With singing and special music and a brief evangelistic message of only three or four minutes, they proclaim Christ in parks, at theater exits, in buses and everywhere. 5 (—)

College and Bible school students from the United States aided in these youth evangelistic activities, providing the instrumental music for the meetings. Special youth activities ended with a national youth congress in Caracas, attended by 3000 teen-agers.

Yet another special effort was the showing of the movie Lucia to an estimated 53,000 people in commercial theaters. This movie, depicting conversion in a Latin American setting and actually filmed in Argentina, was produced by the Billy Graham Evangelistic Association.

In September and October, Evangelism in Depth in Venezuela concentrated on twenty-eight united regional campaigns. The Latin America Mission gave the following significant report on how evangelistic teams were secured for these crusades:

5(3) One of the most remarkable facts about the regional meetings was the participation of more than 60 Puerto Rican evangelists, song leaders and musicians who responded to a 'Macedonian call' and came to the aid of their Venezuelan brethren, in the first example of such missionary initiative on such a scale among Latin American churches. The Puerto Ricans paid their own way to participate in the efforts in Venezuela. 6 (—)

⁵Gonzalez, "God's Miraculous Hand . . . ," Latin America Evangelist, p. 8.

⁶"Evangelism-in-Depth: Triumph and Plans," Latin America Evangelist, p. 18.

In the month of November, a national evangelistic crusade was organized and carried out in Maracaibo, the oil capital of Venezuela. The meetings, lasting for three weeks, took place in an open air theater. Once again, Fernando Vangioni was asked to preach. In conjunction with this campaign, the leaders organized rallies for children, special efforts to reach women--among the most difficult to persuade concerning religion in Latin America, deeper life studies for Christians, special television programs, and a parade in which 3000 participated on the final day of the campaign. The Latin America Mission reported 800 professions of faith, as a result of this campaign.

A second national evangelism crusade took place in January, 1965, in Caracas. For twelve nights, 2000 people gathered in the Caracas Sports Palace to hear the preaching of the Word by Vangioni. On the final day, 4000 marchers participated in the parade which included bands and the presentation of a floral wreath at the monument to Simon Bolivar. As a result of these meetings, there were 1350 professions of faith.

The final follow-up phase began in February and March and was, in turn, the beginning of a year of activities designed to conserve the results of the Evangelism in Depth effort.

As had been noted from the beginning, the effort in Venezuela found the masses unusually responsive to the presentation of the Gospel.

The following summary figures bear this out:

3,600 prayer cells organized.

18,000 laymen instructed in evangelism training classes.

17,000 professions of faith, 10,000 of which occurred during the visitation phase.

The thirteen-month Evangelism in Depth effort resulted in an abundant harvest.

512 ← Bolivia

← Since 1952, the eyes of Latin America have been focused on the backward and poverty-stricken republic of Bolivia to see the outcome of a Mexico-style social and economic revolt that took place successfully at that time. The Movimiento Nacional Revolucionario, which led the revolt, began by nationalizing the tin mines, the principal source of income for the country, and by announcing and actually carrying out a drastic agrarian reform program that broke up the large estates and gave small plots of land to the poor. The revolt was a determined reaction to centuries of glaring social and economic inequities to which the masses of Bolivia have been subjected. These masses, numbering three and one half million, include an Indian population of 60%. The illiteracy rate is a somber 69%, and less than 20% of the children between five and nineteen are in school. In 1964, an Army junta ousted the Movimiento Nacional Revolucionario, in an effort to bring stability to Bolivia as well as to continue the reform measures. The Army leaders feared that the power struggle within the party might lead Bolivia into the Communist camp. As Latin America Mission leaders planned their evangelism effort for Bolivia, they wondered how the social and economic developments and the political unrest might affect their mission. They also pondered over the vast territorial expanse of Bolivia--420,000 square miles, the poor transportation and communication facilities, and the several linguistic barriers. Understandably, one of the leaders wrote an article in the mission magazine, entitled, "Can Anybody Save Bolivia?"⁷ ()

← The following indicates something of the Protestant situation in

⁷John Kenyon, "Can Anybody Save Bolivia?" Latin America Evangelist (March-April, 1965), pp. 12-13.

Bolivia, as the Latin America Mission prepared to sponsor the Evangelism in Depth effort:

5(4) Evangelical work in Bolivia has been difficult. Blind religious fanaticism and fear, fed by isolation and illiteracy, have controlled many inhabitants. The high altitude has taken its toll in the lives and health of missionary stalwarts. Language barriers have been slow to come down. Like many other Latin American countries, the majority of the evangelicals have come from the poorer classes. On the whole, the well-to-do have not been attracted to the evangelical church. The price for active identification with the Gospel is too high.⁸

At the same time, God has raised up a Church of 15,000 communicant members who are gathered into 750 churches. Twenty of those churches are located in Cochabamba, and at least thirty-five, in the capital of La Paz. A dozen of the congregations are Lutheran, most of them sister churches of the World Mission Prayer League (a Lutheran missionary fellowship), and one of them a European group guided by a Lutheran World Federation pastor. The Christians of Bolivia gave a ready endorsement to the Evangelism in Depth program and proved it by producing ten full-time national coordinators. In all, twenty-four of the twenty-seven groups working in Bolivia, including the World Mission Prayer League, cooperated with the program. The Latin America Mission, for its part, offered an advisor team of seven, headed by Rafael Baltodano.

← In January, 1965, the leaders initiated the program with the organization of prayer cells. Arthur M. Gustafson, a minister of the Lutheran Church in America and missionary of the World Mission Prayer League in Bolivia, in a private letter, made a significant comment concerning the emphasis on prayer in Evangelism in Depth. While at one point he stressed the importance of prayer, still at another he felt obligated to state the following: "Emphasis was often placed on the length of prayer, for in-

⁸Dorothy Flory, "Bolivia," Latin America Evangelist (November-December, 1964), p. 16.

stance, all night prayer. If things did not go well enough, we were told we did not pray long enough."⁹ (—————)

← In February, once again the World Vision organization participated by sponsoring the retreat for 500 leaders in the city of Cochabamba. Immediately following the retreat, the Latin America Mission advisors gave the national pastors a two-day orientation about Evangelism in Depth.

← The months of March and April were devoted to promotion among the churches and to the training of the laymen for subsequent phases of the program. Because of the several language groups involved, training booklets were printed in Spanish, Aymara, Quechua, and Guarani. In connection with the training phase of the program, the following comment of Gustafson is important:

5(5) I believe that the leaders of the Latin America Mission really tried to hold to an interdenominational program and to respect the denominations and their points of view. Most of the denominations, for instance, trained their own counselors, as we did in the Lutheran Church.¹⁰

← The visitation and local campaign phases began in the month of May, just as the government armed forces were battling the tin miners in an effort to refrain that element of Bolivian society that has been won by the Communists. Concerning the results of the local campaigns, Gustafson reported the following:

5(6) The local campaigns worked well in certain parts and failed in others. It depended on the preparation and the speaker. In some places there were no results, and in other places, such as in the Lower Beni section of Bolivia, there were good results.¹¹

← June to August were devoted to numerous endeavors to reach different groups. For instance, the Lucia film was shown fifty times to an

⁹(Letter from Arthur M. Gustafson, Missionary of the World Mission Prayer League in Bolivia, December 10, 1965.)

¹⁰Ibid.

¹¹Ibid.

aggregate audience of 21,000, including a showing to 700 soldiers in a La Paz army barracks. Also, efforts to evangelize the professors and students of the seven universities of Bolivia included films, the personal witness of the Protestant students, and lectures given by the Cuban evangelist Gerardo de Avila. Since most of the Latin American government universities are dominated by the pro-Castro element, the choice of an evangelist from Cuba could not have been better. In addition, the Evangelism in Depth leaders made special efforts to witness to Bolivian youth, including a rally, contests, Gospel team work carried out by Protestant young people, and the closing congress in Santa Cruz which drew 3000 young people. Further, for the first time, Evangelism in Depth organized a congress for women in an effort to reach this special group for Christ. Again, thirty Good-Will Caravans including not only evangelists and medical personnel but also agricultural specialists and literacy campaign workers, made trips into the interior. The Bolivian government took special note of this particular effort and provided food and accommodations for the personnel. Finally, the leaders of Evangelism in Depth sponsored the first national Aymara Evangelical congress which drew 6,000 Indians. The congress included a mile-long parade, and the participation of sixteen choirs. The meetings were held in an open-air theater in La Paz.

← The Evangelism in Depth leaders concentrated on the regional campaigns during the months of September and October. Evangelists, musicians, and other participants for these crusades came from Venezuela, Puerto Rico, Texas, New York, and California.

← During the month of November, the national evangelistic crusade took place in the Closed Coliseum in La Paz. Toward the beginning of the

two-week crusade, rain--dangerously cold at an altitude of 12,500 feet--threatened to affect the success of the effort, but by the end of the series, weather permitted audiences of 10,000 people to attend. A union choir under the direction of the Bolivian Pablo Zurita provided special music during the campaign, and the preaching was done by Santiago Garabaya of Argentina. Concerning the theology of his messages, Odell O. Kittelson, the director of the World Mission Prayer League in Bolivia, gave the following important appraisal:

(17) The messages given by Evangelist Garabaya were Biblical--in fact, in most respects very Lutheran. Really, he stuck to the Bible, used very few stories, was dignified (not a jokester) and serious. He seemed to have been influenced by Spurgeon Naturally, EVAF [Evangelism in Depth] is not a Lutheran organization, and therefore we cannot endorse every statement given by every evangelist, etc. But all in all, the cardinal truths of the Bible were honored, Jesus Christ was exalted and pointed to as the only Saviour from sin.¹²

← An interesting feature of the national campaign was the supper given by the Evangelism in Depth leaders on behalf of the Protestant Church of Bolivia, in honor of the president of the republic, General Alfredo Orando Caudia. In addition to the president, several ambassadors, the sister of Hubert Humphrey--visiting Bolivia at the time--and 200 guests were present for the occasion. During the course of the evening, Evangelism in Depth leaders gave speeches and presented the president with a gift, and the president, in turn, spoke a few words. In part, the president said:

(18) I must also recognize the immense contribution of the Evangelical Church in Bolivia. It has opened the doors of culture to the humble of my people, it gives them the possibilities of fighting against sickness, it enables them to fight for life. Therefore, in the name of the National Government, in the name of the Bolivian people, I cannot but express my sincerest thanks to those who contribute to the personal and collective greatness of my land.

¹²Letter from Odell O. Kittelson, Field Director of the World Mission Prayer League in Bolivia, January 10, 1966.

I sincerely believe, senores, that your evangelical mission, that of taking the Word of God to all the inhabitants of the world, is the mission of the privileged, of which you may be proud.¹³ ()

The parade on the final day consisted of twenty-six floats and 20,000 marchers. A group of thirty Protestant bicycle riders attracted national attention by their ride of 150 miles from Oruro to La Paz to participate in the parade. Chartered trains, some carrying 1,500 marchers, and chartered buses brought other Protestants from different parts of the country. Lillian Kvamsdale, missionary of the World Mission Prayer League, wrote about the Lutheran delegation:

5(9) Our Lutheran group numbered over 400, representing 12 different Sunday Schools or congregations. Each person, including the children, wore a royal blue ribbon with the Lutheran coat of arms, and Romans 1:17 in Spanish, 'The just shall live by faith,' as well as 'Evangelical Lutheran Church.' Two floats represented our Lutheran work. One, a red cross on top of a red and blue globe of the earth, silhouetted against the blue sky as it rode high on top of Odell Kittelson's GMC Suburban, announcing the Lutheran Hour radio program, 'Cristo Para Todas Las Naciones' (Christ for All Nations), as well as our daily five minute radio program, 'Cinco Minutos de Buenas Nuevas' (Five Minutes of Good News). The bookstore float had a lamp of the kind used in Bible times and also a large open Bible with the Bible verse in Spanish, 'Thy Word is a lamp unto my feet.' On each side was a sign 'Read the Bible in your home.'¹⁴ ()

The parade prompted the four leading newspapers of the capital, including the Roman Catholic La Prencencia, to give favorable coverage and comment.

An editorial of the Catholic paper read in part as follows:

5(10) The various Protestant sects have united here and organized those endeavors in spite of their differences and in the name of the Gospel. It is a great step, and it manifests a significant spirit

The participants marched along in a peaceful and orderly demonstration, with conviction reflected on their faces. One could not but approve of it.

All the people were from the humble poor, and there was not any pomp in the demonstration that included a remarkable number of parti-

¹³ Alfredo Orando Caudia, quoted in En Marcha (Bolivia edition of the Evangelism in Depth newspaper), December 1, 1965.)

¹⁴ Lillian Kvamsdale, "Bolivia Para Cristo," Lutheran World Vision (January, 1966), p. 6.)

cipants. Both facts pleased me. It also pleased me that those peasant people were clean, neat, without signs of alcoholism on their faces--all evidences of a social ministry and of a preaching philosophy that makes a contribution to those people and to this country.

The fact that many Catholics be horrified at all that I say here will not be a novelty nor will it surprise me. As a Christian I cannot but congratulate you [the Protestants].¹⁵ ()

There was another Catholic publication, a flier, which belittled the significance of the event since, it alleged, the peasants are voluble depending on which course is most favorable to them.

Concerning professions of faith at the campaign, each person who responded to the altar call, after brief instruction and prayer, filled out a card indicating name, address, church preference, and so forth. Shortly thereafter, a committee with representatives from all cooperating denominations studied the cards and then, on the basis of the information received, sent the name and data of each person to the pastor of a certain church. The pastor concerned was asked to visit the party immediately and to make every effort to incorporate the party into the church. The total number of campaign professions of faith reached 1,000.

The final summary statistics of the Evangelism in Depth effort in Bolivia are the following:

4,000 prayer cells organized.

20,000 laymen trained for evangelism, 18,000 of which participated in the visitation campaign.

15,000 professions of faith.

This effort, in terms of dollars, cost the Latin America Mission \$60,000, and the Bolivian missions and churches, \$66,000.

How did the Lutheran missionaries evaluate the program as a whole? Concerning Evangelism in Depth as a method, Killelson concluded as follows:

¹⁵ (La Presencia (La Paz), November 22, 1965, quoted in ibid.)

5(11) Here again we can approve with few exceptions. Campaigns, local and national, prayer vigils, visitation, movies, radio, youth rallies, etc. surely are commendable and effective. The danger in a movement like EVAF is to depend on methods and men. Often one gets the impression that things were forced, not free, spontaneous movements of the Spirit of God in the individuals, churches, and campaigns.¹⁶ ()

Gustafson drew two interesting conclusions, the first of which reads as follows:

5(V2) When I was present at the presentation of the Evangelism in Depth program by the Latin America Mission representatives, I simply heard a program that I had been working with in the churches I served in the States. Rev. William Berg of the LCA [Lutheran Church in America] taught that program very vigorously in the former Augustana Lutheran Church and also in the new Lutheran Church in America. To me it was identical. The Preaching-Teaching-Reaching program in the former Evangelical Lutheran Church was much like the Evangelism in Depth program Now the Evangelism in Depth program differed from the Lutheran Church in America and the American Lutheran Church programs in two aspects: 1. Evangelism in Depth was carried out on a national basis. 2. The Evangelism in Depth program was attempting to be completely interdenominational.¹⁷ ()

His final comment, reading as follows, is just as significant: "I believe that the Latin America Mission is raising a cry in the night that we need to reach the countries and individuals in Latin America with the Gospel NOW."¹⁸

5.3 ← Dominican Republic

← Unbelievable as it may seem, Evangelism in Depth has been going on in revolt-torn Dominican Republic since April of 1965. The roots of the present political turmoil go back to the period 1930 to 1961, the age of Rafael Leonidas Trujillo, one of the most tyrannical dictators on record. He left so stifling an impression on the country, that even after his assassination in 1961, near anarchy has prevailed. At one high point of this lawlessness, in April of last year, the United States government was asked to send

¹⁶(Letter from Kittelson.)

¹⁷(Letter from Gustafson)

¹⁸(Ibid.)

the Marines to the island, ~~because of fear that Cuban Communists might take advantage of the turmoil and seize the country.~~ Shortly after, the Organization of American States agreed to send additional troops. After many lives were lost in street fighting, some troops were finally withdrawn and a temporary government under Hector Garcia Godoy was set up. Elections have been announced for spring of this year, although tension continues in Dominican Republic.

← The country occupies two thirds of the island of Hispaniola. The land on this island produces coffee and sugar, thus providing an agricultural economy for the three and one half million people of Dominican Republic. Half of these people are illiterate, and their standard of life is low, although not as shocking as on the other one third of the island, Haiti. The seat of government is Santo Domingo.

← Virtually all of the 16,500 communicant Protestants decided to endorse the Evangelism in Depth program. And after the fighting broke out just as the program got under way, what was the attitude of the National Coordinating Committee? The Latin America Mission recorded its reaction as follows: "Their great fear seems to be that we, their friends and brethren, will be so paralyzed by the reports of ugly violence, so deafened by the rumble of tanks and the rattle of machine-gun fire, so blinded by the horrible picture of civil war, that we'll think the Lord's work in the Dominican Republic has to wait--that it ought to be postponed until a more favorable time."¹⁹ So, William Cook, the head Latin America Mission advisor, and the others decided to remain.

← The retreat for pastors took place from April 19-25, the precise

¹⁹Horace L. Fenton, Jr., "The Things which Happened . . .," Latin America Evangelist (November-December, 1965), p. 20.

week that the revolt began. In fact, Merrill C. Tenny, dean of the Wheaton College Graduate School, who was the main retreat speaker, had to be rescued by a U.S. Navy airplane.

The disturbed conditions immediately affected the Evangelism in Depth program in several ways. For instance, the rented house of the Latin America Mission youth advisor was completely destroyed in the course of the intense fighting in Santo Domingo. Some of his personal property, as well as equipment destined for the downtown office was also completely destroyed. Again, ^{because of} the troubled conditions, Bill Cook decided to evacuate his wife and two children. Further, with the suspension of mail service, the various instructions to the participating churches had to be given by commercial radio. As for travel, although the leaders could move about quite freely in the rural areas, they actually risked their lives to move about in downtown Santo Domingo. At one point, several advisors were literally pinned down by crossfire for hours. The North American advisors endured much insult from the rebels after the U.S. Marines intervened. Santiago Villanueva, the editor of the Evangelism in Depth paper En Marcha had the following experience:

5/14) Confronted with an exhausted paper supply in the town of Santiago, he decided to run the gauntlet of checkpoints and sniper fire into rebel territory in Santo Domingo. Later he emerged by God's grace with a car full of paper--enough for several issues, plus tracts. 'I told them I was an evangelical worker, and they let me through,' he smiled.²⁰ ()

As for the training phase, the disturbed political conditions delayed the printing of the manuals until only four days before the classes were to begin. Then, because of the curfew in the Santo Domingo area, the leaders were forced to conduct the course in the afternoons instead

²⁰ John Kenyon (ed.), "Preaching out of Season," Latin America Evangelist (September-October, 1965), p. 2.

of the evenings. However, some church members found that they had more time to devote to the house-to-house visitation program, and many of the people they visited had more time to listen to the Evangelism in Depth visitors.

During the summer of last year, North American students from Fuller Seminary, Barrington College, and Columbia Bible College joined Dominican Republic youth to make up Gospel teams for evangelism trips into rural areas. The Latin America Mission reported that the United States students made "a solid contribution to Evangelism-in-Depth."²¹ Other activities designed to reach special groups, as well, were carried out in the Dominican Republic effort.

Regional campaigns took place in sixteen cities, with an aggregate attendance of 70,000 people. As a result of these campaigns, there were 2,700 professions of faith.

The national campaign in Santo Domingo was to have begun on March 21, and the parade on the last day of the crusade was scheduled for April 3.

Thus far, the Latin America Mission has reported the following summary results:

2,000 prayer cells organized.

300,000 homes visited.

10,000 professions of faith.

That is, the Dominican Republic Christians know how fruitful it is to obey the divine injunction, "Preach the word, be urgent in season and out of season."²²

²¹"Latin America News Front," Latin America Evangelist (September-October, 1965), p. 17.

²²2 Tim. 4:2.

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6.1

CHAPTER VI

THE REPUTATION OF THE PROGRAM AND ITS ADOPTION BY OTHERS

The Demand for Latin America Mission-Sponsored Efforts

By the end of 1961, the knowledge about Evangelism in Depth and its application in Nicaragua and Costa Rica had spread not only among the Evangelical churches of Latin America but also to other parts of the English-speaking Protestant world. In the summer of that year, the leaders of the Second Latin American Evangelical Conference, held in Lima, brought Evangelism in Depth to the attention of the delegates. Then, later in the year, Moody Press published Evangelism in Depth by the team members of the Latin America Mission.

← After the use of Evangelism in Depth in Guatemala in 1962, the Latin America Mission could report the following: "Invitations have come to the Latin America Mission to sponsor or coordinate similar movements in practically every country of Latin America, on a nationwide scale."¹ In response to these invitations, the mission conducted evangelism efforts in Venezuela, Bolivia, and Dominican Republic. And, at the present time, the Latin America Mission leaders are committed to the Evangelical leaders of Peru for an evangelism program in that republic in 1967.

6(1)

¹Jonas Gonzalez, "Broadening the Outreach of Evangelism-in-Depth," Latin America Evangelist (May-June, 1963), p. 10.)

6.2 ————— The Adoption of the Program by Others

6.2.1 By the Disciples of Christ in Mexico

In February of 1960, the Disciples of Christ denomination in Mexico, gathered for its annual assembly, heard Kenneth Strachan speak on Evangelism in Depth. In the previous year, national church leaders and missionaries had held a series of institutes to analyze the static condition of their denomination and to adopt measures that might remedy the situation. That is, their minds and hearts were prepared for a vision and plan of evangelistic action that might be applied to their church. Strachan, for his part, had arrived full of enthusiasm about the Evangelism in Depth program that his mission had just initiated in Nicaragua. The following is a brief account of that memorable assembly:

6 (2) The Holy Spirit used Dr. Strachan's messages as the spark to light the wood which had been gathered during the institutes of 1959. In a dramatic moment during the last session of the Assembly, the delegates approved the rough draft of what was to become the 'Plan Revolucionario de Evangelizacion' (Revolutionary Plan of Evangelization) commonly known as P.R.E.²

A planning conference in April of that year worked out the details of the new plan based on Evangelism in Depth. How did Evangelism in Depth work out in a denominational situation? The importance of this question merits some detail at this point.

The Disciples of Christ work is located in the central mountain states of Aguascalientes, San Luis Potosi, and Zacatecas. Five years ago, the church numbered 800 communicant members out of a total population of 1,710,000 in the three states. These members fell into two homogenous groups, namely, those in two urban middle-class congregations

²John Huegal, "An Experiment by a Static Church," in Church Growth in Mexico by Donald McGavran (Grand Rapids, Michigan: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1963), p. 70.

and those in nineteen scattered rural mestizo congregations. At that time, there were four pastors, seven national workers, ~~employed by the mission from the United States~~, and seventeen missionaries. On the whole, the church found itself in a conservative, Catholic section of the country--an environment which looked with disfavor on the Protestant minority. At the same time, there were some liberalizing influences in the area, such as, the government communal farms set up to break the semi-feudalistic pattern that had prevailed since colonial times. Now, in this situation, the Disciples found themselves face to face with a discouraging reality, namely, the lack of numerical growth in the church.

As a first step, after the adoption of the plan, the leaders divided up and visited each church in order to explain the program in detail and to attempt to awaken the Christians to their evangelism responsibility. Then, they initiated a prayer campaign throughout the churches. Not only were prayer cards distributed to the congregations, but a special call to prayer was sent to friends in the United States and in other places. Further, committees on prayer, finances, equipment, literature, music, training, visitation, statistics, publicity, and exploration were appointed. The leaders took these several steps in 1960.

The following year was also devoted to preparation. For instance, a seminary student of the denomination spent six months exploring the field. The procedure he used and the results he obtained are recorded as follows:

6. (3) He had members of twelve different churches give him names of relatives or intimate friends in neighboring villages; these would later receive an evangelistic visit. He thus located 170 villages where there was at least one way for the Gospel to enter. He also identified three totally new areas where responsive 'Revolutionary Ranchos'

were located.³

In addition, the leaders of the plan held thirty-seven lay institutes in the local churches. Each institute consisted of a first week of nightly studies in Romans and a second week of "practical training in communicating the Gospel to friends and relatives."⁴ Over 700 laymen enrolled in these institutes. Also, the pastors prepared themselves for future evangelism campaign work by exchanging pulpits and conducting preaching missions. There were thirty-five confessions of faith as a result. But the Disciples of Christ leaders gave their people still further training in the beginning months of 1962. They brought in Sam Clark of the Navigators group who, in turn, conducted four institutes for lay delegates from the churches. These delegates then returned to their congregations and instructed the other laymen. In all, sixteen months were devoted to training the denomination for evangelism outreach.

The outreach began with a visitation campaign in April, 1962. Members of the city churches were to visit from house to house, and members of the rural congregations were to visit their friends and relatives in other towns and regions. "Due to lack of continued supervision," the leaders reported, "this phase of the program did not bear the expected fruit, especially in the cities."⁵

The Disciples of Christ directors turned next to conducting evangelistic efforts in the rural areas. Four teams composed of eleven students from the Union Theological Seminary in Mexico City, two workers, and a layman were sent out to conduct preaching missions of a week in length in eighteen towns and villages. In the case of each mission, the local

³Ibid., pp. 70-71.)

⁴Ibid., p. 71.

⁵Ibid., p. 72.)

leaders and laymen assisted. Numerous street meetings were conducted.

The leaders reported the following results:

6(4) An aggregate total of 7,688 people attended the services, 94 confessions of faith and 231 reconsecrations were registered, and ten new villages were visited. For some churches, these had been the first evangelistic campaigns in years. 6(—)

The directors organized a follow-up program including the distribution of literature to those who had responded and Bible study courses in each church where there had been a response.

Finally, the month of June was devoted to evangelism campaigns in the conservative and Catholic cities of Aguascalientes and San Luis Potosi. Something of the courage involved in such undertakings is expressed in the following report:

6(5) In these two 'Conservative Cities' the Evangelicals demonstrated a marked fear complex, especially in San Luis Potosi. There even the pastors had an almost paralyzing fear of what might happen in open-air evangelistic meetings. Excuses and delays were presented at each meeting of the committee, but as the dates drew near, the Holy Spirit filled all in both cities with new courage and determination. 7(—)

The leaders publicized the meetings by newspaper advertisements, fliers, posters, and radio announcements. In each place, the first week of meetings was held in a church building, and the second week, in a public place, that is, in a parking lot and in a labor union auditorium respectively. The following report sums up the results of the urban campaigns:

6(6) Although only forty-five persons confessed Christ during the campaigns in the two cities, a real impact was made on each city. The Evangelicals were fortified in the faith and liberated from their blinding fear. They saw that they could gather in public to proclaim their message with no persecution and with the protection of their government. 7(—)

In addition to the 240 professions of faith, the following sig-

6/2 6Ibid.

7Ibid., pp. 72-73.

8Ibid., p. 73.

nificant results of the effort as a whole were reported by the leaders:

"This experiment has shown the leaders of the Church that aggressive evangelism does bear fruit and it has created in their minds a desire for church growth."⁹ Of course, the leaders of a church must believe in evangelism if the church is to grow. Again:

6(1) As a result of this two-year campaign, two churchlets grew to full church size (ten or more full members) and two abandoned churches regained life and members. The Gospel was preached regularly to people in seven new communities and to fourteen intermittently, in which communities there is every reason to believe that churchlets and churches may develop. In almost every church in the field one hears of new villages where people have requested that someone come with the Gospel or villages where there are natural bridges of relationship or friendship.¹⁰

And finally:

6(4) Never before in the sixty-seven-year history of the Christian Church [the Disciples of Christ denomination] in Mexico have as many church members been actively engaged in some form of proclamation of the faith. Three churches now have groups of laymen who visit a total of twelve or more neighboring villages to hold services and make personal calls. Laymen have studied the Bible, taught classes, preached, travelled, visited, and proclaimed the Gospel as never before.¹¹

That is, the leaders are convinced that such an Evangelism in Depth-like program applied to a static denominational situation on the mission field can and does bear fruit.

6.2.2

By Other Groups

While he was living, Kenneth Strachan received other invitations from church leaders in various parts of the world who wanted his advice on the use of Evangelism in Depth in their countries. Although he himself was unable to comply with most of these invitations, Dayton Roberts and Ruben Lores, prominent figures in the Latin America Mission, are at

⁹Ibid., pp. 73-74.

¹⁰Ibid., p. 74.

¹¹Ibid.

the present time on an international trip to counsel with Protestant leaders who have either already initiated an Evangelism in Depth program or are contemplating such an effort, and have therefore asked help of the mission. The itinerary includes Japan, Korea, Taiwan, the Philippine Islands, Hong Kong, Indonesia, Thailand, India, Lebanon, and Portugal. In the case of India, six church groups and seven missions in Maharashtra have united forces to apply Evangelism in Depth to an area of forty million people. According to the latest reports, these groups were organizing prayer cells and training classes, and preparing for evangelism campaigns. In the case of Portugal, Protestant leaders have initiated a movement known as Novimientto Promotor de Evangelizacao, based on Evangelism in Depth. They have already published manuals by way of preparation for the national evangelistic outreach.

← A city-wide evangelism campaign based on Evangelism in Depth has been carried out in the Brazilian city of Sao Jose dos Campos. In and around the town of Armenia, Colombia, the Christian and Missionary Alliance has conducted an Evangelism in Depth effort on a limited scale. In central Nigeria, an Evangelism in Depth-orientated program known as New Life for All, and lasting fifteen months, was used.

← In the United States, some local churches and groups of churches have sought to apply Evangelism in Depth to their situations. For instance, church leaders in the Appalachian region have asked the Latin America Mission for assistance in the organization of such a program in their region. On the local congregational level, as far back as 1962, the pastor, J. Wesley, of the Bethel Temple led his congregation in an Evangelism in Depth-like effort. Their four-point program consisted of the following:

- (1) formation of many small prayer cells,

- (2) enlistment of the entire membership in a Bible study and memorization course,
- (3) a sustained personal witnessing program,
- (4) a climactic evangelistic campaign.¹²

It is probable that Evangelism in Depth attract^s even greater attention and be used yet more widely after the World Congress on Evangelism to be held in Berlin in the fall of this year. Fernando Vangioni, participant in a number of Evangelism in Depth efforts in Latin America, will be one of the main evening speakers, and the Latin America Mission book Evangelism in Depth has been selected as one of the pre-study books.

6.3

The Opinion of the Specialists

Numerous church and missionary leaders have expressed their opinions on the significance of Evangelism in Depth. Some of these statements express concepts that are important to bear in mind in view of a final evaluation.

For instance, Robert L. Constable of the Moody Bible Institute, after a visit to Nicaragua for the close of the Evangelism in Depth effort, wrote the following conclusion:

6(9)

'Do you believe every person in the country has been reached?' I asked Juan Isais, national director of the effort.

'No,' he said. 'Not if you mean, has every person heard and understood the Gospel? But we do believe that every person in the country heard of the campaign and had the Gospel brought within his reach.'

I thought of the Saviour's command, 'Go ye . . . to every creature. . . .' Though the means of reaching out are vastly more effective, it seems increasingly hard to win attention. Meanwhile we face a mushrooming population. Here in the old proved way of personal contact, supported by such other means as are available, may be one means of carrying out the great commission in the day

¹²"Latin America News Front," Latin America Evangelist (May-June, 1962), p. 20.

in which we live.¹³ ()

James W. Reapsome, managing editor of the new Evangelical Missions Quarterly, after a visit to Guatemala for the close of the Evangelism in Depth effort, gave the same thought-provoking evaluation in an article entitled, "Guatemala: A Nation Evangelized."¹⁴ Had a method been found that brought within the realm of possibility the fulfillment of the Great Commission in a given land in a given generation?

Arthur F. Glasser, North America director of the China Inland Mission Overseas Missionary Fellowship, has issued some significant statements about Evangelism in Depth. In an article entitled, "New Dimension in Evangelism," he summarized the message of Evangelism in Depth for the universal Church as follows:

6(10) HOPE. Here is a practical, intensely Biblical approach to the awful demands and the awesome facts of the hour: the 'population explosion' of non-primitive peoples; the secularistic intellectual ferment of the educated; the anti-Western political and cultural reaction of the masses; and the torpor in the Church that has resulted in such a relative paucity of missionary candidates to serve this generation.¹⁵

This is an elucidation of the opinion expressed by Constable and Reapsome.

Glasser continued with a second point:

6(11) VISION.

The concept of Evangelism-in-Depth is not only a transfusion of new life and energy into the Latin America Mission; it is a new vision implanted to the national church. What could be more strategic in the totality of missionary activity today than to strengthen this church until it is an 'on-going Christian community?' Vision in-

¹³Robert L. Constable, "Discovery in Nicaragua," Moody Monthly (July, 1960), p. 15.

¹⁴James W. Reapsome, "Guatemala: A Nation Evangelized," The Sunday School Times, CIV, No. 52 (December 29, 1962), 965.)

¹⁵Arthur F. Glasser, "New Dimension in Evangelism," Latin America Evangelist (November-December, 1961), inside back cover.)

deed--and that for all missions and all churches everywhere!¹⁶

He concluded as follows:

(12) UNITY.

.....
 God's people in a whole country, united to win others for Christ. United! How the word thrills! . . . It IS possible to make a collective, united witness in the world today . . . by a voluntary, unrestrained coming together for a cooperative effort of all evangelical churches for the Lord's glory and the salvation of men.¹⁷

In another article, Glasser stated the following concerning Strachan, the author of Evangelism in Depth: "Indeed, one feels that in time it will become apparent that he made an equally significant contribution [as J. Hudson Taylor] to the task of world evangelization."¹⁸

In recent years, Donald McGavran and the Church Growth movement he has championed have attracted the attention of missionary authorities in many parts of the world. The Church Growth Bulletin had the following to say about Evangelism in Depth:

(14) Against this background [population explosion and ineffective missionary work] comes a refreshing book from Latin America--EVANGELISM IN DEPTH. It tells of a united effort to bring renewal to the Church and life to multitudes. This pilot project in Nicaragua has been repeated in other lands. Every churchman (national and missionary) should buy and ponder this book. It describes a mode of cooperative evangelism possible in many Churches and nations. It can be modified to suit circumstances. It is good. Let us put it to work.¹⁹

6.4 ← The Hayward-Strachan Debate

The International Review of Missions recognized the significance of Evangelism in Depth and so in 1964, asked Kenneth Strachan to contribute an article explaining the program. The Strachan contribution enti-

¹⁶ Ibid.

¹⁷ Ibid.

¹⁸ Arthur F. Glasser et al., "Our Esteemed Brother and Our Friend," Latin America Mission (May-June, 1965), p. 13.

¹⁹ "Books and Articles," Church Growth Bulletin, I, No. 4 (March, 1965), 14.

tled "Call to Witness" appeared in the April issue of that year. In the same issue, Victor E. W. Hayward, Acting Director of the Division of World Mission and Evangelism of the World Council of Churches, submitted a critique of the Strachan article entitled "Call to Witness--But What Kind of Witness?" and thereby initiated an exchange of views. Each produced two articles. In addition, Markus Barth of the Pittsburg Theological Seminary, Martin Conway of the World Student Christian Federation, and Emilio Castro of the Methodist Church in Uruguay, contributed articles for this debate that lasted until the April issue of 1965.

Hayward began his criticism by admitting that "this campaign has been outstandingly successful along its own lines."²⁰ However, his fundamental concern was to criticize Evangelism in Depth, and this, not at the level of methodology, but more fundamentally, at the level of basic presuppositions. "However successful 'Evangelism in Depth' is in uniting the churches and filling the churches," he said, "the real question is: What responsibility will the churches have to carry if those who are most unselfishly concerned for the well-being of their fellow men reject the Christian faith as irrelevant in their revolutionary world, fit only to foster individual and self-regarding piety?"²¹ That is, Hayward objected to an evangelism that produced church members who thereafter are only concerned with the religious activities of their congregations and not meaningfully involved in the secular events of the world in which they live. He objected to an evangelism that limits its proclamation to a call to conversion and does not work with God in His aims for the total life of

²⁰Victor E. W. Hayward, "Call to Witness--But What Kind of Witness?" The International Review of Missions, LIII, No. 210 (April, 1964), 201.

²¹Ibid., p. 208.)

His creation. He opposed that evangelistic theology that regards conversion and adding members to the Church as more than "a by-product,"²² and that does not focus on the salvation of the world in a broad sense as the fundamental aim in view. "Does not Christ care for the hungry and thirsty, the strangers and the naked, the sick and those in prison?"²³ he questioned. When Strachan asked Hayward to clarify how the latter would apply this theology to practice, Hayward answered, "My answer is that I would start by asking the man who responds to the preaching of the Gospel to ask himself and others how he can show to 'his family, the household, the community or the multitude' Christ's compassion for the total needs of the total man in his own particular society."²⁴ These questions would be asked of the new convert from the outset.

By way of answer to the criticism of Hayward, Strachan said, "I am . . . ready to admit that there are emphases within our conservative-evangelical circles which contribute to an ultra-individualistic, falsely pietistic, church-centered way of thought and life that constitutes an imperfect and somewhat distorted representation of our sacred calling and mission in Christ."²⁵ He also agreed that the purposes of God exceed the individual and the Church and embrace the whole range of human life, indeed, the whole creation, "but," he stressed, "any interpretation of the ultimate outreach of the Gospel which overlooks or minimizes the conditions of repentance and regeneration which God has specified

²² Ibid., p. 202.

²³ Victor E. W. Hayward, "Call to Witness," The International Review of Missions, LIV, No. 214 (April, 1963), 192.

²⁴ Ibid.

²⁵ R. Kenneth Strachan, "A Further Comment," The International Review of Missions, LIII, No. 210 (April, 1963), 209.

needs also to be corrected in the light of Scripture.²⁶ Furthermore, men repent and believe individually, albeit within the social structure in which they find themselves and which they will serve as Christians. Also, in the work of evangelism, the worker will preach the essentials, that is, conversion, and leave other truth, such as the service of the Christian to his community, for subsequent teaching. He agreed that the Church on its world mission must be relevant, but "in the final reckoning the degree of our faithfulness in adhering to the terms of our mission will determine the extent of our relevancy in the world."²⁷

Barth cautioned against an oversimplification of the issues of the discussion and called for a continuous quest to understand the message of the Gospel as the primary requirement for effective evangelism. This contribution was directed at both Strachan and Hayward. Conway saw the debate, although carried out on a nobly respectful plane, as yet another evidence of the division between conservative evangelicals and followers of The Ecumenical Movement--which, incidentally, Hayward denied, considering himself an evangelical. Conway also pointed out that the original Strachan article deals not so much with conceptual but practical matters, which induced him to say that "the practice of Evangelism in Depth sounds rather good."²⁸ (See App. pp.) However, as to practice, he criticized the absence of a witness in relation to social and economic conditions. He also raised an old question:

6 (18) I also find very disturbing--again, in practice--the complete lack of mention, apart from caution about its own apostolic efforts, of the majority Roman Catholic Church in the country [Nicaragua]. Just what is Evangelism in Depth doing with and to the Christian

²⁶ Ibid., p. 211.

²⁷ Ibid., p. 214

²⁸ Martin Conway, "A Permanent Argument?" The International Review of Missions, LIII, No. 212 (October, 1964), 451.

faith--immature and feeble, no doubt, but whose is not?--of the already baptized?²⁹ ()

Emilio Castro expressed the same point of view as Hayward, with the added virtue that he speaks as a Latin American. The following quotation sums up his thought:

6(19) Latin America is at present living glorious moments. In the midst of misery, ignorance and hunger, we already perceive the start of the history of the ordinary man, of our little brother in whom Christ finds us. It would be a betrayal of God's purpose for him if he can find only a self-centered Church, or a Church out of touch with reality and preoccupied with a message reduced to 'religious' terms.³⁰ (See app. pp. ---)

Among other observations, Castro makes the following:

6(20) Here we must recognize that all our consciously planned programmes of evangelism have a temporary character; they are stop-gaps. They help us to do consciously that which, in a profounder sense, should be our daily activity. And like all remedies, they contain the inherent danger that we may become accustomed to their presence and lose sight of true normality.³¹ (See app. pp.)

Leslie Newbigin, editor of The International Review of Missions and Director of the Commission on World Mission and Evangelism of the World Council of Churches, tried to sum up the debate with the conclusion that "the important point, surely, is to understand both the context and the content of conversion."³² (See app. pp.) That is, he understood that both Strachan and Hayward were each making an important point. As for the content of conversion, Newbigin said, "I think that there is a need to be clear at this time--just because it is not popular--that missions are concerned with the radical conversion that leads men to explicit allegiance to

²⁹ Ibid.

³⁰ Emilio Castro, "Evangelism in Latin America," The International Review of Missions, LIII, No. 212 (October, 1964), 455-456.

³¹ Ibid., p. 455.

³² Leslie Newbigin, "From the Editor," The International Review of Missions, LIV, No. 214 (April, 1965), 149.

Jesus Christ."³³ As for the context of conversion, he stated:

6(21) The context of conversion in the New Testament is the announcement of the coming Kingdom. 'The time has come; the Kingdom of God is upon you; repent, and believe the good news'--the good news, that is to say, that the Kingdom is at hand. Conversion, in this context is a turning round in order to participate by faith in a new reality which is the true future of the whole creation. It is not, in the first place, either saving one's own soul or joining a society.³⁴

In a word, Hayward and friends think that Evangelism in Depth, and its converts, should be ~~money~~ involved in the social, economic, cultural, and civic affairs of the communities in which they work and live.

This concludes the review of opinion about Evangelism in Depth as expressed by mission leaders of both the historic and the nonhistoric churches. It also concludes the examination phase of this study. That is, the background of Evangelism in Depth has been considered. In like manner, the theory of the program has been studied. A full description of the use of the methodology by the Latin America Mission and by others has been given. And, the abler examiners have voiced their appraisals. The author must now draw his conclusions and final evaluation.

³³Ibid.

³⁴Ibid.

7
AN EVALUATION OF THE PROGRAM

7.1

CHAPTER VII

AN EVALUATION OF THE PROGRAM

The Scope of the Great Commission Taken Seriously

← In the first place, by way of evaluation, Evangelism in Depth has the great merit of taking the dimensions of the Great Commission seriously and demonstrating the possibility of their fulfillment. Our Lord has commanded that the Gospel should be proclaimed to "all nations,"¹ to "the whole creation,"² and "to the end of the earth."³ Further, since people come and go, Jesus meant that the preaching to all men be carried out in every generation. With these awesome dimensions, Kenneth Strachan wrestled until, under God, he came up with a method commensurate with them. In addition, the results of this method applied gave Christians hope that God could enable them to accomplish the sacred task.

← Many have taken the imperative of the Great Commission seriously-- and so have gone to the ends of the earth--who at the same time have doubted that the Gospel could actually be communicated to all men. Few have dared to stress not only the imperative but also the dimensions of the mandate. John R. Mott stressed them both, and subsequent generations excused him by saying that he misinterpreted the new age of technology in

¹(Matt. 28:19; Luke 24:47.)

²(Mark 16:15.)

³(Acts 1:8.)

which he lived. At the same time, mission leaders have not been able to abandon this aspect of our missionary duty. For instance, the representatives to the Whitby meeting of the International Missionary Council, in 1947, issued the following statement:

7(1) The Gospel is to be preached to all men. Can it be so preached in our generation? . . . when we consider the present extension of the Church, and the divine and human resources available we dare to believe it possible that, before the present generation has passed away, the Gospel should be preached to almost all the inhabitants of the world in such a way as to make clear to them the issue of faith or disbelief in Jesus Christ. If this is possible, it is the task of the Church to see that it is done.⁴

← That Strachan comprehended this fact is revealed in the following inspiring passage:

7(2) Can we really reach everybody in any one country like Guatemala? The answer to that troubling question came to me one morning when we were driving to the capital from the interior. Along the way we had picked up an Indian hitchhiker.

An opening question or two had disclosed the fact that we were brothers in the Lord and had loosened tongues. As the car made its way through the mountains, the Indian brother began to point to distant huts and hamlets where other Christians lived. Evangelism-in-Depth had come to Guatemala, he said, and he and his fellow-Christians were all visiting their neighbors, hiking over mountain trails to pass the Gospel on. Without even knowing how to read the Scriptural words for themselves, they were fulfilling them. Each one, in his concern for a friend, a distant neighbor, a relative on another mountainside, was helping to spread the good news of Christ over the whole country.

The answer became joyously and gloriously clear that morning: yes, Christ meant the Gospel for everybody. And everybody can be reached. It is not a question of a few Christian workers exhausting themselves in futile efforts. It is the simple, natural, inspired and reproductive witness of every disciple according to his own gifts and experience, wherever God has placed him, that will bring about the literal fulfillment of the Lord's desire.

Every creature means everybody.⁵

← But does Evangelism in Depth reach all men in a given country?

⁴Committee of the International Missionary Council, Renewal and Advance, A Report of the Meeting of the Committee at Whitby, Ontario, 1947, Edited by C. W. Ranson (London: Edinburgh House Press, 1948), p. 206.

⁵R. Kenneth Strachan, "Everybody," Latin America Evangelist (January-February, 1963), p. 1.

In an absolute sense, no. At the same time, it does arrest the attention of a nation, including its villages as well as its cities, its masses and even semi-assimilated groups as well as its leaders. Furthermore, Evangelism in Depth plans for the continued evangelistic witness after the visiting advisors leave. At this point, it ought to be asked, did Christ and His disciples preach to all men in Israel in their day? Probably not. Still, who would say that they did not evangelize the nation, by their concentration on the strategic cities of Jerusalem and Capernaum, by their circuits throughout the rural areas, by the fame of them that spread throughout the land? And might not something similar be said of the missionary Paul and his helpers? The Great Commission means that all men should hear, and, as the evangelist goes out in obedience, the Spirit of God multiplies his witness in many ways.

← To take the dimensions of the Great Commission seriously requires, among other virtues, humility and courage. Strachan and his colleagues were humble enough to admit that forms of mission work which they had initiated, successful as they had been, were still inadequate. They were also courageous enough to look for new forms and discard or modify the old. R. C. Guy, mission leader of the Southern Baptist Church, frankly stated the need for these qualities as follows: "One fears that some activities on the mission field (in all three departments--evangelism, education, and medicine) are carried on because no one knows how to administer the coup de grace and start something more productive."⁶(—)

The Lutheran Church in Latin America can profit from Evangelism in Depth at this point, for immigrant Lutherans, who form nine tenths of

⁶R. C. Guy et al., Church Growth and Christian Mission, ed. D. A. McGavran (New York: Harper & Row, Publishers, 1965), p. 143.)

the membership of this denomination, have only begun to think of the imperative and dimensions of the Great Commission as Rudolf Obermuller, professor of theology in the Union Theological Seminary and in the Lutheran Theological Seminary of Argentina, admits in the following:

7(4) The consciousness of this duty [evangelism] . . . is still relatively weak, since the spiritual attitude of these churches (especially of their leaders) is still strongly influenced by the desire to preserve obsolete traditions. Moreover, the expulsion of refugees from Europe during the last World War brought many new ethnic groups to Latin America whose sole bond of union was usually their church.

As for the Lutheran Mission boards which are doing evangelistic work in the South, and the Latin American Lutherans who form one tenth of the denomination in the continent, Evangelism in Depth represents a challenge to seek a still greater, indeed, an all-embracing evangelism program. Happily, the Commission on Latin America of the Lutheran World Federation, in one way and another, is stressing the evangelism task of the Lutheran Church in the South. For instance, in 1962, this commission sponsored Communications Conferences in Guatemala City and in Buenos Aires. Still, the matter is urgent.

7.2

The New Day for Evangelism in Latin America

In the second place, Evangelism in Depth discerns and illustrates a new day for evangelism in Latin America. The Latin America scene has been changing rapidly in the last fifty years, and the Latin America Mission has been able to observe or discover these changes and their significance for the work of evangelism. Furthermore, there have been developments within the Protestant community of which Strachan and his colleagues

(Rudolf Obermuller, Evangelism in Latin America ("World Evangelism Today," ed. D. T. Niles, published by The United Society for Christian Literature for the World Council of Churches; London: Lutterworth Press, 1957), p. 14.)

have been aware. These men saw the changing scene, and, by the grace of God, they gave an answer for the times. God gave an open door, and, through Evangelism in Depth, they entered that door.

Of course, some aspects of the Latin American situation that contribute to the current evangelistic opportunity are not of recent occurrence. For instance, political liberalism as an ideal of the majority of the intellectuals and leaders dates from the beginning of the republican period when, in the name of democracy the Creoles broke with Spain and Portugal. This democratic ideal included and still includes freedom of religion, in spite of the fact that the Catholic Church party has tenaciously opposed this principle, indeed, the liberal tradition as a whole, right up until the present decade. This being the case, Protestant missions could enter Latin America and work.

Another aspect of the Latin American situation that contributes to the present evangelistic challenge is even older than the former, namely, the religious vacuum among the masses. Many Protestant authorities have not been clear about this fact, for Catholic spokesmen have persistently claimed the continent to be 90% Catholic. While it is true that the great majority of Latin Americans have been baptized in the Catholic Church, still the following situation, conservatively described by Obermuller in 1957, prevails:

7(4) In the countries in this area most people are outside the range of Christian or religious influences. One-third of the 150 million inhabitants of Latin America may possibly to some extent be under the organization of the Roman Catholic. . . . But two-thirds, or 100 million people, live without any ties or any contact with a Christian Church.⁸

Some progressive Catholic authorities in Latin America have analyzed the

⁸ Ibid., pp. 6-7.

situation of the masses in even more urgent terms. Accordingly, Cardinal Raul Silva Henriquez of Chile, enumerating the causes of Protestant missionary activity in Latin America before the delegates of the Second Vatican Council, began the list with the following point: "Religious needs of the people inadequately met by our Catholic pastoral structures, due to the lack of priests, or to the lack of concern on the part of the laity, or because we perform the pastoral ministry in the confidence of having an established Christianity and not according to the reality of a state of mission."⁹ That is, Silva justifies the presence of Protestant missionaries in Latin America, and recently, on a visit to New York, he proved it by visiting executive secretaries of the mission boards at work in Latin America, "to express his appreciation for what Protestant missions and Protestant churches had contributed to the spiritual life of Latin America, and in gratitude for the debt which the Roman Catholic Church owed them."¹⁰ No one need suffer qualms of conscience about the evangelistic aggressiveness of Evangelism in Depth or any other Protestant agency in "Catholic" Latin America; men of good will, including Catholics, applaud such aggressiveness.

Now, in addition to a political climate that permits the presence of Protestant missions and the religious vacuum among the masses, the Latin America Mission discerns new developments in the Latin America scene, such as, the economic and social revolution that is predisposing large sections of the masses to accept new ideas and new patterns of life. The revolution began in 1910 when the Mexican peasant masses rose up to suc-

⁹Raul Silva Henriquez, quoted in an editorial by Jorge Mejia, El Mercurio (Quena, Ecuador, December 9, 1963), p. 5.)

¹⁰John A. Mackay, "Christ or Religion?" World Vision, IX, No. 7 (July-August, 1965), 23.)

cessfully demand justice and land of the privileged few. Since colonial times, the aristocracy, not only of Mexico but of all Latin America, has held huge estates of land taken from the Indians, and they have dominated the peasants. Furthermore, the patrons have done little to raise the general cultural and physical condition of their subjects. However, beginning with the Mexican Revolution of 1910, the peasant and working class would no longer tolerate the semi-feudal situation, and, since that time, a profound unrest and agitation of a social and economic nature has characterized the entire continent. In 1952, the Bolivian masses captured political control and initiated drastic reforms. In 1959, the people led by Fidel Castro revolted in Cuba, but Communism betrayed that movement. Throughout the continent, large migrations of restless rural people are moving toward the cities. To aggravate the problem, the annual rate of population growth in the continent is 2.6 per cent, greater than that of any comparable region in the world.¹¹ The masses, in desperation, are breaking with the life patterns of the past and groping for new messiahs. They are even giving Protestant evangelists a hearing.

Again, the Latin America Mission sees the new face of Catholicism in Latin America. Even before the Second Vatican Council, changes were discernible. For instance, Catholic authorities, including the American, John Considine, were calling attention to the lack of priests in the continent and the consequent decline in the church. Other Catholic progressives, especially in Chile, were concerned about social and economic developments and were therefore taking the lead in social action. In 1955, the Latin American church, taking a significant step, organized

¹¹ Myrtle M. Clesmer and W. Stanley Rycroft, "A Statistical Study of Latin America," Occasional Bulletin, Vol. XIII, No. 5 (May, 1962), 14.

the Latin American Bishop's Conference in order to confront the social and religious needs of the continent. Finally, in 1959, John XXIII called for the Second Vatican Council which not only focused on renewal within the church but also on brotherly relations with non-Catholic Christians. This second aim represented a radical change for the conservative Catholics of Latin America, and prelates and laymen alike, once the council actually began, watched with wonderment as Catholic progressives showed more strength than the conservatives, as Protestant observers were invited and actually present during the proceedings, and as the bishops issued the epoch-making decree on religious liberty. In the course of the seven Evangelism in Depth efforts, the Latin America Mission could see the face of Catholicism change from sternness in Nicaragua and Costa Rica to near friendliness in Bolivia. As far as the public was concerned, the reaction was even more positive.

Then, in addition to the new responsiveness on the part of a people in flux and the new face of Catholicism, the Latin America Mission discerns significant developments within Latin American Protestantism. For instance, it sees a church that has reached numerical strength sufficient to arrest the attention of the public for the first time in its history. The 750,000 members of the Protestant community of 1925 could not make much of an impression on the public, but a generation later that number had grown to 7,500,000.¹² Furthermore, in spite of the 150 plus Protestant denominations or missions at work in Latin America, 75% of the

¹²Wilton M. Nelson, "Separation or Cooperation?" Latin America Evangelist, (September-October, 1961), p. 7.)

(Songraea
7 (8))

missionaries belong to the nonhistoric churches. In spite of the many divisions among this 75% and in spite of the fact that as a rule they do not belong to the World Council of Churches that has stressed the ecumenical responsibility, still they do emphasize their inner spiritual unity and they have become increasingly sensitive about their lack of outward unity. That is, the stage was set for a leader in sustained cooperative evangelism. That leader, under God, was Kenneth Strachan. Although Strachan did not care to emphasize the parade in the national campaigns, still that feature of Evangelism in Depth has come to symbolize the strength and unity of the Protestant Church which he perceived. The parade more than any other aspect of the program is a symbol of the new day for evangelistic witness discerned and illustrated by the Latin America Mission.

The statistics of campaign attendance and of professions of faith constitute a telling witness to the new day for evangelism. Many more listened to the message on the radio and read it on the printed page. Of course, the professions of faith statistics of the Evangelism in Depth efforts have their limitations. These figures are the number of persons who signed decision cards after the various evangelistic campaigns and of those prayed with concerning conversion in the visitation phase of the program. They do not pretend to represent church membership, for the Latin America Mission advisors leave a country before church membership instruction takes place and people are actually received into the congregations. It would be valuable if the Latin America Mission would

¹⁵R. Kenneth Strachan, The Missionary Movement of the Non-Historical Groups in Latin America, Paper read before the Study Conference of the Committee on Cooperation in Latin America, Buck Hills Falls, Pennsylvania, November 10-12, 1957 (New York: Committee on Cooperation in Latin America, 1957), p. 9.)

collect statistics on church membership and its relation to the Evangelism in Depth effort, say, one year after its conclusions. However, even in view of inevitable losses, that 15,000 adults and young people should answer an altar call and ask for counselling or desire to pray with a visitor concerning repentance and faith in Christ is highly significant, especially in Latin America. Any church, including the Lutheran Church, is not only happy but also impressed when 15,000 unchurched ask for catechetical instruction.

← It should be mentioned that Evangelism in Depth is not the only example of effective evangelism in this new day for Latin America. Indeed, the primary example is not Evangelism in Depth but Pentecostalism which in Brazil alone has ascended to an astronomical 1,639,000 communicant members since 1910. In terms of its larger significance, Pentecostal success in Latin America powerfully reinforces the general conclusion of the open door for evangelism in Latin America now.

← When St. Paul discerned the open door at Ephesus, he decided to remain there, that is, take advantage of the opportunity that God had given. Such opportunities represent sacred visitations from God, which on the part of His servants demand loyal response. Of Lutherans at work in Latin America today, along with all Protestant groups, such loyal response is required. It is the day for aggressive evangelism among the Latin American community on all the fields.

7.3 The Witness of the Entire Church


← In the third place, Evangelism in Depth challenges and enables

(William R. Read, New Patterns of Church Growth in Brazil (Grand Rapids, Michigan: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1965), p. 176.)

(I Cor. 16:8,9)

the entire Church of a given republic to give a coordinated witness to that republic. This point illustrates how profound a simple idea can be. It also shows the genius of Strachan. For, having faced the breadth of the missionary mandate and having discerned the Latin America field as ripe for harvest, Strachan simply remembered that it is a task for the Church--but the whole Church. This reads like a Sunday School lesson, for none denies that the Lord commissioned the Church to give the witness. But, upon further reflection, it must be admitted that few have believed that the visible Church with its sins, weaknesses, and divisions could give a witness that is unified, "in depth," and coordinated. There are several aspects to this point.

7.3.1 The Participation of the Laity in Evangelism

 The Evangelism in Depth program of the Latin America Mission underscores and demonstrates that not only the missionaries and national pastors but also the laymen of the younger churches have a vital part in the work of evangelism. The laymen, and not only their leaders, are a part of the Church to whom Christ gave the missionary command. Indeed, they constitute the overwhelming majority of the Church, and so represent the largest witnessing force of the Church. They too have received gifts of the Spirit to enable them. The laymen have the direct and intimate contact with the community to whom the witness is to be given. In that community they are to evangelize, just as the Christians of the early Jerusalem congregation, persecuted and scattered, "went about preaching the word."¹⁶ For and in this evangelistic work of the laity, the pastors will train and lead them. Melvin L. Hodges of the Pentecostal Church which more than any other in Latin America has been characterized by lay

¹⁶Acts 8:4.

activity, underscores the vital function of the laity in evangelism as follows:

7(9) In those areas of Latin America where the Church has truly progressed it is notable that the entire Church is fruitful seed. There is always a special emphasis on lay activity. Every convert is a witness and every Christian works not only within his church but in outstations and branch Sunday Schools. He is a personal witness of his belief, extending the Church by his work.¹⁷

Of course, Lutherans can understand this, for it is one vital aspect of the doctrine of the universal priesthood of believers. In order that this aspect be put into practice in Latin America, Lutheran leaders may have to undertake a forthright effort in the churches, involving measures toward renewal and guidance in visitation and other forms of evangelism. Evangelism in Depth can benefit all in this regard.

7.3.2 The Congregation as the Focal Point of Evangelism

Evangelism in Depth does not exclude the function of the local congregation in the work of evangelism. Not only are the converts in the union campaigns referred to the local congregations, but also, training for [evangelism is done by the local congregations, visitation work is first carried out around and in reference to the local churches, local evangelistic] campaigns constitute a part of the program, and the aim of Evangelism in Depth is that the churches be renewed in order to carry on evangelism when the advisors leave. The support that Evangelism in Depth gives to the local programs is of utmost importance, for thereby it accords with the Biblical concept of the local congregation as the Church. Since Evangelism in Depth is careful about this point, Lutheran Churches in Latin America, by participating in the Evangelism in Depth efforts will find that their local programs, far from being slighted and overrun,

¹⁷M. L. Hodges et al., Church Growth and Christian Mission, ed. D. A. McGavran, p. 117.

will rather be heightened.

7.3.3

Respect for the Denomination

← Evangelism in Depth makes every effort to guarantee respect for denominational distinctiveness within the limits of evangelical Christianity, and the fact that such large percentages of Protestant missions and churches in the different republics where the efforts were carried out felt free to cooperate, demonstrates this fact. Specific measures designed to please denominations include the following: the request to the denominational leaders at the beginning for the endorsement of Evangelism in Depth, the close cooperation with denominational leaders throughout the effort by means of the National Coordinating Committee, the appointment of denominational regional committees in areas where only one group works, and the varied involvement of the local churches led by their pastors. The last two points are especially important, for they permit the denominations to direct the training of laymen for evangelism, the visitation phase, the local campaigns, the regional campaigns, and the follow-up, exactly as they wish to do so, that is, along their distinctive lines. As for activities of the program carried out on a union basis, Lutherans, for instance, would approve of the showing of the Martin Luther film, the Reformation Day service, and the Lutheran posters and floats in the parade. Most important, they would also approve of the basic principles of evangelical Christianity which in the main constitute the message of the Evangelism in Depth efforts. Admittedly, distinctive features of each participating group inadvertently slip in during such undertakings, but this may be overlooked in Christian love, and in view of the main characteristics of the effort, especially when the program is of a temporary nature. Evangelism in Depth is right in its respect for

the denomination, for since Apostolic times there have been diverse manifestations at the intercongregational level within the one Church of Christ. That is, there is a valid denominationalism, just as Gentile Christians and Jewish Christians in the primitive Church respected and thanked God for one another--although this principle has been greatly abused in our day. In a word, Lutherans who decided to cooperate with Evangelism in Depth did not err but rather strengthened their own denomination.

7.3.4 ← The Participation of the Various Missions

← Evangelism in Depth gives place not only to the denominations but also to the various missions, for these also form a part of the total Church of a given country. The missions have been sent by God for the creation and the establishment of the Church in the various lands. Of course, the Latin America Mission itself is a mission. Then, numerous auxiliary missionary organizations, such as, the United Bible Societies, Missionary Aviation Fellowship, Youth for Christ, Moody Literature Mission, and so forth, participate as such in their respective ways. True, the various coordinating committees are made up mostly of younger church representatives. However, the missions back up the representatives of the sister churches in every way, and they work right along with the national Christians in the various activities of the effort. When there is a choice between a mission and a national church, the latter gets the preference in Evangelism in Depth, which is correct, for the churches represent the permanent organizations in the republics. However, the missions are not slighted, and ample room is provided for them to make their full contributions. Churches and missions work together in the evangelism task.

7.3.5 ← Mass Media and Various Gifts

← Evangelism in Depth does not restrict itself to one or certain types of evangelism approach but seeks to utilize the numerous and varied resources of the Church. This accords with the truth that the Spirit of God has given different gifts to the Church for their use in her life and work. The Apostle Paul wrote, "Having gifts that differ according to the grace given to us, let us use them: if prophecy, in proportion to our faith; if service, in our serving; he who teaches, in his teaching; he who exhorts, in his exhortation; he who contributes, in liberality; he who gives aid, with zeal; he who does acts of mercy, with cheerfulness."¹⁸

This Evangelism in Depth seeks to do, and so, not only visitation but also personal evangelism is employed, not only the evangelistic sermon but also the series of evangelistic meetings in the church, not only evangelism through the various types of mass media but also the mass campaign, not only the evangelistic word but also the evangelistic deed. Indeed, the record of the various Evangelism in Depth efforts constitutes a wealth of practical suggestions as to specific evangelistic approaches from which any mission body, including our Lutheran boards and field conferences, might greatly profit. In part, the varied approach of Evangelism in Depth stems from the recognition of sharp class distinctions in Latin America and the wise decision to approach each in the most suited manner. For instance, the underdeveloped Indian is approached with a method including a social service, the fearful women are given special consideration, the sophisticated intelligentsia are invited in a more formal way, the children and youth require a simple approach, and the masses are met in an unsophisticated and straightforward way. Although Evangelism in Depth

¹⁸Romans 12:6-8.)

did include a special approach to the English-speaking colonies in Central America, it is regrettable that the various immigrant groups were not included in the various efforts. Jewish evangelism ought to be included in these efforts. As for the European immigrants of Lutheran background, many of whom are little more than nominal church members who only occasionally attend church, evangelism among these requires a special approach which the Lutheran churches and boards, by participation in the future evangelism efforts, would be able to provide.

7.3.6

The United Witness of the Church

← Now, the lay witness, the congregational witness, the denominational witness, the contribution of the missions, with all the various gifts and resources involved, Evangelism in Depth brings together for a united, coordinated, and sustained impact on the country involved. That is, the Evangelism in Depth program takes the ecumenical dimension of the Church seriously and earnestly believes in its vital relation to the evangelistic witness to the world. How thought-provoking that a group that opposes the World Council of Churches should call for the united witness of the Church, hurdle some of the difficulties involved, and virtually achieve it, albeit on a temporary basis, in seven different lands! Of course, the Christians and churches involved are profoundly impressed and greatly encouraged. The world, also, applauds through its press and leaders, and responds to altar calls. And the Catholic Church is taken back and even extends congratulations. Lutherans who have been in the vanguard of the ecumenical movement cannot but approve of this. Accordingly, the last Lutheran World Federation Assembly at Helsinki agreed on the following new emphasis for Latin America; "to foster ecumenical fellowship with Protestant brethren . . . with a view to eliminating mutual

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misconceptions and establishing areas of effective cooperation of Christian witness.¹⁹

Evangelism by Word and Deed

In the fourth place, Evangelism in Depth maintains the proper relation between the preaching of conversion and the doing of social work. That is, the program stresses the evangelistic word about conversion to Christ, but it also includes the evangelistic deed of love and mercy in the name of Christ.

As for the evangelistic deed, Evangelism in Depth makes room for such social contributions as the Good-Will Caravan, thirty of which functioned in the Bolivia effort. At the same time, it must be remembered that Evangelism in Depth is of limited duration and so cannot be expected to undertake long-range programs. Such long-range social programs, as well as other forms of involvement in Latin American life, must be left to the missions and churches that reside in a given country, even as the Latin America Mission itself as a permanent organization in Costa Rica and Colombia sponsors schools, an orphanage, and a hospital. Of course, Latin Americans are now in the midst of dire social and economic, cultural and public health needs, and they understand and appreciate whatever effective aid the Protestant groups can provide, even as the government of Bolivia appreciated and facilitated the work of the Good-Will Caravans. The injunction of our Lord to "let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works,"²⁰ is very meaningful for evangelists in Latin America today.

¹⁹Lutheran World Federation, Proceedings, A Report of the Fourth Assembly at Helsinki, Finland, July 30-August 11, 1963 (Berlin: Lutherisches Verlagshaus, 1965), p. 365.)

²⁰(Matt. 5:16.)

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← At the same time, the basic social contribution of the Christian missionary is the Gospel. The several versions of the Great Commission stress the evangelistic word, that is, teaching,²¹ preaching,²² and witnessing²³ to the Gospel, and this Gospel of Christ our righteousness saves the soul and exalts the nation.²⁴ The stress on conversion is not marginal to the Christian witness nor is it irrelevant to the world, and the Evangelism in Depth program has the great merit of keeping this straight. Conversion is exactly what Latin America needs, as Obermuller points out in the following:

7(12) Real contact with Latin American people is made when there is understanding of how to put faith into practice. . . . The first task of evangelism is, therefore, to arouse a sense of personal responsibility. In this setting conversion becomes an important event, because it involves taking a clear attitude, making a decision, turning away from the beaten track. For these reasons alone evangelism in Latin America is obligated to insist on conversion.²⁵

But does not Evangelism in Depth make an emotional approach? Yes, in part. The spirit of campaign prevails, the preaching is ardent, the subjective response of decision and faith is stressed. But that evangelistic preaching and endeavor be emotional does not represent a weakness but rather a strong point, indeed, a necessary quality if people are to be moved. God is the only cause of conversion, but His evangelists must be men of zeal, and the whole sinner including his emotions responds to the Gospel invitation. Accordingly, Conrad Thompson, Executive Director of the Commission on Evangelism of the American Lutheran Church, wrote the following about the evangelism message:

7(13) An evangelistic message confronts the hearer with the claims of

²¹Matt. 28:20.)

²²Mark 16:15; Luke 24:47.)

²³Luke 29:48; Acts 1:8.)

²⁴Prov. 14:34.)

²⁵Obermuller, p. 8.)

Jesus Christ. It is an urgent message, God pressing his claims upon men redemptively, with a decision as the intended result.²⁶

That is, under such circumstances, both the evangelist and the unconverted listener experience emotion. But Evangelism in Depth is not only emotional in approach, but also intellectual or doctrinal. The Latin American public demands this in order to know wherein the Protestant Church differs from the Catholic Church.

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The Limitations of Cooperative Evangelism

In the fifth place, Evangelism in Depth, because of its interdenominational nature, cannot give united expression to certain important aspects of evangelism but rather must leave them to the follow-up phase in charge of the respective denominations. This represents a weakness of the program. More particularly, it is a weakness of fragmented Protestantism in Latin America which can only agree on certain basic facets of evangelism and not on the others. That is, the leaders of Evangelism in Depth do not necessarily reject an evangelism that is complete from a Biblical point of view; rather they must work with Latin American Protestantism as it is. Evangelism in Depth leaders, before the respective audiences of Latin America, can only underscore the importance of several remaining aspects of conversion to Christ and then refer the people to the denominations for further explanations. The leaders believe that the situation in the South requires a united and sustained, albeit imperfect, evangelistic approach. Indeed, God Himself must work with what He has in His Church and, in spite of the weaknesses and sins, work out His saving purposes. But what are the aspects of Biblical evangelism that cannot be handled on a united basis in Evangelism in Depth?

²⁶Conrad M. Thompson, "Evangelism," The Encyclopedia of the Lutheran Church, ed. Julius Bodensieck, I (1965), 820.)

Baptism

The precise function of baptism for conversion and evangelism must be referred to the follow-up period in charge of the denominational leaders. The reason for this is that the several conflicting Protestant views on this matter are represented in the cooperating church bodies. Accordingly, program leaders refer people who sign decision cards to a specific church where they will receive further instruction as to this subject.

Baptism, of course, forms a part of the New Testament conversion experience. Accordingly, of the first converts of the Christian Church, Luke records that "those who received his [Peter's] word were baptized, and there were added that day about three thousand souls."²⁷ Also, of the subsequent converts resultant from the missionary labours of the apostles and the Church, again and again the Scriptures include baptism in their initial salvation experience. That is, whatever meaning be attached to baptism, the rite must form a part of the Biblical evangelism program.

As to the significance of baptism, Mark quotes the words of the Lord in the Great Commission as follows: "He who believes and is baptized shall be saved; but he who does not believe will be condemned."²⁸ The strongest words as to the meaning of the rite come from Peter who affirms, "Baptism . . . now saves you."²⁹ Of course, this last passage must be understood in the light of the many other Bible portions that point to God Himself as the origin of grace and salvation, and not baptism. Furthermore, the Bible underscores the response of faith as the necessary condition on the part of man, if he is to be saved. At the same time, it

²⁷Acts 2:41.)

²⁸Mark 16:16.)

²⁹I Peter 3:21.)

is evident from the passages above, as well as others, that baptism is connected with the grace of God. Baptism is a sacrament. Baptism is a medium of saving grace. Martin Luther in many places penned the meaning of baptism and its relation to grace and faith, as illustrated by the following: "Thus you clearly see baptism is no work which we do, but a treasure which God gives us and of which faith lays hold; just as our Lord Jesus Christ upon the cross is not a work but a treasure comprehended and offered in the Word and received by faith."³⁰

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 ← In the great majority of cases, the converts went through the efforts of the churches during the Evangelism in Depth efforts have been baptized in the Roman Catholic Church as infants. This baptism is valid, because it was administered in the name of the Trinity, and because infants are not excluded from the command of our Lord to baptize "all nations."³¹ However, these people had subsequently strayed away from the Christ of their baptism before, through the preaching of the Word in Evangelism in Depth, they heard His invitation to return.

7.5.2

Instruction

← Some instruction concerning grace, redemption, and faith is given in the preaching meetings of the Evangelism in Depth efforts. However, in the main, instruction of the converts must be handled by the cooperating denominations in and after the follow-up period. The leaders of the Evangelism in Depth program plan that the participating churches receive the new converts into their respective catechetical, membership, and baptismal courses, as well as into the respective continuing adult

³⁰Martin Luther, Large Catechism, translated from the German by John Nicholas Lenker (Minneapolis, Minnesota: Augsburg Publishing House, 1935), p. 164.)

³¹Matt. 28:19.

education programs. Evangelism in Depth itself cannot give this instruction because of the different doctrinal positions of the cooperating bodies.

← For not only baptism but also instruction, according to the New Testament, plays a vital part in evangelization and conversion to Christ. Accordingly, of the evangelism ministry of our Lord, Matthew records that "He went about all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues and preaching the Gospel of the Kingdom and healing every disease among the people."³² Furthermore, the Lord not only taught in His evangelism ministry but also, in the Great Commission, provided that the teaching evangelistic ministry continue, in the following words, "Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you."³³ That is, by means of baptism and teaching the apostles were to make disciples. Because the words "baptizing" and "teaching" are not connected with a conjunction--neither in the Greek nor in the English--the Lord suggests that teaching will in some cases precede baptism and in other cases follow.

← However, evangelists must keep in mind that for Jesus teaching was directed not only to the intellect but also to the will. Jesus directed Himself to the whole man, and "all that I have commanded you" is to be directed to the whole man. Evangelistic teaching dare not reduce itself to the mere impartation of knowledge. Gerhard Kittel, in his monumental Theological Dictionary of the New Testament, writes about ΔΙΔΑΧΗ didaskh as used by Jesus as follows: "The whole teaching of Jesus is with a view to the ordering of life with reference to God and one's

7(15) { ³²(Matt. 4:23.)

³³(Matt. 28:19,20.)

neighbor Thus His teaching constantly appeals to the will, calling for a practical decision either for the will of God or against it."³⁴

7.5.3 ← Church Membership

← Various denominations participate in the Evangelism in Depth efforts, and so the converts cannot be guided to membership in one church. The converts must choose among several denominations, or they are referred to congregations which are near to their residences or which were instrumental in their conversion. In practice, the choice of a denomination among several for Latin Americans is not entirely problematical, for Catholics in the South are accustomed to deciding between regular and secular parishes and between churches maintained by the numerous regular orders. They are also aware of some of the differences between these various Catholic groupings.

The instructions of Christ to the future apostles concerning church discipline, recorded in Matthew 18:15-20, make it clear that He intended that His future followers become members of local congregations. Of the erring brother He says, "If he refuses to listen to them [two or three witnesses], tell it to the church Where two or three are gathered in my name, there am I in the midst of them."³⁵ Accordingly, the missionary Paul not only preached, baptized, and instructed his converts, but also gathered them into a local congregation with appointed leaders who would see to the ministry of the Word and sacraments, before he considered that place evangelized and so could move on to another city.

³⁴Gerhard Kittel (ed.), Theological Dictionary of the New Testament, translated from the German and edited by Geoffrey W. Bromiley (Vol. II; Grand Rapids, Michigan: William B. Eerdmans Company, 1964), p. 821.)

³⁵(Matt. 18:17-20.)

So Luke recorded about Paul and his companions that "when they had appointed elders for them in every church, with prayer and fasting, they committed them to the Lord in whom they believed."³⁶ Peter Beyerhaus is correct when he states,

It is a remarkable thing, and most significant for an understanding of the true nature of the Gospel, that the experience of conversion immediately leads to the desire to join a Christian fellowship. This has always been a phenomenon of the Christian religion, from the days of the Apostles until now.³⁷

7.6 ← The Lack of Complete Spontaneity

← Finally, although it does mobilize the Church and result in many professions of faith, Evangelism in Depth lacks a completely natural and spontaneous quality characteristic of profound movements of the Spirit of God. To be sure, the Latin America Mission represents a harmonious partnership and fellowship in the work of Christ, and the same freedom appears in each republic where it conducts the evangelism efforts. Also, the Latin American Christians cooperate wholeheartedly with the program, and, from time to time, go beyond the program with enthusiastic activity. To be sure, the statistics are impressive. Besides, the Evangelism in Depth leadership has wisely endeavored to remove foreign aspects that thwart indigenusness. At the same time, Evangelism in Depth is essentially a prearranged and scheduled course of evangelistic proceedings--a program. It is good and excellent, one of the finest contributions that Protestant missions have made in Latin America. God has blessed it. Evangelism in Depth must continue. Still, a program is not an awakening. It is not a people movement. It does not represent spontaneous expansion. Christian

³⁶Acts 14:23.

³⁷Peter Beyerhaus and Henry Lefever, The Responsible Church and the Foreign Mission (Grand Rapids, Michigan: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1964), p. 107.)

workers ought always to pray for the highest and seek to remove those impediments that prevent God from giving His best.

← Are there impediments in Evangelism in Depth? The author is disturbed about some misleading statements as to the casual principle behind successful evangelism, such as, Evangelism in Depth. For instance, Roberts reported that "to be successful and to merit the blessing of God [*italics mine*], a program of evangelism must be adequate to the opportunity and need."³⁸ Again, throughout several Evangelism in Depth efforts the Christians were taught the theme song, "We shall win Nicaragua [Guatemala, and so forth] for Jesus if only we battle for Him."³⁹ Again, Gustafson from Bolivia reported, "If things did not go well enough, we were told we did not pray long enough."⁴⁰ No. In the Christian mission, the causal principle is and must ever be God Himself. Evangelism does not succeed because of the wisdom and efforts of the Christians and their leaders, nor because of a principle, nor because of a method, nor^{even} because of our prayers. To be sure, God has chosen to use the agency of His Church for the evangelization of the world, and this involves dedication on her part. Still, the working is that of the Spirit of God, and He must receive all the glory. Pentecostal leaders in Latin America, whose church has spread more rapidly than any other, take care to honor the Holy Spirit, as in the following statement by the well-known missionary spokesman of this church, Hodges:

³⁸W. Dayton Roberts, "New Dimension in Evangelism," Latin America Evangelist (November-December, 1965), p. 13.

³⁹Latin America Mission, Evangelism in Depth (Chicago: Moody Press, 1961), p. 8.)

⁴⁰Letter from Arthur M. Gustafson, Missionary of the World Mission Prayer League in Bolivia, December 10, 1965.)

7(17) In reading the Gospels and the Acts of the Apostles, I am impressed with the fact that the disciples did not sit down and map out the strategy for their world conquest. Christ did not neglect the training and instruction of His disciples, but He was primarily concerned that they grasp the significance of the Cross, the Resurrection, and the indwelling Spirit. The apostles advanced, driven by that Spirit rather than following carefully planned tactics.⁴¹

The representatives at the Whitby meeting of the International Missionary Council issued the following important statement in this regard:

7(18) Much talk of evangelism and the planning of evangelistic campaigns brings with it the danger that men may come to rely on themselves and their own powers as the means by which the Kingdom of God will come in. It is necessary that the Church should remind itself that it is the Word of God which is quick and powerful, and that it is through the Holy Spirit alone that the Word becomes effective unto life.⁴²

The temptation of the evangelist to trust in himself and not in God through His Word, which can only result in the quenching of the Holy Spirit, is subtle, and one that must be avoided at all costs.

This study of the Evangelism in Depth program of the Latin America Mission, at the level of theory and practice, has led to an inescapable conclusion: it is a highly significant development in and for the work of evangelism in Latin America. The program represents workable, successful, and Biblical evangelism. Evangelical churches and missions in Latin America, including those of the Lutheran Church, will find in it an effective aid to and a valuable source of information for their own evangelism program and task.

⁴¹W. L. Hodges et al., pp. 28-29.)

⁴²Committee of the International Missionary Council, Renewal and Advance, p. 21h.)

when they returned it seemed extremely difficult to secure their admission into the ministry of the Church. This unfortunate situation has improved somewhat in the last decade, but the problem has not yet been generally solved. In their regulations on theological training as well as on admission to the ministry, the churches formerly treated the missions as virtually non-existent, and this attitude will have to change when the Church itself begins to engage in mission.

The picture we have drawn of church-mission relationships and the first steps being taken towards a clarification of the situation is a very complicated one. It could be said that everything is in a state of transition—societies improving their relationships with the churches, churches on the other hand awakening to their missionary responsibility. But the pluralism on both sides makes it very difficult to find a solution. We have seen that such a clarification of the situation may be possible only at the highest level. The creation of the Co-operative Committee for World Mission gives us reason to hope for further advancement. But there will then have to be a much wider follow-up in numerous churches as well as societies, and above all, within the actual life of thousands and thousands of Christian congregations. At this level it will be proved whether 'society mindedness', 'church mindedness' or 'missionary mindedness' is at stake. Only if the last of the three has a dynamic power can we hope for an improvement of co-ordination and co-operation; and along this way lies the road to integration.

TH. MÜLLER-KRÜGER

X CALL TO WITNESS

By R. KENNETH STRACHAN

WE Christians can never escape a continuous sense of concern for the task of personal witness and world evangelism, which, we believe, has been divinely committed to us. Whatever else we think or do, no matter what the nature of our duties and delights in home, church and society, sooner or later we have to answer to the insistent demands of conscience regarding our stewardship as witnesses to the grace of God.

Most of us—clergy and missionaries more so than laymen—are constantly convicted of our failure as witnesses. We are troubled by the superficiality and inadequacy of our modern programmes and methods, and challenged on every hand by the dismaying increase of the world's population and the growing indifference to the message of the Church.

Our evangelistic concern becomes more anguished each day because of the apocalyptic character of the age in which we live. All our Christian institutions are in crisis. The social, political, scientific and technological revolution of to-day is challenging the very existence of the Church of Christ and calling in question the validity of all its traditional patterns of life and witness. Consequently, everything has to be rethought in terms of our reason for existence. The essential mission of the Church and of each individual Christian must therefore be redefined and reaffirmed.

For servants of the Church in lands where the Christian community is small and its witness weak, and where the encounter with the overwhelming forces of unbelief and rejection constitute a daily and discouraging experience, this necessity of redefining evangelistic responsibility and fixing priorities becomes the compulsive, imperative, inescapable task of the hour.

This was the principal burden that lay upon members of the Latin America Mission in the years that followed the end of the Second World War. Experience in mass evangelism throughout the continent and the lessons taught in the daily discharge of local church and missionary responsibilities had strengthened certain convictions regarding tried and tested methods of evangelism. But they had also

given rise to growing reservations and questions about some aspects of present-day mission and church structures and modes of operation.

Foremost was a growing sense of dissatisfaction with the organizational and institutional structure of the foreign missionary society as an instrument, with the established national church, for meeting adequately the modern challenge of evangelism. There was no doubt that the foreign mission still had important and strategic functions to fulfil in most fields. And there was no question but that the needs and opportunities were greater than ever. But there was increasing discontent with the projects and current use of evangelistic media which more and more seemed to represent artificial, top-heavy and piecemeal approaches to the job. In tackling the unfinished task, it was instinctive to look to the foreigner, or to the dramatic use of modern inventions or techniques which would especially capture the imagination of the supporting constituency in the home land and appear to promise quick and easy returns. But some years of participation in evangelistic enterprises which were inspired, financed and executed from abroad, had eventually resulted in the conviction that such efforts, while helpful in an auxiliary way, did not represent the true solution. The main task continued almost untouched.

In any case, the new world situation was spelling out more clearly with each passing day the end of an era in missions and the logical imperative of the transfer of authority and responsibility from foreign mission to national church. The implication of all this weighed heavily upon the minds of those who were grappling with the problems of effective witness in the exploding continent of Latin America.

An equal source of concern was the pattern of church life, perhaps a missionary legacy, which was becoming increasingly common and which, it seemed, represented one major cause for the relative failure of the Protestant churches to witness effectively to the world around them. It was distressing to see churches facing inwards, dedicating more and more of their time and energies to self-centred programmes that insulated them from the world but also unfortunately cut them off effectively from real contact with needy friends and neighbours. Of even greater concern was the growing tendency to depend upon a professional ministry, thus relegating to positions of passive irresponsibility the majority of church members. This pattern of static, self-centred congregational life raised doubts about the future. There could be no great advance for the cause of Christ, no adequate meeting of the present-day challenge, as long as this trend continued.

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A question was also raised by the multiplicity of Protestant bodies and agencies in Latin America and the general picture of division, competition and confusion which was presented not only to opponents, but also to the indifferent public at large and to hosts of well-disposed friends and potential converts. There were sufficient historical and other explanations to account for this diversity. Not all of it represented failure or weakness: some of it was fundamental to the virility and vitality of the Protestant movement. But looked at from a long-range viewpoint, such a situation raised definite obstacles to the forward march of the Gospel, and the fact that acceptable paths to ecumenicity were not easily trod in no way relieved the problem or lessened the obligation to face it.

There were other factors also, too important to omit, but too complex to describe in detail. One was the resurgence of the Roman Catholic Church in Latin America which, showing new signs of life and vitality, presented a new challenge to the evangelical movement and raised again the necessity for a careful redefinition of Protestant approach and relationship. Another was the continued prolific increase and spread of the sects, creating problems of relationship and adding to the general religious confusion and disorientation. Then there was also the relentless permeation of Marxist and socialist ideas into a soil made fertile by economic pressure and political instability. These and other factors formed part of the picture. And looming over all was the spectacle of a continent caught in the throes of an unparalleled population explosion. All this called for a careful reevaluation of present evangelistic programmes and practices, and for a fresh consecration to the task. Could the challenge be met, and if so, how? What was the secret of successful expansion? The search for the answers to these questions led in various directions.

The progress being made by other groups was studied. Missionary travels throughout the Latin American republics furnished opportunities for a close observation and analysis of both rapid expansion and relative stagnation, and of their underlying causes. Any writings on the subject were eagerly read. Books such as Roland Allen's *Missionary Methods: St Paul's or Ours?* and *Spontaneous Expansion* were re-read. Others, such as Donald McGavran's *The Bridges of God*, Tom Allen's *The Face of My Parish*, Harry Boer's *That My House May Be Filled*, Hendrik Kraemer's *A Theology of the Laity* and, from a secular viewpoint, Eric Hoffer's *The True Believer*, were extremely helpful.

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Eventually such studies and observations led to the drawing up of a tentative conclusion which was recorded as follows: *the expansion of any movement is in direct proportion to its success in mobilizing its total membership in continuous propagation of its beliefs.* This alone and nothing else is the key.

Once this conclusion was phrased, it was no great surprise to discover that it led back directly to the norms and practices of the first-century Church. Further reflection suggested the additional truth that for an expanding movement to retain its essentially Christian character, its witness must be carried out in conscious submission to the Word of God and to the energizing and directing operation of His Spirit. Apart from this, any movement, no matter what its outward profession or success, will ultimately depart from course and cease to be truly Christian. But the key to successful expansion is the continuous witness of the totality of the disciples.

If this was true, then two other questions followed: Is it possible to mobilize all Christians? How can it be done? The instinctive answer to the first is, of course, to question its feasibility. With the possible exception of the first century, and a few isolated and transitory examples, history records no continuing success along these lines. And the longer established the church, the more marked is the loss of momentum in witness. The necessary answer would seem to be no. But if such a negative answer is accepted, then the fact must be faced that the Church must resign itself to defeat, and the inference must be accepted that Christ gave His Church a command that He did not expect it to fulfil because it was humanly impossible. The truth of the matter is that there has been failure in the past and there may be in the future, but for every failure the Church is judged. Fulfilment of the command is possible—other groups have demonstrated it to be so—therefore the answer must be in the affirmative. The real question then is, how?

The effort to elaborate a practical programme of some sort for the implementation of the key principle of expansion defined above led first of all to setting down certain premises or objectives which, it was believed, should be incorporated in the plan. These were:

1. Every Christian without exception, according to his gifts and situation, is called upon to be a witness for Christ. The momentum of a church in carrying out its witness and in its expansion is directly affected by the degree to which its members participate. Therefore mobilization of the total membership must be the first goal, even

though the ultimate result may fall short or it may be necessary in the case of older and less dynamic communities—as Tom Allen suggested—to depend finally upon an inner core of active disciples.

2. This personal witness must centre in the fellowship and communal witness of the local congregation. This involves a recognition of the true mission of the local church as a testifying community set down in the world, not for purposes of self-seeking or self-defence, but for disinterested service and faithful witness in a climate of spiritual worship and genuine brotherhood.

3. This individual and communal activity must relate constructively to the total witness of the entire Body of Christ. Therefore in some practical way, without compromise or blurring of truths, tangible witness must be given to the unity of the Body of Christ. Any serious consideration of the demands and problems of reaching the world around reveals that the job cannot be done by a few professional workers or some select body of Christians. It has to be done by the joint testimony of the entire community. This is not only a matter of the logistics of evangelism (that only the continuous activity of all Christians can possibly cope with the problem of reaching a runaway population), but it is equally a matter of the precise nature of the witness that the Church is required to give. If there is only one Lord and Saviour and only one Gospel, then it is impossible for many groups stressing many distinctives in isolation from each other to give a clear and convincing testimony to one unique way of salvation. Effectiveness in witness requires some tangible demonstration of unity in Christ which need not result in compromise but is essential and inescapable.

4. The witness of all individuals and communities must aim at nothing less than total and complete outreach. The command is 'to every creature', 'among all nations', 'in all the world'. Only a literal acceptance of these terms can command the active enlistment of every Christian. Therefore the planned activity for the Christian forces must include the specific objective of reaching the entire area. For that reason it is advisable to think in terms of natural geographic areas, in which the precise responsibility for complete outreach and the problems that pertain can be faced and discharged by the resident Christian forces.

It was with these basic premises before them that representatives of the Latin America Mission began work on a plan of action adaptable to the needs and conditions of Latin America. In those days Billy

Graham's first visit to the Caribbean had just taken place. The overwhelming response of peoples from all walks of life and from different religious and racial backgrounds had demonstrated once again the vast need and opportunity of the continent. Participation in the tour had provided the opportunity of observing at close range the methods employed for mobilizing large numbers of Christians in efforts which were taking place simultaneously in different places. So with this to inspire and encourage them, LAM missionaries went ahead with their plans.

In general they thought first of the need and potential of bringing together the entire Christian leadership of a given area for a retreat in which—as they waited on the Lord—primary consideration could be given to the evangelistic task that remained to be done. This would logically inaugurate a preparatory stage of mobilization, in which every effort would be made to publicize the programme, organize the necessary committees, and get the movement under way. Most important would be the formation of hundreds of small prayer cells, small units of two or three persons meeting regularly in homes and other places to pray for the evangelization of their country. Each of these cells would subsequently serve as a nucleus for Bible study, for informal witness and visitation, and for active participation in the organized evangelistic efforts throughout the year.

A second stage to follow immediately would involve an intensive training programme, organized according to local conditions on denominational or interdenominational lines, and aimed at enlisting and training hundreds of Christians for active service in the witness of the Church and in the nation-wide movement of evangelism. During this stage it was hoped that a special ministry of teaching could be carried out in many of the local churches with a view to imparting to pastors and their congregations a new vision of the potential of the Christian community for true service and witness.

The next phase of the programme would see a series of formal evangelistic efforts organized and carried out according to the demands and opportunities of the local situation. House-to-house visitation, open-air evangelism, literature distribution, special approaches to special groups, local church conferences and united evangelistic crusades, would all be combined for the purpose of mobilizing the greatest possible number of Christians, making the strongest possible impact upon the entire area or nation, and embarking the Christian community upon a practice of continuous outreach and activity.

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These efforts, carried out over a period of months, would require careful following up. New converts would need instruction, new prospects should be visited, new congregations that had been organized would need to be consolidated, and new areas opened to the Gospel would have to be entered. Of equal importance was the need to consolidate the gains made in fellowship and co-operation between the different Protestant groups. And hundreds of Christians who had been drawn into active witness and service would need encouragement and further training. In the final analysis, the success of the entire movement would have to be measured, not by the attendance at the crusades or the number of decisions, but by the continued dynamic witness of Christians and churches.

Once the plan was drawn up, it was necessary to find a name for it to distinguish it from traditional evangelistic activities of the past. Somehow the words 'Evangelism in Depth' came to mind and were used as a title heading for the first rough draft of the plan. The term stuck and has been in use ever since.

Evangelism in Depth has been hailed by some as a new strategy of evangelism. But in fact it involves nothing basically new. If there is anything different about it, it is perhaps the fact that it represents a formal effort to relate in a long-range programme the best elements of personal witness and mass evangelism, integrated in the continuous testimony of the local church and linked to the total witness of the entire Body of Christ. It also involves a challenge to all Christian bodies to plan and carry out their respective evangelistic programmes in a simultaneous, co-ordinated effort aimed at the ultimate goal that the Great Commission enjoins. To many individuals, moreover, it comes as a personal summons to take the Lord's command seriously and to adventure with other Christians in obedient involvement and witness in the world.

Once the plan was drawn up, the question arose where to make the first attempt to put it into practice. In Costa Rica, field headquarters of the LAM? That familiar adage about a prophet in his own country raised doubts. Where then? Neighbouring Nicaragua presented a possibility. It was near enough. The Protestant movement in the country, while not large, was fairly robust and Nicaraguan Christians were characterized by a simple faith and ready spirit. Some fourteen Protestant groups were at work in the country, representing the usual differences in theological and ecclesiastical conviction and outlook. But the obstacles to co-operation were not insurmountable. Moreover,

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in spite of the customary political unrest, there was a prevailing liberal atmosphere that offered ample guarantee of religious liberty. Finally, and most important, was the fact that Nicaraguan Christians themselves were convinced that God's time had come for a forward evangelistic thrust of some sort.

On the other hand, the size of the country (larger than the State of Pennsylvania and practically the size of England), the limited resources of the Nicaraguan churches, and the fact that in those same days the Church of Rome had launched a nation-wide 'Holy Mission', called for a careful consideration and counting of the cost. It would not be easy, but it was feasible. In any case, an experimental effort must be attempted somewhere. Preliminary contacts and explorations with representatives of the churches there and subsequent developments eventually produced the assurance that this was the direction in which the Lord was leading.

It is beyond the compass of this brief presentation to tell the story of what took place in that first effort, or in later similar movements in Costa Rica and Guatemala. The story of the first is recorded in the book, *Evangelism in Depth*, published by the Moody Press of Chicago. It included defeats as well as successes, disappointments as well as rejoicings, but more of the latter than of the former. There were many outstanding incidents that highlighted the seven-month effort. Never to be forgotten was the four-day pastors' retreat held on the outskirts of the village of Masatepe. For the first time in the history of the Protestant movement in that republic, leaders from all the different groups were met together. They experienced there a melting of hearts, a drawing together in prayer and fellowship, and a fresh vision of their task, that could be attributed only to the Holy Spirit. In the weeks that followed, they saw with amazement hundreds of Christians from every denomination sitting together, memorizing the Scriptures, training for active service; they led them out in house-to-house visitation that carried them from the squares of their towns or villages to the countryside beyond; they rejoiced in the spectacle of multitudes listening to the Gospel as it was proclaimed in the series of united crusades that was held in strategic centres throughout the country; and they led their people out in parades and demonstrations that made a mighty impact upon the watching spectators.

None who participated or watched those Nicaraguan Christians as they marched through the streets of their cities will ever forget it. There was something in that dignified and brave witness for Christ

that brought tears to the eyes and evoked a vision of multitudes in blood-washed garments marching before the throne on high. There would be also the memory of the sound of singing, as thousands lifted their voices in the song they had been singing for months:

We shall win Nicaragua for Jesus
If together we battle for Him . . .

That first experiment came to a swift end. It is not necessary to describe the results, but team members of the Latin America Mission were encouraged to believe that Evangelism in Depth was feasible and worthy of attempting in other countries as well. What had taken place in Nicaragua was sufficiently exciting to warrant the belief that it might very well represent a programme of united action to meet the challenge of the hour.

Reports of these experiments in Evangelism in Depth have awakened a widespread interest that was completely unexpected. It was not so great a surprise to receive letters of enquiry and invitation from other Latin American republics. But there was correspondence from other parts of the world as well. 'Is this practical for Japan?' wrote one missionary. Similar enquiries have come from Singapore, Vietnam, the Philippines, India, Africa, Spain and many other countries. Some local churches in the United States have even inaugurated programmes of Evangelism in Depth.

There were also expressions of appreciation from church and mission leaders. Kenneth Taylor of the Moody Press wrote:

Is not this more and more what is needed abroad? Not that missionaries will be depended on to do the witnessing, but to help release the enormous Holy Spirit energy that is in every Christian congregation everywhere throughout the world? This, of course, is no new idea, because it has been quietly and increasingly developing for many years; perhaps all that I am doing is reminding myself of the utter logic of what is going on . . . and what I think should soon go on in several other countries.

Special encouragement came from Arthur Glasser, Home Director for North America of the China Inland Mission Overseas Missionary Fellowship. Describing Evangelism in Depth as an entirely new dimension in evangelism, he wrote:

What could be more dead-centre to all the debate about missionary strategy? Not the Western missionary going on his own, but the Western missionary identified with the national church as it moves out in all directions. . . . In present missionary thinking, I see nothing comparable with its vision and dynamic. . . . This marks a heartening break-through in the sinful tangle of inertia that has delayed for so long the advance of the Gospel both at home and overseas.

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Whether the programme of Evangelism in Depth developed in Latin America is adaptable to other parts of the world remains to be seen. Perhaps this report will encourage experiments elsewhere. It should at least serve to focus attention on three simple propositions which ask to-day for conscientious and prayerful consideration. These are:

First, that the Great Commission with its universal goals must be taken seriously and that the primary Christian task in the world to-day must be the faithful, obedient discharge of that responsibility.

Second, that the key to the successful fulfilment of the Great Commission lies in the mobilization of every Christian, for the expansion of any movement is in direct proportion to its success in mobilizing its membership for continuous propagation of its beliefs.

Third, that as Christians in given areas face up to this imperative and accept its conditions, they will discover the secret of abundant and fruitful living, of happy fellowship with other Christians, of joyous and meaningful involvement in the world and worthwhile service for Christ.

Evangelism in Depth, therefore, represents more than a strategy or a plan. It represents a call—God's call, perhaps—for a believing reconsecration to the dynamic, united daily witness that He has ordained for His people, by which He can speak to the world in its present agony. This is His call to the Christian to-day who waits for the return of His Lord, and even while he says, 'Come quickly, Lord Jesus, come'.

R. KENNETH STRACHAN

CALL TO WITNESS—BUT WHAT KIND OF WITNESS?

By VICTOR E. W. HAYWARD

THE foregoing account of 'Evangelism in Depth' in Latin America raises for me a profound issue. I have a great appreciation of the sincerity and dedication of Dr Strachan. It is just because this campaign has been outstandingly successful along its own lines that I feel it proper to make this the occasion for challenging the fundamental assumptions and implications of this type of evangelism. (The first person is used in this paper because I write as representing, not an organization, but only those who may share my theological position.) I am raising a question which would seem deeply to divide Christians, all of whom regard witness to the Gospel as the supreme privilege and responsibility of their lives. This matter of grave disagreement, in spite of the evangelical loyalties and beliefs we hold in common, is something which we obviously ought to think through together.

There are important points on which we completely agree. Like Dr Strachan, I am convinced that 'the social, political, scientific and technological revolution of to-day is challenging the very existence of the Church of Christ and calling in question the validity of all its traditional patterns of life and witness. Consequently everything has to be rethought in terms of our reason for existence.' He is surely right in speaking of evangelism in terms of *witness*, witness both individual and corporate, the witness made by persons to the grace of God. A task so related to the *raison d'être* of the Church does indeed demand a mobilization of the entire membership of the churches. All church members have to be concerned with the evangelization of the world. And the churches themselves, not missionaries from outside, must be the basic agency of mission. I am wholly with Dr Strachan in his call to a united and total witness of the Christian community in every place.

Where, then, do we differ? The fundamental issue is this: *Is the correlate of the Gospel the world or the Church?* That is to say, do we preach salvation as good news for the Church, or as good news for the world? Is the primary movement of evangelism the winning of people into the Church, or the taking of the Gospel into the world? Of course the result of conversion will be the adding of members to the Church.

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But is that a by-product, or the fundamental end in view? To elucidate this, we shall have to ask questions about the nature of our witness—its content, motivation and objective.

I can address myself only to the impressions made on me by reading this report, and must ask to be forgiven if these are erroneous. I can find no evidence, save with respect to the mobilization of witness, of that radical rethinking which Dr Strachan admits to be necessary. Indeed, he himself confesses that Evangelism in Depth 'involves nothing basically new'. But it will certainly need to, if it is to show an understanding why there is a 'growing indifference to the message of the Church', and be regarded as a genuine 'penetration in depth'.

Let me at the outset, however, anticipate certain misconceptions of what I shall be trying to say. I wish to state clearly that I am not preaching universalism. There are many things which the Scriptures leave in mystery, and Christian thinkers have always found it necessary to hold both to the ultimate triumph of God's redemptive purposes, and to the reality of man's God-given freedom either to receive or to reject the divine grace. We must never minimize the gravity of that decision to which men are always called when Christ confronts them, nor deny the need for rebirth before men can enter the Kingdom of God.

Secondly, nothing I say will imply that man can ever build that Kingdom. It is God's gift, and cannot possibly be man's achievement. There is no straight line from human endeavour, even in that Kingdom's service, into the accomplishment of God's plans for mankind. The Gospel tells of God's acts and promises.

And thirdly, I fully recognize that men must be called out of the world before they can be sent as Christ's ambassadors into it. It is God who has called the Church into being, and the citizenship of the pilgrim people of God is in heaven. But here on earth they have a mission to fulfil. They are a vital part, yet only a part, of God's plan to redeem a fallen world.

THE MESSAGE OF THE GOSPEL

The Gospel neither changes nor needs to change; there can be no disagreement on that. We witness to our Saviour, Jesus Christ; we have glorious good news of Him to tell. On that, thank God, we are all united. But have we been preaching this Gospel as it requires to be preached?

Is Christ the Saviour of the world, or Saviour only of the Church? Is He the Saviour only of 'them that believe', the Lord only of the Church? Or is He 'the Saviour of all men', though 'especially of them that believe', and Lord of the world, as well as of the Church? Do we proclaim His coming as a secular, or as a religious event? Is His salvation a means of escape for men's souls from this wicked world, or dare we announce 'the redemption of the world by our Lord Jesus Christ'? Do we speak of the redemption of men's bodies and minds, as well as of their souls—in other words, of their total personalities in all their relationships with their environment both here and hereafter? Or have we lost sight of the concern of the Creator for the whole of the secular world He has made?

The question is, how big is our Gospel? Do we proclaim, as of *secular* importance, that the Jesus Christ who came will come again, to be made manifest as the One through whom God has been reconciling all things to Himself, as God's appointed centre for all creation, as the meaning of the total history of all mankind? Do we proclaim Him as the Word through whom all things were created, and as Him who is even now ruling in this world, though His rule is hidden and will be universally acknowledged only at the End? Does His reign apply to secular affairs? Does His salvation concern more than individual souls? The fact that Christ is our personal Saviour does not mean that He is our private Saviour. We are clear about this in respect of ourselves as individual Christians. But are we equally clear that Christ is not the private Saviour of His Church?

There is an evangelism which, in limiting its proclamation to a call to individual conversion, seems to leave out of account whole sections of biblical doctrine. The creatorship of God obviously implies His interest in the whole range of human life, man's science, art and industry, his social and political life. The need for redemption from godlessness—though not from freedom from ecclesiastical control—of each of these spheres is but a claim upon His greater concern. The tremendous prophetic demands in the Old Testament are surely not to be narrowed down within the Christian Church simply to a demand for individual morality and kindness. In apostolic preaching the Resurrection of Christ is proclaimed as a secular event, albeit revealed only to faith, manifesting God's intention to vindicate Himself upon the earth. As a theologian has wisely remarked:

Our confession of the Risen One is not genuine if it does not immediately and naturally place us in an attitude of responsibility for the terrestrial reality in which

we find ourselves according to God's ordinance. For the event of the Resurrection cuts off any escape into spiritual or religious worlds above and beyond . . . no such Platonic cloud-cuckoo land exists. Everything is decided in this world. Our individual destiny cannot be separated from the destiny of this earth, the destiny of our race, and the destiny of all mankind of which our race is a part (Karl Heim).

The scope of Christ's redemption is as universal as the total life of mankind as a whole. 'I have come that they may have life, and may have it abundantly'—in all its fullness (John 10:10). Does this not apply to life in this world here and now? Or are Christians concerned to live here only so as to be individually ready for real life hereafter? And how do we understand such statements as, 'As the issue of one misdeed was condemnation for all men, so the issue of one just act is acquittal and life for all men', or 'For God hath shut up all into disobedience'—both Jew and Gentile—that he might have mercy upon all', or 'As in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive' (Rom. 5:18; 11:32. 1 Cor. 15:22)? St Paul sees Christ as the head of a new redeemed humanity, more than retrieving all that had been lost through Adam's fall. Could the election to salvation of only a small minority of souls represent that triumph of divine grace and love which moved the apostle to such a rhapsody of praise at the conclusion of his whole argument in *Romans* 1-11?

THE MOTIVATION OF WITNESS

Secondly, what is the motivation for our witness? *Is our witness made for the sake of the Church, or for the sake of the world?* Do we invite people into the Church because it is only within the believing community that the effects of the Gospel can be enjoyed? Or are Christians commissioned to preach to all and sundry the good news that, whether they believe it or not, they now live within a world for which the Son of God has died and which God is even now reconciling to Himself? Is Christ the Light of the Church, the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of believing people, the Bread of God that gives life to the Christian community, in short, the Saviour of an elect minority? Or do we proclaim Him to the world because we know, with St John, that He is no less than 'the Light of the World', 'the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world', 'the Bread of God that gives life to the world'—in short, 'the Saviour of the world' (John 8:12; 1:29; 6:33; 4:42)?

I submit that these questions are not unfair, addressed to any evangelism which gives the clear impression that fundamentally it

preaches so that the movement organized in Christian churches may successfully expand. Is it true that many Christians to-day are far clearer about the Church's need to evangelize than they are of the world's need to be evangelized? Do not the churches give every appearance of being concerned with the churches, and not with the world, except in so far as the world contains potential church members? Whether rightly or wrongly, the impression I have after reading about 'Evangelism in Depth' is that the motivation of this call to the churches to unite is that they may be more effective in winning all possible *into* the Church, because all the world outside is doomed to perdition. Yet it was the *world* for which, in love, God sent His only Son. And through His providential ordering of secular events He often accomplishes suddenly and swiftly things for which missionaries have laboured for generations relatively in vain. In China to-day, for example, millions upon millions of peasants are being taught to read; they know the names of Mao Tse-tung and of Lenin; they are much nearer than ever before to being able to understand the significance of a choice for or against Jesus Christ. Is not this just the kind of thing we ought to expect—and tell the world to expect?

The error behind our church-centred, instead of world-centred thinking, repeats the same terrible mistake made by the Jews as God's chosen people, when they mistook election for witness, service and suffering as being election for self-centred privilege. God's promise was that through Abraham and his descendants 'all the nations of the earth' were to be blessed. Isaiah had thus prophesied of God's will for His Suffering Servant: 'It is too light a thing that thou shouldest be my servant to raise up the tribes of Jacob, and to restore the preserved of Israel: I will also give thee for a light to the Gentiles, that my salvation may be unto the ends of the earth.' Yet when St Paul, in making his defence before the Jewish crowd in the temple, came to the place where he recounted that the Lord had said to him, 'Depart, for I will send thee forth far hence unto the Gentiles', it was those words which caused a fresh riot.

Election means not God's choosing of privileged favourites for salvation, but His selective purpose in calling men to be the instruments of His plan of redemption for all mankind. The God 'who willeth that all men should be saved' (1 Tim. 2:4) has called the Church to understand, proclaim, and witness to His mighty acts of salvation for the whole human race. And these words of our Lord apply as much to the Church as to individual Christians: 'Whosoever would save his life

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shall lose it; and whosoever shall lose his life for my sake and the Gospel's shall save it' (Mark 8:35). The tragedy is that so often the churches appear to be concerned, not with the world, but with their own existence—and, not unnaturally, the world regards them as quite irrelevant. Whereas if the churches 'lost their life' in their concern to make known, by word and deed, the Gospel as *good news for the world*, they would become relevant again. They would then not only provoke hostility and persecution, but would also inevitably grow.

THE OBJECTIVE OF WITNESS

Our question here must be, *Is our witness made to individuals or to the world?* As Dr Strachan notes, the command to witness is 'to every creature', 'among all nations', 'in all the world'. A more literal rendering of the Greek, however, makes a very important point still clearer. The disciples of Jesus are bidden 'to preach the Gospel to the whole creation' (Mark 16:15), 'to disciple all the nations' (Matt. 28:19), and 'to preach the Gospel to all the nations' (Luke 24:47). Thus we come to our third point. The objective of witness is all creation, or all the nations. Surely this indicates that the Gospel is addressed, not to isolated individuals here and there, but essentially to men *in* their social and corporate structures of existence. It is a legitimate inference that the proclamation of the Gospel is to be related to the groupings of nation, community, occupation, culture and religion, in which men actually live. Witness is therefore to be made to, as well as within, those natural groupings and settings in human life. And when individuals within these various types of community respond to the Gospel, they then become the 'first-fruits' of the Gospel in that place, the 'leaven in the lump', a priestly nucleus within that community to offer, on behalf of the community, sacrifices of praise and thanksgiving to God. For in its worship, as in all else, the Church is a *pars pro toto*, and is called upon to identify itself, as did its Lord, with all mankind in its struggles and its sinfulness.

The essence of mission is thus to cross the various boundaries which empirically separate men from one another, declaring to them that in Christ all the walls that divide men from each other are already broken down, for He is the head of one new humanity. From the side of the Christian, the Hindu, Muslim, Buddhist or Communist is already 'the brother for whom Christ died'. This being so, the Church's witness to the Gospel will be faithful only if it is addressed to mankind section by

section, telling each of God's good news for the human race as a whole. We have given all too little thought to understanding and explaining how the Gospel is relevant to all the different areas of human existence. What are the new perspectives it opens up; what are the differences Christ can reconcile; how can the power of a new life in Him, a new 'courage to be', transform this and that situation? And how startlingly relevant to all is the unchanging Gospel that God in Christ is reconciling men into a unity which they seek in vain outside Christ! Preaching along these lines *would* be evidence of real rethinking, though not of a new Gospel. And only in this way shall we be able effectively to preach Christ as the head of a new redeemed humanity, with all its secular concerns, and not simply as the Lord of the Church.

THE GOSPEL'S RELEVANCE

I have no knowledge of Nicaragua. Recently, however, I visited British Guiana, Brazil and Chile. My thesis could equally well be illustrated from Africa and Asia, but I deliberately confine myself to Latin America.

In British Guiana I found the churches unable to make any effective witness to a tragic situation for which the Gospel has indeed the needed word of reconciliation. For the churches, alas, like the rest of the community, were divided into Indian and African groupings. Their witness had not been related to the realities and needs of the social and racial situation in their country. To attempt so to relate it now would be to incur the inevitable and grave suspicion that religion was being used in purely political interests. What a tragedy!

In Brazil and Chile the thinking young people from Christian homes, especially those who had been college-trained, who felt deeply the natural idealistic and self-sacrificing concern that young people have for social justice and the welfare of 'the people', were becoming estranged from the churches. Their hearts were torn because the churches could not or would not give them guidance as to their social responsibilities in a revolutionary situation. Nor was it only young people who found themselves in this position. One or two respected church leaders spoke to me in similar terms. Did they have to become communists if they were to do anything effective for their people, in accordance with their Christian conscience? The pastors, for their part, were willing to preach 'only Christ', lest they should be found implying that anything other than the preaching of the 'simple Gospel'

was required to save mankind. But what Christ were they preaching? The churches looked with unhappiness and suspicion upon such young people as I have described. Were they not drifting away from the Christian faith? The reality is that such young men and women are desperately concerned to relate their Christian faith to the social, economic and political conditions of their country. They are aware of the same kind of injustices and social needs as moved the Old Testament prophets to their burning pronouncements of the will of the Lord. They rightly feel that Christian discipleship must include some kind of political involvement.

I am aware that part of the reason for the present state of affairs among the churches of Latin America is their former rejection of the so-called 'social Gospel' of an earlier day. That rejection was justified, since the message of that movement was less than biblical in its optimism concerning human nature and human progress, and in its failure to take seriously that tragedy of fallen humanity which only God's act of atonement could radically cure. This explanation, however, does not negative the question whether to-day's evangelism is not equally unbiblical in implicitly denying, rather than affirming, the Lordship of Christ over the world. For however successful 'Evangelism in Depth' is in uniting the churches and filling the churches, the real question is: *What responsibility will the churches have to carry if those who are most unselfishly concerned for the well-being of their fellow men reject the Christian faith as irrelevant in their revolutionary world, fit only to foster individual and self-regarding piety?*

The question therefore which, as I see it, evangelicals need to think and pray through with other evangelicals is this: When we preach the Gospel, do we tell men only of a personal salvation offered to those who have faith, or do we declare to them that in Christ God has already performed a mighty act to win back this fallen world into the joy of His purposes? For God commissioned His Church with the good news of what He has already done to reconcile the *world* to Himself, and a declaration that the kingdoms of this world are to become the kingdom of His Son. In Christ, the age to come is already here. Admittedly, this salvation can never be fully appropriated without personal faith. But the benefits of Christ's victory are already flowing, like a Gulf-stream, into the tides of human history, affecting the climate in which all men live. Is not our good news that it is God's purpose to create and grant precisely this—a new earth, as well as a new heaven?

VICTOR E. W. HAYWARD

A FURTHER COMMENT

By R. KENNETH STRACHAN

WITH regard to Mr Hayward's criticism, I would like first to express appreciation for its considerate tone and approach. I am in agreement with him that it is imperative that we re-examine carefully the fundamental presuppositions that underlie the Church's mission in the modern world, and that we face frankly certain basic differences of conviction on the matter which divide Christians to-day. His paper is most helpful in focusing upon this, and therefore greatly appreciated.

Time and restrictions of space do not permit a detailed review of Mr Hayward's paper. I am glad for his preliminary affirmations—that he is not advocating universalism, nor implying that man can ever build the Kingdom; that men must be born again to enter the Kingdom; that they must be called out of the world before they can be sent as Christ's ambassadors into it; and that the Gospel they are to preach is changeless.

I am also ready to admit that there are emphases within our conservative-evangelical circles which contribute to an ultra-individualistic, falsely pietistic, church-centred way of thought and life that constitutes an imperfect and somewhat distorted representation of our sacred calling and mission in Christ. These tend unconsciously to form the underlying presuppositions that may produce a narrow understanding of God's redemptive purposes and a tendency to isolate the Church from the world. They may also limit our evangelistic goals and methods and contribute to the legitimate charge of the Church's relative irrelevancy in the world to-day. Evangelism in Depth, however, is to some extent a reaction against, rather than the creature of, such thinking, and in its elaboration there was at least some awareness of the weaknesses and deficiencies of traditional conservative evangelism.

On the other hand, there are certain statements or implications in Mr Hayward's paper which I find difficult to accept, if I have understood correctly their full import.

Possibly his purpose is to focus clearly upon the issues, but in doing so it would seem that he has shown a tendency throughout to create a false dichotomy between the world and the Church, and consequently

to thrust upon the reader choices that do not necessarily follow. This seems to be the case as he phrases the fundamental issue in the question, 'Is the correlate of the Gospel the world or the Church?' Whether or not this is indeed the fundamental issue, can anyone really answer that question in the either-or fashion which Mr Hayward seems to demand?

Must we not recognize that, regardless of failures in its attitudes or conduct, the Church of the present age *is* in the world, and that the Gospel has been entrusted *to it for* the world? So that the Gospel is not a correlate of either the Church or the world, but rather relates *through* the Church *to* the world. There is therefore no real choice.

The real crux of the matter, I think, is highlighted by him in the questions that need to be asked regarding the nature of our witness—its content, motivation and objective. It would seem that here, rather than in the answer to the previous question, we come to grips with the fundamental issues. But his formulation of the questions again is objectionable, since they do not present true and logical alternatives. Let me use Mr Hayward's headings.

THE MESSAGE OF THE GOSPEL

As to content, he has a right to raise the question, how big is our Gospel? Indeed, the conviction has been growing that Christ's intent regarding the preaching of the Gospel and His promises regarding the outcome of such a proclamation have a far wider outreach and consequence than many of us have seen or believed. There is, as Mr Hayward has pointed out, much Scripture that we tend to overlook.

But here again I find myself reacting to the formulation of the problem in such questions as, 'Is Christ the Saviour of the world or Saviour only of the Church?' Are we being faced here with a choice between a doctrine of limited atonement on the one hand, or one of broad universalism on the other? On the basis of his previous remarks, I am sure that Mr Hayward would not defend the latter; but by the same token, I have no desire to defend the former.

As far as the content of our witness in evangelism is concerned, are there not rather two other questions to be asked: first, what is essentially the Gospel? And second, what of the Gospel is it essential to preach to the world?

No one will deny that the Gospel has implications that go far beyond the individual and the Church, that embrace all of creation and the whole range of human life. How can we seek or speak of the redemption

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of men's souls without thinking also of their bodies and minds in their environment? How can we dissociate this life from the next, or the next from this? But not only must all this be recognized, but we must determine precisely what the Gospel has to say of this life in this world, as well as of life in the next.

And here there is the danger that either party may overlook whole sections of Scripture while stressing others. A Gospel that is limited to a chosen few, that is hedged about with the consciousness of election and exclusion, must be widened to include the broader promises and prophecies of God in the ultimate accomplishment of His redemptive purpose. But any interpretation of the ultimate outreach of the Gospel which overlooks or minimizes the conditions of repentance and regeneration which God has specified needs also to be corrected in the light of Scripture.

When Mr Hayward affirms that 'the scope of Christ's redemption is as universal as the total life of man', what does he mean? If he is referring to its potential universal efficacy and its bearing upon all human existence, then there is no basic divergence between us. But if he thereby allows for the benefits of redemption to accrue to vast portions of mankind apart from the conditions of appropriation laid down; if God's ultimate triumph is affirmed by conveniently overlooking the demands of God which result in conflict, judgment and punishment, then there is indeed a basic difference of conviction.

The problems involved in God's present apparent defeat and in the *how* of His ultimate triumph are not to be minimized, but they are beyond us. We can take comfort in such Scriptures as *John* 10:10; *Romans* 5:18 and 11:32; and *1 Corinthians* 15:22, and accept by faith that somehow, sometime, God's Person will be vindicated. But we dare not read into them more than what, in the light of other revelation, they contain. Surely we have no basis, therefore, to ignore or belittle the mysteries of evil, conflict, and rejection which *do* result in divine judgment and eternal destruction according to the teaching of Scripture, but which somehow will not thwart God's ultimate victory of grace as well as righteousness.

Typical of this oversight is the final statement, 'God commissioned His Church with the good news of what He has already done to reconcile the *world* to Himself, and a declaration that the kingdoms of this world are to become the Kingdom of His Son'. What seems to be ignored here is the process by which this takes place, and the passage referred to (*Rev.* 11:15) makes clear, I think, that it is not merely

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through a pronouncement of a reconciliation provided (which can never become effective until accepted), nor even through a response of personal faith, but actually through the blood and fire of judgment and conquest. (1 Cor. 15:24, 25; Rev. 11:18; 19:11-21).

The second question in connexion with the content of our witness is a practical one. I believe that Mr Hayward will recognize the validity of such a question—at least for a missionary evangelist with a job to do in Latin America. Let us grant that the Gospel has an outreach that goes beyond our comprehension thus far. But in the initial efforts to communicate this Gospel to the world, we must determine what is essential to that first preaching, and what must be left for a subsequent teaching on the part of the Church.

I cannot help feeling that the emphasis on the simple basic facts of the Gospel is not merely practically and psychologically essential and sound, but that it is in the final analysis theologically correct. Does not this characterize the witness and preaching of the apostles? Does not the Apostle Paul sum up his proclamation of the Gospel very simply in such words as: 'You know that I kept back nothing that was for your good: I delivered the message to you; I taught you in public and in your homes; with Jews and pagans alike *I insisted on repentance* before God and trust in our Lord Jesus' (Acts 20:20, 21). 'And now, my brothers, I must remind you of the gospel that I preached to you . . . *that Christ died for our sins, in accordance with the scriptures; that he was buried; that he was raised to life . . .*' (1 Cor. 15:1-4).

Therefore it does not seem to me a fair demand to make of any organized evangelistic effort, that it bring forth in its initial presentations more than those basic facts of the Gospel which are required to command that response which God desires and exacts. Anything more tends to cumber and confuse. The remainder belongs to the subsequent teaching ministry of the Church and of its shepherds.

THE MOTIVATION OF WITNESS

Here again we are faced with one of those either-or questions. 'Is our witness made for the sake of the Church, or for the sake of the world?' Mr Hayward gets the impression that the former motivates the movement of Evangelism in Depth. But is the question fair? Does he not read into the 'Church' a definition of his own as a sheltered, selfish, privileged and exclusive community?

A proper definition of the 'Church' would, I suspect, alter the

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significance of the question considerably. But even so, are we still not wide of the mark? Is not the proper motivation that love and obedience that seeks to bring men not to the Church but to Christ Himself? And, if I may suggest it, world-centred thinking is not the true corrective to a church-centredness which threatens to bring Christendom into 'the same terrible mistake made by the Jews as God's chosen people, when they mistook election for witness . . . as being election for self-centred privilege'. Christ-centred love and obedience is the only effective antidote.

Be that as it may, let us recognize the Church's besetting sin of self-centredness and self-seeking, and the probability of mixed motivation in any evangelistic movement, including Evangelism in Depth. But I wonder if Mr Hayward is not demanding of Evangelism in Depth a measure of disinterestedness that goes beyond that of other human organizations or movements.

THE OBJECTIVE OF WITNESS

A third question raised is whether our witness must be directed to individuals or to the world. Mr Hayward's conclusion is that the objective of witness is all creation, 'that the Gospel is addressed, not to isolated individuals here and there, but essentially to men *in* their social and corporate structures of existence'. Perhaps it is only a matter of emphasis, but here again it would seem essential to underline the fact that it is to men *individually* in the social and corporate structures of their existence that the Gospel must come, and this with a view to their fulfilling of their mission on behalf of their fellow men. But the point of contact must always be an individual one.

Mr Hayward argues that it is 'a legitimate inference that the proclamation of the Gospel is to be related to the actual groupings of nation, community, occupation, culture and religion, in which men actually live'. He then concludes, 'This being so, the Church's witness to the Gospel will be faithful only if it is addressed to mankind section by section, telling each of God's good news for the human race as a whole'.

Speaking as a missionary evangelist with a job to do here in Latin America, I would like to ask Mr Hayward just *how* in actual practice (particularly where evangelicals constitute a small minority) such a witness as he proposes could be carried out? And how would he square this with the apostolic pattern of witness directed to the individual

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in the midst of his family, the household, the community or the multitude, but ever to him as an individual?

THE GOSPEL'S RELEVANCE

A final criticism is made of the relative irrelevance in the world of to-day of traditional evangelistic efforts and even of movements like Evangelism in Depth. Undoubtedly we must all, like the disciples of old, lament and question the causes of our impotence in the world to-day. And there is much to be done in making both Church and Gospel relevant to the age in which we live. But the question can be legitimately asked: In what ways is the Church to relate to the world in its needs? And by what measure—the world's judgment or the judgment of Him Who calls and sends forth—is the degree of our relevancy to be determined? 'In stewards, it is required that a man be found faithful', and in the final reckoning the degree of our faithfulness in adhering to the terms of our mission will determine the extent of our relevancy in the world.

As Mr Hayward has indicated, those engaged in movements of Evangelism in Depth in Latin America do encounter the same frustrating difficulties of contributing in a relevant way to the needs of the day. But their success will certainly not be less than that thus far experienced by the different church bodies in those same countries. The chances are that it may be considerably more.

In the last month in Guatemala, as the initial movement of Evangelism in Depth came to its end, the President of the Republic, accompanied by members of his cabinet, attended four separate meetings in which the Gospel was preached. On the last day—a day in which his own air force had risen in revolt against him—more than forty thousand Guatemalans who had gathered in the Olympic Stadium saw their president give public recognition of the relevancy for his country, in the midst of all her troubles, of the faith proclaimed by this small minority of her citizens.

Such an incident falls far short of signifying any vital impact of the Gospel in contributing to the solution of Guatemala's political problems. But it did highlight at least one significant result of the movement of Evangelism in Depth in that republic, namely, that it had caught the ear and attention of those in power, and that, for the moment at least, they were open to what the Gospel had to say to them and to their country.

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Undoubtedly the problem of relevancy will continue to plague us. But to-day in Latin America, as in other parts of the world, the Church of Christ faces a tremendous task. To carry out that task she stands in need of self-criticism and renovation. She must break through to and become involved in the world—but in complete faithfulness to the terms of the Gospel and her essential mission.

To that end, the underlying assumptions so ably challenged by Mr Hayward need to be carefully reviewed and redefined. I am sure that Mr Hayward would join in the conviction that the Church's witness, whether expressed in movements such as Evangelism in Depth or in other ways, will become increasingly dynamic and relevant to the extent that she is enabled by the Holy Spirit to recapture the divine will for her life and witness in the world as revealed in Scripture. In the meantime, and pending further light, we continue to believe that Evangelism in Depth represents a legitimate and needed call to the churches to move out into the highways and by-ways in obedient witness to Christ.

R. KENNETH STRACHAN

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of everything just as it is. Buddhism speaks of selflessness, but it means the absolute denial of individual selfhood. Buddhism speaks of wisdom and light, but it means the intuitive realization that a man and his environment are not two. Buddhists speak of eternal life, but they mean a timeless extension of the conscious moment, and a denial of both past (birth) and future (death).

From the pragmatic point of view, the Middle Way offers satisfying alternatives to many of the Christian solutions of life's fundamental problems. It offers freedom from fear, deliverance from guilt and sin, liberation from the goads of lust, greed, hate, pride and ambition, from all striving for achievement. It offers a solid base for spontaneous, unselfconscious, effective action, a wholehearted acceptance of one's existential situation. For those who are satisfied with pragmatic solutions and are indifferent to the question of truth, the choice between the Middle Way and the Way of Christ will probably seem merely a matter of personal taste and inclination.

When the question of truth is raised, however, it becomes evident that one is confronted here by two mutually exclusive world-views. If man is a creature alienated from his Creator by voluntary rebellion, the Middle Way is false. For the Christian missionary who is convinced of the truth of the biblical interpretation of reality, the Middle Way is false. What has been said in this paper suggests something of the missionary's difficulty of communicating his faith to those whose interpretation of reality is to a greater or less degree conditioned by the principles of the Middle Way. In such circumstances, he would dare to proceed only when reassured by Christ's promise, 'What is impossible with men is possible with God' (Luke 18:27).

TUCKER N. CALLAWAY

WHAT IS THE GOSPEL?¹

By MARKUS BARTH

IN their essays on witness in the April issue of this Review, both Dr Strachan and Mr Hayward agree in their passionate desire to let the Church's witness be true to Jesus Christ and relevant to the special problems of to-day's world. But they differ in their assignment of priorities and on questions of method. Dr Strachan emphasizes the moments of judgment, repentance, decision and faith, and the gathering of people into the Church. 'Evangelism in Depth' is the name given to the procedure he seeks to recommend, and preaching the Gospel in evangelistic campaigns, carefully prepared and followed up, is declared to be the primary missionary method. Mr Hayward, on the other hand, wants to start from the fact that, in the resurrection of Jesus Christ, the new humanity has already been created; that this new humanity embraces all men, even the world, 'whether they believe it or not' (p. 204), and that the Church has to avoid any and every attempt to promise renewal only to those gathered within its fold. He therefore calls for a witness directed primarily not to individuals but to nations, structures, sections and areas, and carried out by the involvement of Christians in social and political tasks for the good of all men. Though the Church lose its own life as it undertakes this service, Christ's coming and His resurrection are a 'secular event' (p. 203). The kingdom concerns the whole world, not merely a small number who consider themselves saved. Mr Hayward does not give an example of the way in which his vision is to be worked out in practice; thus, he is less vulnerable than Dr Strachan. But we may surmise that pilot projects such as Horst Symanowski's industrial mission in Mainz-Kastell, or the East Harlem Protestant Church in New York, would meet with his approval.

In many respects the authors stand on common ground: the grace of God is to be made manifest; the fallen world is to be 'won' for Jesus, in accordance with God's purpose; the biblical testimony is the criterion in discussions of content and method; every member of the local churches, rather than the clergy and missionary societies alone,

¹ This article and the following contributions by Martin Conway and Emilio Castro are comments on the discussion on evangelism between Kenneth Strachan and Victor Hayward, published in the IRM in April, 1964.

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is to bear witness; ecumenical unity and creative imagination are equally indispensable; the Gospel, the Church and faith must be made relevant to our day; both a strict individualism and an optimistic social gospel are declared to be untenable. Despite some tendency to one side or the other, each of the authors avows that he stands neither for particularism nor for universalism. It is presupposed that the Church knows the Gospel, and that the main problem is the ways and means of communicating it.

The discussion thus opened in the *International Review of Missions* differs in its noble and respectful tone from the passionate disputes over similar issues that divided participants in a recent conference on 'The Missionary Structure of the Congregation'.¹ It is also unlike the Niebuhr-inspired attacks made by G. Winter on the 'pietism' of Billy Graham and his friends,² and the pointed argument of W. Stringfellow for the preaching of Jesus Christ and against the charitable 'conformity with the world' shown in the early stages of the East Harlem Protestant Church.³ The clash of opinion and judgment may serve to indicate the greatness of the problems involved. Respect for those engaged in the discussion and, what is more, respect for the truth of the Gospel, are not shown by glossing over the dissension that has now come out into the open. Of course, it is possible to ascribe the disagreement, whether serene or turbulent, to the different gifts and characteristics of those concerned, and to leave it at that. Diverse spiritual insights and prior commitments may play a large part, and are often necessary. But tolerance and mutual admiration must not prevail over the search for the way of obedience.

Further, it is noticeable that in its slant the discussion follows (rather than leads) the general trend away from a psychological understanding of religion and towards a sociological awareness and application of its relevance. Consequently the activist, social concern of the one camp might be dismissed as a purely secular phenomenon, an indication that at last church thinkers also are prepared to break with nineteenth-century traditions. But it is precisely in the apparently non-theological factor of a sociological orientation that there may lie a truly theological and spiritual concern.

Finally, it would be wrong to see the issue as ultimately a contest between a tradition-bound, retrospective theology and language on

¹ Held at Bossey, April 9-16, 1964. See *Concept VII* (May 1964).

² See G. Winter: *The New Creation as Metropolis* (NY: Macmillan, 1963), p. 15 ff.

³ See W. Stringfellow: *My People is the Enemy* (NY: Holt, Rinehart & Winston, 1964), p. 58 ff.

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the one hand, and a secular, adventurous, open-to-the-future sociology on the other. So cheap applause—earned now by those using time-honoured language and thought patterns, now by those preferring a supposedly more relevant and up-to-date terminology—cannot decide the question of truth or untruth on either side.

If such methods of solving the conflict do not work, how should we proceed? Clearly, we must attempt to break through the limitations of mere methodological discussions on communication.

TREACHEROUS ALTERNATIVES

Some of the alternatives put forward by the spokesmen in this discussion simply do not make sense. There is, for instance, the slogan 'God—World—Church', which has been set up in opposition to the supposedly traditional approach of 'God—Church—World'. This terminology was used in early study groups on the missionary structure of the congregation. The formula 'God—World—Church' appears to support Mr Hayward's position, though he himself never has recourse to such over-simplifying language. Either sequence, however, is likely to exclude the many ways in which God the Father, the Son and the Spirit acts upon the Church and the world together. Is Israel the means or the end in God's approach to the Gentiles? False pride on the part of the Gentiles, or false security on the part of God's people, will follow if we answer in one way or the other.

The Bible is full of illustrations that show there is no either-or. Pharaoh has to listen to Moses, and Moses to Jethro; prophets speak in God's name to Assyria, and a prophet hails the service rendered by the Gentile, Cyrus. Paul brought the Gospel to the Galatians and was received like an angel, but God immediately acted upon the Galatians by giving them the Holy Spirit. In St John's Gospel, the New Testament book that most frequently refers to 'the world', this term often means Jewish worshippers of God—even those whom we might call the 'established' people of God at the time of Jesus. The term 'church', on the other hand, is used (as in *I Corinthians*) for a group of men who, despite their sanctification, act in most worldly ways. In contrast to the Old Testament concept of the people of God, which is relatively easy to delineate, the Church in the New Testament is not an entity separate from the world. It is a gathering of Jews and Gentiles (not a third genus), of those who are not God's people to be God's people, of many members under one Head, a manifold harvest in one field.

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It is a demonstration of the kingship of Jesus Christ—neither an end in itself nor a despicable entity that has to be ashamed of its distinct calling or seek salvation in secularization.

The Church does not live by stressing its function either as mediator or as servant in the world, but by listening to the call of its Lord and doing what He commands. Engagement in this work will prevent our using the abstractions 'church' and 'world'. Condescending talk about our mission in and to the world may actually reveal great pride and selfishness. Might it not be better if we were more specific, and spoke always of particular people, structures or ideas? This would help to make clear that we, as much as any who do not yet belong to the Church, at all times need to receive God's missionaries. For whatever the structure of the Church, static or dynamic, old or new, it bristles with worldly people. And, with or without the help of the Church's mission, the so-called secular realm has again and again received servants of God who work for the common good (see Rom. 13: 4). If the Church has been entrusted with a prophetic ministry, let its words, like those of the prophets, always be specific. Then we should not fight one another over abstractions.

A second example is the impression conveyed in this discussion that there is a fundamental contrast between knowing and teaching the 'basic facts' of the Gospel and 'engagement' in political or other urgent issues (p. 212). Again, I can see no sound meaning in such a distinction. For it simply is not true that Paul was first ('personally') converted by the communication of a few facts, and that only later was he made an ambassador for Christ, who had to work on the basis that the wall between Jew and Gentile had been broken down. His very conversion was his liberation from the separatist tradition of his fathers and his commission for a ministry among the Gentiles. There was and is no private justification eventually followed by sanctification for public work. For the justification by grace which Paul preaches and upholds against the religious segregationists of his time (Gal. 2-3; Rom. 3; 8-11) is identified with God's judgment on all men, with the breaking down of the wall of hostility by Jesus Christ, and with the creation of the one true worshipper of God, that is, the community of the far and the near (Eph. 2: 11-22).

The distinction that is frequently made between *kerygma* and *didache*, between Gospel and Law, between faith and obedience, can no longer be maintained when it is realized that the true and full Gospel is often preached in the form of imperatives (as, for instance,

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in the Sermon on the Mount, in Paul's ethical passages, and by James) and that it is a sheer delight and joy to the heart to hear, receive and keep the Law of God, of Christ or of the Spirit. It is a 'basic fact' of the Gospel that, because of the resurrection of Jesus Christ, man no longer can or must wail or worship at dividing lines. Rather, he is accepted into the service of God, who loves the lowest outcast. Since this is the basis of Mr Hayward's position, I am in full agreement with him. But it is equally basic to Christian ethics that Christians are not justified before God solely on the ground of their engagement in social issues, great or small. They have to hear and learn of Jesus Christ ever and anon, and they cannot, even for the sake of a more tangible service, abstain from reference to those dramatic events which have made and are still shaping the history of mankind. If we no longer dared to speak of Jesus Christ's coming to the poor, His death in the midst of the outcasts, and His enthronement above all powers, how could we be faithful to Him in our active or passive involvement in the tears and laughter that surround us?

We may add a third and last example. Much is made of the contrast between receiving the witness to personal salvation on the one hand, and a risky engagement in the service of society or for the transformation of its structures on the other. At a different level, this may appear as the distinction between a 'come church' and a 'go church'

Indeed, there was a time (and for some there still is) when biblical interpretation, dogmatic teaching, evangelistic preaching and liturgical and private prayer were so anthropocentric that the revelation of the impact of God's kingdom upon angels and demons (Paul calls them 'principalities and powers'; to-day we call them 'structures and institutions') was relegated to the realm of myth. It is certainly biblical to affirm that God does not care for angels as He does for men (cf. Heb. 2: 16); Jesus casts out the demons but not the persons who come to Him. So it is clear that man himself, or the soul of man, counts for more before God than the abysses of the power of Mammon or Sex or Labour. God does not 'redeem' the family, the nation, economics, society, history. They do not become His children, or His image. Neither can we redeem them. But it is equally clear and relevant that the first and second coming of Jesus Christ affect man *and* the invisible powers ruling for good or evil within creation. Man cannot be man without being both actively and passively involved in those psychological, physical, social and historical structures that bind him to fellow man, to a given space and time, to himself and to death.

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The most personal 'acceptance of Christ' cannot by-pass the subjugation by Christ of the constituent and transient elements of psychic, social, spiritual and historical life.

To be accepted by Christ and to confess this acceptance means to receive and to assume a place in the struggle against evil powers and for the freedom of all men. Those who receive the Spirit go into the wilderness or the cities to fight and to suffer. There is no legitimate alternative between personal and communal obedience. A private faith in Jesus Christ will always make itself known in public actions; and social ethics cannot exist or advance without personal faith and commitment.

More could be said about such opposites as particularism and universalism, pietism and social gospel, secularization and religious tradition. But these patent formulae used to label complex historical phenomena, and the corresponding nicknames that are bandied about, with good or slanderous intent, serve little good. Wrong questions have been asked, superfluous animosities aroused and encouraged, and God's own judgment is wrested from His hands, when Christians deem it necessary to bind themselves or to condemn one another on the ground of such divisive nomenclature.

LISTENING TO THE GOSPEL

At this point, we need to take warning lest any one particular slogan be considered a reliable guide for public and private Christian witness. No doubt, those were great times in the Church's life and ministry when the Gospel was summed up in one phrase—such as unification, discipleship, justification, conversion, mission, justice, charity—which was broadcast far and wide and taken to heart by those who believed. To-day it may be most appropriate, in the light of both the eternal Gospel and the frightful division and fear in the life of a modern man, to sum up the work and will of God under the heading, Reconciliation. But even when such a catchword has been found and when the thinking, action and suffering of Christians have yielded to it, we need to be aware that it is precisely behind biblical terminology that falsehood and hypocrisy are mostly likely to be concealed.

In the last twelve years, there has been so much talk about the identity of the Church, about our being the Body of Christ (if not the extended Incarnation), about worship and doctrine, that many have grown tired of this ecclesiastical narcissism. Are we sure that the more

recent vocabulary, built round terms like 'new humanity', 'new creation', 'servant church' and 'evangelism', is any the less evidence of a self-enamoured churchiness? To me, at least, it seems that those who want most of all to establish the presence of the Church in each and every realm of human suffering and achievement may be more concerned for our—the churchmen's—relevance and success than for Jesus Christ Himself and the Gospel.

I agree entirely with Dr Strachan when he asks the uncomfortable question, What is the Gospel? (p. 210). While I have to disagree with his notion that the 'essentials' of the Gospel can be distinguished from non-essential elements and with the way in which he speaks of 'implications' and necessary 'conditions of appropriation', I believe he is right in implying that Christians have a much more urgent problem than that of communicating what they possess: they have to learn anew *what* to communicate. They should not pretend to know Jesus Christ and the Gospel when in the same breath they have to admit that they really do not know how relevant He is to modern man and his problems.

The Gospel is something different from an assertion that there is a God somewhere and that belief in Him is good for psychical balance and the mutual acceptance of diverse groups. It presupposes and proclaims that through Jesus Christ, in contrast to all man-made gods that enslave and are afar off, the living God is present for sinful man. It affirms the love and might of 'God with us', of Him who alone can end loneliness and condemnation. This Gospel is relevant because it is news from God. It cannot be split into essential and non-essential elements. It cannot be rationed, assimilated, diluted or spoon-fed. For where it runs its course, there is life from the dead, salvation from misery. It is an either-or. The content of this Gospel has to be learned day by day. We may start out with the conviction that it is for all; but recognition that it is for all, and of how it is for all, comes only as we try to make it heard, by this or that man or woman, now by words and now by deeds, according to this part of the Bible or that. Unless we let the Gospel do its work, we cannot speak about it or act according to it. Unless we seek and find it together with those to whom we would testify, it is but a proposition or a fancy. For the Church does not possess the Gospel. No theologian can capture it in words or in a system. No form of piety or mission, traditional or modern, can monopolize it. Great acts of charity, or martyrdom, even of reorganization, do not guarantee its presence. Even the Bible does no

more than give manifold testimony to the content and form of its proclamation and reception.

Christians, therefore, stand as beggars before God and cannot boast of riches before the world. Their riches are God alone. Since He has not declared His resignation with the advent of modern man, and did not do so even after the crucifixion of His Son, there is good reason to trust that He will still make Himself heard to 'this crooked generation'.

If, instead of pretending that we 'acknowledge the Gospel', that we exhibit 'God's first-fruit', that we are 'agents of reconciliation', we church people would turn our minds to listening before we speak, to seeking before we claim to have found, to doing this or that service, small or great, before we advertise our servanthood, then much bothering about the success or failure of the rôle we play might become superfluous. All our lust for relevance, and all the many recommendations on how to achieve it, will not take us anywhere. But let those people speak up who can declare in new and compelling ways that Jesus Christ has died and risen for all, and so for you and me. Let us listen to those who, in the clamour of human need and in the fumbling search for meaning and unity, find traces of a response to the living God.

The Church still lives by the Word of God, which also upholds the whole universe. He who lives by the Word is unlikely to have a programme for the rest of his life or for the salvation of every man. But he receives daily bread for his sustenance and his service.

At the Bossey conference mentioned earlier, a member from Eastern Germany uttered a warning to western enthusiasts for new structures befitting a truly missionary church. He showed that the little steps taken day by day may be more important than great projects and programmes, and also that, among the many crumbling structures of the traditional Church, there are some that may still render indispensable service to a congregation in a missionary situation.

A church that recognizes its poverty cannot make method and structure its primary concern. But it will seek for the message by which all men live. When it has found something worth saying and standing for, then it will find, by experiments and failures, the best way of communicating it.

MARKUS BARTH

A PERMANENT ARGUMENT?

By MARTIN CONWAY

CHRISTIANS in the university world suffer with quite particular acuteness from the tragic division between conservative evangelicals and 'ecumaniacs' which, though recent (the International Fellowship of Evangelical Students was founded in 1947), has become world-wide and apparently irreconcilable. The discussion between Kenneth Strachan and Victor Hayward in the April number of the Review is not untypical of the better sort of conversation that can occasionally happen across the divide, and which must be fostered; having known recently in our own circles an example of the other sort, I am delighted to find the IRM opening up a dialogue, and the more so in that I have long thought that the foreign missionary endeavour provided one of the most hopeful settings for such dialogue within the Church.

Yet the course of this discussion is distressingly predictable. Mr Strachan leads off with a passionate plea for the full obedience of all Christians to the Great Commission to witness, consolidating his plea with an account of one particular attempt. Mr Hayward counters by bringing out the theological heavy armour of Christ, His Church and His world, with apparent understanding and humility, but in fact, it would seem, exploding the very basis of Mr Strachan's position. But the latter does not think so, refuses the misunderstandings and even misrepresentations that he finds in Mr Hayward's arguments, and continues to protest the value and appropriateness of his own approach. What has in fact happened? Where has the argument displaced either participant or the onlooker? Shots have been exchanged, but both remain in their previous positions and continue to wear the theological blinkers that make them speak and act as they do.

No man can claim to be free from some such set of blinkers, and I must own to a pair similar enough to Mr Hayward's to make me feel that the basic question at stake is indeed a theological one concerning the relation of Church and world. He is, I am sure, quite right to press this in terms of message, in terms of motivation, in terms of objective. Of course it is the whole of the world's life we are concerned with, in all its throbbing complexities of politics and social conditions, and not just the religious compartment of the life of each individual. Of course

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it is the redemption already inaugurated in Christ which we preach, and not only the judgment, repentance and rebirth of the believer. Yet Mr Strachan is just as right—from his point of view—to refuse the distinctions that have become the easy battle-cries of the ecumaniac, and to insist on the scriptural foundation of much that he stands for. Mr Hayward's argument is foreign, strident and unnecessary—and, in particular, it does not begin to touch on the practical concerns which the original article was about.

What can you do next but break off the conversation, each dismayingly shaking his head at the other's lack of understanding? For myself, I believe the only way forward would lie in a prolonged period of living together and doing basic Bible study together, with the utmost patience and honesty, and this is hard for any of us in our embattled professional positions even to arrange, let alone to carry through.

It almost looks as if it is a divide between two quite different temperaments: on the one hand, those who are sure about their faith, and who need above all to be challenged to stand up for it and to seek new ways of doing so; on the other, those for whom their faith is always both full of questions and raising questions about everything else, who have to struggle for belief and obedience and who find, as Bishop Newbigin once memorably put it, that they 'only really know the Gospel in the effort to communicate it to someone else'. These need to share a man's perplexities and anxieties before they feel they can honestly point him to Jesus Christ, and they find it hard to know what is meant by such phrases as 'the simple basic facts of the Gospel' or 'the benefits of redemption'.

My own blinkers are obvious. But both sides must come to be able to state openly that it is not a question of denying that those on the other are Christians: we are not to judge one another, although our positions necessarily imply a certain judgment about how far it is possible to speak of a man being or not being a Christian, and about the complexity, duration and ramifications of the process of his becoming one. Nor can it be simply a question of evangelistic fervour—as Mr Strachan seems to me to be saying at times—where what is needed is a yet more stirring appeal to our consciences and wills to carry out the Great Commission. It must rather be a question of the way we know Jesus Christ, and are known by Him, so that witness is not a special task of which we have to be reminded so much as the natural and appropriate exchange of an articulate being with the neighbour he loves. What is evangelism, if it is not that discussion

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with anyone and everyone about matters of importance which few of us are not constantly engaged in? It is basically a theological question which divides us, but one for whose answer there is no standard theological recipe.

Yet it is not about theology but about practice that Mr Strachan originally wrote; he and many conservative evangelicals prefer to take their stand here—on what they are actually doing as witnesses to the Gospel. And the practice of Evangelism in Depth sounds rather good. The stages he outlines—a retreat for the entire Christian leadership, the mobilization of many small groups for prayer and Bible study, an intensive training programme, a series of formal evangelistic efforts and then careful, personal follow-up and consolidation—are not too far from what one recommends year in, year out, to SCM committees planning their next year's programme. The main difference (and this would be my foremost question to Evangelism in Depth) is that one tries to get an SCM committee to plan its witness in relation to those concerns or issues which are already stirring the hearts and minds of a given group of students—their future careers, their girl-friends, the value of their field of study, their country's need for social justice or economic development or political integrity. There is no mention of any such relation in Mr Strachan's programme. Faith, he agrees, must do its best to be relevant; but he is clearly unwilling to allow the missionary approach to start from any particular relevance.

I know next to nothing about the economic and social conditions of Nicaragua; but are they such as to justify a complete lack of mention in an account of a nation-wide effort of 'total and complete outreach'? The Guatemalan example is hardly reassuring here; if the air force was in revolt, whatever was the President doing at a public rally, except seizing the handiest opportunity to reassure the citizenry of his command of the situation? That is hardly what we should mean by relevance. I also find very disturbing—again, in practice—the complete lack of mention, apart from a caution about its own apostolic efforts, of the majority Roman Catholic Church in the country. Just what is Evangelism in Depth doing with and to the Christian faith—immature and feeble, no doubt, but whose is not?—of the already baptized?

We are given no evidence on which to do more than register surprise at these omissions. Why is there no mention? There speculation takes us back again into the realm of those theological questions that we can only see through our blinkers. Who will deliver us from them?

MARTIN CONWAY

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EVANGELISM IN LATIN AMERICA

By EMILIO CASTRO

IF we enter into the discussion between Dr Strachan and Mr Hayward, it is as Christians committed to the evangelization of Latin America. The importance of the discussion lies in its basic theme: the message that is preached in Latin America.

First of all, we would ask that some of the points made in this discussion—which, because they meet with almost complete agreement, might pass unnoticed—should not be overlooked. It is always easier to concentrate on the areas of disagreement rather than on the general lines of agreement. That must not happen in this instance, especially since the understanding of these points of agreement and their publication in Latin America cannot be taken for granted. We refer in particular to three statements made by Dr Strachan that receive the explicit or implicit support of Mr Hayward:

1. This personal witness must centre in the fellowship and communal witness of the local congregation. This involves a recognition of the true mission of the local church as a testifying community set down in the world, not for purposes of self-seeking or self-defence, but for disinterested service and faithful witness in a climate of spiritual worship and genuine brotherhood (p. 195).

2. Tangible witness must be given to the unity of the Body of Christ (p. 195).

3. In the final analysis, the success of the entire movement would have to be measured not by the attendance at the crusades or the number of decisions, but by the continued dynamic witness of Christians and churches (p. 197).

The greatest obstacle to evangelization is the church which is preoccupied with its own existence. It would be amusing, if it were not pathetic, to see entire denominations concerned with wholly secondary questions of form or doctrine—the pastor's clothing, women's adornment in church, the possibility of having a cross in the sanctuary—while the revolutionary ferment is raging in the streets and countryside of Latin America. Congregations which, while worshipping, are concerned for the men living out the problems of to-day; congregations which regard themselves as called to serve rather than to condemn—here is the beginning of the spiritual revolution we need.

The second point of agreement is no less important. Latin America 'boasts and bears' almost 150 different evangelical denominations. To evangelize is to bear witness to the reconciling power of Christ between

parties, races and nations. And certainly Latin America needs reconciliation. But this cannot be proclaimed if it is not lived. Here again, it is only as we forget ourselves as institutions and the preservation of our own existence, and seek the will of our Lord for Latin America, that we discover the call to Christian unity. The reply to our Lord's call is given to us in our ordinary contact with the world.

Unfortunately, Dr Strachan has made the 'expansion' of the Church the basis of his argument. We say 'unfortunately', because we are sure that it is not his intention to say what his article seems to imply. We cannot take as the standard means of spreading the Gospel of Christ those methods used for the propagation of any other idea, or for the sale of some article. Faithfulness to the Gospel is more important than its propagation; and faithfulness and propagation are not always synonymous. Paul 'failed' in Corinth, but he was faithful there. How easy it is to extend a 'movement', but how difficult to *live* the Gospel! But Dr Strachan corrects a false interpretation of his thinking when he tells us that the basic criterion is not numerical results, but dynamic service and witness in the life of the churches.

Systems of evangelization are not formulae to be applied indiscriminately. They develop within the framework of a given situation and are determined by the reality of the existing churches. At the same time, they must be in accordance with the call of God in a particular human situation. Thus we have Evangelism in Depth, arising out of a church situation characterized by division and conservatism, with the merits and defects inherent in such a situation. If we attempt to question this system, it is because we wish to help in the search for the best means of fulfilling our evangelistic responsibility in Latin America.

Clearly, the questions that should be asked do not primarily relate to the system, but to the message that is proclaimed. But every method of Christian work must be examined in the light of the Christian message, to see whether it helps or hinders it.

Evangelism in Depth begins with a retreat for church leaders. To what extent do we seek in this retreat to correct our earlier ideas about the evangelistic message, and to what extent do we assume that we already understand it? Obviously, the Christian message is the same, yesterday, to-day and for ever. But the concrete content of that message must vary continually, if it is to be comprehensible and relevant, for the Gospel is addressed to individuals in all their varied social and family circumstances. The Gospel is the same, but the sermon our Lord gave in the synagogue at Nazareth was not the same as that given

in the Temple at Jerusalem. It is this initial retreat that provides the best opportunity for the evangelistic effort, not as a technique, but as a search to discover the message to be preached.

Perhaps we are disagreeing over mere words, but we cannot accept the distinction that Dr Strachan proposes between an essential part of the Gospel, to be included in evangelistic preaching, and another part that comes later, and is to be included in the didactic task of the Church. It is true that it would be impossible to cover all the Christian doctrines in one sermon. But that is not the point. It is a question of proclaiming Christ, His promises and His commands, in such a way that the new convert accepts his responsibility in the world and is not self-centred. It is a message of repentance, and this includes not only sorrow for our sins, but a radical change in our whole outlook on life; a crucified Christ, who has taken upon Himself the lot of all sinners and invites us to bear with Him the cross of service in the world; a resurrected Christ, who calls us to live the reality of the new man. In short, the convert should not have a religious dimension only, but should really live according to the Gospel and have a total dimension.

It is clear that this is not merely a question of correct preaching. The same words have different meaning in different situations. It is a matter of Christians and churches taking seriously the whole reality of Latin American man. Only thus shall we be taking the Gospel seriously. If Evangelism in Depth were a mere technique placed at the disposal of self-centred and socially irresponsible churches, it would only increase that irresponsibility. But it need not be so. On the contrary, in itself it affords a magnificent opportunity to help the churches reconsider their message.

Dr Strachan rightly criticizes the attitude in which many of the churches of Latin America live, of expecting that foreign money, a great evangelist or a new system will provide the means of discharging their evangelistic responsibility. Evangelism in Depth seeks to show that the mobilization of existing forces is more important than these false expectations. However, there is one important problem we must face: not simply that of depending on aid from outside, but the fact that we have not yet understood that evangelism is best carried out in the circumstances of our everyday life. 'Natural' evangelism is that of the Christian who, when asked to account for his spirit of service, names Christ as its secret source. The word 'witness' must regain its original meaning—*one who witnesses* Jesus Christ. If this witness is to

be made among individuals in all sections of the community, and if Christian service is to be offered at all levels of our complex modern life, Christians must be released from our ecclesiastical programmes and seen as Christ's missionaries in their several spheres of responsibility. The example of the sects mentioned by Dr Strachan early in his article does not help us. In the sects we have individuals who have forgotten their social responsibility, who have forgotten their human responsibility, and have become agents of an idea. But the Gospel renders us responsible. It does not call us to propagate an idea, but to live responsible before God for the enlightenment of human society.

Here we must recognize that all our consciously planned programmes of evangelism have a temporary character; they are stop-gaps. They help us to do consciously that which, in a profounder sense, should be our daily activity. And like all remedies, they contain the inherent danger that we may become accustomed to their presence and lose sight of true normality. If all the members of the Church in Latin America were to devote themselves to a conscious programme for the spread of Christianity on the exhaustive lines of Evangelism in Depth, it would be a tragedy for the Gospel in Latin America; for we should then be taking our members away from their places of responsible witness in society. And while we might add many to our numbers, we should turn many others away, for they would be able to see the Church only as a body wrapped up in itself and irresponsible in the face of the problems of the community. The Church has had abundant experience of that in history. The masses abandoned her, because to them she seemed socially irresponsible.

But once its temporary character is recognized, once its dangers are seen, we can freely use the opportunity offered to us by Evangelism in Depth. Just as, in the first stage, it is a question of discovering together with the church leaders in a particular country what is God's message for that country, so, as we move on to the period of Bible study and prayer, we should be able to concentrate on seeking to discover the responsible witness that God asks of His laymen. In this way we should be building a bridge from the temporary to the permanent, from remedies to a normal state of health.

Latin America is at present living glorious moments. In the midst of misery, ignorance and hunger, we already perceive the start of the history of the ordinary man, of our little brother in whom Christ finds us. It would be a betrayal of God's purpose for him if he can find only a self-centred Church, or a Church out of touch with reality

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and preoccupied with a message reduced to 'religious' terms. Evangelism in Depth will make its contribution. Other efforts will make theirs. But let us all passionately seek to be witnesses to the complete transformation that Christ has made and is making in the life of humanity, of all peoples, of mankind.

EMILIO CASTRO

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*Problems in Industry in Bangalore.*¹ The Industrial Team Service has also organized seminars for managers and workers in which the Bangalore Productivity Council has participated. In Madras, the Church of South India City Mission has also sought to become fully involved in the industrial mission through occupational groups. These efforts, however, have not been very successful, and the whole plan is about to be reviewed and revised.

In an industrial town in the Punjab where there is a concentration of new, small-scale industries, a Christian sociologist has conducted a survey which reveals that a large number of the industries are evading industrial laws. Plans are afoot to organize a series of public forums which would expose the need and challenge the social conscience of the local industrialists. In a number of other rapidly developing towns in different states in India, surveys to determine the needs and to plan for mission are being conducted by the churches with the guidance of the National Christian Council.

The churches are slowly responding to the challenge of industry. They are cautious, because they do not yet fully understand the complex industrial set-up. The response is not very vigorous, because they do not yet have adequate leadership, in number as well as in quality. But a beginning has been made which testifies to the impact made by the industrial team's visit on the Church in India.

M. A. Z. ROLSTON

¹ Edited by M. M. Thomas and H. F. J. Daniel. Bangalore: Christian Institute for the Study of Religion and Society, and St Mark's Cathedral Industrial Team Service, 1964. Re 1.50.

CALL TO WITNESS

By VICTOR E. W. HAYWARD

THE Editor has kindly invited me to make a brief response both to Dr Strachan's reply to my comments on his original paper, all of which appeared in the April 1964 issue of the *International Review of Missions*, and also to the three subsequent contributions made to this discussion by Dr Markus Barth, Mr Martin Conway, and the Rev. Emilio Castro in the following October issue. I will try to avoid repeating what I have already said in that longer article; what I now write, therefore, presupposes all that I said there.

I am very grateful that others have joined in, for the purpose of my paper was precisely to stimulate discussion. I have a strong feeling, however, that both Dr Barth and Mr Conway have unintentionally misrepresented the positions taken in this exchange of views, through interpreting it along the lines of 'Missionary Structure of the Congregation' and SCM-IVF 'debates' respectively. I find it significant that it is a Latin American pastor, the Rev. Emilio Castro, who seems best to have appreciated the points at issue in this particular discussion. As the last section of my paper indicated, my fundamental fear regarding Evangelism in Depth was lest 'those who are most unselfishly concerned for the well-being of their fellow men reject the Christian faith as irrelevant in their revolutionary world, fit only to foster individual and self-regarding piety'. Unlike Mr Conway, who thinks that Dr Strachan and I are not really talking to one another, and can therefore only 'break off the conversation, each dismayingly shaking his head at the other's lack of understanding', Mr Castro recognizes us as two evangelicals with many basic beliefs in common, and a shared concern for the preaching of the Gospel in the modern world.

With many of the points made in these three later contributions I am gratefully in agreement. Limitation of space forbids my listing and commenting upon these. I must regretfully concentrate upon matters of disagreement. Dr Barth admits that I did not myself use the formula 'God—World—Church'. In fact, I too think it just as unsatisfactory as that of 'God—Church—World', which it is designed to replace. I fail to see that my position coincides with any of the 'treacherous alternatives' which Dr Barth lists. I did not call for 'a witness directed

primarily not to individuals but to nations, structures, sections and areas', nor could I possibly imagine that Christians are 'justified before God solely on the ground of their engagement in social issues, great or small'. That would indeed be a betrayal of evangelical faith. And to Mr Conway I want to say that I am one of those 'who are sure about their faith', not of those 'for whom faith is . . . full of questions', though for me faith does indeed 'raise questions about everything else', and I warmly agree that we 'only really know the Gospel in the effort to communicate it to someone else'.

It is, however, to Dr Strachan himself that I most want to express gratitude. He has not only understood, but graciously accepted one of my main contentions. 'I am also ready to admit', he wrote, 'that there are emphases within our conservative-evangelical circles which contribute to an ultra-individualistic, falsely pietistic, church-centred way of thought and life that constitutes an imperfect and somewhat distorted representation of our sacred calling and mission in Christ. These tend unconsciously to form the underlying presuppositions that may produce a narrow understanding of God's redemptive purposes and a tendency to isolate the Church from the world. They may also limit our evangelistic goals and methods and contribute to the legitimate charge of the Church's relative irrelevancy in the world to-day.'

I agree with Dr Strachan that the differences between us are largely a matter of emphasis, and a certain over-emphasis or over-simplification often seems necessary to stimulate discussion. Nevertheless I find these differing emphases of crucial importance. I accept his statement that the Gospel has been 'entrusted to the Church for the world'; my point is that the Gospel is primarily good news for the whole world, and not good news only for those who are called to be agents of God's reconciling and redeeming purposes for all mankind. God has direct relations with both Church and world, and speaks to each through the other. The Church is that part of the world which responds to God in conscious faith. But it is mankind as a whole which is the object of God's saving love. Here and now the Church exists for the world. Only eschatologically does the world exist for the sake of the Church.

The crux of the matter is the content of conversion. I submit that careful biblical exegesis reveals that conversion, though individually experienced, is nevertheless essentially a community matter. In the Old Testament it means a return to the covenant relationship which God by grace has already established. In the New Testament it means turning to the new reality of the Kingdom revealed in Christ's coming,

death and resurrection. In either case it means incorporation into the People of the Covenant, that is, into that community through which God purposes that all the nations of the earth shall be blessed. So far from being a purely individual matter, conversion relates directly to God's ultimate purposes in history for all mankind. Conversion is an act of personal committal, in faith, to Him who is Lord over the world, Saviour because full authority in heaven and on earth has been given to Him.

I therefore believe it to be necessary, in that 'first preaching' of the Gospel which Dr Strachan distinguishes from the 'subsequent teaching' of the Church, to make clear that acceptance of Christ as Saviour and Lord involves a committal in trust and obedience to what God is doing in the world. It is true that just what such a committal will involve, socially, economically and politically, will have to be gradually discovered, through obedient action as well as through teaching; what is essential is that the convert shall realize *from the outset* that this kind of obedience will be involved in his discipleship.

On this, all three later contributors seem to be in agreement with me, not least Mr Conway, who points out that Christian witness must be related to 'those concerns or issues which are already stirring the hearts and minds' of those to whom the Gospel is preached. 'There is no mention of any such relation in Mr Strachan's programme. Faith, he agrees, must do its best to be relevant; but he is clearly unwilling to allow the missionary approach to start from any particular relevance.' My contention is, to use Mr Castro's words, that this 'is a question of proclaiming Christ, His promises and His commands, in such a way that the new convert accepts his responsibility in the world and is not self-centred'. It is part of the gospel message that the Saviour offers us a meaningful life in this present world through that one act of committal to Him which opens up to the believing soul all the benefits of Christ's redemption. It is equally essential both that discipleship be seen to involve social ethics, and that the ethics be recognized as flowing from the nature of the Gospel. Otherwise, as someone has warned, 'we can participate in the life of the world and of the Church, and still be fundamentally useless to both. We can preach the Gospel and work like mad on social action projects, and remain self-centred, ruthless creatures whose good works leave men worse off than before'.¹

It was in this connexion that I said in my first paper: 'The Gospel is addressed, not to isolated individuals here and there, but essentially

¹ Bruce Kenrick: *Come out the Wilderness* (London: Collins, 1963), p. 205.

to men *in* their social and corporate structures of existence. It is a legitimate inference that the proclamation of the Gospel is to be related to the groupings of nation, community, occupation, culture and religion, in which men actually live. Witness is therefore to be made to, as well as within, those natural groupings and settings in human life.' Witness is made to man, not to structures, but it is always to man-in-society. In Latin America, as Mr Castro says rightly, 'it is a matter of Christians and churches taking seriously the whole reality of Latin American man'.

In all of this I agree with Dr Strachan that the centre is neither the Church nor the world, but Christ, as Lord over both. And it is His judgment, not the world's, which determines the relevancy of our obedient witness. But does not Christ care for the hungry and thirsty, the strangers and the naked, the sick and those in prison? Dr Strachan questions 'just *how* in actual practice' I would call for relevant witness. My answer is that I would start by asking the man who responds to the preaching of the Gospel to ask himself and others how he can show to 'his family, the household, the community or the multitude' Christ's compassion for the total needs of the total man in his own particular society. He will then soon realize how inadequate individual witness is. The world needs the witness of the whole Body of Christ.

VICTOR E. W. HAYWARD

SOME BASES FOR A CHRISTIAN APOLOGETIC TO ISLAM¹

By R. MARSTON SPEIGHT

THIS generation of Christians is deeply indebted to such scholars as Louis Massignon, Kenneth Cragg, Louis Gardet and Edwin Calverley, who from their Christian positions have given us a new and deeper understanding of the religion of Islam. They have brought to their research that element of sympathy which a recent Muslim writer has called 'a fourth dimension'.² In a remarkable way, they have identified themselves with the object of their studies and thereby brought to light hidden values and profound meaning in the Islamic religion. It remains for others to apply the results of modern Christian research in Islam to a valid modern missionary apologetic. Some bases for a new apologetic are indicated in the present-day temper of Christian openness towards other religions; other elements remain unchanged from former generations.

It is evident from certain currents of Christian theological thought that there is a place for an apology for apologetics. Nevertheless, in this paper it is assumed that an apologetic enterprise is valid, for the simple reason that Islam, traditionally and in an explicit way, calls in question the Christian Gospel.

I. DIALOGUE AND ITS LIMITATIONS

A significant factor in the present-day situation between religions is the emphasis upon dialogue. We are living in an age of dialogue. Particularly in the West, there seems to be an almost universal desire for mutual encounter by those with different points of view. The conferences, colloquies, meetings, interviews and seminars that make up so much of the modern expression of the dialogue idea constitute a new manner of communication which requires thoughtful consideration.³

¹ Dr Daud Rahbar, of Hartford Seminary Foundation, will comment on this article in the next issue of the Review.

² Mohamed Talbi: 'Louis Massignon un Maître', *Confluent*, December 1962, p. 764.

³ See Alfred Fauque: 'Les Perspectives d'un Dialogue Orient-Occident', *Confluent*, June-July 1961, pp. 390-409. This article goes far toward clarifying the issues involved in dialogue.

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Cuidado al catalogar esto. Es el
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 INTERNATIONAL MISSIONARY REVIEW: LOS OTROS ARTICULOS SON:

1. Kenneth Strachan, (el misionero propulsor del metodo
 de evangelización, presentado en la tesis)
 10 páginas
 2. Victor Hayward (WCC) director de estudios misioneros 8 pps.
 3. Respuesta de K. Strachan 7 pp.
 4. Markus Barth (Hijo de Karl Barth, y
 professor de N.T. en
 Pittsburgh Theological Seminary) 8 Opp.
 5. Martin Conway : Secretario de Estudios de World Student
 Chritian Federation Ginebra 3 pp.
 6. Emilio Castro, pastor Metodista Uruguayo,
 coordinador de UNELAM Unión Evangelica
 Latino Americana..... 5 pp
 7. Nueva obsefvación de V. Hayward, tomando en
 cuenta lo que se ha dicho ~~xxxxxxx~~ en los
 articulos anteriores. 4 pp.
 8. Leslie Newbigin, Obispo de la
 Iglesia Unida del Sur de India, y editor de
 International Review of Missions 3 pp.
-
- total 48 ppp.s

LA TESIS DE RAMON ROSALES, trata de un movimiento
 de tipo "faith mission", o ala conservadora del protest ntismo,
 y represefnata los 75% de la misión protestante en Am. Latina.

en este sentido es un fenómeno típico.

~~Nex~~ Es atípico en el sentido que la mision evita paternalismo, y
 está en busqueda de una vision edumenica, sin decirlo.

A DESCRIPTION AND EVALUATION OF THE EVANGELISM IN DEPTH PROGRAM
OF THE LATIN AMERICA MISSION

A THESIS

Presented to

The Faculty of the Department of Graduate Studies

Luther Theological Seminary

In Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree

Master of Theology

by

Ray S. Rosales

April 1966

Dear Prof. Morales!

The Committee has approved the publication of your thesis (plus the discussion in the International Missionary Review).

Congratulations. Would you please, proceed with the revisions you had in mind?

I shall call you one of these days.

Yours sincerely

Key

Saturday, 1/7/67
19:30.

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