

***The New Macedonia:
A Revolutionary New Era
in Mission Begins***



RALPH D. WINTER

Introduction by Donald A. McGavran

INTRODUCTION

At the International Congress on World Evangelization Dr. Ralph D. Winter proved beyond any reasonable doubt that in the world today 2,700,000,000 men and women cannot hear the Gospel by "near-neighbor evangelism". They can hear it only by E-2 and E-3 evangelists who cross cultural, linguistic and geographical barriers, patiently learn that other culture and language, across the decades preach the Gospel by word and deed, *and* multiply reproductive and responsible Christian churches. This means enormous numbers of 'sent' preachers (Romans 10:14,15). It means missionaries by the hundred thousand. It means that all Churches (denominations) become sending Churches, sending out E-2 and E-3 evangelists (missionaries) till the 2,700,000,000 have sprinkled through them at least, 2,700,000 congregations. At that point, the Lord may well judge that all men have really heard the Gospel and return.

Winter's address marked the end of an age in missions. For the last thirty years the urgent necessity has been for Western missions to turn authority over to non-Western denominations. During this period it has been both fashionable and right for national leaders to emphasize in dozens of ways that they had come of age and no longer needed missionary guidance or control. It was right for missionaries to withdraw and for missionary societies to plan their program so as to lessen the number of missionaries who exercised directional responsibilities over Christian denominations, hospitals, schools, and other institutions. It was right for the goal of both missions and Churches to be the ultimate abolishing of missionary posts designed to serve existing churches.

It was right for these things to happen in connection with all well established denominations (Churches). But since the missionary movement (which involves Christians in *all six continents*) is continually planting new clusters of congregations in which missionaries have to be the planters and nurturers for some years, tension between national leaders (who think that the time has come to turn over, who resent fatherly guidance from the missionaries) not only exists but will continue. This tension must not be wiped out by the simplistic expedient of ceasing to plant new clusters of congregations, and closing one's eyes to the 2.7 billion!

During the era just past, the stock in trade of certain leaders, both in the Western and non-Western worlds, was to proclaim boldly that nationals were quite able to run their own show and that missionaries

should bow to their wishes. Alas, this became "the chief Gospel" preached by many eminent leaders. This is what they were noted for. This was what they always said. Let us assume that in the years now ended their message was right.

But it is no longer right. That period in the expansion of Christianity is over. A new era has begun. There is no longer any danger that missionaries from Japan, Korea, Norway, England, the United States, the Philippines, Zaire, Chile, Mexico or other lands will lord it over the denominations in the lands to which the Holy Spirit sends them. *To continue harping on that old message is wrong in this new era when suddenly we are conscious of the two point seven billion who are living and dying without Christ and who cannot be reached by near neighbor evangelism.* Through his cool and irenic presentation of the great new fact which confronts international Christianity, Dr. Winter was calling on the four thousand leaders from 150 countries gathered at Lausanne to recognize that we have emerged from the old era and have entered a new era. What is necessary and should be fashionable today and tomorrow is not that old message. The battle to recognize non-Western Churches (denominations) as equal has been won. There is no need to continue fighting it. That wheat has been threshed. Let us not continue threshing the old straw.

Today's challenge is to devise new slogans, new priorities, and new principles which excite the Church of Jesus Christ to surge forward on ten thousand fronts sending apostles, sending preachers, sending missionaries across cultural linguistic and economic barriers to evangelize any and all segments of society which the existing Churches in any land are not reaching and cannot reach. Today mature Churches in every country will courageously face up to the many segments of the population which they are *not* evangelizing, in which they are *not* establishing outposts of heaven, in which few ever become baptized believers. Mature Churches will then do two things:

First, they will recruit as many of their own sons and daughters as they can — and send them to such segments as E-2 and E-3 missionaries, but not to reproduce their own kind of embodied Christianity, their own cultural image, and their own social status. On the contrary, their missionaries will do what all good missionaries do — deculturize themselves and enculture themselves in the segment of population concerned, learn the language thoroughly, and then father new congregations which are soundly Christian, filled with the Holy Spirit, obedient to the Bible and loyal to the good in their own culture.

Second, seeing the tremendous size of the task, mature Churches will actively recruit missionaries from other Churches in their own country and in other countries. They will send messengers to other countries, pleading with them to "Come over to Macedonia and help us. We have selected for you a segment of population — a county, a ward of our great city, a tribe, a caste, an income bracket, the intelligentsia, the illiterate, the community whose men drive taxis in our metropolis, the land owners, landless laborers — and will assist you in every way in evangelizing that segment. We will pray God's blessing on you, thank

Him for your presence, counsel you as to methods, but not impose our will on you. We will hope that you will employ some of our sons and daughters as your assistants. We are confident that the clusters of churches which you establish will be soundly Christian. And that as those churches mature you will encourage them to associate themselves with us, while you go on to other yet untouched and unreached segments of our vast population."

The creative nature of Dr. Winter's address will only be recognized as we try to develop some such vision of the future, some concrete plans to engage all the churches of all the continents in a determined, intelligent evangelization of the 2,700,000,000 (who in less than 20 years will be 4,000,000,000) who are not now being reached by existing denominations.

The shadow of the era just past is, to be sure, still visible, but it will diminish in length. It takes no great feat of imagination to hear some indignant leader protest that many missionaries even today are exerting undue influence on the existing churches. Such protests are sometimes *well* founded. Some missionaries, like some ministers, are dominant personalities and occasionally excite resentment in those dominated. Some few missionary societies may yet be living in the pre-1945 era. But they are rare; sending out only a few missionaries, planting a few churches. Where such conditions exist, pressure should certainly be brought to rectify them.

Such protests are sometimes *ill*-founded. In any extension of the Christian Faith on new ground, infant congregations are brought into being. They would never be born without a father, whom God uses to create new churchlets. These need fatherly "care and feeding". They need Christian nurture. They need help. Someone must be in travail for them till Christ be born in them. Of course, fatherly care continued too long becomes paternalism, but this error in judgment is not likely to be made often. The real danger is all the other way — namely, that in fear of being paternalistic, the missionary hesitates to be fatherly. As a result either no churches are born or those which are born sicken and die. Existing denominations and congregations need no longer be jealous that their prerogatives may be usurped by foreign missionaries. Existing denominations and congregations should actively invite in bands of comrades from outside their culture area who will accept the responsibility for evangelizing suitable segments of the unevangelized.

What do we mean by suitable segments? In the past two hundred years, it was commonplace for one mission to claim sole responsibility and authority for ten million people. This ten million was a Baptist area and that an Anglican. The mission then occupied the area with a force of twenty missionary families — which gave each a parish of 500,000 souls. Today any such assignment of territory is totally unacceptable. One missionary family is ordinarily able to evangelize effectively a community of perhaps five thousand. It is easily seen that the two point seven billion divide into 540,000 field of that size. These would be fields in which at present, according to Dr. Winter's thinking, practically no one can be reached by E-1, that is, by near-neighbor evangelism.

When in 1965 I was inaugurated as the founding dean of the School of World Mission at Fuller Theological Seminary and called for 100,000 missionaries, I considerably underestimated the need. Since the total number of the unreached, for the next thirty years at any rate, will increase toward four billion, the number of reasonably sized fields to be occupied by missionaries will increase year by year. After thirty years — or perhaps fifty years — if the Lord tarry — the number will decrease. I have dealt with this in the May 1974 issue of the Church Growth Bulletin under the title "The Tide Turns". But until it turns, the number of utterly unreached mission fields will increase. Christians must not delude themselves with the comfortable assumption that existing churches using near-neighbor evangelism will complete the task. They will not. They cannot. This is the hard, unshakable core of what Dr. Winter told Lausanne.

Nothing said at Lausanne had more meaning for the Expansion of Christianity between now and the year 2,000. As its implications are discovered — I have mentioned only a few — and new forms of mission are invented by Western and non-Western denominations to carry out effective mission in this new age, the possibility of obeying the Great Commission adequately will loom larger and larger. God grant His rich blessings on all such courageous and faithful forward moves to obey God and meet the deepest and most desperate human needs.

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Part I in what follows was one of the printed addresses circulated to all 2,700 participants prior to the Congress. Part II consists of the supplementary address actually presented at the Congress, in the plenary session, Saturday morning, July 20, 1974. It builds not only on Part I, but on the written responses sent ahead of time by more than 1,000 of the participants. We are indebted to World Wide Publications for their special help in the reproduction of these materials. For a complete transcription of all of the addresses and conferences at the International Congress on World Evangelization you are referred to LET THE EARTH HEAR HIS VOICE, a most valuable volume of more than 1,300 pages, available in both paper and cloth from World Wide Publications, or from the Church Growth Book Club.

THE HIGHEST PRIORITY: CROSS— CULTURAL EVANGELISM

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PART I

In recent years, a serious misunderstanding has crept into the thinking of many evangelicals. Curiously, it is based on a number of wonderful facts: the Gospel has now gone to the ends of the earth. Christians have now fulfilled the Great Commission in at least a geographical sense. At this moment of history, we can acknowledge with great respect and pride those evangelists of every nation who have gone before us and whose sacrificial efforts and heroic accomplishments have made Christianity by far the world's largest and most widespread religion, with a Christian church on every continent and in practically every country. This is no hollow victory. Now more than at any time since Jesus walked the shores of Galilee, we know with complete confidence that the Gospel is for all men, that it makes sense in any language, and that it is not merely a religion of the Mediterranean or of the West.

This is all true. On the other hand, many Christians as a result have the impression that the job is now nearly done and that to finish it we need only to forge ahead in local evangelism on the part of the now world-wide church, reaching out wherever it has already been planted. Many Christian organizations, ranging widely from the World Council of Churches to many U.S. denominations, even some evangelical groups, have rushed to the conclusion that we may now abandon traditional missionary strategy and count on local Christians everywhere to finish the job.

This is why *evangelism* is the one great password to evangelical unity today. Not everyone can agree on foreign mission strategies, but more people than ever agree on *evangelism*, because that seems to be the one obvious job that remains to be done. All right! There is nothing wrong with evangelism. Most conversions must inevitably take place as the result of some Christian witnessing to a near neighbor, and that is evangelism. The awesome problem is the additional truth that most non-Christians in the world today are not culturally near neighbors of any Christians, and that it will take a special kind of "cross-cultural" evangelism to reach them.

Cross-cultural evangelism: The crucial need.

Let us approach this subject with some graphic illustrations. I am thinking, for example, of the hundreds of thousands of Christians in Pakistan. Almost all of them are people who have never been Muslims and do not have the kind of relationship with the Muslim community that encourages witnessing. Yet they live in a country that is 97 per cent Muslim! The Muslims, on their part, have bad attitudes toward the stratum of society represented by the Christians. One group of Christians has boldly called itself *The Church of Pakistan*. Another group of Christians goes by the name, *The Presbyterian Church of Pakistan*. While these are "national" churches in the sense that they are part of the nation, they can hardly be called national churches if this phrase implies that they are culturally related to that vast bloc of people who constitute the other 97 per cent of the country, namely, the Muslims. Thus, although the Muslims are geographically near neighbors of these Christians, normal evangelism will not do the job.

Or take the Church of South India, a large church which has brought together the significant missionary efforts of many churches over the last century. But while it is called *The Church of South India*, 95 per cent of its members come from only five out of the more than 100 social classes (castes) in South India. Ordinary evangelism on the part of existing Christians will persuade men and women of those same five social classes. It would be much more difficult — it is in fact another kind of evangelism — for this church to make great gains within the 95 other social classes, which make up the vast bulk of the population.

Or take the great Batak church in Northern Sumatra. Here is one of the famous churches of Indonesia. Its members have been doing much evangelism among fellow Bataks, of whom there are still many thousands whom they can reach without learning a foreign language, and among whom they can work with maximum efficiency of direct contact and understanding. But at the same time, the vast majority of all the people in Indonesia speak other languages, and are of other ethnic units. For the Batak Christians of Northern Sumatra to win people to Christ from other parts of Indonesia will be a distinctly different kind of task. It is another kind of evangelism.

Or take the great church of Nagaland in Northeast India. Years ago, American missionaries from the plains of Assam reached up into the Naga hills and won some of the Ao Nagas. Then these Ao Nagas won practically their whole tribe to Christ. Next thing, Ao Nagas won members of the nearby Santdam Naga tribe, that spoke a sister language. These new Santdam Naga Christians then proceeded to win almost the whole of their tribe. This process went on until the majority of all fourteen Naga tribes became Christian. Now that most of Nagaland is Christian — even the officials of the state government are Christian — there is the desire to witness elsewhere in India. But for these Nagaland Christians to win other people in India is as much a foreign mission task as it is for Englishmen, Koreans, or Brazilians to evangelize in India. This is one reason why so far the Nagas have made no significant attempt to evangelize the rest of India. Indian citizenship is one advantage the Naga Christians have as compared to people from other countries, but citizenship

does not make it easier for them to learn any of the hundreds of totally foreign languages in the rest of India.

In other words, for Nagas to evangelize other peoples in India, they will need to employ a radically different kind of evangelism. The easiest kind of evangelism, when they used their own language to win their own people, is now mainly in the past. The second kind of evangelism was not a great deal more difficult — where they won people of neighboring Naga tribes, whose languages were sister languages. The third kind of evangelism, needed to win people in far-off parts of India, will be much more difficult.

Let's give labels to these different kinds of evangelism. Where an Ao Naga won another Ao, let us call that *E-1 evangelism*. Where an Ao went across a tribal language boundary to a sister language and won the *Santdam*, we'll call it *E-2 evangelism*. (The E-2 task is not as easy and requires different techniques.) But then if an Ao Naga goes to another region of India, to a totally strange language, for example, Telegu, Korhu or Bhili, his task will be considerably more difficult than E-1 or even E-2 evangelism. We will call it *E-3 evangelism*.

Let us try out this terminology in another country. Take Taiwan. There also there are different kinds of people. The majority are Minnans, who were there before a flood of Mandarin-speaking people came across from the mainland. Then there is the huge bloc of Hakka-speaking people who came from the mainland much earlier. Up in the mountains, however a few hundred thousand aboriginal peoples speak Malayo-Polynesian dialects entirely different from Chinese. Now if a Mainlander Chinese Christian wins others from the mainland, that's E-1 evangelism. If he wins a Minnan Taiwanese or a Hakka, that's E-2 evangelism. If he wins someone from the hill tribes, that's E-3 evangelism, and remember, E-3 is a much more complex task, performed at a greater *cultural distance*.

Thus far we have only referred to language differences, but for the purpose of defining evangelistic strategy, any kind of obstacle, any kind of communication barrier affecting evangelism is significant. In Japan, for example, practically everybody speaks Japanese, and there aren't radically different dialects of Japanese comparable to the different dialects of Chinese. But there are social differences which make it very difficult for people from one group to win others of a different social class. In Japan, as in India, social differences often turn out to be more important in evangelism than language differences. Japanese Christians thus have not only an E-1 sphere of contact, but also E-2 spheres that are harder to reach. Missionaries going from Japan to other parts of the world to work with non-Japanese with totally different languages are doing an evangelistic task on the E-3 basis.

Lastly, let me give an example from my own experience. I speak English as a native language. For ten years, I lived and worked in Central America, for most of the time in Guatemala, where Spanish is the official language, but where a majority of the people speak some dialect of the Mayan family of aboriginal languages. I had two languages to learn. Spanish has a 60 per cent overlap in vocabulary with English, so I had no trouble learning that language. Along with the learning of Spanish, I became familiar with the extension of European culture into the New World, and it was not particularly difficult to understand the life-ways of the kind of people who spoke Spanish. However, because Span-

ish was so easy by comparison, learning the Mayan language in our area was, I found, enormously more difficult. In our daily work, switching from English to Spanish to a Mayan language made me quite aware of the three different "cultural distances." When I spoke of Christ to a Peace Corpsman in English, I was doing E-1 evangelism. When I spoke to a Guatemalan in Spanish, it was E-2 evangelism. When I spoke to an Indian in the Mayan language, it was the much more difficult E-3 evangelism.

Now where I live in Southern California, most of my contacts are in the E-1 sphere, but if I evangelize among the million who speak Spanish, I must use E-2 evangelism. Were I to learn the Navajo language and speak of Christ to some of the 30,000 Navajo Indians who live in Los Angeles, I would be doing E-3 evangelism. Reaching Cantonese-speaking refugees from Hong Kong with the Good News of Christ would also be, for me, an E-3 task. Note, however, that what for me is E-3 could be only E-2 for someone else. American-born Chinese would find Hong Kong refugees only an E-2 task.

Everyone who is here in this Congress has his own E-1 sphere in which he speaks his own language and builds on all the intuition which derives from his experience within his own culture. Then perhaps for almost all of us there is an E-2 sphere — groups of people who speak languages that are a little different, or who are involved in culture patterns sufficiently in contrast with our own as to make communication more difficult. Such people can be reached with a little extra trouble and with sincere attempts, but it will take us out of our way to reach them. More important, they are people who, once converted, will not feel at home in the church which we attend. In fact, they may grow faster spiritually if they can find Christian fellowship among people of their own kind. More significant to evangelism: it is quite possible that with their own fellowship, they are more likely to win others of their own social grouping. Finally, each of us here in Lausanne has an E-3 sphere: most languages and cultures of the world are totally strange to us; they are at the maximum cultural distance. If we attempt to evangelize at this E-3 distance, we have a long uphill climb in order to be able to make sense to anyone.

In summary, the master pattern of the expansion of the Christian movement is first for special E-2 and E-3 efforts to cross cultural barriers into new communities and to establish strong, on-going, vigorously evangelizing denominations, and then for that national church to carry the work forward on the really high-powered E-1 level. We are thus forced to believe that until every tribe and tongue has a strong, powerfully evangelizing church in it, and thus, an E-1 witness within it, E-2 and E-3 efforts coming from outside are still essential and highly urgent.

Cross-cultural evangelism: The Biblical mandate

At this point, let us ask what the Bible says about all this. Are these cultural differences something the Bible takes note of? Is this something which ought to occupy our time and attention? Is this matter of cultural distance something which is so important that it fits into a Congress like this? Let us turn to the Bible and see what it has to say.

Let us go to that vital passage in the first chapter of Acts, so central to this whole Congress, where Jesus refers his disciples to the worldwide scope of God's concern — "in Jerusalem, in all Judea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth." If it were not for this passage

(and all the other passages in the Bible which support it) we would not even be gathered here today. Without this biblical mandate, there could not have been a Congress on World Evangelization. It is precisely this task — the task of discipling all the nations — which includes all of us and unifies all of us in a single, common endeavor. Notice, however, that Jesus does not merely include the whole world. He distinguishes between different parts of that world and does so according to the relative distance of those people from his hearers. On another occasion he simply said, "Go ye into all the world," but in this passage he has divided that task into significant components.

At first glance you might think that he is merely speaking geographically, but with more careful study, it seems clear that he is not talking merely about *geographical* distance, but about *cultural* distance. The clue is the appearance of the word *Samaria* in this sequence. Fortunately, we have special insight into what Jesus meant by *Samaria*, since the New Testament records in an extended passage the precise nature of the evangelistic problem Jews faced in trying to reach the Samaritans. I speak of the well-known story of Jesus and the woman at the well. Samaria was not far away in the geographical sense. Jesus had to pass there whenever he went from Galilee to Jerusalem. Yet when Jesus spoke to this Samaritan woman, it was immediately obvious that he faced a special cultural obstacle. While she was apparently close enough linguistically for him to be able to understand her speech, her very first reply focused on the significant difference between the Jews and the Samaritans — they worshipped in different places. Jesus did not deny this profound difference, but accepted it and transcended it by pointing out the human, cultural limitations of both the Jewish and the Samaritan modes of worship. He spoke to her heart and by-passed the cultural differences.

Meanwhile, the disciples looking on were mystified and troubled. Even had they understood that God was interested in Samaritans, they probably would have had difficulty grappling with the cultural differences. Even if they had tried to do so, they might not have been sensitive enough to by-pass certain differences and go directly to the heart of the matter — which was the heart of the woman.

Paul acted on the same principle when he sought to evangelize the Greeks, who were at an even greater cultural distance. Just imagine how shocked some of the faithful Jewish Christians were when they heard rumors that Paul by-passed circumcision, one of the most important cultural differences to the Jews, even Christian Jews, and went to the heart of the matter. He was reported to them as saying, "Neither circumcision nor uncircumcision is worth anything in comparison to being in Christ, believing in him, being baptized in his name, being filled with his Spirit, belonging to his body."

At this point we must pause long enough to distinguish between cultural distance and walls of prejudice. There may have been high *walls of prejudice* involved where Jews encountered Samaritans, but it is obvious that the Greeks, who did not even worship the same God, were at a far greater *cultural distance* from the Jews than were the Samaritans, who were close cousins by comparison. It is curious to note that sometimes those who are closest to us are hardest to reach. For example, a Jewish Christian trying to evangelize would understand a Samaritan more

easily than he would understand a Greek, but he would be more likely to be hated or detested by a Samaritan than by a Greek. In Belfast today, for example, the problem is not so much cultural distance as prejudice. Suppose a Protestant who had grown up in Belfast were to witness for Christ to a nominal Belfast Catholic and an East Indian. He would more easily understand his Catholic compatriot, but would face less prejudice from the East Indian. Generally speaking, then, cultural distance is more readily traversed than high walls of prejudice are climbed.

But, returning to our central passage, it is clear that Jesus is referring primarily neither to geography nor walls of prejudice when he lists *Judea, Samaria, and the ends of the earth*. Had he been talking about prejudice, Samaria would have come last. He would have said, "in Judea, in all the world, and *even in Samaria*." It seems likely he is taking into account cultural distance as the primary factor. Thus, as we today endeavor to fulfill Jesus' ancient command, we do well to be sensitive to *cultural distance*. His distinctions must underlie our strategic thinking about the evangelization of the whole world.

Evangelism in the Jerusalem and Judea sphere would seem to be what we have called *E-1 evangelism*, where the only barrier his listeners had to cross in their proposed evangelistic efforts was the boundary between the Christian community and the world immediately outside, involving the same language and culture. This is "near neighbor" evangelism. Whoever we are, wherever we live in the world, we all have some near neighbors to whom we can witness without learning any foreign language or taking into account any special cultural differences. This is the kind of evangelism we usually talk about. This is the kind of evangelism most meetings on evangelism talk about. One of the great differences between this Congress and all previous congresses on evangelism is its determined stress on *crossing cultural frontiers where necessary* in order to evangelize the whole earth. The mandate of this Congress does not allow us to focus merely on Jerusalem and Judea.

The second sphere to which Jesus referred is that of the Samaritan. The Bible account shows that although it was relatively easy for Jesus and his disciples to make themselves understood to the Samaritans, the Jew and the Samaritan were divided from each other by a frontier consisting of dialectal distinctions and some other very significant cultural differences. This was *E-2 evangelism*, because it involved crossing a *second* frontier. First, it involved crossing the frontier we have referred to in describing E-1 evangelism, the frontier between the church and the world. Secondly, it involved crossing a frontier constituted by significant (but not monumental) differences of language and culture. Thus we call it *E-2 evangelism*.

E-3 evangelism, as we have used the phrase, involves even greater cultural distance. This is the kind of evangelism that is necessary in the third sphere of Jesus' statement, "to the uttermost part of the earth." The people needing to be reached in this third sphere live, work, talk, and think in languages and cultural patterns utterly different from those native to the evangelist. The average Jewish Christian, for example, would have had no head start at all in dealing with people beyond Samaria. If reaching Samaritans seemed like crossing two frontiers (thus called E-2 evangelism), reaching totally different people must have seemed like

crossing three, and it is reasonable to call such a task *E-3 evangelism*.

It is very important to understand the full significance of the distinctions Jesus is making. Since he was not talking about geographical, but cultural distance, the general value of what he said has striking strategic application today. Jesus did not mean that all down through history Samaria specifically would be an object of special attention. One Christian's Judea might be another Christian's Samaria. Take Paul, for example. Although he was basically a Jew, he no doubt found it much easier to traverse the cultural distance to the Greeks than did Peter, because unlike Peter, Paul was much better acquainted with the Greek world. Using the terminology we have employed, where an E-1 task is near, E-2 is close, and E-3 is far (in *cultural*, not geographical distance), we can say that reaching Greeks meant working at an E-2 distance for Paul; but for Peter it meant working at an E-3 distance. For Luke, who was himself a Greek, reaching Greeks was to work only at an E-1 distance. Thus what was distant for Peter was near for Luke. And vice versa: reaching Jews would have been E-1 for Peter, but more likely E-3 for Luke. It may well be that God sent Paul rather than Peter to the Gentiles partially because Paul was closer culturally. By the same token, Paul, working among the Greeks at an E-2 distance, was handicapped by comparison with E-1 "nationals" like Luke, Titus, and Epaphroditus; and, as a matter of evangelistic strategy, he wisely turned things over to "national" workers as soon as he possibly could. Paul himself, being a Jew, often began his work in a new city in the Jewish synagogue where he himself was on an E-1 basis and where, with the maximum power of E-1 communication, he was able to speak forcefully without any non-Jewish accent.

Let us straightforwardly concede right here that, all other things being equal, the national leader always has a communication advantage over the foreigner. When the evangelists went from the plains of Assam up into the Naga hills, it must have been very much harder for them to win Ao Nagas than it was for Ao Naga Christians to do so, once a start had been made. When the first German missionaries preached to the Batak, they must have had a far greater problem than when the faith, once planted, was transmitted from Batak to Batak. E-1 evangelism — where a person communicates to his own people — is obviously the most potent kind of evangelism. People need to hear the Gospel in their own language. Can we believe God intends for them to hear it from people who speak without a trace of accent? The foreign missionary communicator may be good, but he is not good enough. If it is so important for Americans to have thirty translations of the New Testament to choose from, and even a "Living Bible," which allows the Bible to speak in colloquial English, then why must many peoples around the world suffer along with a Bible that was translated for them by a foreigner, and thus almost inevitably speaks to them in halting phrases?

This is why the easiest, most obvious surge forward in evangelism in the world today will come if Christian believers in every part of the world are moved to reach outside their churches and win their cultural near neighbors to Christ. They are better able to do that than any foreign missionary. It is a tragic perversion of Jesus' strategy if we continue to send missionaries to do the job that local Christians can do better. There is no excuse for a missionary in the pulpit when a national can do the job

better. There is no excuse for a missionary to be doing evangelism on an E-3 basis, at an E-3 distance from people, when there are local Christians who are effectively winning the same people as part of their E-1 sphere.

In view of the profound truth that (other things being equal) E-1 evangelism is more powerful than E-2 or E-3 evangelism, it is easy to see how some people have erroneously concluded that E-3 evangelism is therefore out-of-date, due to the wonderful fact that there are now Christians throughout the whole world. It is with this perspective that major denominations in the U.S. have at some points acted on the premise that there is no more need for missionaries of the kind who leave home to go to a foreign country and struggle with a totally strange language and culture. Their premise is that "there are Christians over there already." With the drastic fall-off in the value of the U.S. dollar and the tragic shrinking of U.S. church budgets, some U.S. denominations have had to curtail their missionary activity to an unbelievable extent, and they have in part tried to console themselves by saying that it is time for the national church to take over. In our response to this situation, we must happily agree that wherever there are local Christians effectively evangelizing, there is nothing more potent than E-1 evangelism.

However, the truth about the superior power of E-1 evangelism must not obscure the obvious fact that E-1 evangelism is literally *impossible* where there are no witnesses within a given language or cultural group. Jesus, as a Jew, would not have had to witness directly to that Samaritan woman had there been a local Samaritan Christian who had already reached her. In the case of the Ethiopian eunuch, we can conjecture that it might have been better for an Ethiopian Christian than for Philip to do the witnessing, but there had to be an initial contact by a non-Ethiopian in order for the E-1 process to be set in motion. This kind of initial, multiplying work is the primary task of the missionary when he rightly understands his job. He must decrease and the national leader must increase. Hopefully Jesus' E-2 witness set in motion E-1 witnessing in that Samaritan town. Hopefully Philip's E-2 witness to the Ethiopian set in motion E-1 witnessing back in Ethiopia. If that Ethiopian was an Ethiopian Jew, the E-1 community back in Ethiopia might not have been very large, and might not have effectively reached the non-Jewish Ethiopians. As a matter of fact, scholars believe that the Ethiopian church today is the result of a much later missionary thrust that reached, by E-3 evangelism, clear through to the ethnic Ethiopians.

Thus, in the Bible as in our earlier illustrations from modern mission history, we arrive at the same summary:

The master pattern of the expansion of the Christian movement is first for special E-2 and E-3 efforts to cross cultural barriers into new communities and to establish strong, on-going, vigorously evangelizing denominations, and then for that national church to carry the work forward on the really high-powered E-1 level. We are thus forced to believe that until every tribe and tongue has a strong, powerfully evangelizing church in it, and thus an E-1 witness within it, E-2 and E-3 efforts coming from outside are still essential and highly urgent. From this perspective, how big is the remaining task?

*Cross-cultural evangelism:
The immensity of the task*

Unfortunately, most Christians have only a very foggy idea of just how many peoples there are in the world among whom there is no E-1 witness. But fortunately, preparatory studies for this Congress have seriously raised this question: Are there any tribal tongues and linguistic units which have not yet been penetrated by the Gospel? If so, where? How many? Who can reach them? Even these preliminary studies indicate that cross-cultural evangelism must still be the highest priority. Far from being a task that is now out-of-date, the shattering truth is that at least four out of five non-Christians in the world today are beyond the reach of any Christian's E-1 evangelism.

Why is this fact not more widely known? I'm afraid that all our exultation about the fact that every *country* of the world has been penetrated has allowed many to suppose that every *culture* has by now been penetrated. This misunderstanding is a malady so widespread that it deserves a special name. Let us call it "people blindness" that is, blindness to the existence of separate *peoples* within *countries*—a blindness, I might add, which seems more prevalent in the U.S. and among U.S. missionaries than anywhere else. The Bible rightly translated could have made this plain to us. The "nations" to which Jesus often referred were mainly ethnic groups within the single political structure of the Roman government. The various nations represented on the day of Pentecost were for the most part not *countries* but *peoples*. In the Great Commission as it is found in Matthew, the phrase "make disciples of all *ethne* (peoples)" does not let us off the hook once we have a church in every country — God wants a strong church within every people!

"People blindness" is what prevents us from noticing the sub-groups within a country which are significant to development of effective evangelistic strategy. Society will be seen as a complex mosaic, to use McGavran's phrase, once we recover from "people blindness." But until we all recover from this kind of blindness, we may confuse the legitimate desire for church or national unity with the illegitimate goal of uniformity. God apparently loves diversity of certain kinds. But in any case this diversity means evangelists have to work harder. The little ethnic and cultural pieces of the complex mosaic which is human society are the very subdivisions which isolate four out of five non-Christians in the world today from an E-1 contact by existing Christians. The immensity of the cross-cultural task is thus seen in the fact that in Africa and Asia alone, one calculation has it that there are 1,993 million people virtually without a witness. The immensity of the task, however, lies not only in its bigness.

The problem is more serious than retranslating the Great Commission in such a way that the peoples, not the countries, become the targets for evangelism. The immensity of the task is further underscored by the far greater complexity of the E-2 and E-3 task. Are we in America, for example, prepared for the fact that most non-Christians yet to be won to Christ (even in our country) will not fit readily into the kinds of churches we now have? The bulk of American churches in the North are middle-class, and the blue-collar worker won't go near them. Evangelistic crusades may attract thousands to big auditoriums and win people in their homes through television, but a large proportion of the newly converted, unless already familiar with the church, may drift away simply because there is

no church where they will feel at home. Present-day American Christians can wait forever in their cozy, middle-class pews for the world to come to Christ and join them. But unless they adopt E-2 methods and both *go out after these people and help them found their own churches*, evangelism in America will face, and is already facing, steadily diminishing returns. You may say that there are still plenty of people who don't go to church who are of the same cultural background as those in church. This is true. But there are many, many more people of differing cultural backgrounds who, even if they were to become fervent Christians, would not feel comfortable in existing churches.

If the U.S. — where you can drive 3,000 miles and still speak the same language — is nevertheless a veritable cultural mosaic viewed evangelistically, then surely most other countries face similar problems. Even in the U.S., local radio stations employ more than forty different languages. In addition to these language differences, there are many equally significant social and cultural differences. Language differences are by no means the highest barriers to communication.

The need, in E-2 evangelism, for whole new worshiping groups is underscored by the phenomenon of the Jesus People, who have founded hundreds of new congregations. The vast Jesus People Movement in the U.S. does not speak a different language so much as it involves a very different life-style and thus a different style of worship. Many American churches have attempted to employ the guitar music and many of the informal characteristics of the Jesus Movement, but there is a limit to which a single congregation can go with regard to speaking many languages and employing many life-styles. Who knows what has happened to many of the "mods" and "rockers" who were won as a result of Billy Graham's London Crusades? On the one hand, the existing churches were understandably culturally distant from such people, and on the other hand, there may not have been adequate E-2 methods employed so as to form those converts into whole new congregations. It is this aspect of E-2 evangelism which makes the cross-cultural task immensely harder. Yet it is essential. Let us take one more well-known example.

When John Wesley evangelized the miners of England, the results were conserved in whole new worshiping congregations. There probably would never have been a Methodist movement had he not encouraged these lower-class people to meet in their own Christian gatherings, sing their own kind of songs, and associate with their own kind of people. Furthermore, apart from this E-2 technique, such people would not have been able to win others and expand the Christian movement in this new level of society at such an astonishing rate of speed. The results rocked and permanently changed England. It rocked the existing churches, too. Not very many people favored Wesley's contact with the miners. Fewer still agreed that miners should have separate churches!

At this point we may do well to make a clear procedural distinction between E-1 and E-2 evangelism. We have observed that the E-2 sphere begins where the people you have reached are of sufficiently different backgrounds from those of people in existing churches that they need to form their own worshiping congregations in order best to win others of their own kind. John, chapter four, tells us that "many Samaritans from that city believed in him (Jesus) because of the woman's testimony." Jesus evangelized the woman by working with great sensitivity as an E-2

witness; she turned around and reached others in her town by efficient E-1 communication. Suppose Jesus had told her she had to go and worship with the Jews. Even if she had obeyed him and gone to worship with the Jews, she would on that basis have been terribly handicapped in winning others in her city. Jesus may actually have avoided the issue of where to worship and with what distant Christians to associate. That would come up later. Thus the Samaritans who believed the woman's testimony then made the additional step of inviting a Jew to be with them for two days. He still did not try to make them into Jews. He knew he was working at an E-2 distance, and that the fruits could best be conserved (and additional people best be won) if they were allowed to build *their own fellowship of faith*.

A further distinction might be drawn between the kind of cultural differences Jesus was working with in Samaria and the kind of differences resulting from the so-called "generation gap." But it really does not matter, in evangelism, whether the distance is cultural, linguistic, or an age difference. No matter what the reason for the difference or the permanence of the difference, or the perceived rightness or the wrongness of the difference, the procedural dynamics of E-2 evangelism techniques are quite similar. The E-2 sphere begins whenever it is necessary to found a new congregation. In the Philippines we hear of youth founding churches. In Singapore we know of ten recently established youth break-away congregations. Hopefully, eventually, age-focused congregations will draw closer to existing churches, but as long as there is a generation gap of serious proportions, such specialized fellowships are able to win many more alienated youth by being allowed to function considerably on their own. It is a good place to begin.

Whatever we may decide about the kind of E-2 evangelism that allows people to meet separately who are different due to temporary *age differences*, the chief factors in the immensity of the cross-cultural task are the much more profound and possibly permanent *cultural differences*. Here too some will always say that true cross-cultural evangelism is going too far. At this point we must risk being misunderstood in order to be absolutely honest. All around the world, special evangelistic efforts continue to be made which often break across culture barriers. People from these other cultures are won, sometimes only one at a time, sometimes in small groups. The problem is not in winning them; it is in the cultural obstacles to proper follow-up. Existing churches may cooperate up to a point with evangelistic campaigns, but they do not contemplate allowing the evangelistic organizations to stay long enough to gather these people together in churches of their own. They mistakenly think that being joined to Christ ought to include joining existing churches. Yet if proper E-2 methods were employed, these few converts, who would merely be considered somewhat odd additions to existing congregations, *could* be infusions of new life into whole new pockets of society where the church does not now exist at all!

A discussion of the best ways to organize for cross-cultural evangelism is beyond the scope of this paper. It would entail a great deal of space to chart the successes and failures of different approaches by churches and by para-church organizations. It may well be that E-2 and E-3 methods are best launched by specialized agencies and societies working loyally and harmoniously with the churches. Here we must focus on the nature of cross-cultural evangelism and its high priority in the face of the immensity

of the task. Aside from the Chinese mainland sector, the two greatest spheres in which there is a tragic paucity of effective cross-cultural evangelism are the Muslim and the Hindu. Our concluding words will center on these two groups, which in aggregate number well over one billion (1,000,000,000) people.

As we have earlier mentioned, a converted Muslim will not feel welcome in the usual Presbyterian Church in Pakistan. Centuries-old suspicions on both sides of the Muslim-Hindu fence make it almost impossible for Muslims, even converted Muslims, to be welcomed into the churches of former Hindu peoples. The present Christians of Pakistan (almost all formerly Hindu) have not been at all successful in integrating converted Muslims into their congregations. Furthermore, it is not likely to occur to them that Muslims can be converted and form their own separate congregations. The enormous tragedy is that this kind of impasse postpones serious evangelism along E-2 lines wherever in the world there are any of the 664 million Muslims. Far to the east of Mecca, in certain parts of Indonesia, enough Muslims have become Christians that they have not been forced one by one to join Christian congregations of another culture. Far to the west of Mecca, in the middle of Africa on some of the islands of Lake Chad, we have reports that a few former Muslims, now Christians, still pray to Christ five times a day and worship in Christian churches on Friday, the Muslim day of worship. These two isolated examples suggest that Muslims can become Christians without necessarily undergoing serious and arbitrary cultural dislocation. There may be a wide, new, open door to the Muslims if we will be as cross-culturally alert as Paul was, who did not require the Greeks to become Jews in order to become acceptable to God.

Vast *new* realms of opportunity may exist in India, too, where local prejudice in many cases may forestall effective "near-neighbor" evangelism. Indians coming from a greater distance might by E-2 or E-3 methods be able to escape the local stigmas and establish churches within the 100 or so social classes as yet untouched. It is folly for evangelists to ignore such factors of prejudice, and their existence greatly increases the immensity of our task. Prejudice of this kind adds to cultural distance such obstacles that E-2 evangelism where prejudice is deep is often more difficult than E-3 evangelism. In other words, scholarly, well-educated Christians from Nagaland or Kerala might possibly be more successful in reaching middle-class Hindus in South India with the Gospel than Christians from humble classes who have grown up in that area and speak the same language, but are stigmatized in local relationships. But who dares to point this out? It is ironic that national Christians all over the non-Western world are increasingly aware that they do not need to be Westernized to be Christian, yet they may in some cases be slow to sense that the challenge of cross-cultural evangelism requires them to allow other people in their own areas to have the same liberty of self-determination in establishing culturally divergent churches of their own.

In any case, the opportunities are just as immense as the task. If 600 million Muslims await a more enlightened evangelism, there are also 500 million Hindus who today face monumental obstacles to becoming Christians other than the profound spiritual factors inherent in the Gospel. One keen observer is convinced that 100 million middle-class Hindus await the opportunity to become Christians — but there are no churches for

them to join which respect their dietary habits and customs. Is the kingdom of God meat and drink? To go to the special efforts required by E-2 and E-3 evangelism is not to let down the standards and make the Gospel easy — it is to disentangle the irrelevant elements and to make the Gospel clear. Perhaps everyone is not able to do this special kind of work. True, many more E-1 evangelists will eventually be necessary to finish the task. But the highest priority in evangelism today is to develop the cross-cultural knowledge and sensitivities involved in E-2 and E-3 evangelism. Where necessary, evangelists from a distance must be called into the task. Nothing must blind us to the immensely important fact that at least *four-fifths* of the non-Christians in the world today will never have any straightforward opportunity to become Christians unless the Christians themselves go more than halfway in the specialized tasks of cross-cultural evangelism. Here is our highest priority.



THE HIGHEST PRIORITY: CROSS-CULTURAL EVANGELISM

PART II

Let me now turn to the many hundreds of responses I have received from other participants in the Congress. I deeply value and intend to save every one of your papers that came to me. Practically all the questions either concerned the statistical *scope* of the task or the theological *nature* of the task.

Questions about the statistical scope of the task

Let us consider first the *scope* of the task. Figure 1 is an attempt to sum it up. Jesus said that no man builds a tower without first sitting down and calculating the cost. Here at this Congress we must sit down and assess the task of world evangelization.

CHRISTIANS	Western	Africa	Asia	TOTAL	
Nurture	120	40	40	200	
E-0 Renewal	845	76	58	979	
	965	116	98	1179	
NON-CHRISTIANS					
E-1 Ord. Ev.	180	82	74	336	----13%
E-2, E-3, CC Ev.	147	200	2040	2387	----87%
	327	282	2114	2723	
GRAND TOTAL	1292	398	2212	3902	

Figure 1

Note that the numbers above are all in *millions* of people in the world today. You will see I have first divided between those who call themselves Christians and those who do not call themselves Christians, and you will

see in the column on the far right that the total number of Christians is 1179 million, and the total number of non-Christians is 2723 million.

I want you to think for a moment about this latter number — 2700 million. Do you notice that this is about one million people for each participant in this Congress? (This means that if each of you all had been busy and had won a million people on your way here, we would have been able to disband the Congress!) These two numbers, 1179 and 2723 are, of course, not precise counts except at a certain date — since the population clock tells us such numbers are constantly changing. For example, the number of Christians, 1179 million, is increasing by 70,000 each day we are gathered here. If we had an evangelism clock in addition to a population clock, it would register the number of additional Christians each minute. For example, from the opening of this Congress until now, four days later, the number of Christians in the world has grown more than a quarter of a million. If we had a really sophisticated clock, we could even record the fact that each day in practically every country of the world, the *percentage* of Christians is also increasing. I add these comments lest anyone shrink from the task of evangelizing the massive numbers of non-Christians in Figure 1. I don't want you to wonder if there is any hope of being successful in world evangelization. Dear brothers and sisters, we *are* being successful right now, and we surely have no *statistical* reason not to make definite plans here at this Congress to move ahead with Jesus Christ, Lord of History, to finish the task of world evangelization.

In other words, the numbers in the last column are only apparently static. They do not show the fact that we are constantly gaining in the Christian percentage in all columns, that is, in the Western World, in Africa, and in Asia. (Australia and Latin America are included in the Western World; the Pacific I am including in the Asia column.)

You will now note that both the Christian and the non-Christian populations have been further divided. The Christian group is divided into the committed Christians, who need nurture; and nominal Christians, who need renewal. Then the non-Christians are also divided in two groups, this distinction being the heart of my whole presentation: those who can be reached by ordinary, near-neighbor evangelism (which I have called E-1 evangelism); and those who are beyond a significant cultural frontier, *whom we can only reach by cross-cultural evangelism*, that is, who may wish to exercise their biblical right to self-determination in establishing a separate cultural tradition of regular worship and fellowship. In a word, they are people at a sufficient cultural distance so that we cannot necessarily expect them to join existing Christian churches. Their existence calls for special cross-cultural evangelism, and constitutes the major technical obstacle to world evangelization.

In Figure 2 you see the quantities and distinctions mentioned in Figure 1 now visualized with the spaces drawn to scale. For example, the four numbers down the right side of the large, vertical rectangle — 200, 979, 336, 2387 — are the same numbers we have just seen in the last column of Figure 1. The first two numbers are those who call themselves Christians, requiring nurture and renewal. Then you'll notice a dark line running across the rectangle, and the two categories below this line are the non-Christians — the 336 million who can be reached by the ordinary

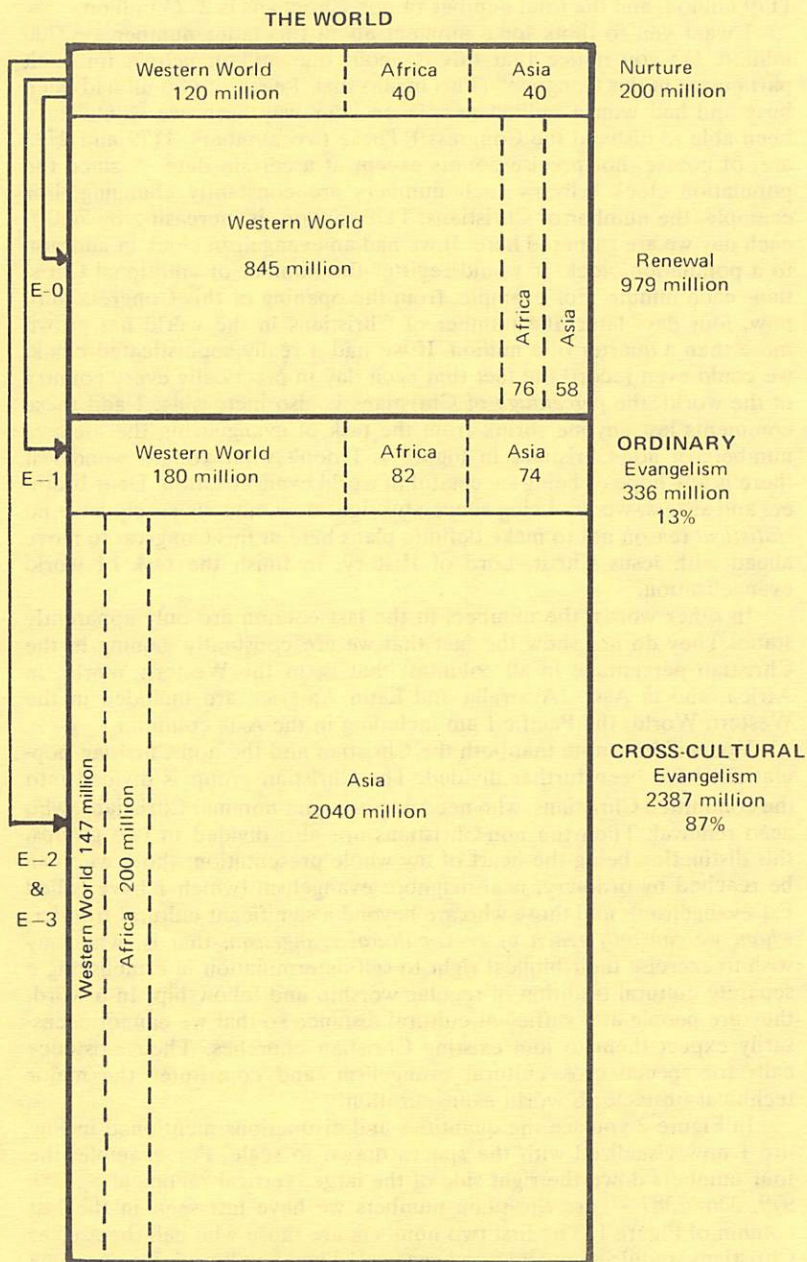


Figure 2.

evangelism of Christians reaching out to their cultural near-neighbors, and 2387 million who are not within the range of the ordinary evangelism of any Christian congregation — people who require cross-cultural evangelism (E-2 or E-3). Note that according to these estimates, 87 per cent of the non-Christians are in the cross-cultural category. Before leaving this diagram, note that most of the people needing renewal are in the Western World, while the people needing cross-cultural evangelism are mainly in Asia. This fact helps to account for the instinctive difference between the way most Western Christians think about evangelism and the way people involved in cross-cultural evangelism think about evangelism.

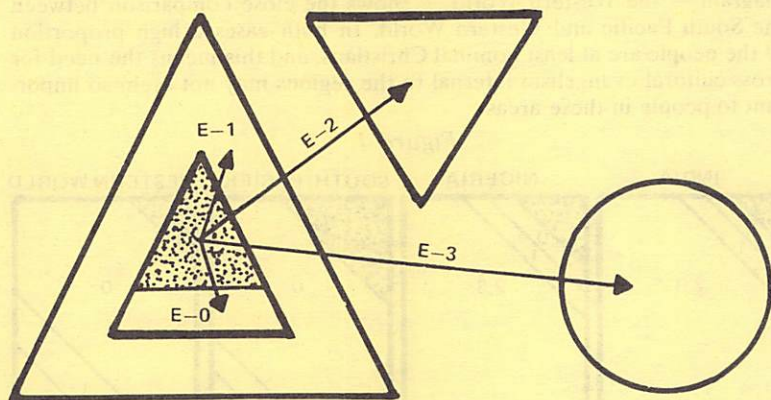


Figure 3.

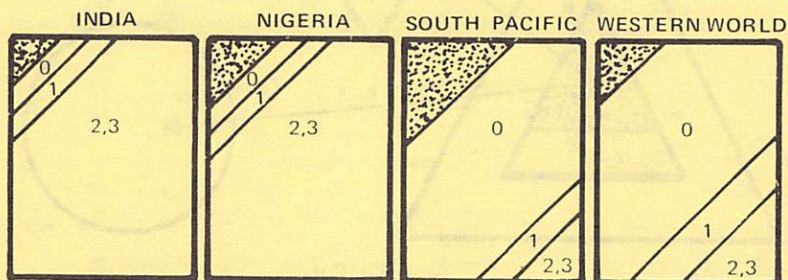
Now let's look at Figure 3. Here you see a small triangle representing the Christian community, from which four arrows emerge. One arrow, labeled E-0, is aimed into a sector within the Christian community. This is the winning of nominal Christians to personal faith and commitment — the “evangelical experience.” This E-0 evangelism involves just as much a spiritual experience as E-1, E-2, or E-3 evangelism, but there is no cultural distance involved — hence the zero. The arrow labeled E-1 goes out of the church into the culture within which the church is at home, the only barrier being the “stained-glass barrier” between the church and the world. People in this area, if converted, will feel at home in existing churches. However, the E-2 arrow reaches outside this culture into a similar culture that is nevertheless sufficiently different to make the founding of separate congregations desirable to act as a base for effective outreach to others in that same culture. The E-3 arrow involves similar church-planting implications, but reaches out to a totally strange culture (the circle).

I hope this doesn't seem too complicated. It is a help when looking at any country or region of the world to size up the situation by making a rough estimate of the number of people in each of these five categories which the diagram in Figure 3 gives us: First, there are the committed Christians (shaded area) who are the only active agents you can count on to do the work. Next there are the four kinds of people who are not

committed Christians and who are either at a 0, 1, 2, or 3 cultural distance away from the committed Christians. Following this scheme, you can divide the people in a small town into these five categories. Or you can make estimates of the number of people in these five categories for a whole country. This seems to be helpful to size up the task.

I have done this by way of example in the diagrams in Figure 4. The first three diagrams are for three different sections of the non-Western world, where from left to right there is a progressively greater number of committed Christians. (In these diagrams I have not distinguished between the E-2 and E-3 areas because they are both cross-cultural evangelism and therefore usually require founding new churches.) The fourth diagram — the Western World — shows the close comparison between the South Pacific and Western World. In both cases a high proportion of the people are at least nominal Christians, and this means the need for cross-cultural evangelism internal to the regions may not seem so important to people in these areas.

Figure 4.



On the other hand, India and Nigeria are more typical of all the rest of the world, and that is why cross-cultural evangelism is of the highest priority in the non-Western world. Let me repeat that although there are a lot of Christians in India, this must not obscure the fact that most of the people in India are at a *cross-cultural* distance from any Christian congregation whatsoever.

In Figures 5 and 6, unlike in the table in Figure 1, we have divided the total world population first into Western and non-Western spheres. In Figure 5 you'll notice the statistics from the first column of the earlier table, where the Western world is divided between Christian and non-Christian — 965 million Christians and 327 million non-Christians. Note that the 10,000 missionaries working in the Western world (mainly Europe, North America, Latin America) are focusing almost all of their efforts on the nominal Christian sphere while only a fairly small percentage, according to my estimates, are really concentrating on people who do not consider themselves Christians (E-1, E-2, and E-3). This is not surprising, because the majority of Westerners are nominal Christians. Things are very different in the non-Western world, as we see in Figure 6. There for simplicity we have divided all the non-Christians into four groups — Chinese, Muslim, Hindu and "other." The bottom three layers represent three virtually untouched blocs of humanity, amounting to 1993 million people.

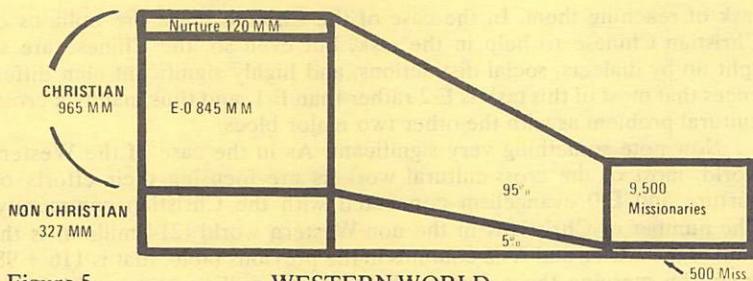


Figure 5 WESTERN WORLD

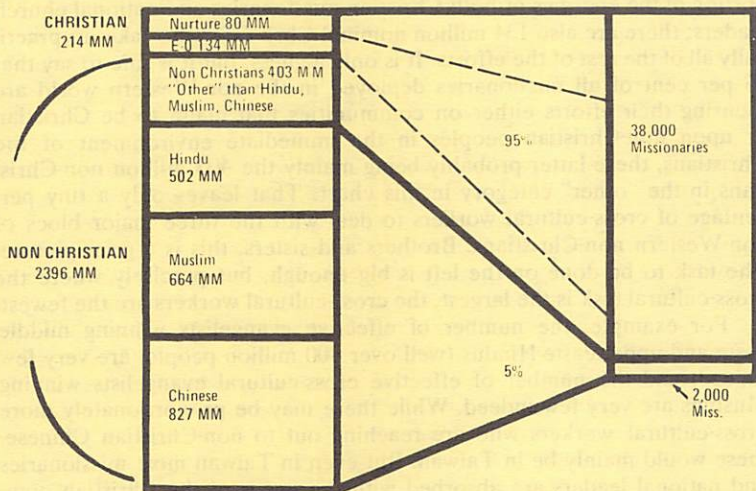


Figure 6 NON-WESTERN WORLD

Let us think prayerfully for a moment about these three groups. A few minutes ago we noted that there are roughly one million non-Christians in the world for each participant here. If our Congress participants consisted of people whose gifts and calling were focused proportionately on all non-Christians in the world, would we not have to have here one participant for each million in each of these groups? This means we would have to have 502 people here specializing on reaching the 502 million non-Christian Hindus. These would have to be cross-cultural specialists, on the whole. We would also have to have 664 people here specializing on reaching the 664 million Muslims. They too would have to be almost entirely cross-cultural specialists, since only tiny numbers of Muslims can be won by local Christians living in their areas who try to reach them by ordinary evangelism. (Parenthetically, let me observe that the Muslim group, which is already immense, is growing at a biological rate almost double that of the Chinese, and that if present rates continue, there will be more Muslims than Chinese within about ten years.) Moving on to the Chinese, proportionately to represent the 827 million non-Christian Chinese would require at this Congress 827 people specializing on the

task of reaching them. In the case of the Chinese there are millions of Christian Chinese to help in the task, but even so, the Chinese are so split up by dialects, social distinctions, and highly significant clan differences that most of this task is E-2 rather than E-1, and thus mainly a cross-cultural problem as with the other two major blocs.

Now note something very significant. As in the case of the Western world, most of the cross-cultural workers are focusing their efforts on nurture and E-0 evangelism connected with the Christian community. The number of Christians in the non-Western world (214 million) is the sum of the Africa and Asia columns in the previous table, that is 116 + 98. Again by merging the columns, there are 80 million committed Christians in the non-Western world, whose nurture soaks up a very large proportion of the energies of both Christian missionaries and national church leaders; there are also 134 million nominal Christians who take up practically all of the rest of the efforts. It is only a guess, but it is safe to say that 95 per cent of all missionaries deployed in the non-Western world are focusing their efforts either on communities that claim to be Christian or upon non-Christian peoples in the immediate environment of the Christians, these latter probably being mainly the 403 million non-Christians in the "other" category in this chart. That leaves only a tiny percentage of cross-cultural workers to deal with the three major blocs of non-Western non-Christians. Brothers and sisters, this is a grim picture. The task to be done on the left is big enough, but precisely where the cross-cultural task is the largest, the cross-cultural workers are the fewest.

For example, the number of effective evangelists winning middle caste and upper caste Hindus (well over 400 million people) are very few indeed, and the number of effective cross-cultural evangelists winning Muslims are very few indeed. While there may be proportionately more cross-cultural workers who are reaching out to non-Christian Chinese, these would mainly be in Taiwan. But even in Taiwan most missionaries and national leaders are absorbed with the needs of the Christian community. This is not to begrudge the "interchurch" exchange of E-3 workers. *The danger is that we may easily deceive ourselves concerning the proportionate weight of personnel that is going to the evangelism of non-Christians.* This is so important to understand that we must use an extended illustration of this whole matter of the statistical scope of the task of cross-cultural evangelism. Since I have already said a good deal in my original paper about Pakistan, let me build on that situation.

The rough proportions in Pakistan are similar to the diagram in Figure 4 for India. In Pakistan there are proportionately fewer Christians than in India, but they number well over one-half million (out of 70 million). The Christian community today is the product of a great people movement and spiritual revival over a half-century ago, but there are very few people living today who were brought to Christ in that movement, and the churches of Pakistan by now have a sizeable proportion of their own members who need to be won by E-0 evangelism to personal spiritual obedience to Christ. The really surprising thing is why the E-1 sphere is so small. A country of 70 million people where there are 500,000 Christians does not on the face of it seem likely to be a place where near-neighbor evangelism would have relatively small significance. Why can't the 500,000 Christians just reach out to their near neighbors and win them to

Christ? This is the crucial question. The answer is that 99 per cent of the Christians have a Hindu (not Muslim) cultural background, whereas 97 per cent of the non-Christians in Pakistan are Muslim. In the north you have scattered communities of Christians (just as in India, most Christians are in separated, isolated areas, almost like ghettos), but their *physical* separation from so many of their countrymen does not remotely approach the significance of their *cultural* isolation.

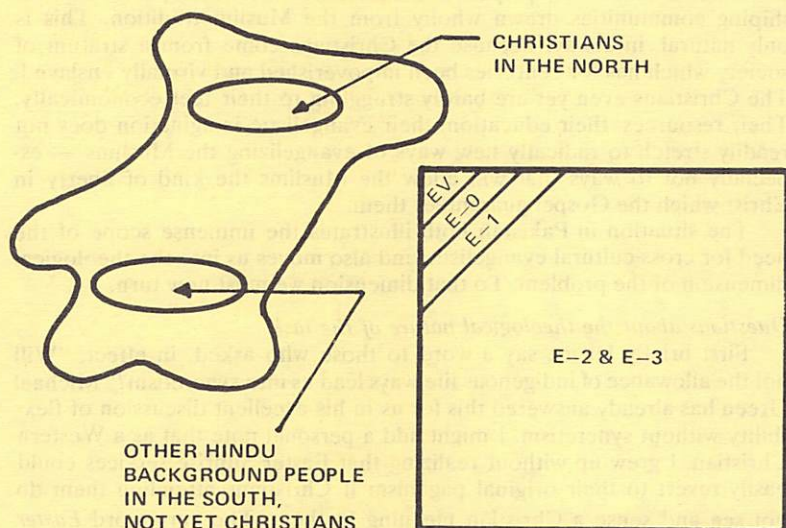


Figure 7. PAKISTAN

Thus, from the beginning of the revival movement in the north over fifty years ago until the present time, almost never has a Muslim joined a Christian church, while hundreds of thousands of former Hindus have become Christians. Although the church in Pakistan has a large E-0 population of nominal Christians, it is continuing to win some remaining Hindus to Christ through E-1 evangelism. On this basis, how soon will the church run out of Hindus to convert? In the northern part of the country, where most of the Christians are, practically all of the non-Muslim people of Pakistan are already at least nominally Christian. Curiously, there are almost a million people of Hindu background yet to win, but they are in the South, hundreds of miles from the main body of Christians. While it would be relatively simple for these Christians to do evangelism in the South (only a geographical distance away), the Christians are very, very distant from their Muslim neighbors. Why? Because there is a very pronounced cultural distance between the cultural tradition represented by the church and the cultural tradition represented by the Muslims.

Let us be more specific. Both Muslims and the (Hindu-background) Christians in the North speak Urdu. But they don't speak exactly the same kind of Urdu. A Muslim can tell either by listening or by reading that the religious language of the Christians comes from the originally Hindu minority in his country, and he has monumental prejudices about this

difference. The Christians, on the other hand, while they don't hate the Muslims, don't feel it is necessary to make a special translation of the New Testament into the religious language of the Urdu-speaking Muslims, even though there are more than 30 million Urdu-speaking Muslims alone! Feelings of suspicion between the two communities are so great that an occasional Muslim convert does not feel at home in any of the Christian congregations. Christians have not yet made an effective effort nor even drawn up speculative plans for the development of worshiping communities drawn wholly from the Muslim tradition. This is only natural, in a way, because the Christians come from a stratum of society which has for centuries been impoverished and virtually enslaved. The Christians even yet are barely struggling to their feet economically. Their resources, their education, their evangelistic imagination does not readily stretch to radically new ways of evangelizing the Muslims — especially not to ways that will allow the Muslims the kind of liberty in Christ which the Gospel guarantees them.

The situation in Pakistan both illustrates the immense scope of the need for cross-cultural evangelism, and also moves us into the theological dimension of the problem. To that dimension we must now turn.

Questions about the theological nature of the task

First briefly let me say a word to those who asked, in effect, "Will not the allowance of indigenous life ways lead us into syncretism?" Michael Green has already answered this for us in his excellent discussion of flexibility without syncretism. I might add a personal note that as a Western Christian, I grew up without realizing that Easter Sunrise services could easily revert to their original paganism if Christians attending them do not see and sense a Christian meaning in them. The very word *Easter* comes from a Teutonic spring goddess of fertility called *Eostre*. The same is true of Christmas. We have all fought to maintain Christ in Christmas, since Christmas is also originally a pagan holiday that was taken over by the early church. (Romans gave gifts to each other on December 25th long before Jesus was born, and for that matter, Jesus may have been born in June, not in December.) Briefly, in employing pagan words and customs, we must be careful to make sure that the whole counsel of God is constantly taught and understood.

The main theological question, raised more often than any other, is so profound that I feel I must devote my remaining time to it. The question was stated in many ways in your response papers, but is basically this: "Will not our unity in Christ be destroyed if we follow a concept of cross-cultural evangelization which is willing to set up separate churches for different cultural groups within the same geographical area?" It is only with humble dependence upon the Holy Spirit to honor the Word of God above the secular influences to which we all are subject that I dare to proceed with a perspective which I myself could not understand nor accept until several years ago. I was brought up in the United States, where for many people integration is almost like a civil religion, where such people almost automatically assume that eventually everyone will speak English and really shouldn't speak any other language. To me cultural diversity between countries was a nuisance, but cultural diversity within a country was simply an evil to be overcome. I had no thought of excluding anyone from *any* church, (and I still do not), but I did uncon-

sciously assume that the best thing that could happen to Black, White, Chicano, etc., was that they all would eventually come to the White, Anglo-Saxon, Protestant church and learn to do things the way that I felt was most proper.

Following this kind of American culture-Christianity, many missionaries have assumed that there ought to be just one national church in a country — even if this means none at all for certain sub-groups? Such missionaries, in all earnestness, have assumed that the denominational pluralism in their own home country is simply a sin to be avoided. They have assumed that *Southern* Baptists aren't necessary in *Northern* India, even though, as a matter of fact, in Boston today most of the Anglo churches have been sitting around waiting for the Arabs and the Japanese to come to their churches, and it has taken Southern Baptists to go into Northern United States and plan Arab churches, and Japanese churches, and Portuguese churches, and Greek churches, and Polish churches, right under the nose of hundreds of good-willed Anglo churches which have been patiently waiting for these people to assimilate to the Anglo way of life. With one or two fine exceptions, the Anglo churches, with all their evangelistic zeal, simply did not have the insight to do this kind of E-2 and E-3 evangelism.

For my own part, after many years of struggling with this question, I am now no less concerned than before about the unity and fellowship of the Christian movement across all ethnic and cultural lines, but I realize now that Christian unity cannot be healthy if it infringes upon Christian liberty. In terms of evangelism, we must ask whether the attempt to extend, for example in Pakistan, an external form into the Muslim culture is more important than making the Gospel clear to such peoples within their own culture. Can we not condition our desire for uniformity by an even greater desire for effective preaching of the Gospel? I personally have come to believe that unity does not have to require uniformity, and I believe that there must be such a thing as healthy diversity in human society and in the *Christian world church*. I see the world church as the gathering together of a great symphony orchestra where we don't make every new person coming in play a violin in order to fit in with the rest. We invite the people to come in to play the same score — the Word of God — but to play their own instruments, and in this way there will issue forth a heavenly sound that will grow in the splendor and glory of God as each new instrument is added.

But some of you have said, "OK, if that is what you mean, what about the Apostle Paul? Did he set up separate congregations for masters and slaves?" I really don't know. I don't think so. But that does not mean that didn't happen. In a recent monograph by Paul Minear entitled *The Obedience of Faith*, the author suggests that in Rome there were probably five separate congregations of Christians, who numbered a total 3000, and that Paul's letter to the Romans was written actually to a cluster of churches in the city of Rome. He also suggests that these churches were very different from each other, some being composed almost entirely of Jewish Christians, and others (the majority) almost entirely of Gentile Christians. "Instead of visualizing a single Christian congregation, therefore, we should constantly reckon with the probability that within the urban area were to be found forms of Christian community which were as diverse, and probably also as alien, as the churches of Galatia and those

of Judea." But whatever the case in Rome, Paul in his travels was usually dealing with the phenomenon of house churches, where whole households, masters and slaves, quite likely worshiped together. We cannot believe he ever separated people. However, we do know that he was willing to adopt in different places a radically different approach, as he put it, "for those under the law and for those not under the law." When, for example, he established an apparently non-Jewish congregation among the Galatians, it was obviously different, perhaps radically different from that of the Jewish congregations elsewhere. We know this because Jewish Christians followed Paul to the Galatians and tried to make them conform to the Jewish Christian pattern. Galatia is a clear case where it was impossible for Paul to submit simultaneously both to the provisions of the Jewish Christian way of life and at the same time to the patterns of an evidently Greek (or perhaps Celtic) congregation.

Paul's letter to the Galatians, furthermore, shows us how determined he was to allow the Galatian Christians to follow a different Christian life-style. Thus while we do not have any record of his forcing people to meet separately, we do encounter all of Paul's holy boldness set in opposition to anyone who would try to *preserve a single normative pattern* of Christian life through a cultural imperialism that would *prevent* people from employing their own language and culture as a vehicle for worship and witness. Here, then, is a clear case of a man with cross-cultural evangelistic perspective doing everything within his power to guarantee liberty in Christ to converts who were different from his own social background.

This same thing is seen when Paul opposed Peter in Antioch. Peter was a Galilean Jew who was perhaps to some extent bi-cultural. He could have at least been able to understand the predominantly Greek life-style of the Antioch church. Indeed, he did seem to fit in until the moment other Jewish Christians came to the door. At this point Peter also discovered that in a given situation he had to choose between following Jewish or Greek customs. At this point he wavered. Did he lack the Spirit of God? Did he lack the love of God? Or did he fail to understand the way of God's love? Peter did not question the validity of a Greek congregation. Peter had already acknowledged this before his Jewish compatriots walked in the door. The point was that Peter was pained for others to know him as one who could shift from one community to the other. What this means to us today is quite clear. There were in fact in the New Testament period two significantly different communities of believers. Peter was regarded the apostle to the circumcision and Paul to the uncircumcision. Peter identified more easily with the Jews, and no doubt had a hard time explaining to Jews his experience at Cornelius' household, namely his discovery that Greek congregations were to be considered legitimate. Paul, on the other hand, was able to identify more closely with the Greek congregations. They were perhaps eventually his primary missionary target, even though in a given locality he always began with the Jews.

One clue for today is the fact that where Paul found some Christians to be overscrupulous about certain foods, he counseled people in those situations to abide by the stricter sensibilities of the majority. However, it is always difficult to make exact parallels to a modern situation. The

New Testament situation would compare more easily to modern India today were it the case that the only Christians in India were Brahmins (and other members of the middle castes) with their highly restrictive diet. Then we would envision Brahmin Christians finding it hard to allow the less restrictive meat-eating groups to become Christian; but the actual situation is very nearly the reverse. In India today it is those who eat meat who are Christians, and the problem is how to apply Paul's missionary strategy to this situation. In regard to food restrictions, it is as though the Brahmins are "under the law," not the present Christians. In this situation can we imagine Paul saying, "To those under the law I will go as under the law if by all means I may win some"? Can we hear him say as an E-2 or E-3 evangelist, "If meat makes my brother offended, I will eat no meat"? Can we hear him defending worshiping groups among the Brahmins against the suggestion or expectation that they should change their diet or join congregations of very different life-style in order to be accepted as Christians? Against the accusation that he was dividing the church of Christ, can we hear Paul insist that "in Christ there is neither Jew nor Greek, low caste nor high caste"? Is this not the actual force of his oft-repeated statement that these different kinds of people, following their different cultural patterns, are all equally acceptable to God? Was he really announcing a policy of local integration, or was he insisting on the equality of diversity?

Note very carefully that this perspective does not enforce (nor even allow) a policy of segregation, nor any kind of ranking of Christians in first- and second-class categories. It rather guarantees equal acceptability of different traditions. It is a clear-cut apostolic policy against forcing Christians of one life-style to be proselytized to the cultural patterns of another. This is not a peripheral matter in the New Testament. True circumcision is of the heart. True baptism is of the heart. It is a matter of faith, not works, or customs, or rites. In Christ there is freedom and liberty in this regard — people must be free either to retain or abandon their native language and life-style. Paul would not allow anyone to glory either in circumcision or in uncircumcision. He was absolutely impartial. He was also widely misunderstood. Paul's problem ultimately was in gaining acceptance by the Jews, and it was Asian Jews, possibly Christians, who pointed him out in the temple and thus finally caused his martyrdom for his belief in the separate liberty of the Greek Christian tradition. Let no one who seeks to be a missionary in the tradition of the Apostle Paul expect that working between two cultures will be easy to do. But he can take heart in the fact that the hazards of the profession are more than justified by the urgent missionary purposes of the cross-cultural evangelist.

If, for example, a cross-cultural evangelist encourages members of a Brahmin family to begin worship services in their own home, does he insist that they invite people from across town to their very first meeting? On the other hand, any Brahmin who becomes a Christian and who begins to understand the Bible will soon realize, whether it was entirely clear before or not, that he now belongs to a world family within which there are many tribes and tongues — indeed, according to the Book of Revelation (Rev. 7:9), this kind of diversity will continue right down to the end of time. When the cross-cultural evangelist allows the development of a Brahmin congregation, he is not thereby proposing Brahmin

segregation from the world church. He is not suggesting that the Brahmin Christians shun other Christians, but that Brahmins be included within the world church. He is merely affirming their liberty in Christ to retain those elements of their life-style that are not inimical to the Gospel of Christ. He is not increasing their alienation. He is giving them the Word of God which is the passkey to the ultimate elimination of all manner of prejudices, and is already signing them into a world Christian family which embraces all peoples, tribes and tongues as equals.

Now, I regret that this subject is so delicate, and I would not embark upon it if it were not so urgently significant for the practical evangelistic strategies which we must have if we are going to win the world for Christ. I would not even bring it up. Yet I must say I believe this issue is the most important single issue in evangelism today.

Many people asked me what I meant by the strategic value of the establishment of youth churches. It is important to realize the youth situation is highly parallel to the situation we have just discussed. It is by no means a case where we are suggesting that young people not be allowed in adult services. We are not suggesting segregation of the youth. Youth churches are not ends, but means. We are not abandoning the thought that young people and older people should often be in the same service together. We are merely insisting, with what I pray is apostolic intuition, that young people have the freedom in Christ to meet together by themselves if they choose to, and *especially if this allows them to attract other young people who would likely not come to Christ in an age-integrated service.*

I will, however, freely admit that this strategy may unintentionally make it appear that we are setting aside goals of unity for goals of evangelism. This in fact is not the case. It is quite the opposite: we are willing to do evangelism in the highly divided world in which we live, believing wholeheartedly that in the long run the working of the Holy Spirit through true evangelism is the only way to melt down the high walls of prejudice and thus produce unity where none at all existed before.

Some have warned that this kind of culturally sensitive evangelism will lead to ghetto churches. I suggest rather that it will go to ghetto situations and eventually bring those isolated people into contact with others in a rewarding and enriching way. Where there are already ghetto churches all around the world that are isolated from their neighbors, this may not be the fault of the original evangelists, but of the nurture in succeeding years. If the Gospel begins in a ghetto, it should not end there. Rival street gangs may more easily be brought together by being brought to Christ separately. The initial evangelist does not add a ghetto to the church; he takes the church to the ghetto. People from that ghetto are then automatically present at the next city-wide Christian meeting. The efforts of the Billy Graham Crusades must be seen in this light not as an optional, but as an essential, beautiful, and permanent part of God's ultimate uniting strategy. There must, in fact, be annual city-wide and regional Christian festivals whether or not Billy Graham can personally be there. There must be many other contacts between Christians of all kinds between such annual meetings. Yet we must yield to the fact that God allows the family and the local congregation and even whole denominations to speak different languages and to express their faith in different

linguistic and cultural traditions. But woe to such self-determining Christians if this liberty in Christ becomes understood as a basis for superiority or isolation. Why? Because, as Paul said, "In Christ there is neither Greek nor Jew, nor Barbarian, nor Scythian, nor bond nor free, nor male nor female."

It is a curious fact that the kind of culturally sensitive evangelism I have been talking about has always been acceptable wherever people are geographically isolated. No one minds if Japanese Christians gather by themselves in Tokyo, or Spanish-speaking Christians gather by themselves in Mexico, or Chinese-speaking Christians gather by themselves in Hong Kong. But there is considerable confusion in many people's minds as to whether Japanese, Spanish and Chinese Christians should be allowed or encouraged to gather by themselves in Los Angeles. Very specifically, is it good evangelistic strategy to found separate congregations in Los Angeles in order to attract such people? Do Cantonese-speaking non-Christians need a Cantonese-speaking congregation to attract them to Christian faith and fellowship? If you talk to different people, you will get different answers. In my opinion, this question about evangelistic strategy in the forming of separate congregations must be considered an area of Christian liberty, and is to be decided purely on the basis of whether or not it allows the Gospel to be presented effectively to more people — that is, whether it is evangelistically strategic. Some go as far as granting separate *language* congregations, but hesitate when the differences between people are social and non-linguistic. Somehow they feel that people may be excused for meeting separately if their language is different, but that the Gospel urges us to ignore all other cultural differences. Many people are literally outraged at the thought that a local congregation would deliberately seek to attract people of a certain social level. And yet, while no one should be excluded from any church under any circumstances, it is a fact that where people can choose their church associations voluntarily, they tend to sort themselves out according to their own way of life pretty consistently. But this absolutely must be their own free choice. We are never suggesting an enforced segregation. Granting that we have this rich diversity, let us foster unity and fellowship between *congregations* just as we now do between *families* rather than to teach everyone to worship like Anglo-Americans. Let us glory in the fact that the *world* Christian family now already includes representatives of more different languages and cultures than any other organization or movement in human history. Americans may be baffled and perplexed by world diversity. God is not. Let us glory in the fact that God has allowed different life-styles to exist in different forms, and that this flexibility has been exercised throughout history. Let us never be content with mere isolation, but let us everlastingly emphasize that the great richness of our Christian tradition can only be realized as these differing life ways maintain creative contact. But let us be cautious about hastening to uniformity. If the whole world church could be gathered into a single congregation, Sunday after Sunday, there would eventually and inevitably be a loss of a great deal of the rich diversity of the present Christian traditions. Does God want this? Do we want this?

Jesus *died* for these people around the world. He did not die to preserve our Western way of life. He did not die to make Muslims stop pray-

ing five times a day. He did not die to make Brahmins eat meat. Can't you hear Paul the Evangelist saying we must go to these people within the systems in which they operate? True, this is the cry of a cross-cultural evangelist, not a pastor. We can't make every local church fit the pattern of every other local church. But we must have radically new efforts of cross-cultural evangelism in order to effectively witness to 2387 million people, and we cannot believe that we can continue virtually to ignore this highest priority.



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