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[11](#)) in describing the emptying of Christ when He became Man. This is not the place for the theological and doctrinal complexities of the Incarnation. Suffice it to say, when Christ came to earth, He somehow mysteriously limited Himself as God, yet fully remained God, while becoming fully human.

In a way, God simplified Himself. Yet this, as with so many simplicities, is the greater mystery. For all that the Incarnation means to the salvation of human kind, it means significant things for human creativity as well.

An analogy may help. If, before becoming man, Christ could be likened to an oratorio, in His Incarnation He became a hymn tune. But in this, He lost nothing of His eternal character and excellence. Becoming a hymn tune was not a compromise, a dilution, or a weakening. Nor did it mean that He refuted His being an oratorio. Rather, becoming a hymn tune was a uniqueness in itself, with its own wholeness and usefulness. It is in this way that we can once again say that a hymn tune is not a skeletal oratorio. Now we can say that it is an emptied oratorio.

There is a difference between putting something aside and losing it. Christ showed us this difference and the true artist—may I now say the servant-artist—must likewise learn this well. He must come to [p. 168](#) experience the dignity, worth and eventual joy of putting things aside, of emptying himself and taking the form of a servant. He must be able to move from the oratorio to the hymn tune, from the drama to the couplet, with grace, elegance, power, and imagination.

To lay aside is still to remain the same, as long as one's integrity, imagination and sense of excellence are at hand. The lessons of simplicity and complexity, worth and usefulness, variety and unity, familiarity and strangeness, are corollary to the lesson of laying aside. The servant-artist proceeding this way has finally learned artistic wisdom. He has acquired the gift of functional integrity the ability to maintain excellence, high purpose and artfulness in the fulfilment of any creative task in any context to which he may be called.

Which is the greater mystery, that Christ is God or that He could lower Himself while remaining God? Likewise, which is the greater mystery, that man is artistically creative or that in his creativity he may empty himself and still remain artistic? A servant-artist has his reward, just as Christ has His. Once the hymn tune has been written, the right to do another oratorio has been earned.

Harold M. Best is the Dean of Wheaton Conservatory of Music, Wheaton College, Wheaton, U.S.A. [p. 169](#)

Evangelicals, Evangelism and Theology

A Missiological Assessment of the Lausanne Movement

Peter Beyerhaus

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(Beyerhaus, an evangelical thinker of world repute, belongs to that group of theologians who have fought for the defence of the classical understanding of mission in modern times and needs no introduction to the readers of ERT. He has several definitive works on the theology of mission to his credit, in English as well as in other European languages, in addition to numerous articles and addresses in theological journals and consultations. The following article presented in Leuven, Belgium last June is a fine and incisive assessment of Lausanne Movement—a sister movement of WEF—and has been acceptable to the LCWE leaders. The final part of this paper, 'New tasks and theological challenges facing the Evangelical Movement'—emphasizing the urgent need for faithful education for mission, the generation shift in the international evangelical movements, mission amidst the exponential growth of urbanisation—calls for immediate and drastic decisions by, and united effort of, evangelical leaders. At no time have evangelicals needed one another more. As such this paper makes a good example of doing theology at international/ecumenical level.)
—Ed.

In July 1974 at Lausanne took place a historical International Congress on World Evangelization which brought together 2,700 spokesmen of evangelical churches. Mission agencies and colleges from 150 countries in order to reconsider the Great Commission of Jesus Christ as a still unfinished task. The watch word therefore was 'Let The Earth Hear His Voice'.

Ours is a century of many Christian world conferences, assemblies, consultations and congresses, and it is hard to keep pace with all of them or to simply register their occurrence. Some Christians rightfully ask how many of them are worth all the investment of time, finance and manpower, if we measure them by their results in the life and ministry of the churches in the six continents, which thereby are often deprived of the services of their chosen leaders. But Lausanne was not just another conference among many others: it made a profound p. 170 impact upon the thinking and acting of its participants and through them as multipliers of the life of the evangelical community at large, probably even of other Christian bodies who do not call themselves evangelical. Moreover, the stimulus of the Lausanne Congress is still felt in many places. One could even argue that its full and lasting impact will only be realized and evaluated in the future, when the Lausanne Movement, as it now is called, will have grasped the deeper implications of its mandate and communicated them to the Church at large.

I. LAUSANNE AS A DECISIVE BREAKTHROUGH IN THE HISTORY OF EVANGELICALISM

Let me start with a sobering reflection: every historian knows that a new age is never born through one single event. Everything for which the Lausanne Movement has come to be known was not initiated there. It can, in fact, be argued whether Lausanne as such has given birth to any single concept or movement at all. Most of the ideas expounded at ICoWE had already been suggested by their proponents or others, and this was the main reason why they were invited to address the Assembly. That which made Lausanne '74 a unique event was that small rivers, some of which had been rather unnoted before, became confluent, and by their union formed one mighty stream, which was deep enough to carry a fleet of evangelistic fisherboats, and which had water enough spiritually to fertilize the dried soil of latter 20th century christendom.

Let us remember that evangelicals in the first half of this century found themselves in a rather awkward position. Much of the spirit of the Great Revival which had given birth to the movement in the 18th and 19th centuries had cooled down. Divided among

themselves by many theological dissensions, group rivalries and their own notorious individualism, their persuasions were contested strongly by liberal thought in the main line churches and by the famous institutions of academic learning that once had been founded by evangelicals, but later taken over by liberal theologians. Evangelicals found themselves in a rather ghetto-like situation of self-defence.

But since the Second World War, the international missionary movement, initiated in Edinburgh in 1910 and co-ordinated by the International Missionary Council, became the WCC's Commission and Department of World Mission and Evangelization after New Delhi in 1961. This commission lost more and more of its original impetus and sense of biblical direction. Words like 'crisis in mission' or 'frustration p. 171 of missionaries' became notorious for the situation between 1950 and 1970, a development which reached its nadir at what Donald McGavran called the 'betrayal of the 2 Billion', i.e. the neglect of the unevangelized pagan masses at Uppsala in 1968 and the call for a moratorium of western missions at the 8th World Missionary Conference at Bangkok in 1973.

Meanwhile a new resurgence of evangelistic zeal had captured evangelical groups especially in the U.S.A., bringing about what Pierce Beaver called the second missionary movement. Evangelical leaders in mission and evangelism started to convocate their own national and regional congresses on mission and evangelism and to articulate their indispensable principles of missionary theology. I will just mention the Wheaton Congress in 1966, the first World Congress on Evangelism in Berlin in 1966, convened by Carl Henry, Billy Graham and their friends, and the world-wide catalytic effect of the Frankfurt Declaration on the Fundamental Crisis of Christian Mission in March, 1970.—When, through several regional congresses on evangelism, the movement had grown sufficiently, Billy Graham confidently voiced his persuasion that the time had now come for the evangelicals to take the lead in calling the churches to a re-thinking of their position and to new vigorous evangelistic ventures. 'We stand on the threshold of a new era', he stated. 'Never before have the opportunities been so great. I believe that God will ... direct our strategy toward total world evangelization in our time.' The platform from which this call was to be voiced was the Plenary Hall of the Palais de Beaulieu, that magnificent modern congress centre at Lausanne where the assembly took place.

The achievements of ICoWE can be summarized in four major points:

Firstly, Lausanne served as a rallying point to *unite* the great majority of evangelical mission agencies to jointly pray and think about their common evangelistic calling. A new willingness to overcome petty dissensions and to co-operate was born, resulting in the formation of the Lausanne Committee for World Evangelization the following year, 1975, in Mexico City. This group of 50 men and women was going to take the lead in the follow-up work of the congress and keep its impetus alive.

Secondly, a new vision of the unfinished task of global evangelism was opened up before the spiritual eyes of the participants. The cry of the 2.7 billion people who never had been confronted effectively with the invitation of the saving gospel of Jesus Christ was the direct answer to the defeatism voiced in many ecumenical quarters that the age of missions had passed and that it would be better for missionaries to p. 172 return home to look after their own churches' domestic business. Exciting testimonies of unprecedented opportunities to offer the gospel to receptive populations shattered the pessimistic notion that mankind in two-thirds of the world was turning a deaf ear to a religion which was irreparably stung with the notion of Western colonialism. This vision was answered by a new spirit of dedication, in which 2,000 participants pledged themselves 'into a covenant with God and with each other to pray, to plan and to work together for the evangelization of the whole world'.

Thirdly, Lausanne's evangelistic zeal was not just an outburst of sentimental enthusiasm where sounding promises were made without regard for the real conditions of their practical implementation. One of the key concepts at Lausanne was the call for working out realistic and specific methods of evangelism within the wider framework of a universal strategy of winning people out of every nation for Jesus Christ. Strategists amongst missiologists like Ralph Winter and Ed Dayton made their first international appearance at Lausanne and were soon going to take the lead in the entire follow-up programme. The demanding cry: 'It *must* be done' was matched by the confident assurance: 'It *can* be done!' What was meant was the virtual completion of world evangelization before the end of this century. Without literally repeating the battle cry of the old Student Voluntary Movement, the strategies that evolved from Lausanne definitely aimed at its final implementation: the evangelization of the world in this generation.

The *fourth* merit of Lausanne '74 was the new grounding of our evangelistic activities on a firm theological foundation, in faithful continuity with the doctrinal stance of our predecessors in the classical missionary movement. As Billy Graham pointed out in his opening message, loss of these biblical persuasions was the greatest single cause of the gradual disorientation and fatigue of the international missionary movement in the decades that followed the historic Edinburgh Conference and the formation of the International Missionary Council in 1921. The great dilemma of the IMC had been that it never possessed a clear cut theological basis to protect it from doctrinal deviation.

The evangelical leaders who sponsored Lausanne were all in agreement: they wanted the congress to frame a biblical declaration on world evangelism. The result which we know was the Lausanne Covenant which combined in its 15 paragraphs such a doctrinal affirmation with a practical guidance for missionary action in our changed situation and with a pledge of the participants to dedicate their lives to the unfinished task. [p. 173](#)

Time does not allow me to unfold the entire theology of evangelism as enshrined in the Lausanne Covenant. Let me instead point out what I believe to be the most crucial re-affirmations of truly evangelical convictions about evangelism:

1). The Lausanne Covenant affirmed the divine inspiration, truthfulness and authority of the Bible as the only infallible rule of faith and practice in Christian mission work. Evangelicals look for their missionary instruction not on the world's agenda, nor do they listen to people claiming to interpret God's message to us prophetically through revolutionary events in secular history. Rather they try to be faithful to Christ's own gospel and commission as it is recorded in this precious book.

2). The salvation which Christians are to announce and even to mediate through evangelism was described in authentic soteriological terms as the forgiveness of sins through Jesus Christ and the reception of the liberating gift of the Holy Spirit. This was a direct answer to the WCC's Bangkok Conference in 1973, which under its theme of 'Salvation Today' tried to suggest that the humanization of the social and political order was the way in which people in our time experience the redemptive work of God and in which the church as well, participating in God's mission, should organize its missionary activities. Lausanne definitely pleaded for a combination of evangelistic proclamation and social involvement in mission, but it maintained emphatically the priority of evangelism in the Church's total mission (§ 6).

3). The final central insight of Lausanne was the affirmation of the eschatological nature of world evangelism. Ever since the time of the apostles, missionaries have been invigorated greatly in the vision that this gospel of Jesus must be proclaimed their zeal by in the whole word as a witness to all nations before the end would come with the glorious return of the Lord Jesus to set up his kingdom in power ([Matt. 24:14](#)). The loss of this eschatological incentive in exchange for evolutionary or revolutionary concepts of world

history was again one of the most fatal causes for the pitfall of the conciliar missionary movement which replaced the biblical prophecies of the kingdom by political or pan-religious utopias.

I am especially convinced that the re-affirmation of these three basic tenets—the revelatory, the soteriological and the eschatological affirmations—are contributing much to the vigorous line of action which the evangelical mission movement has been taking ever since Lausanne 1974; but I am also convinced that the future of the evangelical movement will entirely depend on the vigilance of its [p.174](#) leaders to defend this position against new temptations, from which evangelicals, too, will not be exempted.

II. THE EVOLVEMENT OF THE NEW MOVEMENT FOR WORLD EVANGELIZATION SINCE LAUSANNE 1974

The development of the World Evangelistic Movement that followed the Lausanne event has been a remarkable one. The message of the congress was received attentively in many countries, and it has given orientation and dynamic impulses. Mission societies, churches and individual Christians received new vision and encouragement. Congresses for word evangelization were convened according to the Lausanne pattern on national and regional levels. The Lausanne Committee for World Evangelization (LCWE) has attempted to give guidance and stimulus to these ventures. At the same time, it has resisted the temptation to build up a new, ecclesiastical superstructure in analogy to the World Council of Churches which is evolving in such a direction. It has not even been possible to merge the Lausanne Movement with the World Evangelical Fellowship. To most evangelicals it does not seem desirable to create a monopoly for one single evangelical body, which would be the umbrella for all evangelical organizations and activities, for this is not at all congenial to the evangelical spirit.

Rather, the LCWE has been endeavouring to develop a multifaceted ministry, whereby the Committee acts like the head of a flying arrow—a comparison that struck me when, in January, 1983, we held our annual meeting in the headquarters of Campus Crusade for Christ at Arrowhead Springs. Leighton Ford, the present chairman of the LCWE, expressed it like this: 'Lausanne has become more than a place, an event, or a committee. It has become the symbol of a movement of likeminded believers who long to see the day when the Gospel will be preached to the whole world and the Lord will return.' The Lausanne Movement is serving evangelicals world-wide as an instrument of spiritual motivation, which has helped them to follow a clear trajectory. This trajectory has been marked by a number of significant events, which followed each other in a logical and consistent sequence. I am referring to the various consultations—some of which were cost-sponsored by the World Evangelical Fellowship—which were held to implement or to explore the mandate of Lausanne 1974.

1). Missionary strategy has been and is still ranking very high. This was not accidental. The great conciliar-evangelical debate on mission was opened in 1965 by an article that appeared in the July issue of the [p. 175](#) International Review of Missions under the heading: 'Wrong Strategy—the Real Crisis in Missions'. According to Donald McGavran, the author, the only adequate mission strategy aims at discipling receptive groups of people and organizing them into self-propagating, rapidly growing indigenous churches. Under the directorship of Ralph Winter, Peter Wagner and Ed Dayton, a strategy has been developed which steadily focuses on global dimensions. Their guiding motive is the idea of constantly crossing cultural frontiers. Like St. Paul, evangelicals want to break new ground and preach the Gospel to people who have never been reached before. But unlike St. Paul, they now have access to scientific tools like communication methods, statistics

and system analysis, which they readily make use of. In this way, new instruments are placed at the disposal of evangelical missionaries. Each year, tables are published which enlist such people groups as have only recently been identified as lacking the knowledge of the Gospel. *Country Profiles* indicates the numerical strength of Christianity in different countries as well as the mission agencies which are at work there.

A new *terminology* has been introduced into the language of evangelical missionaries. We now speak of E1, E2 and E3 types of evangelism, indicating thereby the cultural gap which has to be crossed by missionaries to reach the respective groups. We use expressions like 'hidden peoples' or 'homogeneous units'. This serves to divide up the unevangelized billions into social entities of which one can get a clear perception. The Lausanne Working Group on Strategy, jointly with the Mission Advanced Research Centre (MARC), annually publishes reports on unreached peoples and also issues manuals on strategical procedures in evangelism.

All of these endeavours converged at the Consultation on World Evangelization which was held in Pattaya, Thailand, in June 1980. The Lausanne theme 'Let the Earth Hear His Voice' was complemented by the guiding question of [Romans 10:14](#): 'How shall they hear?' In response 17 mini-consultations tried to elaborate distinct strategies suitable to reach each major block of the still unevangelized mankind, such as Buddhists, African Animists or Marxists. The same concern for the unreached was also displayed by the Congress of Frontier Missions, which in commemoration of the historic first World Missionary Conference in 1910 was convened by Ralph Winter in Edinburgh in October 1980.

2). But Lausanne did not only work for missionary strategy in the technical sense. The concern of the Strategy Committee was complemented by the work of the Theological Committee under the able [p. 176](#) leadership of John Stott and later of Bishop John Reid. Both working groups were asked to co-operate as closely as possible since strategical concepts, too, have their theological premises and consequences, and they can lead to tensions and blockades even within the evangelical constituency. This was experienced for the first time at the consultation on the Homogeneous Unit Principle (HUP), which was held in the spring of 1977 in Pasadena. At Fuller Theological Seminary, the cradle of the Church Growth movement, a heated discussion was held between its supporters and critics concerning how far the HUP, if pushed as the only concern that matters, could lead to ecclesiastical segregation and thereby petrify and sanctify existing social and racial barriers, in open contradiction to St. Paul's doctrine on the Church as the body of Christ. This was the first occasion when it dawned upon the new movement for world evangelization that a sound missionary strategy could only be developed on the basis of a thorough reflexion on biblical ecclesiology, a concern which had not really come into focus in Lausanne 1974. The Pasadena Report endeavoured to arrive at a viable synthesis between the ethnic principle as a helpful method in the pioneering stage and the catholicity of the church as the goal of mission.

3). Lausanne was a global event. The leaders had successfully attempted to have representatives from all corners of the earth actively involved in the programme. In the evangelical movement since then we have been discovering the spiritual riches of churches and Christians in the Third World. One of the most important consequences was that we have realized that the traditional Western patterns of organization and working are by no means the only valid carriers of evangelization. Instead, we have gratefully accepted what God has given to us through the ministry of our fellow Christians in Asia, Africa and Latin America. When I make this point, I am referring both to the manpower and to the cultures of these continents as carriers of the Christian Gospel to their populations:

A. One of the most exciting discoveries was the emergence of Third World missionaries and mission societies as a new, vigorous potential for world evangelization. While, in 1974, the statistics had been accounting for approximately 1000 missionaries from Third World churches, the latest estimate is already 15,000! In view of the often unstable political situation on those continents, this introduction of non-western forces into the common cause is very important.

A double missiological problem arises from this: Firstly, how can these younger organizations benefit from the experiences of the older Western missionary movement and enter into a fruitful relationship with it? Secondly, how will they be able to avoid the fatal mistake of p. 177 western missionary societies and make use of their advantage of originating from such cultures which resemble those of the populations which they want to evangelize? These questions are especially a challenge to re-think theological education in the Third World and to re-adjust it to local conditions. The programme of Theological Education by Extension, which makes use of correspondence and cassette courses is already a decisive step in the right direction.

B. At the same time, Lausanne's global perspective has also led to a new discovery and evaluation of indigenous cultures, which had been unprecedented in former times. This was the cause for convening the second theological consultation of the Lausanne Movement, which in January 1978, at Willowbank, Bermuda, dealt with the theme 'Gospel and Culture'. For the first time, missiologists, church-leaders, theologians and anthropologists joined their forces in order to outline a new missionary policy sensitive to foreign cultures. We must, however, realize that a huge task still lies ahead of us, which is threatened by many snares and pitfalls. From now on the question will never disappear from our agenda: What is the relation between the eternal and unchangeable content of the Gospel and the culturally conditioned expression of the faith which it has found in the mission work of the historical churches?

4). The new awareness of the social dimension of our evangelistic task also led to a further emphasis on the theory and practice of social ethics which goes together with the ministry of proclamation. The lack of such awareness among many evangelical groups in the past—in reaction to the Social Gospel of the liberals—has burdened us with a painful handicap in some mission Fields which are ridden by socioeconomic problems. This has been the pretext for the 'radical evangelicals' to demand a complete re-evaluation and re-conception of evangelical mission work among poor populations. The challenge was taken up by two consultations. The first one was held in 1980 in Hoddesdon to explore the implication of the Lausanne Covenant's call (§ 9) for a 'simple life style' in world evangelism; the second one took place in June 1982 in Grand Rapids, Michigan, where the Relationship between evangelism and social responsibility was treated, a problem Which according to Arthur Johnston had not been solved well enough biblically by the well-known antithetic phrases in Article 5 of the Lausanne Covenant.

While the Hoddesdon Report—on account of some ideologically infected phrases appearing in it—found a rather mixed reaction, Grand Rapids really succeeded in preventing a threatening schism between two wings of today's evangelical movement, i.e. those in p. 178 mission adamantly defending the primacy of oral proclamation and those who want socio-political concerns to rank much higher on our missionary agenda. Three terms or images were employed to express the relationship between evangelism and social action: the latter might be regarded either as *fruit*, *bridge* or as *partner* of evangelization; but in each case, in accordance with article 6 of the Lausanne Covenant, the primacy of evangelization in the church's mission of sacrificial service was dearly maintained. This was reassuring to most participants and has encouraged evangelicals

world-wide to develop mission programmes where both concerns are integrated according to the mentioned order.

It can't, however, be taken for granted that the Grand Rapids Report will be considered by all evangelicals as the final word in this matter. There can be differences of interpretation, and already some people, who feel that their concerns did not find adequate attention at the consultation, are pursuing their own means of further exploration. It is a familiar experience that conferences which are staged to produce a consensus between people of different view points may succeed in arriving at it, due to the willingness of both sides to meet each other halfway; but when the partners return to their familiar setting they will be gripped by the same old sentiments of their associates and then go back to or even strengthen those positions which they had begun to soften or modify in response to other viewpoints. Conference reports are at their best stepping stones towards a possible solution, points of reference; but only a few people will ascribe dogmatic authority to them. This observation applies to both schools of thought represented at Grand Rapids.

5). Let me conclude this second part by pointing out—last but not least—the spiritual dynamics of the evangelical movement for world evangelization which experienced its renewal in Lausanne.

The Lausanne Committee is sub-divided into four working groups, each of which plays an indispensable part in its enabling ministry. There are the two committees which we have spoken of, those for Theology and for Strategy; and there is the Committee on Communication to mediate information and new insights to the constituency. The fourth committee, which I like to count as number one, is the Intercession Advisory Group. It reminds us of the most important truth that it is not we human missionaries who are the primary agents in mission, but it is the triune God, who allows us to be His instruments. As such, however, we are totally dependent on His continuous presence, guidance and support, and this is given in its fullness only in answer to ardent and faithful prayer. [p. 179](#)

Western mission agencies—whether conciliar or evangelical—will always be tempted to conduct their business in an intellectual or technocratic mentality, and the strategic planning and theological reflection of LCWE are not exempted from this temptation. To the modern western mind, almost everything appears to be possible or theoretically solvable. Even the evangelization of the three billion unreached people by the year 2000 appears to be a solvable task. One leading official in the Lausanne Movement told me that his missiological career was initiated by the perplexing question of a wealthy American business man: 'How much does it cost to evangelize the world?'

It was, therefore, extremely timely and fortunate that the next consultation under the auspices of the Lausanne Committee was to be sponsored by its Intercession Advisory Group. Due both to the strong international interest in its theme and to the wise choice of country for our venue, Korea, this meeting assumed the dimensions of a congress. In the week leading up to the feast of Pentecost, 1984, the first international Congress on Prayer for World Evangelization took place in Seoul. It has, as I can confirm as one who was deeply engaged, forcefully contributed to open anew the eyes of all participants to the tremendous importance within the total task of world mission that God has assigned to the ministry of prayer as praise, thanksgiving, intercession and, let us not forget, spiritual battle with the demonic powers of heathen darkness. But only the future development of our evangelical mission movement will show how far the vision of Seoul 1984 has been implemented: A movement of prayer in every Continent, city and church of the world, co-ordinated by a network of mutual exchange with regard to intercession needed or answered

I whole-heartedly agree with the words by which Vonette Bright outlined the purpose of the prayer congress in Seoul:

'The Lausanne Committee for World Evangelization, ... has endeavoured to serve the Church by sharing evangelization strategies through congresses and publications. These are valuable tools in the hands of those who have a burden for the evangelization of the world in this generation. Basic to everything, however, is that directive from God which reminds us: 'Not by might nor by power, but by my Spirit, says the Lord Almighty' ([Zechariah 4:6](#)).'

III. NEW TASKS AND THEOLOGICAL CHALLENGES FACING THE EVANGELICAL MOVEMENT

It is vital to the new movement for world evangelization not only **P. 180** to attend to the opportunities and duties as seen at any given moment, but at the same time to keep also a watching eye on the future. I am speaking about future partly in the sense that it can be extrapolated from present trends, but also in the sense that it clearly can be predicted from biblical prophecies, which is very important.

Already from its inception, the Lausanne Movement was intensely captured by the awareness that the end of the twentieth century is approaching. Evangelical mission strategies are often framed with the goal in mind to complete the evangelization of the world by the year 2000. This does not mean that we expect (by this time) all nations and population groups to be christianized, but we certainly are entitled to aim towards the goal that all unreached peoples will have the opportunity to listen to the offer of salvation in the name of Jesus Christ in a language comprehensible to them.

There are several implications in this idea, of which the following four are especially crucial:

1). Much effort has been spent on the task to discover who and where the unreached population groups are. Mission strategists like R. Winter and David Barrett believe that Christianity does have the potential to reach all these people. But they will only be reached if this potential is discovered and mobilized. This is the task not only of further inspirational congresses, but of faithful education for mission.

2). The mobilization of the missionary potential of our churches includes the realization that we are heading for a *generation shift* in the international evangelical movement. Most of the founding fathers of the Lausanne Congress will be at retirement age by the end of this decade. It is, therefore, most encouraging to watch the attraction of such congresses which are convened specifically for the young generation. The TEMA Conferences are attended by several thousand young people.

3). The completion of world evangelization also implies the realization that large sociological changes in world population are taking place. The process of urbanization is assuming a remarkable speed. (As Dr. Raimund Bakke, a senior Lausanne associate, has pointed out, we are confronted with exciting statistics: By the year 2000, 94% of the United States' population will live in large cities. The respective figures for the other continents are as follows:

Western Europe:	82%
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Eastern Europe:	80%
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Latin America:	73% p. 181
Australia:	85%
Asia:	60%
Africa:	45%

It is estimated that, provided the present speed of population growth will continue, Mexico City will be the largest city in the world with at least 31 million inhabitants!)

For the time being, the evangelical movement is by no means ready to take up this task. Dr. Bakke, therefore, spends much time in travelling all over the world in order to set up consultations for church leaders, by which he wants to help them to interpret the sociological development and its challenge to world evangelism. What is urgently needed is a combined effort of all evangelistic forces. A whole network of urban evangelistic ministries is already in the process of being formed.

4). We have to consider that a large section of non-christian mankind is not made up of the so-called unreached, but rather by those who are turning their backs to the Christian faith due to the alarming speed of secularization, especially in the Western world. The new battle cry heard in many evangelistic speeches in Western countries is the word 'Re-Evangelization'.

The open question is, however, whether we can follow the same strategy which has been developed to evangelize the not yet reached two-thirds of the world. This is not only a question of strategy, but even more one of theological and homiletical implications. I know that many brilliant minds are struggling with this problem. May the Lord himself give us the answers!

What are the future problems one can anticipate for the Evangelical Movement? My own basic concern with regard to the future is that the Lausanne Movement really be faithful to the three basic theological reaffirmations which I pointed out within the Lausanne covenant: the normative authority of Scripture; the soteriological interpretation of salvation as reconciliation of sinful man with God; and the eschatological terminal of missions.

Are there any indications that these affirmations might be challenged and threatened to be dissolved? I am afraid there are. Evangelicals do not live on an idyllic island, but they are exposed to the influence of spiritual and theological cross-currents in Christianity at large. When new concepts or quests come up which claim to make new discoveries in the field of theological understanding, they might be intrigued by them and follow the direction to which they are pointing.

Three of these seemingly fresh and fruitful concepts are 1). the p. 182 hermeneutical method of a '*contextual* exegesis', 2). the offer of a '*holistic* Gospel', and 3). the programme to re-think biblical theology in terms of the *Kingdom of God* found in the synoptical gospels rather than by the categories of the Church which are used in the N.T. epistles.

Each of these new trends that seem to fascinate quite a number of evangelical missiologists contain certain elements of truth. But, in each one, there are also hidden snares and pitfalls.

1). The programme of contextual hermeneutics seems to intrigue theologians especially in the Third World. Here, the attempt is made to read Scripture not so much in

analogy to the Christian doctrinal tradition, which is said to be permeated by Western ideological presuppositions, but rather in the light of socio-political conditions in which the present reader is involved. He now looks to the biblical texts for answers to his problems. He might find them by discovering new aspects in these texts which were seemingly overlooked by previous exegetes. He may regard the biblical text as simply a *model* of divine redemptive action within the socio-political situation of the original readers, which could be transposed into analogous answers relevant to our conditions. In this way, at the surface the evangelical affirmations of scriptural inerrancy could still be maintained,—but they are secretly undermined by a hermeneutical method aimed at satisfying our present quests rather than allowing them to give their authentic message.

2). The programme of bringing a holistic gospel has its truth and temptation at the same time. It contains truth in as much as it can point out that the historical Jesus conducted a ministry by words and deeds, applied to the souls and bodies of men. But it is misleading if it regards these two dimensions as absolutely equal and if it leads to the understanding that, under certain conditions, socio-political action is a redemptive activity which is even more important than the forgiveness of sins. In this way, contrary to our original purpose, we may finally end up with another 'social gospel'. The biblical concept of salvation would be blurred and lost again.

3). The idea of preaching the Gospel in world evangelization by using the so-called kingdom language as Jesus himself did appears to be fine. But we must not overlook the fact that to Jesus the kingdom was a mystery. In this mystery some elements already became visible through his earthly ministry; other elements, however, remain hidden until his Second Coming. The realized elements of his kingdom message are exactly those which can be found in St. Paul's ecclesiology, while the prophetic elements are preserved in his [p. 183](#) eschatology, as pointed out in [1 Cor. 15:24ff.](#) or [Romans 8:17ff.](#) The programme of reverting from Paul's gospel to the kingdom message of Jesus, therefore, might easily mislead us to a loss of true biblical hope for the sake of a realized eschatology which does not take realistically into account the satanic evil which is still to be dealt with in the final victory at Christ's Second Coming.

I see a direct relevance of this argument with regard to our understanding of non-christian religions. The Lausanne Movement up to now, especially at its Pattaya Consultation in 1980, has dealt with non-christian religions mainly under the aspect of strategy and communication: how to reach the unreached blocks of Asia's high religions, to dispel false pre-suppositions in the minds of their adherents and to communicate Christ in terms and images truly perceptible to them. If we are able to do this, it is secretly assumed that the conversion of the Muslim or Hindu blocks could be achieved. The same argument can be discovered in the report of the mini-consultation dealing with Marxism.

What is lacking here is a realistic insight that non-christian religions and ideologies are not only mistaken and illusionary products of the human minds, or expressions of their thirst for salvation, but, at the same time, they are also incorporations of the spirits of God p. enemies which finally join forces in the universal reign of the Antichrist. What the Lausanne Movement still has to produce, therefore, is a realistic theology of non-christian religions and ideologies which is analytically mindful of all components in their systems: the human, the divine and the demonic.

My final concern in this survey is closely related to the previous argument. The excitement of the new breakthrough of evangelistic concerns in the evangelical constituency has proved to be a mighty impulse up to now. The 'spirit of Lausanne' has produced the optimistic vision of a world to be totally evangelized and largely won for Christ within the reach of our present generation. This vision, however, can degenerate into euphoric enthusiasm if it does not take heed of the other side of the authentic

eschatological vision of the Bible. The biblical authors, the apostles and Jesus himself, nowhere predict a total triumph of the missionary church within the period of this present age. Scripture promises us that this Gospel will be proclaimed among all nations until the Lord comes ([Matthew 24:14](#)), but it also shows that this witness will provoke resistance and hatred and persecution of the messengers and their converts as well. Such persecutions have been experienced by the Christian Church throughout the history of her mission. p. 184

In fact, such persecutions were the occasions for the proclamation of the Gospel in its most solemn form and convicting force, the witness in the form of martyrdom. *Sanguis martyrorum est semen ecclesiae*.

A large portion of Christianity today lives under conditions of harassment and persecution, especially in nations ruled by totalitarian ideologies and religious movements. I am sad to observe that the rest of the church in the free world is not really mindful of their persecuted brothers and sisters. The plea for the persecuted church is made in a very low voice not only at ecumenical assemblies, but also at the meetings of the Lausanne Committee and other evangelical bodies. This is in contrast with the Lausanne Covenant, which in its 13th paragraph clearly states: 'We also express our deep concern for all who have been unjustly imprisoned, and especially for our brethren who are suffering for their testimony to the Lord Jesus; we promise to pray and work for their freedom.'

I do not deny that prayers for the persecuted have been offered by individual members of the Lausanne Movement. But these concerns are not voiced in its public statements and activities. The reason is that we do not want to be an embarrassment to our evangelical brethren who are still living in relative freedom in such totalitarian countries. But I do believe that the concern for the suffering ones must figure highly on the agenda of the Church. They themselves use every opportunity to send messages to their fellow Christians, asking them to lend their voices for raising their case before international political and ecclesiastical forums, and experience has shown that merely mentioning their names has rescued them from falling into oblivion and disappearing forever.

But the main incentive for solidarity on behalf of the persecuted church is a theological one: the Church is the body of Christ made up by many members. The service of each member is needed for the healthy functioning of the whole body. The witness of the persecuted is, at the same time, a glorification of the triumphant God and a persuading force for the still unbelieving world, it also serves to intimately unite the afflicted member to the suffering and to the redemptive death of Christ our Redeemer, carrying with it a new enrichment and blessing for the entire Body, the Church universal. I think there should soon be convened an evangelical consultation for exploring exactly these dimensions of martyrdom for the upbuilding and evangelistic growth of the whole church.

It would be an important service to strengthen the ties with our afflicted fellow Christians for the benefit of the whole Church. It would also be a most necessary inner preparation of all Christians for such a p. 185 time, when suffering for Christ's sake will be the ultimate test of our faithfulness, carrying with it a decisive victory over the forces of the great adversary. It is in view of this final battle that St. John in [Rev. 12:10-11](#) says:

And they have conquered him by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony, for they loved not their lives even on to death. Rejoice then, o heaven and those that dwell therein! But woe to you, o earth and sea, for the devil has come down to you in great wrath, because he knows that his time is short! p. 186

Prof. Dr. Peter Beyerhaus occupies the chair for the Science of Mission and Ecumenical Theology at the University of Tübingen, West Germany.