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Evangelism and social action are distinct, and must not be confused. But they must not be separated either, for both are part of our total mission in God's purpose for this world.

Hugh Wetmore is General Secretary of the Evangelical Fellowship of South Africa. **p. 236**

A Commentary on the 'Manila Manifesto'

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The Australian Evangelical Alliance Council meeting in Melbourne in August 1989 commended the Manifesto of the Lausanne Congress II in Manila to member bodies for study and action. Here is a commentary and evaluation from the perspective of the AEA Statement of Faith prepared by the AEA Theological Commission and edited by the Convenor, Revd. Dr. David Parker. Some of the authors were present at Manila while others are heavily involved in EA activities and others are sympathetic observers.

INTRODUCTION: A MANIFESTO OF CONVICTIONS

**by Revd. Dr. David Parker, MA, BD, PhD,
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The original Lausanne Congress held in 1974 was certainly of great importance, and not unexpectedly, high hopes were held for Lausanne II as it met at Manila in July 1989. On the world scene, many people connected with the World Evangelical Fellowship/Evangelical Alliance (WEF/EA) are involved in the Lausanne Movement (LCWE), although relationships between the two bodies are still not satisfactory. Apparently there will be two world bodies for evangelicals, each with its own character—WEE as a fellowship of national Alliances providing a channel for evangelical unity on the basis of commitment to its doctrinal statement, and LCWE as a self-perpetuating movement promoting world evangelization. There has been some cooperation between WEF and LCWE (especially in joint conferences), but LCWE has declined any closer organizational relationship.

LCWE's emphasis upon 'world evangelization' is clearly displayed in the Manifesto, which is not presented as a general doctrinal statement, but as a 'public declaration of convictions, intentions and motives'. It therefore differs from the 'covenant' of Lausanne I by which signatories committed themselves to cooperation in world evangelization and so created the 'Lausanne movement'. Since 1974, this Movement has grown rapidly, with ever widening scope and organizational complexity.

The Manifesto is divided into two parts—21 ‘Affirmations’ and a 12-section p. 237 ‘Explication’. Most of the issues in the first part are taken up in the Explication, but not in the same groupings, which is somewhat confusing. The second part is arranged around one of the congress themes, ‘Calling the Whole Church to take the Whole Gospel to the Whole World’, a statement found originally in the Covenant (para. 6).

It is stated that the Manifesto is to be taken ‘alongside’ the Covenant, a document of 15 sections, widely accepted as signalling a highly significant development in evangelical thinking especially on Scripture, evangelism, social concern and culture (# 2, 4, 5, 10).

The Lausanne Covenant statement on Scripture clearly asserted its divine inspiration, and affirmed it as ‘the only written word of God, the only infallible rule of faith and practice’. The Manifesto, however, states that ‘in the Scriptures ... God has given us an authoritative disclosure of his character and will, his redemptive acts and their meaning, and his mandate for mission.’ Admittedly, this is supplemented in other Affirmations and in the Explication by references to the ‘biblical gospel’.

But it is not clear why the statement is worded in this way or how it is to be tied to the ‘biblical gospel’ as this is later elaborated. For example, is Scripture a disclosure of God’s will alongside other similar disclosures? Or is this statement to be taken in broader context? Given that in some way all Christians acknowledge the Scriptures, it is here affirmed that they constitute ‘divine revelation’ and hence they must be the authoritative guide for faith and practice, especially in regard to evangelization. Certainly, the sections of the Explication dealing with the ‘whole gospel’ do not give any ground for thinking that the Manifesto is less than ‘biblical’. (For example, there is a clear exposition of the universality of sin and its consequences, the deity and saving work of Christ, and the necessity of the gospel for the salvation of humanity.)

In accordance with the congress theme, the Manifesto focuses more attention on the church and its mission to the world than the Covenant did. It includes sections on the functions of the local church, the roles of pastors and lay people, the need for integrity in Christian living and relationships within the world church. Similarly, the final section largely comprises an analysis of the world from the perspective of strategy for world evangelization, with many references to current situations such as *glasnost*, missionary visas and industrialization. This is welcome evidence of a serious commitment to the Lausanne Movement’s goal of fostering world evangelization, but there is a noticeable trend away from the humility and sensitivity of the Covenant. p. 238

It is perhaps inevitable that the manifesto of a congress trying to unite such a wide range of opinion as this one should tend to emphasize matters of parochial and controversial interest to its constituencies. For example, in the Explication, there are sections relating to ‘Wimberism’, the nature of ministry in the church and the relation of the gospel to socio-political concerns. However, these statements, in which there is a certain degree of clarification over and above the Covenant, are not matched in their impact by the equivalent Affirmations (2, 8, 9) which are generally unremarkable.

Consequently, it is not easy to see how, in practical terms, the Manifesto can effectively be used ‘alongside’ the Covenant. The Covenant was detailed and yet compact enough to be studied as a whole; on the other hand, the Manifesto with its two-part structure creates a division in which the usually predictable and generalized contents of the Affirmations are not always truly reflective of the wide-ranging contents of the Explication, some of which are more suitable for an exposition than for the Manifesto itself.

Perhaps part of the explanation can be found in the process behind the document. A draft was apparently drawn up prior to the congress by using statements from the addresses which were to be given; this draft was subject to revision by the organizers during the congress before being presented to the participants for acceptance during the

final hours of the gathering. Thus, the Explication does not read like a ‘public declaration of convictions’ but instead like a summary of what was said in the plenary sessions, giving background data, biblical texts, surveys of world conditions, demographic statistics, missiological theory and descriptions of the world church as well as confessions of past failure and hopes for the future. Part A on ‘The Whole Gospel’ is different again, being more theological in content. The Affirmations do read much more like a ‘manifesto’, but as we have seen, it would be misleading and inconclusive to take this part by itself.

We can now turn to specific issues that are raised in the Manifesto, which will be the subject of discussion in the remaining parts of this evaluation.

EVANGELIZATION AND CHRISTIAN LIFE AND WITNESS

by Revd. Dr. David Wilson, BTh, MA, M Div, O Min
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The Manila Manifesto has many emphases running through it, but one of the most dominant is the need for the gospel to be lived and spoken [p. 239](#) by individual Christians in their everyday situations. It affirms that the biblical gospel is God’s enduring message to our world and that we are to defend, proclaim and embody that message. This gospel is to be a visible demonstration of God’s love to the deprived in the world, as well as to the world’s ‘rich’.

Further, our demonstration of the gospel in life and word is to be a prophetic witness to other individuals, as well as to society as a whole. To be such a penetrating force, we are to be reliant upon the empowering and enabling ministry of the Holy Spirit and of prayer, for we are up against opposition for which we need spiritual resource to combat.

To ensure that the task is done, lay Christians must be involved along with ordained Christians. The mobilization of the whole church is strategic to the fulfilment of our mission. Both lay and ordained people of God need to be trained for the task of living and speaking the gospel in the world. The Manifesto urges faithfulness, urgency and sacrifice to ensure the mission’s success.

Further, it is emphasized that evangelistic witness and compassionate service (the whole gospel) need to go hand in hand and that integrity, involving a matching of life and words in holiness and love, needs to be maintained at all costs.

What the Manifesto affirms in this area is indeed significant for the evangelical Church throughout the world today. For too long evangelism has been perceived by ‘grass roots’ Christians to be the domain of either specialist evangelists and their ‘high tech’ rallies, or the latest pre-packaged programme to reach the community for Christ. The Manifesto puts an emphasis on the necessity for individual Christians to live a life of holiness and love in everyday situations and thus to seek to witness to the gospel and bring people into the kingdom.

Scripture seems to lay the same emphasis. Examples are given in the book of Acts of evangelism being a natural part of everyday lifestyle situations; teaching in the Epistles supports this notion. St. Peter tells his readers that they are to sanctify Christ as Lord in their hearts and to be prepared to make a defence for the hope that is within them, doing this with respect and gentleness ([1 Peter 3:15](#)).

Sanctifying Christ as Lord in our hearts is a call to live under the lordship of Christ, and thus is a call to a ‘life of holiness and love’. Living such a life is going to draw attention from those around us in everyday situations.

In the words of the Manifesto, it is in 'friendships, in the home and at work' (and we could add, at school, in the neighbourhood, and in any [p. 240](#) other life situations Christians find themselves) that witness is to take place. It is in these relationships that we are to live a life with 'Christ sanctified in our hearts as Lord'.

When attention is given to such a lifestyle, the questions start coming. It is then that we are to be respectful and gentle, yet assertive in verbalizing the reason we live the way we do. This thought is picked up in the Manifesto in the final paragraph under the heading of 'The Uniqueness of Christ'.

In the past we have sometimes been guilty of adopting towards adherents of other faiths attitudes of ignorance, arrogance, disrespect and even hostility. We repent of this. We nevertheless are determined to bear a positive and uncompromising witness to the uniqueness of our Lord, in his life, death and resurrection ...

Throughout recent church history we have been guilty of actually programming people away from this primary responsibility of life-situation evangelism. Sometimes the programmes have been evangelistic in thrust, and have often been attempts to create relationships in which evangelism could take place. Door-knocking with religious surveys, and 'coffee house' evangelism, are two examples that come to mind. At other times (and perhaps more often) the programmes have been maintenance-type programmes to keep the local church intact. An abundance of committee meetings, working bees and financial drives come to mind. When such events programme Christians away from primary responsibilities in the family and community, we are doing the Kingdom of God a disservice.

The dual emphasis in the Manifesto on life-situation evangelism and 'whole church' evangelism (#8, 'The Local Church') is relevant, because it is important for the local church as a group of believers to penetrate the community with the whole gospel. However, we need to be careful not to programme people away from the best opportunities they have for witness. Further, we need to recognize that the best way the whole church can penetrate the community with the gospel is through her individual members and their lives of holiness and love. It is the role of the 'church gathered' to teach and give support to the individual members for their ministry throughout the week.

We are rather good, as Christians, at summarizing problems, suggesting solutions, repenting of past mistakes and exhorting one another to practise the truth. All of these are good and necessary. However, we need to go further. We need to help in applying those truths in our pluralistic, multi-cultural world, that the truth might be practised. [p. 241](#)

Of particular importance is the training of leaders for today's church. The New Testament philosophy of leadership is complex, but one important aspect of it is that leaders are to be in the process of training (equipping) the people of God for their ministry of service. It is reported that a church in New South Wales has a liturgy something like this:

Leaders: Who are you?

People: We are the ministers.

Leaders: Who are we?

People: You are the equippers of the ministers.

This liturgy has caught well the concept of Paul's instructions in Ephesians chapter 4, and is an attempt to help the people of God with their immense identity problem.

One of the things for which the Church has to be trained is life-situation evangelism. To do that, the people of God need to understand God's Word so well that they can 'gossip'

it in their relationships. They also need an understanding of the world in which they live, and a further understanding of how to communicate the truth in that world in ways that allow its relevancy to be seen. Above all, the people of God need to know how to develop further their relationship with God, how to grow in intimacy with him, that they may be internally motivated to live for him no matter what the cost.

We are called to accept the challenge of such training, and the further challenge of living a holy and loving life ourselves, that the Kingdom of God might increase, all to the praise of his glory.

CHRIST, THEOLOGY AND EVANGELIZATION

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‘Proclaim Christ until he comes’ was one of the major themes of Lausanne II. It is appropriate then that the Manifesto also emphasizes Jesus Christ as the focus and content of the evangelistic proclamation.

For example, Jesus is declared to be the basis of unity in the task of evangelization. The Manifesto states, ‘What unites us is our common convictions about Jesus Christ’ (para. 3). It calls upon evangelicals to affirm boldly in an increasingly pluralistic world the ‘uniqueness, indispensability and centrality of Christ’. From this is evident that the Lausanne Movement retains its commitment to the gospel ‘as it is in Jesus’ (to use a phrase of the Apostle Paul). [p. 242](#)

One whole paragraph (3) is devoted to the person and work of Christ. Here the Manifesto presents him as absolutely central to the purposes of God. He is Saviour, Lord and Judge. He is the world’s Saviour in that he himself is the only way of salvation. He is Lord over all of life, both private and public, local and global. Death has yielded to his mastery; principalities and powers are subject to him; he is the coming Judge, but even now the winnowing fork is in his hand, judging both modern culture and a worldly Church.

The uniqueness of Jesus Christ (the title of para. 3) is a constant refrain. He is the only way to God, a point of great importance for world evangelization. The Manifesto emphasizes that there is no warrant for saying that salvation can be found outside of Christ; there must be an explicit acceptance of his saving work through faith.

The substitutionary view of the cross of Christ which the Manifesto takes is to be welcomed. The Christ is presented as a crucified Christ who bore our sins and died our death. His work is given full value by the proclamation of his bodily resurrection and his personal return in glory.

The uniqueness of Christ is extended to his person. He is set forth as the eternal Son of God, who experienced a true incarnation. Full weight is given to both his deity and his humanity. He is unique as a man of history and the God of eternity.

The Manifesto does not fail to note the servant character, humility and compassion of Jesus. In the Conference itself there was a great deal of emphasis upon this in relation to ministry to the poor and oppressed of this world. Thus the document presents a balanced picture. Admittedly, there are some things it does not say, but given the circumstances under which it was written, together with the particular interests of the movement which produced it, it can be concluded that it presents the central truths of biblical faith clearly and emphatically.

The Manifesto is clearly trinitarian in its view of God, although this is more implicit than explicit—the presupposition with which it was framed. Nevertheless, there is a clear

statement in which the Son, with the Father and the Spirit, is declared to be the sole object of worship, faith and obedience (para. 3). Throughout the document, the full deity of each person of the Trinity is acknowledged.

The God presented in the Manifesto is Creator, Redeemer and Evangelist. The world is his work, as are the men and women who have been placed upon it as stewards. As Redeemer, God does not rest with the tragic reality of a fallen creation. God comes to us in Christ. Thus the gospel carried by the witnesses is described as God's p. 243 message, and the salvation it proclaims is understood as God's salvation. So evangelism has its source in the love and grace of the Creator.

The most striking statement about God in the Manifesto is that which speaks of him as evangelist: 'The Scriptures declare that God himself is the chief evangelist' (para. 5). Evangelism has not only its source in God, but also its dynamic. God the Spirit accomplishes the task of evangelism from beginning to end. As para. 5 continues, God 'anoints the messenger, confirms the Word, prepares the hearer, convicts the sinful, enlightens the blind, gives life to the dead, enables us to repent and believe, unites us to the Body of Christ, assures us that we are God's children, lead us into Christ-like character and service, and sends us out in turn to be Christ's witnesses'.

It is salutary to be reminded that, in the last analysis, evangelism is the activity of God. Some might quibble that in this way no room is left for human responsibility, but that would be to interpret the passage against the whole spirit of the Manifesto and of the Lausanne Movement itself. The document itself is a call to 'get on urgently with our responsibility', which is to call people everywhere to repentance and faith in Jesus Christ.

Further examination of the Manifesto reveals that it is evangelical in all the major doctrines which it happens to touch. Its attitudes to Scripture and to sin, for example, are areas where there is a worthy presentation of the evangelical position. It would be an enriching and rewarding venture to study other theological issues which are raised in the Manifesto.

Perhaps the greatest contribution of the Manifesto to the evangelical Church is in its application of theological truth to the realities of the world in which we live. In Australia we sorely need this kind of corrective.

Let us take as examples three current issues: the earth's resources, the ministry of women and the problem of evangelism in a multi-faith society.

Since God is Creator, we are our brothers' keepers and stewards of the earth's resources. As evangelicals, we are called upon to ensure that the essential dignity of humans is everywhere acknowledged, that resources are not wantonly depleted and that they are equally distributed (para. 1). For Australian evangelicals, this is a pointed challenge to a rich church in an affluent and resource rich country.

The Manifesto also reminds us that because he is Creator, women along with men are equal bearers of his image and must be granted partnership in world evangelization (para. 6). The Manifesto also p. 244 declares that God is both the Redeemer who accepts women equally with men in Christ and the Evangelist who pours out his Spirit upon women as well as men, equipping them for various ministries. The Manifesto does not address all the issues involved in this, but its basic position comes as a further challenge to the Australian church which has tended to deny full partnership to women.

Evangelicals must also be as uncompromising as the Manifesto in their presentation of the uniqueness of Jesus as the only way of salvation and the only path to God. On the other hand, God is the Redeemer who 'in his love came after us in Jesus Christ to rescue and re-make us' (para. 2). Thus, the Manifesto declares, there is no room for ignorance, arrogance, disrespect or hostility in presenting Christ to adherents of other faiths. They too must be sought out with understanding, love and compassion.

In these ways the Manifesto is a useful guide which encourages us as evangelicals to work with a true biblical theology and to apply it practically and unreservedly to the challenges of our times.

EVANGELIZATION IN THE MIDST OF HUMAN NEED

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‘Lausanne 1974’—‘Lausanne II in Manila 1989’—the titles point to continuity, the dates raise the question of process and change. A significant result of Lausanne 1974 has been the influence of its Covenant in bringing together evangelism and social responsibility. Two articles in the original Covenant are devoted to these issues (#4, #5) and another (#9) states, ‘All of us are shocked by the poverty of millions and disturbed by the injustices which cause it.’

A key affirmation for many people was that ‘evangelism and sociopolitical involvement are both part of our Christian duty’ (#5). Another statement raised on-going debate: ‘In the church’s mission of sacrificial service evangelism is primary’ (#6).¹ Although social involvement was affirmed, its relationship to evangelism was ill-defined.
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At the ‘Thailand 1980’ Consultation on World Evangelization held at Pattaya, this issue was raised again. Peter Wagner stated that COWE ‘held the line’ by affirming the primacy of evangelism and by keeping it separate from social service. This was so, despite strong voices raised against such a position. From that perspective, Orlando Costas could say, ‘In a day when everything is swinging to the right, for evangelicals even to hold the line on social action must be seen as progress.’ Waldron Scott, then General Secretary of the WEF, was more critical when he concluded that ‘it seems unlikely that the Lausanne Committee will be a major force in the 1980s for promoting a style of evangelism based on a holistic theology and a clear-sighted vision of the definitive contextual realities of this decade’.²

Subsequent events have shown Scott’s predictions were unfulfilled, although it is significant that there has been closer cooperation between LCWE and WEF. Thus, 1982 saw these two bodies jointly sponsor the international Consultation on the Relationship between Evangelism and Social Responsibility (CRESR). The 64-page report of this gathering makes a valuable study, particularly its identification of social activity as either

¹ See Athol Gill in C. Rene Padilla, (ed.) *The New Face of Evangelicalism: an international symposium on the Lausanne Covenant* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1976) pp. 99–100.

² ‘COWE: a personal assessment’, *Global Church Growth Bulletin* 17 (1980) pp. 56–59; report by Athol Gill, ‘Pattaya 1980’, *On Being* 7, 2 (August 1980); ‘The significance of Pattaya’, *Missiology* 9 (1981) pp. 57–76.

a consequence of, a bridge to or a partner of evangelism. The issue of 'primacy' was handled by reference to eternal need, but with an important qualification: 'seldom if ever should we have to choose between satisfying physical hunger and spiritual hunger ... the choice, we believe, is largely conceptual. In practice, as in the public ministry of Jesus, the two are inseparable, at least in open societies.'

A year later was Wheaton '83, 'I will build my church', an international conference sponsored by WEF and supported by LCWE. According to the researches of Hadyn Siggins, the key word in the report of this conference is 'mission'. It affirmed, 'God calls us to proclaim Christ to the lost *and* to reach out to people in the name of Christ with compassion and concern for justice and equity ([Rom. 10:14, 15](#); [Ps. 82:2-4](#); [Mic. 6:8](#)).'

At Manila, the relationship between evangelism and social responsibility was not an issue! It appears that, from the standpoint of international evangelical leadership, CRESR and Wheaton '83 have provided a consensus on this matter—a holistic approach is now assumed. As Alan Nichols reports (making reference to the address of [p. 246](#) WEF Chairman Tokunboh Adeyemo at Manila), 'It does not alter fundamentals in the traditional view of the gospel, but it certainly indicates some shift in the emphasis.'³

What then of the contents of the Manila Manifesto concerning human need and the world context of evangelization?

Included in the 'Twenty One Affirmations' are references such as: 'The biblical gospel is God's enduring message to our world, and we determine to defend, proclaim and embody it' (3); 'we must demonstrate God's love visibly by caring for those who are deprived of justice, dignity, food and shelter' (8); the 'prophetic witness' denounces 'all injustice and oppression, both personal and structural' (9); 'we who proclaim the gospel must exemplify it in a life of holiness and love' (15); 'every Christian congregation must turn itself outward to its local community in evangelistic witness and compassionate service' (17).

The 12 Sections that follow provide a summary of the kinds of concerns that were expressed during Lausanne II. In general, they summarize points presented at the plenary sessions of the Congress, although opportunity was given for input from individuals and groups, and from the many tracks and workshops which were also part of the Congress. The final document differed in many ways from the initial draft. There was no opportunity for much discussion of it, but the statements do reflect concerns separately voiced by a significant number of people. In many ways, they are agenda items for ongoing action.

Section 1, 'Our Human Predicament' focuses rightly on human rebellion resulting in alienation from the Creator and the rest of his creation, resulting in 'pain, disorientation and loneliness ... [and] anti-social behaviour, in violent exploitation of others, and in a depletion of the earth's resources'. The inclusion of references to exploitation and environmental harm in such international statements is new!

In reference to 'the majority of the world's population who are destitute, suffering or oppressed', Section 2, 'Good News for Today', rightly states that we have not adequately grappled with St. Luke's emphasis that 'the gospel is good news for the poor.' Hence Section 4, 'The Gospel and Social Responsibility', calls for an 'integration of [p. 247](#) words and deeds'. Furthermore, speaking in language which is much stronger than any used previously, Section 10 describes the impact of 'modernity' (to use the phrase of Os Guinness), secularism and the worldwide move into cities by stating that 'the proclamation of God's kingdom necessarily demands the prophetic denunciation of all

³ Alan Nicholls, (ed.) *The Whole Gospel for the Whole World: Story of Lausanne II Congress on World Evangelization*, Manila 1989 (Charlotte NC, LCWE and Ventura CA, Regal Books, 1989) pp. 72-73.

that is incompatible with it' and then listing such evils as inhuman living conditions, institutional violence, the drug traffic and the burden of debt on the Two-Thirds World.

The agenda is long! But the fact that these matters are expressed in the context of evangelization is significant. There is clear recognition of the danger of getting immersed in social issues and forgetting the gospel—but just as clear is the danger of preaching a gospel without confronting them!

Theologically there is now acceptance of the inseparability of word and deed and of proclamation and compassion. There is one God who desires that all come to repentance and faith and share his doing of justice, being his co-workers fulfilling his purposes for his creation.

The question remains as whether these issues are live ones for churches in Australia? Perhaps for many, the first issue is the impact of modernity—how our culture has affected our faith and practice. Beyond that the Manila Manifesto has provided an array of issues, the solutions of which will require ongoing study and action. We will learn from our brothers and sisters in the Two-Thirds World. The last fifteen years *have* seen changes in international evangelical perspectives. The next fifteen years must now see increasing action.

THE NATURE AND METHODS OF EVANGELIZATION

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According to the 1974 Lausanne Covenant (#1), it is the purpose of God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, to call out from the world a people for himself and to send this people into the world to be his servants and witnesses. The gospel has to be seen always in terms of the uniqueness and universality of Christ as testified in Scripture (#3). The Covenant is intentionally and firmly based on biblical foundations, and the 1989 Manila Manifesto which affirms continuing commitment to the Covenant, proceeds on that same basis (Manifesto #2, 3). Therefore [p. 248](#) evangelism, the proclamation of the gospel, ceases to be valid if it compromises the uniqueness and universality of Christ.

This is the background of evangelism as it is set forth in the Lausanne Covenant. Again, the points made highlight biblical teaching; 'to evangelize is to spread the good news that Jesus Christ died for our sins and was raised from the dead ... as the reigning Lord he now offers the forgiveness of sins and the liberating gift of the Spirit ...' (#4). Similarly, the Manifesto highlights the human predicament, and the gospel which alone can remedy it. Sin has alienated people from both their creator and from the rest of his creation. Self-salvation of every kind is impossible. Left to themselves human beings are lost forever (#1).

The Covenant also shows that recognition of Christian social responsibility is essential to evangelism (#5). The salvation we claim and proclaim should be one that transforms the totality of personal and social responsibilities, for faith without works is dead. In #4, the Manifesto spells out specific areas of social concern and the need to proclaim the

lordship of Jesus Christ over all of life, private and public, local and global. The importance of social responsibility within the framework of evangelism is thus consolidated.

Evangelism, then, is the proclamation of the uniqueness and universality of Christ for the salvation of sinners so that he will be seen to be Lord over all of life. There is a place for apologetics and dialogue, but the gospel itself must be proclaimed (#2).

Overall, Lausanne I and II covered the widest possible range of methods of evangelism. However, here we will concentrate on the more basic considerations concerning methods which are emphasized in the two Lausanne documents.

The first of these is the importance of the personal element. The Manifesto declares that 'God himself is the chief evangelist' (#5). Indeed, 'God was in Christ reconciling the world to himself' ([2 Cor. 5:19](#)). And in turn, Jesus said, 'You will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes upon you and you will be witness to me' ([Acts 1:8](#)). The Covenant reminds us that 'the Holy Spirit is a missionary spirit' and accordingly, 'evangelism should arise spontaneously from a Spiritfilled church.' (#14).

God's basic method then is to communicate personally—through Jesus Christ, the Holy Spirit and a Spirit-filled church. Whatever forms of communication are employed, they are to facilitate the personal, so that God's grace will work in the lives of people through faith in him. As Carmelo Terranova said, 'We are the message ... the key to evangelism is to plant holy people everywhere, who weep as Christ wept, live as Christ lived and love as Christ loved.' [p. 249](#)

The second basic consideration is that all believers have a part in evangelism. The Covenant (#6) affirms that 'Christ sends his redeemed people into the world as the Father sent him'. Therefore 'we need to break out of our ecclesiastical ghettos and permeate non-Christian society'. The final Manila Affirmation (number 21) declares that 'God is calling the whole church to take the whole gospel to the whole world', and it concludes with a determination to proclaim the gospel 'faithfully, urgently and sacrificially until he comes'.

This is a task that cannot be left to clergy and other professionals, for as the Manifesto states, 'the domination of the laity by the clergy has been a great evil in the history of the church'. Hence, the centuries-old insistence on 'the priesthood of all believers' must now be accompanied by an insistence on 'the ministry of all believers'. Lay people should see their role in the local church, and also through their wider friendships and the use of their homes and workplaces for the furtherance of the gospel (#6).

The third general area for consideration is the need for God's people to be adequately prepared and equipped for evangelism. Both documents stress the need for training, but the Manifesto points out the particular challenge of the modern world with an increasing proportion of the world population living in cities, and also the need to identify with unreached people groups through those willing to be cross-cultural messengers (#10). It notes that at present only 6% of missionaries are engaged in seeking to reach the unreached!

The fourth element in the methodology of evangelism is the vital importance of personal integrity, an issue stressed by many at Manila. This is the familiar point that while people look for better methods, God looks for better people. Thus the Covenant states that 'a church which preaches the cross must itself be marked by the cross' (#6); the Manifesto observes: 'nothing commends the gospel more eloquently than a transformed life, and nothing brings it into disrepute so much as personal inconsistency' (#7).

In particular, the Manifesto shows how important integrity is when living and witnessing as Christians under hostile governments (#12). Christians, it says, are 'loyal citizens', though unwilling to do anything which God forbids; they renounce unworthy

methods of evangelism; and they earnestly desire freedom of religion for all people, not just freedom for Christianity.

Fifthly, it follows that evangelism has to be caring. The Covenant states that a Christian style of leadership is not a matter of domination, but of service (#11). Manila Affirmation 16 shows that compassionate service must accompany evangelistic witness, while #2 expresses repentance for the occasions when Christians 'have been indifferent to [p. 250](#) the plight of the poor, and where we have shown preference for the rich'. It concludes with the determination to follow the example of Jesus.

Finally, the local church is seen to have a vital role in the spread of the gospel. Indeed, #8 of the Manifesto states that it has the primary responsibility for this task. To do so, it is necessary to turn 'outward to its local community in evangelistic witness and compassionate service' (Affirmation 16). It will also be necessary to develop appropriate strategies for mission. However, the reality is that many congregations are inward-looking, organized for maintenance rather than mission, or preoccupied with church-based activities at the expense of witness. None of this is new to those engaged in local church ministry, but we need the challenge and encouragement that comes to us through the Lausanne movement.

In conclusion, world evangelization requires 'the whole church to take the whole gospel to the whole world' (to re-state the Manila theme). This involves praying, planning and working together, proclaiming Christ until he comes, 'with all necessary urgency, unity and sacrifice'. And these closing words of the Manifesto, in effect, summarize the nature and methods of evangelization.

COOPERATION IN EVANGELISM

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The Lausanne Congress of 1974 and Lausanne II in Manila 1989 succeeded in bringing together key evangelical leaders from around the world for inspiration, support, challenge and encouragement in the crucial task of world evangelization.

Unity and cooperation related directly to one of the key themes at Manila, 'the whole church proclaiming the whole gospel to the whole world'. It was gratifying to note the breadth of the representation—over 4,000 participants and observers from nearly 200 countries. Lausanne '74 had 2,500 from 150 countries. In 1966, the Berlin Congress on Evangelism had 1200 delegates from about 100 countries.

The Lausanne Covenant (#9) stressed the urgency of the evangelistic task: 'More than 2,700 million people which is more than two thirds of mankind, have yet to be evangelized.' Article 6 stresses that 'World evangelization requires the whole church to take the whole gospel to [p. 251](#) the whole world' (which gave the wording for the theme at Manila). Several articles called for Christian unity as a condition for accomplishing the Great Commission to go into all the world and preach the gospel, 'because oneness strengthens our witness, just as our disunity undermines our Gospel of reconciliation' (#7).

The Manila Manifesto continued this stress on unity and cooperation: 'We affirm the urgent need for churches, mission agencies and other Christian organizations to cooperate in evangelism and social action, repudiating competition and avoiding duplication' (Affirmation 17).

In some ways, both Lausanne I and II echo the deep concerns of the ecumenical movement as expressed in the World Council of Churches. However, many evangelicals feel that the World Council has lost touch with biblical authority, the essentials of the gospel and the divine imperatives for evangelism. Yet, those who have turned away from the World Council have all too readily retreated into their own narrow environment and neglected the biblical concern for unity ([1 Cor. 1:10, 13](#)) and the relationship between unity and evangelism ([John 17:21](#)). A study of the Manila Manifesto and other Lausanne materials such as the official report, papers and tapes of the congress should help to redress that situation.

The question to be faced then is how the biblical demand for unity, involving a call for cooperation is to be reconciled with the need to stand for our distinctive convictions, as reflected, for example, in the Evangelical Alliance statement of faith? One pointer is the need to distinguish the essentials of the faith from those things on which we may hold intense convictions but which are still not essential to the gospel itself. The call of Lausanne I and II for cooperation must continue to challenge the churches. The burden is to 'make disciples of all nations'. We need to ask if we are discipling or proselytizing?

It was both interesting and challenging to note the depth of the representation at Manila—almost half the participants were under 45 years of age, with women comprising almost a quarter.

How do these figures match up with church life in Australia? Many congregations, including those of evangelical churches, reveal a preponderance of the over 60's and many have a high proportion of women, which does not correlate well with the overall population distribution. We are not at liberty to change the message simply in order to attract listeners; as an African brother said in relation to the gospel and social concern, 'We must never allow our strategy in evangelism to triumph over our theology.' However, we should be asking ourselves whether it is the gospel or our particular presentation p. 252 of it which is failing to attract the full spectrum of Australians, including young people and men.

In his opening address, Leighton Ford said, 'There [Lausanne '74] few women came as participants. Now we are thankful for the many gifted women among us, and we wish there were more, who have come, not so much in the cause of feminism, as for the cause of evangelism, ready to take their full God-given part in Christ's global cause.' The Manifesto calls on members of the Body of Christ to transcend 'the barriers of race, gender and class'. It affirms 'that the gifts of the Spirit are distributed to all God's people, women and men, and that their partnership in evangelism must be welcomed' (Affirmations 13, 14).

Yet it is apparent that the tensions we see on this issue in several of our Australian churches were also present at Manila. On the whole, the Congress favoured stronger participation by women, and the women declared they were ready to serve. But the Congress steered clear of a definite pronouncement on women's ministry. Did it fail to be prophetic, or is this an area where differing convictions must be allowed? Whatever the answer to this question, it is obvious that Lausanne II in Manila was at the same time a major statement of evangelical unity and a sign of future developments.

CONCLUSION: 'WHO DO WE THINK WE ARE TALKING TO?'

by Revd. Dr. David Parker, MA, BD, PhD

This concludes our commentary on some major themes of the Manila Manifesto. There has been a certain amount of overlap, and, of course, more could be said about these and other topics. In fact, one of the striking features of the Manifesto is the wide range of issues and emphases which it covers, especially in final section on 'the whole world'. This wide diversity results in a certain loss of precision and impact. In commenting on the Congress itself, David Wells noted that there had been less serious engagement with 'the real world' than there had been at previous international evangelical conferences.⁴

Undoubtedly, the Manifesto builds upon the foundation of the 1974 Covenant, but there is still some uncertainty as how it is to be construed by such a wide ranging group of participants. In the official [p. 253](#) report of the Congress, Alan Nicholls concludes that one of the major outcomes of Manila is that 'the label "evangelical" ... no longer applies to a narrow band of Protestant Christians but a much broader spectrum of charismatics, conservatives, radical and historic church members' and that 'Lausanne has become ... an international movement of significance to every part of the Christian church in the world'.⁵ In particular, he notes, it has lost its 'parachurch' image, and is now geared towards mainstream churches; he adds that 'renewal of the main churches is a key to evangelism'. This change of orientation will have profound implications for evangelicalism.

This more inclusivist nature of the Lausanne movement contrasts strongly with the statement of another widely-representative conference held in the USA just two months prior to Manila, which not only defined the faith in a series of 'Evangelical Affirmations' but also responded to pressing social issues as well.⁶ Admittedly, the Manila Manifesto is more an action document than a doctrinal one, but the question of doctrine cannot be avoided ultimately. David Wells observed that so great had been the impact of other interests at Manila that theological reflection had been all but squeezed out.⁷

This leads to consideration of one of the series of searching questions raised by Colin Chapman during the Congress itself: 'Who do we think we are talking to?'—each other, other evangelicals, the World Council, non-evangelicals, Catholics, Orthodox?⁸ The response to this question will largely determine our assessment of the Manifesto. Whatever answer we give, it cannot be said that the Lausanne II in Manila has failed to offer food for thought, and at least the Manifesto can be a jumping off point for further reflection and action, as our writers have indicated. So what happens from here on is left to the readers, and also—due to the particular structure of Lausanne Movement—to the Congress 'participants' as they network with their own constituencies. [p. 254](#)

⁴ David Wells, in Alan Nicholls (ed.), *The Whole Gospel for the Whole World* (LCWE 1989) p. 138.

⁵ Alan Nicholls (ed.), *The Whole Gospel for the Whole World* (LCWE 1989) p. 143f.

⁶ *Christianity Today*, June 16, 1989 pp. 60, 63.

⁷ David Wells, in Alan Nicholls (ed.), *The Whole Gospel for the Whole World* (LCWE 1989) p. 137.

⁸ Colin Chapman, in Alan Nicholls (ed.), *The Whole Gospel for the Whole World* (LCWE 1989) p. 136.