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Jesus Christ are needed everywhere with almost equal urgency. With the apostle Paul we should be able to say 'I am obligated both to Greeks and non-Greeks, both to the wise and the foolish. That is why I am so eager to preach the gospel also to you who are at Rome. I am not ashamed of the gospel, because it is the power of God for the salvation of everyone who believes. . . .' Everyone who believes in the message of the gospel will be saved. So mission should be done everywhere, among all nations ([Mt 28:19-20](#)).

II CONCERN FOR EACH OTHER, ESPECIALLY THE POOR

One of the marks of true disciples of Jesus Christ is love. Love cannot be love if it is not translated into action. The apostle John writes, 'If anyone has material possessions and sees his brother in need but has no pity in him, how can the love of God be in him? Dear children, let us not love with words or tongue but with actions and in truth' ([1 John 3:17-18](#)). Love requires interaction. It cannot take place in seclusion or isolation. The present seclusion and individualism seen in some cultures should be carefully weighed on the basis of this concept of love. We have heard and read a number of times of people dying in their apartments and their bodies being found after a number of weeks. It is very sad to learn that nobody ever visited them regularly. The church should be the foremost example of the love of Jesus Christ both within her members and in the community among whom she exists and whom she serves. Jesus Christ sought the lost; the downcast and the marginalized. So should his church on earth. It is expected from the body of Christ, the church, to reflect him who is love. He gave not only his possessions, honour, etc. but his very life in love.

Conclusion: We expect and hope for the coming of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

The present world around us is full of evil. When we see the countries in the world arena, materially affluent nations seem to be selfish, greedy and protective of their own advantages. On the other hand materially poorer nations seem to be torn with discord, war and envy. What then is the hope for our world in the years to come and particularly in the new millennium? If all the nations of the world were to be led by the Spirit of Jesus Christ, who was born from the virgin Mary, crucified, died and was buried under Pontius Pilate and rose on the third day from death, the world would be a peaceful place. There would be no discord, war, envy, selfishness, greed and protectionism. Thus, the only solution for our world is in the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ and his total reign. The church, his body, is expected to share in the reign of Jesus her Lord. In the meantime however she has to live in the world without being of the world and sharing its evil deeds. We, then, enter into the new millennium expecting the coming of our Lord who will give peace to his world and creation. Amen. Come, Lord Jesus.

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Jesus Christ—Lord of the Market Place

Bruce J Nicholls

Dr Bruce Nicholls gave the Frank Kline Memorial lecture on March 6, 1997, at the Union Biblical Seminary, Pune, India, where he was interim Principal for the year 1996–7. This annual lectureship series honours the founding Principal, Dr Frank Kline (1953–65). In his address the author explores the Lordship of Christ as Lord of creation, Lord of history and the church, and Lord of redemption in the context of training men and women to be practical theologians for service in the market places of India and the world.

Editor

It is indeed an honour and privilege to give the Frank and Betty Kline Memorial Lecture during my one year as Principal of UBS. My wife and I came to the Union Biblical Seminary as a young married couple in 1955 and worked under Dr. Kline's leadership until his retirement in 1965. Since then I have had the privilege of visiting them in their retirement home in USA. We have maintained regular links with their son, Harvey and their daughter, Helen. Our early years in India were shaped by their wise and gracious counsel and we were inspired by their consistent lifestyle, their genuine friendship with people in the town and their commitment to Christ's mission in the world. We thank God for every memory of them both.

I believe that the 21st century will be God's *kairos* time for evangelical leadership in the churches in India. Our founding Principal would have added, 'provided we are totally committed to the Lordship of Jesus Christ and the guidance of the Holy Spirit'. He would also have affirmed the priority of the faithful exegesis of Scripture, the relevant interpretation of God's word for our fragmented and fallen society and Christ's call to mission in the world.

THE CHANGING MARKET PLACES OF INDIA

In our own context, we are called to proclaim by word, deed and life that Jesus Christ is Lord of the market place. The dynamic centre of any nation is the market place. This is the place where people meet to buy and sell and to exercise political rights and power. It is the meeting point of ethnic and social communities with the babble of languages each competing for supremacy. The market place is the focal point for education, medical care, maintenance of law and order, and provision of social services. It is the cultural centre for the arts, for entertainment and for sport. Above all, it is the nerve centre for the practice of religious faith or ideology and its propagation. The communication and propaganda media through T.V., video, films and radio are aimed at the people of the market place.

Market places are found in every city, town and village. With the growth of cities in number and size, they have become the decision-making centres of the nation. The city reflects the best of human creativity, scientific advance and human idealism but also the worst of human greed, violence and oppression leading to poverty and suffering. In one sense, the plurality of cultures of our nation change little; in another sense, they are changing rapidly with the impact of urbanization, modern technology, education and travel.

Every market place, whether large or small, has become a mosaic of cultures, ancient and modern. The conflict of the ages is nowhere more evident today than in India and in China—nations which are destined to dominate the 21st century. Early in the next century, 50% of the population of India will live in towns and cities. The percentage is now 30. The market places of our urban cities are impacting our national cultures, even down to the smallest village. Values and social structures of centuries of tradition will continue while urban society is caught in the conflict between its religious and caste

culture of the past and the secular and materialistic culture of the present and the future. Massive migrations from the villages to the cities are taking place everywhere in India. People uprooted from their culture are vulnerable and open to change. T.V., especially foreign T.V., video and films are creating new and hedonistic felt needs. We are in transition from a controlled or command economy to a free market and open economy. One of the results of this is the expanding middle class—symbolized by the possession of colour T.V. in the homes, a scooter or a car, English education for their children and expensive holidays.

Where culture changes rapidly, culture shock and stress result, exacerbated by the breakdown of marriages as more wives attain freedom and become financially independent. Escalating bribery and corruption in every facet of living bring increased marginalization and stress to the lives of ordinary people caught in the web of powerlessness and oppression. Those below the poverty line struggle to survive and to maintain some personal and family dignity as they become poorer and poorer. Those who own land or property or who exercise political and economic power are struggling to protect themselves from the very stresses that overwhelm the poor and powerless.

One third of the people of our four main cities live in dehumanizing slums and seem powerless to liberate themselves. They have little motivation or will to break out of their ghettos and alas! when some do, they begin to oppress their own people. National efforts to liberate the large Dalit community with empowered voting and reservation has brought some justice to these oppressed and marginalized poor, but at the cost of growing violence and retaliation by the upper castes and by the political power brokers.

If culture is 'the design for living', of any given community of people in the interaction of their traditional religious world views and values with the changing environment, then the most significant change in cultures is their increasing complexity. As more people with diverse backgrounds interact, their cultures become more diverse and complex. As people travel and migrate, as the mass communication media create new signs, symbols and myths, people find themselves living in a plurality of cultures. The business man or office worker lives in one culture in the office, and another at the club and a third in his/her home. The common missiological practice of defining people by 'people groups' is perhaps a too simplistic analysis of our complex changing social structures.

As practising Christians, do we have a coherent yet open understanding of the gospel within this diversity? By its very nature, fundamentalism cannot cope with rapid change. It resorts to violence and oppression to retain its cultural purity. This is true of all fundamentalist movements whether Hindu or Muslim where life is imprisoned in a culture bound life set. Similarly Christian fundamentalism is unable to meet the challenge of this growing complexity of culture. It is in danger of retreating into a narrow pietistic ghetto.

The challenge of Christ's lordship over culture and the market place is a challenge to be faithful to the givenness of revelation and the relevance and flexibility of the cultural change. All too often, church planting is reduced to rescuing individuals, not to the transforming of whole communities; evangelism is individualistic with little attention to the social fabric of family life. As our cities expand and the conflict of cultures becomes more intense, our churches appear to be unable to meet the challenge. While churches are growing among the unreached tribal communities, they are not keeping up with the growth of large cities. The challenge of the city market place is the challenge of the future.

MISSIOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVES ON JESUS CHRIST AS LORD OF THE MARKET PLACE

Here we focus on three perspectives of Jesus Christ as Lord of Creation, Lord of History and Lord of Liberation and Redemption.

A. Jesus Christ as Lord of Creation

In the opening prologue of John's Gospel, the author targets both Jewish and Gentile readers. To the Hebrew, the Word has creative power with its own independent existence so that the Word of God is a substitute name for God himself. To the Greek, the Word of God was the reason of God, the principle of order and rationality that controls and pervades the universe. It is the power that keeps the universe going. In the opening verse of the prologue, the Word is eternal; it is with God and is God. The Word is personalized for 'through him all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made'. The Creator as Word of God has become flesh and tabernacled among us (v. [14](#)). He reflects the glory of the Father and is full of grace and truth.

Paul takes up this theme and gives an in-depth theological reflection on the reality of God incarnated in Jesus Christ. In his Christological hymn ([Col. 1:15–20](#)), Paul declares that Jesus Christ is the exact image of the invisible God. In him, God who is invisible becomes visible, for in him, the fullness of Godhead dwells. He is the Lord of creation for he is God. This is the foundation pillar of Christ's lordship in the market place.

Christ is supreme over all creation for 'by him all things were created and for him'. He expands 'all things' to include the total cosmos, earth and heaven, all that is visible and invisible, so that nothing is outside his creative act. He is eternally prior to all things and in him all things hold together (v. 2017) so he holds together everything in unity and perfect harmony. Without his sovereign control, the universe would disintegrate with an atomic bang.

How then does this exalted picture of Christ's lordship over creation, speak to our village and urban market places which so often seem to be in the power of spiritual forces antagonistic to Christ? The reality of the conflict between the kingdom of God and the kingdom of Satan is fully acknowledged in Scripture but Paul reminds us that Christ through the cross has disarmed the powers and authorities and made a public spectacle of them as Rome did of enemies in a victory parade ([Col. 2:15](#)). This conflict of the two kingdoms is here reflected in the contradictions of the market place. On the one hand, the market place testifies to God's activity, for here we see the greatness of humankind through grand architecture, aesthetically pleasing sculptures, beautiful designs in clothing, furniture and pottery, the wonders of T.V. and computers. All these reflect the greatness of humanity created in the image of God. At the same time, we see the consequences of human rebellion and sin, in poverty, uncollected garbage, disease and death, noise and pollution, violence and oppression. These evils exist by the permissive will of God, for Satan, though vanquished, is not yet destroyed. His end is the final lake of fire. To those who reject his reign, Jesus Christ becomes judge and in the end they are banished from the presence of Christ and his kingdom to a final judgment of remorse and unrelieved guilt. It is by faith that we see Christ's victory now, to be realized at his coming on Judgment Day when he hands over the 'kingdom to God the Father after he has destroyed all dominion, authority and power' ([1 Cor. 15:24](#)). It is this assurance of faith that enables us his disciples to persevere in the confidence that he shall reign and that in the day of his triumph, every knee shall bow and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord ([Philp. 2:10f](#)).

With this confidence in the sovereignty of Christ's reign, we are able to endorse Abraham Kuyper's famous statement made on the occasion of the founding of the Free University of Amsterdam, 'There is not one inch of any sphere of life over which Christ the Lord does not say "mine"'. In this sense, eschatology is realized now, but its confirmation

is not yet. Therefore, along with the heroes of faith, we claim Christ's lordship over every market place in India. This lordship may not become visible during our lifetime but we believe it will happen, provided the church is faithful to her calling.

The coming fulfilment of this vision is graphically portrayed in the description of the Holy City, the New Jerusalem coming out of heaven ([Rev. 21:2](#)). Our God is the Creator, Sustainer and Saviour of the city, the citadel of humankind's habitation.

B. Christ as Lord of History and the Church

Having affirmed the supremacy of Christ in Creation, Paul adds, 'He is head of the body, the church' ([Col. 1:18](#)). The Lord Jesus Christ is the head of the church because he is the lord of History. He, the transcendent God became imminent in his Creation. The Bible portrays God as a God who acts in human history, beginning with Abraham, the wandering pilgrim in the land of Canaan. God revealed himself as a covenant-making and covenant-keeping God with the repeated promise, 'I will be your God and you shall be my people.' This covenant he confirmed through numerous theophanies which we may interpret as appearance of the second person of the Trinity, the pre-incarnate Son of God. The ups and downs of the history of the Hebrews is a testimony of God's faithfulness to his purpose, for in the fullness of time, God became incarnate in the womb of the Virgin Mary. All the creeds of the early church give testimony to this central belief of incarnation. For Christian belief, God in history is fundamental. If Jesus was not born as described in Scripture, if he did not die on the cross (as Muslims suggest), if he did not rise from the dead as many Christian sceptics declare, then, says Paul, our belief is in vain.

This affirmation of God acting in history is already having a profound impact on the major community of India. Fifty years ago, Gandhiji was not concerned whether Krishna or Rama or Jesus never lived. The myths that surround them were themselves the reality. But not so now; Hindu fundamentalists take history seriously; otherwise why would they fight for the preservation of the exact spot at Ayodhya where Rama was born? This necessity of history is one sign of Christ's coming reign in the market places of India. God's covenant relationship with his people reaches a new level of reality in the promise of a new covenant given to the prophet Jeremiah, that God would write his laws on the hearts and minds of his people, that their sins would be forgiven and their shame and guilt blotted out and that all would know him without social distinction ([Jer. 31:31-34](#)). Jesus taught that this covenant was actualized in himself and sealed in his cross. History then has become his story and alone gives meaning to our story and experience. When Christ came, the kingdom became visible. For the Christian, history is no longer a cyclic story of endless rebirths like the seasons of the year; rather it points to a glorious fulfilment when Christ shall return.

The New Testament portrays the church as the sign that Christ the King has come. He announced the kingdom with the words 'the time has come. The kingdom of God is near. Repent, believe the good news' ([Mark 1:14f](#)). The church then is sign to the world that the kingdom has been made visible. She is the body of Christ, his bride. He is her head; just as the body is dependent on the head for its source of life so the church is dependent on Christ, the head. In response to Peter's affirmation of the deity and lordship of Christ, our Lord declared to Peter that upon him and his confession, he would build his church and the gates of hell would not prevail against it ([Matt. 16:13-20](#)).

If Christ is to be the Lord of the market place, he must first be Lord of the church, for in the words of the Lausanne Covenant, 'The Church is at the very center of God's cosmic purpose and is His appointed means of spreading the Gospel. But a Church which preaches the Cross must itself be marked by the Cross.' (Section 6).

Every time I visit Seoul, the capital of Korea, I am inspired by this sign of Christ's reign, for there the sign of a Cross is lifted up over 8000 churches. Every morning of the year the ringing shout of 'Hallelujah!' by thousands of Christians as they end their dawn prayer meetings, symbolizes Christ's lordship over his people. At the beginning of this century, there were only a few thousand Christians in Korea; today 50% of the people of Seoul acknowledge Jesus Christ as Lord. But for the church to impact the whole society it needs to be constantly reformed and renewed under the lordship of Christ. Only where Christ is Lord is his kingdom visible.

The true church bears witness to the transforming power of the Cross and she participates in the resurrection life of her Lord. He is the first fruits that guarantee the coming resurrection of all believers. The resurrection is the bridge between Creation and the church. Christ calls us to break out of our ecclesiastical ghetto and be salt and light in society. Church growth of itself is no guarantee of Christ's lordship in the market place. For too long practising and believing Christians sanctioned slavery, then apartheid, and now caste distinctions within the church. For Christ to reign, the church must be in the world, but not of it.

The implication of this understanding of mission is critical to the life of any seminary, including the Union Biblical Seminary. Our impact on the city of Pune must begin with our involvement in the life of the churches of this city. Our forty weekend teams in the churches of Pune must have a clear focus in their calling as agents of renewal through example and teaching, and as witnesses penetrating the whole of society with the good news of Jesus Christ. In most cases, evangelism is the fruit of compassionate service and prophetic justice rather than its precursor.

From this it follows that those who teach in our seminaries must be men and women who share this vision, who have a background of in-depth pastoral and evangelistic experience and who are living models for students to follow. As I reflect on my own theological training, I see that I was more influenced and moulded by the character, lifestyle and church involvement of my teachers than by what I remember of their classroom lectures, however erudite they were. Let this be true of all of us called to the ministry of teaching and administration.

This church-centred priority must be reflected in the spiritual formation of our students. Daily worship in the chapel, mastering the skills and discipline of expository preaching and teaching, grappling with the contextual issues of a market place theology, evidencing a passionate love for people and having a burning desire to make Christ known must shape the life of our seminary community. Our goal is more than to impart academic knowledge, important as this is; it is to shape the life and message of those entrusted to our care for four years of training. Our focus must be on what the student becomes more than on the examinations he or she needs to pass.

In the past, we have been blessed with the privileges of freedom of worship and the propagation of our faith as guaranteed by the Constitution of India. Tomorrow this situation may change. We have to prepare ourselves for days of restriction and even persecution. But we do not fear, for we know from history that when the church is persecuted it is purified and nothing can stop its growth. The recent history of the church in China and in Nepal bears witness to the growth of the church and her impact on society.

C. Jesus Christ, Liberator and Lord of Redemption

Christ's work on the cross was both an act of reconciliation and the beginning of a process. Christ calls us to love our Lord with all our being and our neighbour as ourselves. We cannot obey one without obeying the other. Therefore evangelism is inseparable from compassion and servanthood and from striving for peace and justice in society. John

affirms the universality of our Lord's saving love when he writes, 'for he is the atoning sacrifice for our sins, and not for ours only but also for the sins of the whole world' ([1 John 2:2](#)). Redemption begins with the individual and the family but must extend to the community and to the nation. Liberation begins with the poor and the powerless but its goal is freedom for everyone, light penetrating the darkness and salt permeating the whole in order that society may be renewed and evil restrained. The goal of the gospel of the kingdom is to bring all powers and authorities under Christ's rule. While conversion to Christ is central to our missiological goal God's plan of redemption is all-embracing. It is not limited to the redemption of individuals; it includes all of God's handiwork, for God not only forgives our sins but also heals our diseases ([Ps. 103:3](#)). A major part of Jesus' three brief years of ministry was devoted to meeting the needs of society—healing the sick, giving sight to the blind, releasing women entrapped in bondage and feeding the hungry. The restoring of creation was never far from his preaching. His parables are drawn primarily from nature and from human experience. Christ's work of redemption culminated in victory over death itself. The resurrection of the body points to the redemption of the whole person—body, mind and spirit—and the goal of the good news is the promise of a new earth and a new heaven wherein dwells righteousness ([2 Pet. 3:13](#)). The whole of creation is now 'subject to frustration', and 'under bondage of decay' and groans as a woman in the pains of childbirth ([Rom. 8:19-22](#)). The promise of the liberation of creation from the dominion of evil is seen in the vision of peace in the city, in community and in nature ([Isa. 11:1-9](#); [65:17-25](#)). It will be consummated at the end of time with the coming of the new Jerusalem and the healing of the nations by the leaves of the tree of life ([Rev. 22:2](#)). Concern for the environment is not an extra beyond mission but an integral part of it. It is the cosmic dimension of salvation. I dream of the day when UBS will be offering an M.Th. in Ecology with a specific focus on the redemption of the market place.

We want the campus of UBS to be a signpost to our stewardship of creation and our involvement in its renewal. We are landscaping the whole of our campus that it may be a garden of thankfulness to our Creator and offered to the glory of God. This means more than the planting of trees; it means accepting the self-discipline of garbage control, the careful use of water and electricity, cleanliness and tidiness in our hostels and homes, respect for seminary property and voluntary service to maintain UBS as a garden unto the Lord, knowing that one day we will all have to give an account of our stewardship. Service in the Campus is but a school of discipline for service in the community. Every day a hundred women come to our Community Development Center for training in income-generating skills. They come from three nearby slums. Their goodwill is a bridge for teams of students to minister to them in their community by teaching literacy, hygiene, garbage collection and community well-being. Another challenge opening up before us is the approaching crisis of HIV positive and AIDS victims. Pune is known to have one of the highest number of people under the judgment of this painful death. The next ten years will witness an explosion of opportunity to help with compassion those who are dying of such dreaded diseases. In addition public agencies in Pune that are concerned to preserve and restore the environment are inviting us to work with them. Can we see this as part of God's calling to mission and evangelism? When our students see fruit from their ministry among the poor and oppressed as well as among the rich and the student class, this will be a sign that Christ is extending the frontiers of his lordship over the market places of Pune.

CONCLUSION

This comprehensive and integrated understanding of our missiological task bears implications for the future directions of our Seminary.

Our primary calling is to train pastors, teachers, evangelists and cross-cultural missionaries for the ministries of the church and mission agencies across this vast nation of India and beyond. As we begin our post-graduate department of training at the level of M.Th. and eventually Ph.D., we will be preparing teachers for the growing number of seminaries and colleges across India who are in urgent need of qualified staff. There are probably two hundred such institutions which need our help. The Pentecostal families of churches alone sponsor more than seventy Bible Schools at various levels.

As our theology of the market place deepens and our commitment to Christ's lordship over the whole of society is strengthened so our seminary must expand its ministries to work with the lay leaders of our churches and the Christian decision-makers in secular employment. We have already begun an annual short course in Marathi for village elders who have been sponsored by their respective churches. UBS has a long experience in extension education in English, Marathi and Hindi with excellent teaching materials prepared over the years. However, these are in need of constant revision and new courses are needed. We cannot meet the challenge of lay training alone and we look forward to pooling teaching materials with other like-minded seminaries. We are exploring the possibility of expanding our extension education programme to include evening classes of one month course modules in the major cities of Maharashtra and even beyond to New Delhi. It is indeed tragic that two of the great cities of India, Mumbai and New Delhi have little or no effective training at the graduate level for those whose ministry is primarily in the market places of our society. As a seminary, we must face in two directions, the church and the world and live with the tension of serving both.

As UBS explores the possibility of partnership with other colleges and with the churches we serve, may we be empowered by the Holy Spirit to be agents of change in a confused world, ever testifying to the changelessness of Jesus Christ, the Lord of the market place.

We thank God for the late Frank and Betty Kline, for their vision of fifty years ago and for the privilege of following in their footsteps, training men and women to be ambassadors of the Lord Jesus Christ in the churches and in the market places of our world.

Dr Bruce Nicholls, now resident in Auckland, New Zealand, is engaged in writing and editing and in lecturing widely in Asia.

The Renewal of the Church

James Wong

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In this paper presented at the recent Asia Leadership Conference on Evangelism, Canon Wong traces the major renewal movements in the church from Pentecost to the