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The World We Face

A Response of the Local Church to the World

Our Response as Christians

We Are Inhabitants

Our Response to Other Christians in this World
The World We Face

JOHN C. HOAGLAND

Over 1900 years ago God’s only Son said to his followers: “Go into the whole world and preach the gospel to all mankind.”

The world is still there, confronting the church. What is our response to it in this day?

Our question is HOW shall we today plan and move to see God’s Word obeyed and fulfilled?

Or, is there no solution to the problems of the world that we face? Can the world be evangelized? Can the good news be given to all men? Can we find an appropriate Christian response? What kind of a world do we face? — this world, in which we find ourselves — this world that we are commanded to serve and to which we have been commissioned to communicate the love of God in Christ Jesus.

The planet which the human race occupies is a part of an incredibly immense and complex universe. This universe is said to be billions of years of age and known to be 1.4 times 10 to the 22nd power miles from edge to opposite edge.

It is possibly expanding at near the speed of light in all directions. Even though our planet is a small, microscopic part of our universe it is also incomprehensibly complex. Why should we expect it to be otherwise?

Our race, living in the lower atmosphere of this planet, is a world made up of many sub-worlds.

How can God be made known through Christ to the whole globe’s inhabitants in the few years God has given us?

As our ancient sun’s light bathes our race today, it reveals men with a new universal consciousness. But how can this awareness be used to renew man’s sensitivity to the Creator who made him?

The greatest concentrations of human beings in all of history are distributed around the earth with no apparent attention to the ability of the soil to support them. Masses of people live on flood plains, such as the Mexican gulf coast, where year after year many are lost to the natural processes of the planet. Asia, Europe and the eastern United States are examples.

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States support huge blocks of population while other equally fertile lands remain relatively undeveloped.

Man does not know how to understand and manage his own numerical increase. It is estimated that the earth’s population has doubled a total of 31 times and will double again in 36 years or less. Estimates indicate that at the time of Christ there were 250 million people. This number barely doubled by the year 1600. By the time of the U.S. Civil War the earth’s population could no longer be counted in millions; it had to be counted in billions. Estimates of world population today indicate about 3½ billion people. If we continue to multiply at the present rate, at the time of the thirty-second doubling, by or about the year 2000, we will be 7 billion souls. We may double again then, in 15 or 20 years and again in eight. If the present rate of increase holds at only 2% per year, in less than 130 years we will be 70 billion human beings. Today there are almost as many people living as have previously lived altogether in man’s whole history!

Of all that we know and are relearning about our human mass, which sets of facts are most important? There are places on the populated surface of the earth where there is a birth rate of over 4.5%, considered by experts to be of the highest order. The Near East, South and West Central Africa, Northern and South America, parts of Southeast Asia—these all have an incredibly high birth rate.

At the same time there are areas of the world where the death rate is 2% or over — most of inhabited Africa, all of the Middle East, and all of Southeast Asia.

The result of this tremendous increase means more and more people crowded into cities. Strip cities stretching from Boston to Washington, from San Francisco to San Diego, and one continuous city along the coast of China may soon be realities. We must ask, if our social conditions are so affected by over population now, what shall they be then?

Our view from the over-privileged hill of the western world is distorted by our exceptionally high standard of living. How can we understand poverty? On a global basis the average income per year is $200 per person. The average United States personal income is $3159. And yet North American Christians spend less than 400 million dollars per year to share Jesus Christ with the rest of the race ($1.63 per American). Though we make up only about 6% of the earth’s population, we in the U.S. control more than 50% of all the world’s wealth. The gross national product of the United States may have already exceeded one trillion dollars. Do we have any ability to understand what life is like at this subsistence level? What do we have to say to some machine operator in Hong Kong who no matter how hard he works will never have any excess above that needed to sustain life? If we are to learn and know and understand our human family and to inform every person of the Savior, how shall we begin to relate to them?

The recommended daily minimum adult protein requirement is one gram of protein for every kilogram of body weight. Thus, a 154 pound man requires an average of 49 grams of protein. Most of the world’s population receives less than 30 grams of protein per day. Malnutrition follows largely the same geographic pattern as other indicators of human need and deprivation. What is it like to have a stomach that aches all the time?

We in the United States have a life expectancy of over 60 years. Almost all people in Africa can expect to live no more than 40 years. In most of Latin America, the Middle East and India the average person may expect to live less than 60 years.

Christianity is based on the written Word. How many people can read it? In most of Asia, most of Africa and the Middle East, and parts of Latin America, only 200 out of 1000 or 20% can learn the secrets to be found in books or can read the instructions on medicine bottles if they had the medicine. Only two out of ten can understand a tract or Bible portion if it is given to them, can read or understand a Bible correspondence follow-up course.

Or how shall we relate to people for whom medicine is perhaps effectually non-existent? For over half the world there is only one doctor and dentist for every 100,000 people or more. One dental survey in Vietnam indicated almost every child had a toothache. By comparison, the average in the United States is 750 people for each doctor alone. Most people in the world have to stand in a line of at least 100,000 people for either a doctor or a dentist.

Significant groups of human beings remain acutely belligerent. Conflicts have increased since World War II. Since the turn of the century we have experienced more than 125 significant, separate conflicts, over 70 of them since 1940. Most of this century’s wars have occurred or have been bred in the underdeveloped lands, 95 of the total taking place in Asia, Africa and the Middle East.

The break up of colonial empires with new nations sensing a new freedom has spread the conflicts. More weapons have been readily available since the second World War. Peace-keeping agencies have been on the whole ineffective. There has been an increase of guerrilla warfare. The eastern hemisphere including Africa and Europe has been the site of 110 conflicts—in the last 70 years. Asia has had 40. The total cost of only the eight most deadly hostilities in this period was 63,500,000 human lives. Of these at least 36,230,000 have been civilians. This means a total loss due to military and political conflicts of at least 900,000 persons per year over the 70-year period ending in 1968.

Symbolic of the increasing imbalance in our environment is the growing surplus of carbon monoxide—invisible, odorless and toxic gas. Fuel oil, tobacco and gasoline all
contain carbon which yield carbon monoxide when burned. This substance is known to be capable of producing loss of energy and other mentally and physically crippling effects upon humans. It becomes dangerous to humans when found in only ten parts per million parts of air. It has become a favorite form of suicide. The Northern Hemisphere is said to contain over 90% of the world's carbon monoxide. As urbanization and industrialization spread to other areas, carbon monoxide will increase.

More and more "usable" resource molecules are being removed from the environment and being suspended as "user" molecules in the physical make-up of the human and other biologic populations. These "users" in turn require more "usables" for maintaining their systems. As this occurs there are fewer resource molecules available for use and the ratio of usable to user molecules decreases. Thus conservation and management of environmental resources are inseparably tied to the size of the using human population and the extent and distribution of its technology. Gruesome predictions are increasing as to what this imbalance will mean to our children and their children unless concerted and sustained effort is made soon.

What is our response? Shall we carry on as we are, hoping against hope that the visible church in the world will somehow overcome the obstacles to love and communicate, and, in the end, miraculously have been enabled to evangelize these masses? By then, we may be bearing and multiplying and foraging about the land and seas like microbes, bent primarily on instinctual survival.

From a percentage viewpoint, the church of Jesus Christ is losing ground rapidly. Two-thirds of the world's people live in countries where less than 5% of the population claims to be Christian. Or do missions really begin at home? Should we in the countries now sending out missionaries specialize for 50 years among the young people at home where cities burn, races shout and the fires of overall devotion flicker and threaten to go out?

How much time have we left for research and how much time can we afford to spend in planning to make the key decisions? We do not yet know.

How do we plan into our developing programs the options which time and population growth require? How do we plan to give every person in the mass a genuine opportunity to accept Jesus Christ? We do not yet know.

We do not yet know enough about our own human race, its languages, its patterns of thought and mind, in order to make a personal Christ known to each person in the race in a way that he may truly hear and truly understand and truly believe.

We do know that yesterday's tools are not evangelizing today's race and that they will not evangelize the race of tomorrow. The evangelization of tomorrow's race requires tomorrow's man of God and the tools of tomorrow.

In view of current and foreseeable trends in population, secularism and preoccupation with pleasure, our best efforts represent perhaps only a token beginning of Christian presence after all.

With all of the accumulated learning of civilization behind us, apparently not one single thought has ever been effective-ly communicated to the entire race by any person or group which set out to do so. Why do we think that we, a small segmented minority, can accomplish global evangelism now, at this late date?

Human individuals and groups, for all their similarities, possess differences which to date seem to preclude a standard approach to them. Thus, understandable communication with them on any level of their social organizations has often been difficult, if not impossible. Where we have learned to penetrate the comprehension of one group, we have not yet learned to modify, with regular success, to another group.

The range of conditions affecting human welfare and potential may be so wide as to forestall effectual total consideration of man. How can he be influenced as a mass group to his maximum benefit? We do not yet know. We need to know a great deal more than the conclusions and insights of dated classic research and statistical estimates.

If the world is just now new — as one biologist has said —if our family of man survives to the year 2000, our social order and style of life will be totally unrecognizable from what it is today. If we are — as one human race — well into the beginnings of one last irreversible transition to the unknown — how can you and I now begin newly to pray, to think, to feel and to love a whole new world of a new kind of man? Upon our God-given ability to do this the issue may well depend.

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The 70s have dawned and everything is up for grabs — including the organized church. Of all the forms and structures which denominations have put together in this country and abroad, the one most likely to retain a viable life and a capacity to respond to the very immediate world of people in communities is the local congregation. The interlocking network of local congregations is the chief resource that the body of Christ has, and will continue to have insofar as the expression of its mission is concerned. Historically many Protestants have concurred that the church exists in a meaningful way wherever the word is faithfully proclaimed, the sacraments celebrated, and the disciplines of the brotherhood maintained. No other vehicle has provided a context for the expression of these internal conditions like the local congregation.

Whatever response has been made to the world by the church in the past and whatever will be made on any level in the future will depend ultimately upon the health and spiritual vigor of the gathered church in given communities. Pontifical declarations are irrelevant except as they reflect the level of support and commitment that local congregations bring together. The acting out of justice and righteousness in response to the world, and in light of such declarations, can happen only in the local church or some extension of it. Indeed, if the response of the church to the issues of our time is to be more than an academic sputtering its expressions of concern must be enunciated and acted out where the people are, in the context of the variables of urban, suburban and rural life. The local church is the cell group of the kingdom, and will continue to be the fellowship where movement, growth and response in obedience to the gospel must take place. To be sure, the form in which the local church will live, its structures for program, the nature and even the wisdom of the facilities it provides will be vastly affected by present and impending pressures around it.

It can be affirmed that a response by the local congregation to the world as it is today is out of the question until local congregations discover their unique capacity to be the instrument for communicating the gospel in a great variety of ways. The agony and the ecstasy of the church in the 70s must include the process of finding its own unique role and identity under God as a movement among movements. I prefer the term "movement" to describe the church because at its best it is in truth the moving body of Christ abroad in the world, alive, vigorous, compelling. If it is thought of as "institution" or "organization" alone, the genius of its survival under the Holy Spirit is overlooked. In truth, the organized forms of the church at any given time on any level of its expressed life may seem essential — but are never indispensable. We can expend many structured forms, and historically have left the hulks of many such behind us. But the body of Christ lives because of the supernatural resources that motivate God's people, and the sense of oneness that they
have with the Lord of the church. This resource can never be adequately catalogued or its capacity for response underrated. There have been too many eras in which at the time of greatest uncertainty the church has demonstrated God’s ability to invade human history with a redemptive force that has been both authentic and timely.

This struggle to find the meaning of “church,” and to learn again the uniqueness and identity of the body of Christ appears to be most public in the Roman Catholic church. In a lesser, but equally demanding fashion, it is beginning to grip Protestantism. The capacity and the will of the local congregation to respond to the great issues determining the future of mankind will be found only in the context of this struggle to self-discovery. Such discovery implies, for the church, the rediscovery of Jesus Christ who is at the heart of his people. The struggle has just begun. To date, despite all the structured efforts to that end, the fact remains that the local church has yet to find itself.

A response to the world will require an honest confrontation with our historic roots as Christians. The aimless drifting of the 60s must be replaced by a recovered sense of purpose that appropriates from our past that sense of continuity — that sense of “Christ in us” which is the hope of glory.

Along with this, Christians in congregations must become theologians again. When our will to hear God is balanced by an equal will to hear the world, we shall begin to touch the life of that world as a reconciling and healing extension of Jesus Christ. Contemplation of theological truth by itself can make monastics of us and make way for another “dark age.” Contemplation that opens windows to insight and doors to movement is required.

In a very real way the discovery of its own unique nature will be for the church a kind of initial response to the world. This is true because the church of Jesus Christ can never discover itself outside the total context of life in a given world, plagued by a given set of tragedies, and challenged by an array of exciting options that offer hope for the future. In a future-oriented age, the church will find herself in both the contemplation of the word that comes from above, and the word that is communicated on the streets. Her first response is to listen and to observe. To really see again and hear again is not only a liberation for the people of God, but a ministry of significant dimensions to the people of the secular community for whom the opening of communication is prelude to their liberation as well.

Without this discovery that leads to renewal, evangelization of our vast race is out of the question. Evangelism happens in the context of relationships between persons and groups. In such God can work and speak. It is increasingly evident that failure in evangelism over this past decade has been a direct reflection of the failure to understand the word and the world.

For many a local congregation the self-discovery about which we speak will be both a voluntary quest and at times a forced confrontation. As a drowning man reportedly sees a flashback of his life, so the church beset by the awesome waves of change in the world will be confronted by a forced exposure to its own past. There will be much that will cause sorrow. The essence of the church’s life locally and in the broader spectrum of history solicits both thanksgiving and cries of anguish. The “woe is me” of the prophet must be forced upon us ere we can say to God in face of such a world: “Here we are! Send us!” The factors that will separate the men from the boys in this struggle to renewal in the local congregation, and that will determine whether congregations live or die, are not the formidable challenges of the world, but the presence or absence of a formidable will to repentence, obedience and faith within the brotherhood.

It is obvious that the church on any level can not survive, let alone respond, if it is determined to carry with it into the future the excess baggage of its own eccentricities. It must leave behind both its burden of guilt and its will to keep on sinning against its Lord and the demands of ministry in his world. The doctrine of the separated life properly understood can be utilized to enhance our integrity before the world. But the twisted version which implies the isolated life only throttles relevant proclamation and contributes to our institutional paranoia, and our schizoid attitudes toward real involvements in a very real and very demanding world. The congregation that mimics the proverbial brass monkeys will die. Better to fail than not to see, not to hear, not to speak.

Such prophecies are predicated on the hope of renewal. It must leave behind both its burden of guilt and its will to keep on sinning against its Lord and the demands of ministry in his world. The doctrine of the separated life properly understood can be utilized to enhance our integrity before the world. But the twisted version which implies the isolated life only throttles relevant proclamation and contributes to our institutional paranoia, and our schizoid attitudes toward real involvements in a very real and very demanding world. The congregation that mimics the proverbial brass monkeys will die. Better to fail than not to see, not to hear, not to speak.

Our fear of the world out there must go. And with it the fear of risk and of failure. Our reluctance to “fear” God has made these other fears our undoing. A responsible response to the world can begin when a sobered congregation of open disciples emerges from this agony of renewal. A great deal that has “made the church” must now be shaken down so that as the writer to the Hebrews puts it, “what cannot be shaken may remain” (Heb. 12:27).

As an awareness of itself must precede a response to the world, so an awareness of the world will determine the nature of the response. The responding congregation must develop a life style garbed in realism. The chastening of God is worth the agony if out of it can come an alert and liberated congregation capable of making an intelligent response to the issues of the world.

In that world the congregation must appreciate and appropriate those gifts from Christ that equip the church to be a unique community. A capacity for forgiveness, acceptance and love characterize the community of faith. As these qualities flower in the brotherhood, the honesty and integrity that follow will produce a style of life and a liturgy for mission appropriate not only to persons in the brotherhood, but men in the world for whom the brotherhood is willing to give its life. Such a will to share these authentic and longed for qualities, and indeed to take high risks for other men, will solicit in turn a response by the world. The youth culture around us is demanding integrity and authenticity in human relationships and commitments. The congregation that survives into and beyond the 70s can not be phony. Herein lies a portion of the response that is evangelism. Without such, men will have no message and no life to which they can respond with hope.

A response in the context of realism will alter the view we have of the world. The gossamer shrouds that have screened the world and kept evangelicals particularly aloof and afraid will begin to evaporate. Along with a new realism about Scripture, theology and prayer, there will come a new understanding of life and of man. No congregation that has lost its capacity to respect the personhood of any man can long survive, let alone respond.

Such prophecies are predicated on the hope of renewal. It
remains to be seen if that reawakening will be brought forth in congregations as we know them, or whether many of them must die while new life begins as a work of the Holy Spirit quite outside and apart from organized Christianity. Whatever, God will produce a viable witness to himself, and will resurrect his church in those forms most appropriate to his purpose in the world. To lose this vision is to despair, for it is apparent that congregations as we know them hardly are equipped for survival, let alone response, apart from an act of God.

The congregations that will emerge will respond to the world in a number of broad categories. Some are already seen as valid and essential dimensions of mission. Apart from occasional demonstrations of obedience, however, the landscape is still quite barren of significant response. But I believe it is possible and believe it is coming.

For one thing, in a world of vast change the need for acceptance, fellowship, love and communication between persons will intensify. I anticipate an opening of the congregation to a new inclusiveness. This will be a response to the vast aloneness of men. It will be the extending of a unique kind of community in the name of Christ. This openness will not be a kind of eclectic spasm. Such only reduces the stature of discipleship and limits the uniqueness of the brotherhood.

Rather this new inclusiveness will open the way for sensitive and searching men to probe the faith as inquirers while being accepted in a warm fellowship whose garments of superficial judgment have been properly discarded. The movement of such into full discipleship will be a process within a community of acceptance, sharing and learning. These "proselytes of the gate" will become not only a potential source of new and well taught disciples, but a viable extension of the antenna of the local church into the life style of its immediate parish. The strain of attitudinal change required for such a response to the world can be understood when we compare the exclusive nature of many current congregations.

In the world this renewed congregation will do justice and will do righteousness. This serious concern for the needs of men will consider not only the ecology of our physical environment, but the whole matter of impoverishment as it affects the total process of life together on this small, complex, and in some ways fragile planet.

Advocacy on behalf of change will become an unquestioned response to a real world. It is not so today. In such matters as war and peace, racism, economic development, urban planning, birth control, abortion, the process of government, and the search for insight and truth in their application to life, this liberated congregation will assert once again God's concern for the welfare of mankind.

Herein this new realism will be joined to a new sensitivity that feels the current and the future pulsebeats of man, and selects those directions in mission and witness that join the knowledge of the world and the universe, which is given of God, to the spiritual understanding of man which is also given of God. Out of the rediscovery of God as sovereign and the nature of the kingdom of Christ as a concept somewhat in opposition to our current understanding of "church," there will emerge a new freedom that will permit the local congregation to adapt and to adopt Christian truth in the gospel to the changing needs and concerns of society.

With the necessity, for example, of population control, there must emerge from the church a call for a new understanding of the uniqueness of human life. Since not all possible men shall be or can be born and sustained, we must now learn and teach the need to treasure and honor even more than ever that particular integrity of those persons who have been given that most privileged of all gifts — life. As our Lord gave his life that we might live in him, so we must stand for the dignity of the life that he gives and that he would redeem.

The prophetic call of God's people will invite the world to responsibility beginning where they are, for the world in its large sense ultimately lives and breathes in the context of the local community. The private preferences and self-centered goals will give way to a world and life view that calls for a commitment not only to God but to his world. As Dr. Edward Lindeman, president of Whitworth College and leader in space research, put it recently, there is required for mankind at this juncture a profound "mid-course correction." This world and this life is, after all, all that we have, and freedom to assert its glories and demand its welfare becomes a mandate from God to a renewed and courageous church.

This response to the world will not deny the spiritual. Within the congregation the ministry of sharing and learning will work to expand our understanding of the spiritual sweep of God's encounter with man in Jesus Christ. This response will elevate an awareness of the participation of man with God in time and the continuity of relationships with him beyond. The present bizarre pandering to the occult and the superstitious dimensions in our nation are proof that man, however sophisticated his technology, has an unquenchable yearning for the spiritual. He will cry out for a word from the Almighty. The renewed congregation will respond to that call with a space age comprehension of the New Testament's implications. The word of Paul concerning Christ and his role blows the mind. 'He is before all things, and in Him all things hold together' (Col. 1:17).

In face of new windows opening upon the mysteries of both inner and outer space, and in face of the terrifying potential for breakdown in our spiritual as well as our technological systems, such a word opens us up to hope and to Christ — the Lord of the atom, of space, of conscience, of soul, of mind, and of mechanism. The liberated congregation will respond to the world by calling man to such a God and will demand of men that they set aside their private prerogatives in order to acknowledge the sovereign rule and will of him under whose canopy of grace they already dwell.

His kingdom is not of this world — surely not as we know it. For the world seen through the mists of our prejudice and fear is not the world as seen by him. His kingdom is of another kind of world whose freedom must be translated to our own. Then the kingdoms of this world shall become the kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ who though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied himself, taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men. And being found in human form he humbled himself and became obedient unto death, even death on a cross. Therefore God has highly exalted him and bestowed on him the name which is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every (Continued on page 11, column 2)
Our Response as Christians

ARTHUR F. GLASSER

The past influences the future. Although this truisim tends to be negated by the “Now” generation, we hasten to affirm at the outset that there is a stable, continuing element in the church—the activity of the Spirit of God. And he has begun a work of renewal in the twentieth century that cannot but largely determine the probable course of the church throughout the world in the 70’s. But first, some perspective.

By the 16th century the Medieval Church had become so sub-biblical—intrusted with tradition and defiled by erroneous teaching—that drastic measures were needed to save it. God graciously raised up Luther and through him the Protestant Reformation. He recovered the truth of justification by faith and the priesthood of all believers, and revived the centrality of preaching in the worship of God’s people and their commitment to the Scriptures as the sole authority for faith and practice. But the Reformation fragmented the Church and failed to generate concern for the discipling of the nations. In the years that followed, Protestantism became an arid movement, captured by doctrinal legalism and state church monopolism.

By the 18th century God had to do a new thing that his purpose for the nations be realized. His chief instrument was Wesley and the Evangelical Awakening. Its emphases were distinctive: the possibility of Spirit-inwrought assurance and a life of personal holiness, along with the obligation to win others to Christ. Although largely confined to the English-speaking world, its influence reached many of the churches of the Reformation. To be an “Evangelical” meant more than a commitment to Protestant orthodoxy. Would that the word had retained its precise historic meaning! At any event, without this Awakening there would never have been the modern missionary movement. “Behind Carey was Wesley”—this from the introduction to Carey’s official biography. In time, however, its vitality was lost and the movement crystallized into a legalistic, introverted piety that became defensive, anti-intellectual, world-escaping.

By the 20th century God had to break through once again and release yet more of the latent dynamism within his Church, that it might worship him “in spirit and in truth” and perform its mission in the world.

Currently we are in the midst of what has been variously and incorrectly called the pentecostal, neo-pentecostal, and charismatic movement of the twentieth century. No one term really applies. Despite this ambiguity it appears to bear the same relation to churches of this century that the Evangelical Awakening bore to the churches of the eighteenth century and the Protestant Reformation bore to the Roman Catholic Church of the sixteenth century. These movements always brought both renewal (in part) and schism.

The same is happening today. Few Christians today endorse all that Luther or Calvin, Wesley or Whitefield stood for. But all are grateful for their tremendous service to the cause of Christ and his Church. Likewise, relatively few Christians endorse all the revival and missionary forms of this twentieth century movement.

The next decade will see the urbanization of the world steadily increase. What will the churches be like in the cities of tomorrow? Traditional Roman, Protestant, or Evangelical styles? Hardly. Land is too expensive; building costs too high. Since these types began to fade in the 60’s there is little reason to believe they will be revived in the 70’s, either in North America or overseas.

The emerging urban expression of the church is the small informal group, the Bible study circle with its free personal interaction and its folk music, less didactic one-way communication and more “every member” participation.

Although the valid insights of the Reformer, Evangelicals, and Fundamentalists will doubtless be retained, supplemented by a positive regard for values reminiscent of St. Francis and Augustine, the new style will be an integration of the corporateness that is Christ’s Body and the experiential emphasis of freedom in the Spirit.

If this eventuates, what of the ecumenical movement and the WCC? This twentieth century has not deeply penetrated the ecclesiastical machinery of organized Protestantism. Even though some dispensationalists may persist in their convictions that the WCC is a dynamic monolith of power and destruction, gobbling up churches, suppressing truth, and preparing the way for the Antichrist, there are many who feel that highly institutionalized Christianity is facing a bleak future.

Although the WCC structure is “beyond challenge, the most complex and intricate machinery which this planet has ever witnessed” (Henry P. Van Dusen), it is currently sailing through troubled waters. It is hard-pressed for funds and its programs are being hotly challenged by radicals and conservatives, blacks and whites, young and old. This appears largely due to the commitment of its theologically liberal leadership to the militant advancement of a humanistic form of Christianity that member churches cannot honestly support.

Only two possibilities of response are open to them at this time: either reaffirm the historic biblical faith of the “not so silent majority” of member churches, or persist in the present course that can only lead to further debilitation and irrelevancy. The former alternative may win the day. I sincerely trust so.

When D. T. Niles recently admitted that “much disagreement exists in the

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help the 70’s could conceivably witness a major breakthrough. Think what this could mean in terms of the completion of the mission of the Church—in our generation! And more, the development of strong theological underpinnings for the church growth movement will conceivably produce the spin-off of related theological studies.

Many unresolved problems clamor for attention. How should Christians in Communist countries proclaim the gospel “by word and deed” to the peoples within their societies? How should Christians in countries caught up in rapid social change participate with Christ—the Lamb and the Lion—to serve their fellow-citizens in “all the will of God”? And how should Christians in the Western world maintain the balance between gospel proclamation and the sort of prophetic ministry which is so sorely needed by Christians when their churches have existed for centuries in the midst of appalling personal and social need?

This new linkage between theologians, missionaries, and national church leaders all over the world will not be Western-dominated. Significant stirrings are discernible among younger intellectuals in the churches of Asia, Africa, and Latin America. The 70’s will witness the beginnings of the restatement of biblical and philosophical theologies in such a manner that they speak to the experience and within the thought-forms of the separate cultures of mankind. This shall bring about the long overdue transformation of a Western religion into a universal faith.

The development of indigenous theologies will lead to greater independent action on the part of national church leaders all over the world in the 70’s. The black world is a case in point. In our generation it has broken free from white political rule. We are in the early stages of the beginnings of its break-away from white intellectual domination.

This is marking the end of Africa’s white spiritual domination. This is significant if for no other reason than the large numbers of Christians involved. Africa is the only continent on which the entire Christian community has expanded uniformly from 1910 to the present, twice as fast as its population growth. And the Church continues to outdistance Islam to a marked degree.

This means that Roman Catholic and Protestant churches are facing a potentially terrifying experience in the days ahead. They will witness widespread breakdowns in their organizations because of the sheer clogging of numbers of converts they will not be able adequately to care for. The problem will be the acute lack of sufficiently trained leaders to cope with these masses.

Here is where the extension theological education breakthrough of the 60’s proves so timely. Obviously missionaries will be urgently needed in considerable numbers in the days ahead for this task. Do white Western missionaries, however, have a future in black Africa? My concern is theological. What about their white theology? Let me explain.

The rapid development of black theology in America in the late 60’s may become the focal point of contention. Those who have experienced its elemental rejection of Western white theology will sense the force of my concern. Black theologians contend that Jesus Christ is the Savior who liberates the whole man. Christianity is a “Theology of Liberation.” Black theology has for its context the “black experience” in America. Do you know what this means? A black theologian commences his presentation in the following vein:

We first met the American Christ on slave ships. We heard His name sung in hymns of praise while we died in our thousands, chained in the stinking holds beneath the decks. . . . When our women noticed the great and holy books on the shelves. . . . Our introduction to this Christ was not propitious, and the horrors continued on America’s soil. Many black men reject this Christ—indeed, the miracle is that so many accepted Him. . . . In past times our disdain often had to be stifled and sullen, our anger silent and self-destructive. . . . But now we speak out. . . . We black Christians are now being called upon to choose between death with the American Christ and life with the sufferer.
Class Notes

1950

The class of 1950 Newsletter brings us this information on some alumni we had not reported on for some time:

Bob Gerry has just spent six weeks in the States attending a conference at the Christian Literature Crusade. He serves with that board in Japan.

Wil Salmon and Mildred are home from their third furlough from Pakistan.

1953

Joseph Ryan has joined the staff of World Vision, on special assignment to the Christian Training Center in Los Angeles.

1954

Richard Carr, an Air Force Chaplain, recently returned from a tour of duty in Viet Nam and Thailand. He shared experiences with Fuller students on campus recently.

J. Murray Marshall, pastor of the First Presbyterian Church of Flushing, N.Y., has been elected a vice president on the Latin America Mission board.

1955

Roy Parsons Jr. (MRE) has been appointed area vice president for Africa of the Missionary Aviation Fellowship, which puts Roy in charge of all MAF operations in that continent.

1956

Richard Bnger (MRE) has joined the staff of the First Baptist Church of Tucson, Ariz. He previously had served in West Los Angeles.

1959

Alan Gates and family are on furlough for the summer, from their post in Taiwan.

1960

Richard Bershon, a military chaplain, has gone to Viet Nam.

1964

Robert Gullick (BD’64, ThM’65) has translated a book by Leonard Gappelt which has been published in London as The Apostolic and Post-Apostolic Times.

1966

Douglas Miller has been named assistant professor of Christian social ethics at Eastern Baptist Seminary.

1968

Roy Brewer begins June 1 as minister of the First United Presbyterian Church of Baldwin Park, California.

Calvin Gregory is the new youth minister of the First Baptist Church in Delano, Calif.

John Vvyyan has returned from mission work in Egypt and has begun work in the Th.M. program at Princeton Seminary.

1969

Donald Maddox (X’69) and Joyce are the parents of Andrew, born on March 3.

David Scottcher reports that they have arrived in Guatemala, where they are working under the direction of the National Evangelical Presbyterian Church of Guatemala.

DR. RODDY SUCCUMBS

At press time we were saddened to learn of the death of Dr. Clarence S. Roddy on May 18. Two days earlier he had suffered a massive stroke, and died in Silverton, Ore., where he had been living since his retirement two years ago.

Dr. Roddy had been professor of homiletics and practical theology since 1951, and his life had touched that of each Fuller alumnus.

Mrs. Roddy is living near her daughter, Mrs. Wayne Mueller, in Silverton, Ore.

CARNELL & MORGAN TAPES SOUGHT

The Seminary is searching for tapes of lectures/sermons/discussions of both Edward John Carnell and Jaymes P. Morgan Jr. We would have use for these in the library and for possible publication. We will be happy to duplicate your tape(s) and return intact. Please send them to Bernice Bush at Fuller.

CARNELL MEMORIAL

The last phase of the Carnell Memorial is the brochure of Dr. Carnell’s inaugural address, “The Glory of a Theological Seminary.” This will be printed next month and mailed to all alumni at that time.

The portrait of Dr. Carnell hangs in the library reading room, along with the portraits of Dr. and Mrs. Charles E. Fuller.

Our thanks to Ray Anderson, B.D. ’59, and his committee for their work, and to you alumni for supporting the project.

THE ALUMNI FUND

Goal $18,000

Receipts through April 30 12,526

Balance needed by June 30 $ 5,474

LONG RANGE PLAN

PROGRESS REPORT

At the recent meetings of the long range academic and facilities committee the following items were discussed. It should be said that due to the tentative nature of these discussions, recommendations contained herein cannot be taken as a blueprint of the direction in which the Seminary will move, but we do want to share the thinking with alumni.

1. Grading: Consideration will be given to the elimination of grade points earned in a first attempt at a course which the student is allowed to repeat; and that courses may be repeated for which the student has done unsatisfactory work. Consideration will be given also to the possibility of re-evaluating the grading system with attention to the number of categories and the basis on which credit is to be determined.

2. Degree Programs. The proposal for the professional Doctor of Missiology degree (2 years beyond the B.D.) is being considered by the inter-faculty committee, as is the post-B.D. M.A. in Missiology degree. Some aspects of the theology section of the psychology curriculum are being reconsidered. Under the committee on lay ministry the areas of religion, marriage counseling, and Christian education — in that order — are being considered for M.A. degrees.

3. Vacation of North Oakland: Formal petition has been made to city authorities for vacation of North Oakland Avenue between Ford Place and Union Avenue for campus development.

4. Master Site Plan: A. Quincy Jones has been authorized to continue the revision and refinement of the master facilities plan, including the detailed definition of plans for Payton Hall renovation. The committee attempts seriously to consider the stewardship responsibility of the Seminary in its expansion program. The building program as presently outlined is ambitious only in the sense of providing the kind of facility that is indispensable in the tasks that face the three schools. They are seeking a flexibility in concept that will allow for the inevitable adjustments of future development.
Placement Opportunities

**Director of C.E.** United Presbyterian Church of West Valley, San Jose, Calif. UPUSA. CE and youth. Two-man staff.

**C.E. and Youth Director.** First United Presbyterian Church, Bremerton, Wash. UPUSA.

**Youth Director.** Valley Presbyterian Church, Sepulveda, Calif. Unaffiliated. Membership 665.

**Pastor, Church of the Covenant, Boston, Mass.** UPUSA-UCC. Membership 200. One-man staff.

**C.E. Director.** Panorama Presbyterian Church, Panorama City, Calif. UPUSA.

**Assistant Minister.** First Presbyterian Church, Covina, Calif. UPUSA.

**Minister of Youth and C.E.** Bethel Reformed Church, Bellflower, Calif.

**Minister of Youth.** First Baptist Church, Santa Paula, Calif. ABC. Second man on staff. 325 members; 175 attendance.

**Youth Pastor.** Grace Baptist Church, Santa Maria, Calif. BGC. Have pastor and C.E. director. Membership 500.

**Youth Minister.** First Baptist Church, Elk Grove, Calif. No. Am. BGC. Second man on staff. Responsibilities include youth and education.

**Minister of Education.** Community Congregational Church, Chula Vista, Calif. UCC. Second man on staff, involved in total program with emphasis on youth. Membership 1400; church school 500.

**Assistant Pastor.** First Covenant Church, Duluth, Minn. Incercity. C.E. and youth prime responsibilities.

**Minister of Youth.** Camelback Bible Church, Paradise Valley, Ariz. Suburban Phoenix. Membership 200; attendance 300. Second man on staff.

**C.E. Director.** First Baptist Church, Spokane, Wash.

**Assistant to the Minister.** Grace Chapel Fellowship, Hacienda Heights, Calif. Independent. New work; attendance 200. Second man on staff with prime responsibilities youth.

**C.E. Director.** Mayflower Church, Pacific Grove, Calif. Independent.


**C.E. and Youth Director.** The Missionary Alliance Church, Portland, Ore. C&MA. Church has a youth center as well.

**Assistant Minister.** Magnolia Park United Methodist Church, Burbank, Calif. Total education and evangelism program. Two-man staff.

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**May 1970**

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**A Response of the Local Church . . . (cont. from page 7)**

knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father (Phil. 2:6-11).

To this old and frightened world must come the hope of Christ expressed in the life of a renewed and responsive church. God's turned on people must become the agents of the kingdom, the harbingers of a new day in human relationships, those who assert his presence and proclaim his return and who call for his rule in the life of man.

As our view of earth has now become a view from without, as we see earth as that glorious and silent orb which is our only Eden, so the church renewed must be the advocate of a new heaven and a new earth in which man as last will learn again to walk with God.

With ease one's mind can wax prophetic and hopeful. But the realism we demand requires that like the disciples we move from the high vistas of our mountain top in space to the filthy, crawling furrows that are the complex communities of man. There we must live, learn to love, and learn to be both the liberated and the liberators. The task before the local church is staggering. But in the valley the word remains with us, and we remember not only Calvary but Easter.

The methods of response to a real world by a liberated church on every level must be found in the process of our pilgrimage. To accept the necessity of response, the church in all of its forms must be prepared to risk death in order that both its people and all men may have new life in Christ. In face of the gathering storm on the horizon of man, a word from Christ: "I am the light of the world; he that followeth after me shall not walk in the darkness but shall have the light of life." The response of the local church to the world is that which flows out of a faithful walk with Christ who is and will continue to be "the light that lighteth every man."

Out of the liturgy of an "experimental ministry" among young adults has come this response recited around the Lord's table. In the style of one sub-culture it may give faint hint of something coming that is both real and hopeful. The young voices rise together:

God is bread.
The bread is rising.
Bread is revolution.
God is revolution.
Revolution is love.
The world is coming to a beginning.
Join the freedom meal.
The liberated zone is at hand.

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**BIBLIOGRAPHY**


(continued from page 9)

and resisted the desire to express their
to white leadership, embraced an
American-styled "separatist" outlook
of Asia. Little has happened in Africa
the old pattern of automatic deference
Association of Evangelicals, following
since 1960 to encourage one to believe
He could not have been thinking of
that the tide is turning in favor of
Africa, much less of the Middle East or
recently whistled in the dark when he
predicted that nationalism throughout
Africa, much less of the Middle East or
black theology on Africa's emerging
spirit disinfected, and Africa's faith in
command no small respect in African
churches. But they are not unmoved by
the mood of Africa today.
In 1960 Max Warren, a specialist on
Africa felt pressed to warn the churches
of the West that "the revulsion of Africa
against the white man, unless it can be
checked, its dynamism redirected, its
faith in its early years." Although
the 70's may witness
increased tension between the more
rigid Western-oriented missions and
their overseas churches, if the former
continue to press for non-fraternization
with those whose ecclesiastical
connections are suspect.

A few months back,
the director of a large IFMA mission
gave an address in London contending
that this position is consonant with
Scripture. When his address was
published it drew prompt and pointed
negative reader reaction. Dr. Robert E.
D. Clark, a prominent Christian at
Cambridge, wrote a devastating reply,
delivered a detailed scriptural refutation
of its salient points, and concluded with
the judgment that "separatism" has
been "the curse of organized Christi-
nianity from its early years." Although
the 70's will find separatists more
hard-pressed than ever to defend them-
severally biblically, their emotional com-
mitment to this tradition will doubtless
continue to harass Christians overseas in
their divided, competing churches.
The charismatic movement with its
stress on "fellowship in the Spirit" is
also suspicious of any policy that would
prevent Christians from receiving all
those whom Christ has evidently re-
ceived. It is being used of God to bring
together subsections of the Christian
community that find they need one
another. "Catholic Pentecostals"
(chiefly students) are bringing their
patterns of worship and fellowship to
the more biblically literate but at times
pietistically introverted of the IVCF.
Southern Baptist and Assemblies of God
missionaries in Ethiopia are partici-
pating with Coptic Christians in their
liturgical worship while sharing their
distinctives in turn. Is this reality to be
dismissed as theological confusion and
spiritual compromise? It would only
appear so to the doctrinaire analyst who
views the matter from afar!
And what should be said to those
eager supporters of Hans Kung, the
articulate evangelical theologian of the
Roman Catholic Church, who continues
to press his church to move beyond the
liberalizations granted by Vatican II?
They are experiencing considerable
interaction with Europe's more con-
servative Barthian Protestants. And how
should we respond to those Roman
Catholics who are seeking to get
through the WCC grid and into contact
with evangelical groups they feel must
be somewhere "on the edges of
institutional Protestantism?"
The evangelical who attends a liberal
seminary today cannot deny the reality
of his discovery that he is finding far
more theological agreement and spiri-
tual community with Roman Catholic
priests and nuns than with many who
call themselves Protestants. Whereas he
may encounter a general antipathy
toward fundamentalism, all will speak
of the charismatic movement with a
measure of respect, recognizing that it
represents a meaningful, noninstitu-
tional, primitive-style Christianity.

Indeed, the more one exposes
himself to the total spectrum of
Christian activity today the more aware
he becomes that these are days of
transition and upheaval, and that the
deposit of truth Christ gave his disciples
long ago is not confined to any one
segment of the structured church.
Missionaries in the 70's will urgently
need the help of theologians to assist
churches overseas "to make the good
confession" of Jesus Christ in their
growing encounter with atheism and
resurgent ethnic religion.
In the nineteenth century mission-
aries regarded non-Christian religions in
the worst possible light, and gave only
the most grudging approval to those
aspects in their practice in which God's
"common grace" was too apparent to
ignore.
In the early part of the twentieth
century liberal missionaries went to the
other extreme and argued that these
religions were anticipatory of Christian-
ity, differing in degree, but not in kind.
They called for religious syncretism and
cooporative social effort, to the nega-
tion of man's spiritual estrangement

Theology, News and Notes
from God and his peril of eternal judgment. The evangelical came to be regarded as the religious imperialist, the proselyter, the culturally-arrogant triumphalistic, a maladjusted ignoramus who distorted truth and misrepresented Christ.

Now that more frequent encounters will take place in the 70's between dynamic ethnic religious communities and the growing Christian church, much thought needs to be given to insure that the context of confrontation will enable truth to prevail.

Past representations by liberal Christianity have painted evangelicals in such poor light that, as things now stand, the evangelical church will hardly be accorded a hearing.

It can only overcome this hurdle by making doubly sure that when it has a chance to bear witness to the truth, it will do so in a strong, clear and winsome fashion. "Theologians to the rescue!" In these days of growing world-wide interest in the study of "comparative religions" the church needs her best minds to give themselves to defining evangelical approaches to the debate. Thus the struggle for truth in our time.

Consider the Jews and their continued estrangement from Jesus Christ. The 60's marked for them a heightening identity crisis in the West and the growing isolation of Israel in the hostile world of the Middle East. Only in the last four or five years have Jewish theologians been able to think about the theological implications of Hitler's systematic murder of six million European Jews.

They ask: Where was God when our kinsmen called on him for deliverance? Why have the survivors of Auschwitz so little interest in God and in Judaism? Why is Israel such a secular state? What should we think about Christianity now that the Roman Catholic Church has repudiated two millennia of "Christian anti-Semitism" and now appears willing to make significant theological concessions to improve relations with us? Why are Protestants so silent about Auschwitz and so vocal in affirming that God was on our side in the Six Day War of 1967?

What sort of answers should evangelical Christians give them?

Let's be honest. Evangelical theologians have tended to overlook Auschwitz, as they have overlooked white racism, economic exploitation, social injustice, monopolistic capitalism, and a hundred other pressing human problems. No wonder the blacks have countered with a slanted, illogical "Black Theology" in reaction to the distortions of this "White Theology." This mood will continue into the 70's. As never before the church will have to give honest answers to questions that people seriously ask.

Rabbi Rubenstein deserved an answer to his bitter cry: "Of one thing I am convinced: more than the bodies of my people went up in the smoke of Auschwitz; The God of the Covenant died there." And what should be the evangelical response to this burden that Jews from henceforth return to Israel, not to become a "Kingdom of Priests unto God" but rather to "reaffirm the archaic, long forgotten gods of Earth within Jewish existence." Not to Yahweh who allegedly died at Auschwitz, but to the Baalim in Israel!

We should pray for a rebirth of theological interest in the Jewish problem and in the obligation of the Church toward the Jewish community. In no area of world-wide outreach is the Church more plagued with simplistic, emotional jargon. And its theologians have yet to grapple with the awesome theological implications of Auschwitz, the rebirth of Israel, and the sporadic reappearances of anti-Semitism throughout the world. How wonderful that among Israeli students an IVCF-style charismatic movement offers hope for good things to come.

What of the need for missionaries in the 70's? This is a complex question, but we can be sure of one thing: hustlers for the American middle class way of life are not needed!

All aspiring candidates do well to reflect on the agitations of that "talented and ferocious" Msgr. Ivan Illich of Cuernavaca, Mexico. He insists that all "North American volunteer armies" be shipped home from Latin America—particularly missionaries and members of the Peace Corps.

Another straw in the wind is the official directive of the government of Malaysia that limits missionary residence to ten years out of fear of "cultural imperialism and ecclesiastical colonialism."

Indian Christians advise those who come to their country to "retain their sense of mission without becoming in any sense missionaries." The role of the missionary, though never popular, will be accorded less public approval than ever in the world of the 70's. There is no escaping the Cross.

And yet many missionaries will be needed to serve national churches in the days ahead. By God's grace the 70's shall witness far more mobilization of the churches for evangelism and discipleship training, far more effective application of church growth principles for the multiplication of congregations, far more top-quality leaders enrolled in extension theological education programs, and far more use of the communication media to reach this generation for God. This means the continued need for missionaries to provide a linkage between all segments of the world-wide Church.

We can expect God to continue to call not a few top-quality Christians and train them by his Spirit to serve his people throughout the world.

They will need more devotion to his Son, more loyalty to his truth, more theological sensitivity, more language skill, more thirst for intercultural and ecumenical experience, more energy, and—finally—more evidence of possessing a "spiritual gift" to confirm God's call and guarantee potential usefulness in his service.

Missionaries of the future will not be white imperialists who in cavalier fashion by-pass national churches overseas to "do their thing."

Only those men are needed who will humbly enter the life of the people and participate in their proclamation of the gospel. Not as propagandists nor proselyters, for God is neither: "He calls and waits; He seeks and serves."

May 1970
We Are Inhabitants

JOHN COVENTRY SMITH

In the fall of 1968, Edward Lindaman, an executive in the space program and a Christian layman, told some of us that the most important instrument in the spaceship would be the miniature camera. We did not understand him then, but three months later, when we saw the first pictures taken of the earth from an Apollo ship circling the moon, we understood. For we saw our earth as it truly is, for the first time.

Archibald MacLeish described for us in beautiful language what we saw. He wrote: "To see the earth as it truly is, small and blue and beautiful in that eternal silence where it floats, is to see ourselves as riders on the earth together, brothers on that bright loveliness in the eternal cold — brothers who know now they are truly brothers." Most of this we instinctively accept. He has said it well for all of us. But even he could have said it better. There are four words at the end of one sentence which the Christian cannot accept. He says: "... riders ... together, ... in the eternal cold." The Christian cannot say that, for he does not believe that man is alone eternally or that the universe is a gigantic impersonal, cold machine. The three astronauts said it better when they chose to begin what they had to say with the words: "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth."

You may remember another thing they said to themselves as they commented on what they saw. "If we were on a spaceship from another planet and were seeing the earth for the first time, we would ask, 'Is it inhabited?'" Of course this planet is inhabited. We are the inhabitants. We share God's purpose. It is not an accident we are here. We are not just a speck on a disc speeding in space, alive for an instant and then gone. We are God's creation.

In these terms we can go beyond that. God not only created us, he cares for us. He expressed his love and concern for us by becoming an Inhabitant with us. That is the meaning of the Incarnation—God in the person of Jesus Christ, identifying with us, sharing our lives, the shame and the glory we experience and making known his love and offering to enable all of us to fulfill the purpose of our creation.

John Coventry Smith is general secretary of the Commission on Ecumenical Mission and Relations of the United Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. He was elected moderator of the General Assembly of the denomination for 1968-69, and one of the six presidents of the World Council of Churches in July 1968. Dr. Smith is a member of the Central Committee of the World Council of Churches. He was a missionary to Japan for fourteen years and later a pastor before joining the staff of the Presbyterian board.
This is the first great miracle of the Christian faith — “God with us.” But there is still another miracle. In the last 1900 years there has come into existence a community of those who believe in God through Jesus Christ, a community which in the last one hundred years has encircled the globe so that it is represented on every continent, among people of every race and nation. This is the result of the missionary movement — Roman Catholic and Protestant. And this worldwide Christian community has begun to symbolize the kind of community which God intended all of mankind to possess.

The fact that this community exists does not imply any uniformity of structure. Actually there is a vast variety, and it has only been in recent history that structures began to reflect the worldwide or ecumenical nature of the community. The World Council of Churches is one expression of that community. Vatican II is another. The Berlin Congress on Evangelism expressed this same world dimension for those outside both the World Council and the Roman Catholic circle. In its manifesto, the Congress called itself an ecumenical evangelical congress.

Therefore, the first response of Christian structures to “The World We Face” is to respond in an adequate way to the fact of a worldwide Christian community and to the unity of the body of Christ. No matter what kind of immediate Christian community we may belong to, that community now has to take into account the nature of the world God is revealing to us and the fact of the world Christian community. Our structures and our thinking about them have a new content, a new dimension.

But let us back up now and start over again. What we have already written must be added to the things enumerated in the article, “The World We Face.” Altogether, they indicate overwhelmingly that man and his organizations have come to the end of an era in history and must face radical change. We have been saying this over and over again until it has become trite. But nevertheless, it is true. We are already in the era of change. The implications are all about us.

If this be true, then the Christian and his organizations have also come to the end of an era and must change. I have been invited to respond from the standpoint of present church institutions in the world. That does not allow the other three who respond to escape from my dilemma. They too are involved in institutions. Roman Catholics, World Council members, members of free churches and independent agencies are all alike in sharing the necessity of change. We all have to understand that some form of Christian organization is always necessary, but any particular form is always the product of a particular time in history and therefore is expendable. We have to face the possibility that present structures must be abandoned or radically changed.

Christians faced a similar period of change in the sixteenth century. The climate of the Middle Ages was changing. Studies of Greek philosophy and culture had stimulated thoughtful people. The organized Christian community had become institutionalized. Its old answers were not adequate for people with new questions. More than that, the church had covered up the person of her Lord so well that he could scarcely be perceived. It took the radical change of the Reformation and the Counter-Reformation to restore a measure of relevancy to the Christian faith. In the same way we can be quite sure as Christians that the people of the new era will not listen to the good news if the church carries into the new era all the baggage she has accumulated in the old.

We Protestants criticize the Roman Catholic church because we believe that at many points it is frozen into the form it took in the third century. We welcome the struggle it is making to break out of that form. We do not always realize that the form that Protestant churches have taken is also the product of four centuries ago. We may not call the structure “Christendom,” but even if we call it “Christianity” and mean by that the institution of the Christian church, it can stifle freedom and become especially subject to God’s judgment in a time of change.

One of the major changes that continues to involve the whole world is the secularity of the new technological society. It is interesting to note that the emergence of this secular society is a major cause of recent growth in the Christian communities in Africa and Indonesia. The number of Indonesian Christians has increased 46% since 1957, almost all of it in the last six years. And in Africa the Roman Catholic and Protestant population has almost tripled in two decades (34 million to 97 million). In each area the advance of a secular society has prepared the way. Persons are finding their former religions a handicap in a secular world. They find in the Christian faith freedom to change and meet new situations.

But in Europe and North America, the continued advance of a secular society is regarded as a threat to the Christian church and a major cause of its failure to grow. Could it be that the decline in the west is not because the Christian faith is being rejected, but because its structure as an institution is rejected, a structure which has become rigid and resistant to change? The rigid form of Christianity offers the same handicaps in the west to freedom for change as animism offers in Africa.

The church as a community of believers will continue, but the form it takes may be quite different. This will be particularly true of the church in the U.S.A. Often it has so identified with the American way of life that it has become a symbol of the status quo and is in the forefront of resistance to change. We tend therefore to reflect in the world not only the good things of American society, but our national arrogance, racism, affluence and paternalism.

In such a time of change when our Christian institutions are under judgment, our hope will lie in two things — a new appreciation of the person of Jesus Christ and a new understanding of what the rest of the world Christian community is saying to us. Let us take the latter first.

Let me illustrate by a story. In 1963, the World Council’s Central Committee met at Rochester, New York. As always, the two-week meeting had a central theme. This time it was “The Meaning of Membership in the World Council” and the paper on the theme was by Dr. Visser ‘t Hooft, the general secretary. He spoke of the conditions for membership and then went to the heart of the matter. Membership means that churches are willing to share ideas, listen to one another, and to change if they are led to do so by the Holy Spirit. The first member on his feet when the time came for discussion objected. He said that if his church had known this was the meaning, it never would have joined. We all laughed, but we realized that Visser ‘t Hooft was right and that our fellow

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member represented us all in instinctively resisting the learning process. There is no question about it. The learning process goes on. It went on at Vatican II and still does in Roman Catholic circles. It goes on in the World Council. It went on at the Berlin Congress on Evangelism. Things were said and listened to that could not have been said and would not have been listened to under any other circumstance. And once this process begins, it accelerates. We learn to value this process even when it hurts. If I were not a Christian, I would say we were lucky that at this particular time in history we found this facility for learning what others think about our provincial, national ideas. As it is, I believe that God planned that at this critical time he would be able to speak through others and to reinforce the things he was saying to us directly. The world Christian community is a kind of conscience for its members. It does not condemn. It does not condemn. But it exposes to the daylight the half-truths we have discovered and seeks to make them whole.

It is within this context that we turn now to the questions raised in the statement on "The World We Face."

The questions are overwhelming, both in their variety and their individual weight. I have the sense that they are legitimate questions, but that taken all together they are a bit overdrawn, as though we were being told, "If overpopulation, poverty and war don't get you, pollution must." Against such an array, I do not know what Christian organization could possibly prevail.

Which leads me to the first reply I want to make: "The Christian and his organizations do not have to have a complete plan to defeat all these enemies of human existence." If I thought we had to, I would go out of my mind. And I am not about to add that God has a plan which in his own good time will defeat them all. I believe God has more than a human plan and it will prevail, but complete defeat of all these enemies by the end of this century may very well not be a part of it. God having created man and given him his freedom, and human nature being what it is, it is just possible that man may destroy himself. But, history also indicates that God has a way of inspiring hope as man struggles with his problems. He will never solve them all — that is the human predicament. But in the struggle he has hope and he has a foretaste of the kingdom.

I am not trying to avoid the questions. They are too serious for that. But I am trying to put them in the context of Christian responsibility.

In that context, we have a tremendous and urgent task. We believe that God has created this planet and its inhabitants, has revealed his love and concern for us in the person of Jesus Christ, and continues to act in the world on behalf of mankind. He has called us to be Christ's modern disciples without a spiritual dimension.

Christian responsibility.

Although the problems are varied they may also be summarized as part of one problem — how the inhabitants of this planet can develop resources together and learn to live at peace with one another. One might describe this planet as a "spaceship." We, the inhabitants, are the passengers. It is time we asked each other some serious questions — "How many passengers can we take?" "How much water do we have and can we keep it pure and re-use it?" "How much do we have in resources, including food, and how are they to be distributed?" In a spaceship our ability to find answers to these questions would determine whether we lived or died. The time has come for the inhabitants of the earth to find answers to these questions or perish.

Christians who know their responsibility in this must begin with the assumptions that they and their organizations will have a significant part to play, but it will be modest.

Government and inter-governmental agencies along with private business and other economic agencies will play the major part. This is as it should be. Most of these problems will not respond to anything less than that.

But the Christian brings a dimension of concern to this that is significant. He believes there is a purpose in creation and in the tensions of our time. We are not just an accident. He believes that people, individual men and women, are important — that human life is God's supreme creation and concern. We are not lost in a vast mechanical universe. And he believes in the development of man who will not be whole without a spiritual dimension.

Christians can express this concern by:

1. Confessing that they and their organizations are part of the structure that dominates persons and hampers their freedom to grow.
2. Encouraging the businesses with which they are related to increase their understanding of the effect their economic activities have on people and to act wisely. This may require increased legal restrictions.
3. Supporting governmental and inter-governmental activity on behalf of worldwide development. This can no longer be considered as "aid to less fortunate people." This is planning and working together to develop the future of all of us.
4. Committing themselves and the resources of their organizations to the task. This may still be relatively modest but the Christian can scarcely act with integrity in encouraging business and supporting government if he does not commit himself and what he has. (When the average person in India receives $1.00 of income, the average person in the U.S.A. receives $60.00. At the present rate, by the year 2000 for every $1.00 in India, it will be $100.00 in the U.S.A. The Christian who commits himself must act to reverse this process.)
5. Supporting experimental projects which business and government may not be free to support and which advance the development of the whole community.
6. Sharing with others the faith in Jesus Christ that has changed us and which we believe can change all of mankind.

I doubtless have over-simplified the possible answers. I am not an expert who can describe how such development can be tested in some respects as never before.

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It may increase the depth of our perceptiveness if we begin by indicating that "our" is to be construed as referring to the relationship of European and North American Christians to Christians in other lands.

The hemispheric base of modern foreign missions has been the world of the white man. The full historical weight of that simple statement can never be rightly measured unless we see it as something paradoxical. Why, for example, should such a distinguished authority in the mission world as Dr. Kenneth Cragg of England offer it as a carefully calculated judgment that "one of the sorest liabilities of modern Christian mission (is) that it has been so exclusively pursued by white humanity and served by white initiatives?"

Not for a moment does Dr. Cragg question the providence of God according to which Anglo-Saxon Christians accepted, both as privilege and obligation, the stewardship of the gospel as an incomparable treasure to be shared with African and Asian man. His concern is not to question the impulse but to evaluate the effect. If history records that white Christians of the west have been genuinely and generously outgoing, it must record also that they have tended to be lingeringly possessive and paternalistic. Thus Kenneth Cragg writes in retrospect:

The faith of Christ was somehow reserved even while it was given: it belonged to its bearers in the very act of being opened to its hearers. The very communication tended to be an exercise in retention. The freeing of men by the Gospel was at the same time a binding of them to a fashion of its corporate expression congenial to those who brought it.

If one may attempt an analogy that is admittedly perilous, since in many particulars the parallel breaks down, one may say that western missions have repeated the mistake of Jerusalem in the first generation of Christian history and have missed the freedom of Antioch. The force of this analogy is chiefly cultural, not theological. An illustration of it popped up recently in Japan when Mrs. Rees, after watching the superb performance of some Japanese boys and girls in a television program, turned to me with the remark that they "looked so sharp and modern." She was referring to their western-style clothes. Obviously there was nothing malevolent about her remark. It was intended as a compliment. But it rested on a highly dubious assumption. That assumption is the inconceivability, to Mrs. Rees' western mind, that they might have been dressed as Asians and still be "sharp and modern."

There is probably a measure of self-deception in all of us western Christians if we facilely imagine that we do in fact know how to respond to other Christians in lands and cultures far from our own. The plea for better, more perceptive,
more essentially Christian responses is one for which, if God will give me the grace I pray for, must be addressed to myself as penetratingly as to others.

I.

To begin with, we should recognize them charitably. Let me instantly drain away every suggestion of condescension that may be read into the word "charitably." The plea is not for pity but for magnanimity. Most of us evangelicals are in far graver danger of exercising judgments that rule people out of the kingdom of God than we are of judgments that hopefully include them in it.

If we take seriously the evangelical concept of the nature of the Christian church, wherein we firmly assert the spiritual unity of all believers in Jesus Christ, Savior and Lord, then surely we must be prepared to accept all those whom God accepts in the Son of his love. At this point, all too often, our deeds part company with our words. We begin to sort out the believers — organizationally, doctrinally, traditionally — and thus to see ourselves over against them rather than in the same "household of faith" with them as undeserving sinners justified before God by the grace of the same Savior.

To be sure there is about this view of the matter a simplicity of which unfair advantage can be taken. What do we do with the biblical recognition of the difference between true and false, between fidelity and apostasy, between sound doctrine and perilous error? Of course no circumstance ever frees the Christian from commitment to truth — the truth as it is in Jesus and in the Holy Scriptures. On the other hand, neither official title nor years of seasoning will confer infallibility of judgment on any of us. St. Paul's word is plain and pertinent: "God's firm foundation stands, bearing this seal: 'The Lord knows those who are his,' and, 'Let everyone who names the name of the Lord depart from iniquity'" (II Timothy 2:19).

It is salutary to remember that the minimal faith which may make a Christian can be far indeed from that maximal confession of the gospel required for the continuity and integrity of the church as a distinctive believing community. This helps us to understand why our Lord told us that the brethren.

Impelled by this love, we accept those whom God accepts.

II.

A second form of response may be indicated thus: relate to them helpfully. This carries us beyond recognition and acceptance. It is less passive, more creative.

The burgeoning of indigenous churches in the world of mission puts upon western Christians an obligation to readjust their thinking, their praying and their acting in reference to their overseas brothers in Christ. Our conditioning has been their overseas brothers in Christ. Our conditioning has been.

Our task of redefining the word "helpful" is pointed up by a sensitive Lutheran missionary regarding the situation in India. The Rev. H. G. Schaeffer, in book-symposium called Revolution in Missions, pleads with our "home churches" to:

1. Recognize that the Indian church is a church in its own right, that in the church universal it has nevertheless in own identity and responsibility.
2. Recognize that "whereas help in the form of money and personnel still may be necessary, such help should be the help of a friend appreciating the work of another."
3. Recognize that the type of personnel needed on the field has changed in its character and that consequently "the appeal should not be for pioneer spirits but for men capable of, and willing to, work within the church."
4. Recognize that missionaries sent in future should come to India for specific tasks and for perhaps limited periods of service.
5. Recognize that the appeal of the home church for funds and personnel need not fail merely because it is less glamorous and emotion-charged than formerly. It should be made "in a sober vein" with the realization that the gift offered is made without strings attached or guarantees of "certain expected returns." This suggestion reminds me of the cynic's comment that I read many years ago: "Blessed are the unself-conscious who in distributing the milk of human kindness do not insist on rattling the cans."

The major point I wish to make in citing this series of proposals is not that the proposals apply with equal cogency to all areas where trans-cultural missions are in action but that they do in fact serve as indicators of new shapes and definitions that must be given to our understanding of what it means for western Christians to relate helpfully to their brothers overseas. Our western mentality does not fit easily into the new pattern. Its mood tends to be: "Look, I am here to help you, and please don't interfere with my doing so!" Yet fit it must — or suffer the slow death of frustration.

III.

Still another form of response requires the dictum: receive from them humbly. Two exercises that are difficult to Christianize are giving and receiving. Giving can be spoiled by ostentation or by condescension. Receiving can be poisoned by ingratitude or by the resentment arising from the implied state of dependence. Both exercises need to be purified and redeemed.

Have American and European Christians nothing to learn from their African, Asian and Latin American brothers in the faith? John V. Taylor of London, general secretary of the Church Missionary Society, saw at first hand what was being done through team evangelism in Northern Nigeria. An outstanding team working in the Nupe tribe consisted of a senior pastor, himself a Nupe, a younger ordained man, two evangelists, two English ladies trained in adult education, an agricultural extension worker, and several leaders of women's groups. In the dry season, when the farms are not being worked and the people are in their walled villages, the team cycles out from whatever base they are using to first one and then another of these villages. They beat drums, do folk dances in the street, sing tribal lyrics with Christian words, all of it interspersed with bits of preaching and witnessing.

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Following an hour or so of this kind of activity, the members of the team mingle with the people, answering questions, inquiring about local news, expressing concern about sickness or other misfortune in the village, counseling about practical problems, and so on. Then on to another village!

It is the after effect that gives to this technique its validity. In case after case the headmen of the village — many of them Muslims — have come to the district center where the team is temporarily based, saying to the leader, "You have brought us good words. Everyone is talking about it. We want to hear more." With this opening, certain members of the team settle down for a period of months. Bible teaching, literacy, the seminal inspiration, the forward-looking reactionary from among their Christians. Forget about parish sake, inherently creditable and inspiring though they are. Not so that marked the life of one western leader when he was at home in London. He called one day on a parish minister of the Church of England. The parish was in a depressed area of greater London. Worse still, the depression had taken hold of the minister. He was in a disheartened mood. In the community, said Taylor, there were about equal numbers of British, Arab, Pakistani and Caribbean residents. As the two men walked along the dingy streets, Taylor suggested to his friend that this might be the very place to form a team ministry. Get Pakistan and the West Indies each to send a missionary from among their Christians. Forget about parish boundaries and institutional church rigidities. In a guided and selfless team effort begin showing the lonely, the sodden, the unemployed, the embittered and the rejected what the love of God is like.

A week later John Taylor received a letter from that minister. In it were these lines:

I have had great searchings of heart since your visit and feel that God has done much to increase my vision and my faith as to what He will do through us if we fully obey His word. Indeed, this experience has been something very much akin to a second conversion.

This account, given by Dr. Taylor in Witness in Six Continents, does not record what has happened since then, as I wish it did. What is does make clear, however, is the fresh thinking, the seminal inspiration, the forward-looking resolve that marked the life of one western leader when he was prepared, in effect, to sit humbly at the feet of African Christians and learn from them.

This response to "other Christians in this world" may be the hardest to make. It may be, also, the most fruitful in the end.

IV.

A fourth response may be gathered in the words: reinforce them discerningly. Deservedly in wide circulation during the 60s was a book by Bishop Stephen Neill called The Unfinished Task. It includes an extraordinarily thought-provoking chapter entitled "The Unfinished Task in the Younger Churches." (Notwithstanding its ambiguity, since some of these Asian and African Christian communities are older than any of the churches of the west, Bishop Neill uses the phrase 'younger churches' to describe the groups of Christians whose existence lies in the midst of cultures that are, and always have been, predominantly non-Christian.) Says Bishop Neill:

For forty years it has been difficult for any missionary to tell the truth about the younger churches. Even in earlier times, missionaries, under the influence both of their own loyalty to fellow-Christians whom they loved and of the inveterate desire of the readers of missionary magazines for success stories, tended to cast a somewhat rosy glow upon the field of their endeavors.

Latterly, as Neill points out, the tendency has been for leaders in the indigenous churches and the members of the missionary community to engage in mutually frank criticisms of one another. This exercise can be futile or fruitful, depending on whether the principals basically accept one another under their common obedience to the one Lord who is the Head of the Church.

"All Churches alike," says the bishop, "stand under the judgment of God; all alike need to learn a new humility, and a more perfect dependence on the grace of God. All need to learn from one another." And he rightly goes on to say that "many of the defects that can be seen in the younger churches are also glaringly evident in the older churches, and with very much less excuse."

In such a mood of realism, self-awareness and penitence Western Christians, whether they be cast in a vocational or a supportive missionary role, need to affirm, rather than reject, their fellow-Christians abroad, however weak and faltering the latter may be. This reinforcement must at the same time be marked by insights and concerns that lift it far above the level of sentimentalism.

With younger churchmen abroad, as with younger churchmen anywhere, what is desired to satisfy them is not necessarily what is required to season them. A distinguished Asian Christian spoke approvingly about an American missionary who one day said to him, "I am staying on, not because I am wanted but because I am needed." The words were spoken neither in pride nor in stubbornness but out of a compelling sense of responsibility.

If this giving of ourselves, this passing on of all that we know of Christ in order that others may know him too, means a Calvary, then so be it. "The disciple is not above his Lord." The Savior's mission meant the Savior's passion. In whatever measure that is possible in the lives of redeemed sinners, it may happen to us too. This is the target for which Douglas Webster goes straight as an arrow when he writes:

Just to be in some of these places where people starve and suffer, where Christians quarrel endlessly and go to law against each other, where hardly a soul is attempting any evangelism, where even the clergy are sometimes corrupt as well as ignorant, where the least spark of spiritual inspiration or initiative is criticized or quenched — just to be there, loving, serving, caring, praying, is to be in the place of crucifixion and to learn something of the meaning of our Lord's Cross, not out of a book but by sharing it...

Reinforcing, affirming, upholding other Christians, while never forgetting that we ourselves need the reinforcement of others, requires above all the giving of ourselves. "But first they gave themselves to the Lord and to us by the will of God." (II Corinthians 8:5).

Pungent and poignant are these sentences I came upon recently in an English paper:

(Continued on page 20, column 2)
accomplished in detail. But I do believe that along with the problems that the new technological world brings us, there will also be new ways of solving the problems. We have enough plans or we can make them. What we need most is commitment enough to act on what wisdom we have.

Even in the task of sharing the good news of the mystery of God in Jesus Christ, the new technological world may very well furnish us ways and means we have never dreamed of. When modern satellite television makes a vast village out of the places where the inhabitants of this planet live and work, we ought to have the wit to find ways of communicating faith as well as technical knowledge. After all, Jesus already has disciples in every part of that village, and the Holy Spirit has not exhausted their means of communication.

It is already clear that being a part of this new world and the world Christian community can make us more understanding of the nature of Jesus Christ. Often the words we have used to describe him have not been understood. We need now to come as the first disciples came — seeing a real Man who taught them and led them. He identified with the needs of all people, poor and rich alike. When this identification antagonized the religious establishment, he still was concerned with all people and continued to challenge the establishment. Between the religious and political leaders, they finally put him to death.

But those who followed him had become disciples. They remembered he was a Teacher and a Leader of people, but that he also forgave sins and promised that all who followed him would be new creatures. Reinforced by the knowledge that he had risen from the grave and the promise that he would be with them always, they set out to share their faith, in Jerusalem, in Judea, in Samaria, and to the ends of the earth. This is a stupendous task, but essentially a simple one — to tell the whole world about a Person in whom God has made himself known — to confess that this Person has made a difference in our own lives — to believe that this Person can make the difference for all of mankind.

Louis Cassels, senior editor of the United Press International, has a new book called *The Real Jesus.* In it he says:

Actually, he was a bold and outspoken man who rebelled against convention and trampled unmercifully on the tenderest corns of the religious and political Establishment. He was often blunt and sometimes brutally frank in his speech. In his capacity for stirring up controversy, he resembled Martin Luther King far more than Norman Vincent Peale.

His teaching is revolutionary in the precise meaning of that abused term. It turns upside down the whole value system by which most of the world lives. It repudiates many ideas and attitudes which have long been cherished in the name of religion. It offers men a vision of God and an understanding of morality so profoundly different from conventional religion that even after two thousand years it still sounds new. One of the greatest ironies of our time is the fact that many youthful rebels are rejecting Christianity because the only version they have encountered is repugnant to values which they unwittingly have taken from the teaching example of Jesus.

Cassels ends his book by writing that the disciples "became Christlike, and they unanimously attributed their incredible transformation to the fact that the Spirit of Jesus had taken up residence in their hearts."

"It still happens."

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**Our Response to Other Christians ... (cont. from page 19)**

God did not send technical assistance to our troubled world. Gabriel and a company of experts with their know-how. He did not send us food, nor the cast-off garments of angels. Neither did He arrange for the export of surplus grace on a long-term personal loan. Rather, He came himself. And hungering with us, He became our bread; and suffering with us, He became our joy.

Somewhere here, in this costly self-giving, we shall find our way into those appropriate responses by means of which the worldwide community of believers discovers both the "wideness of God's mercy" and the winsomeness of the church's love.

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