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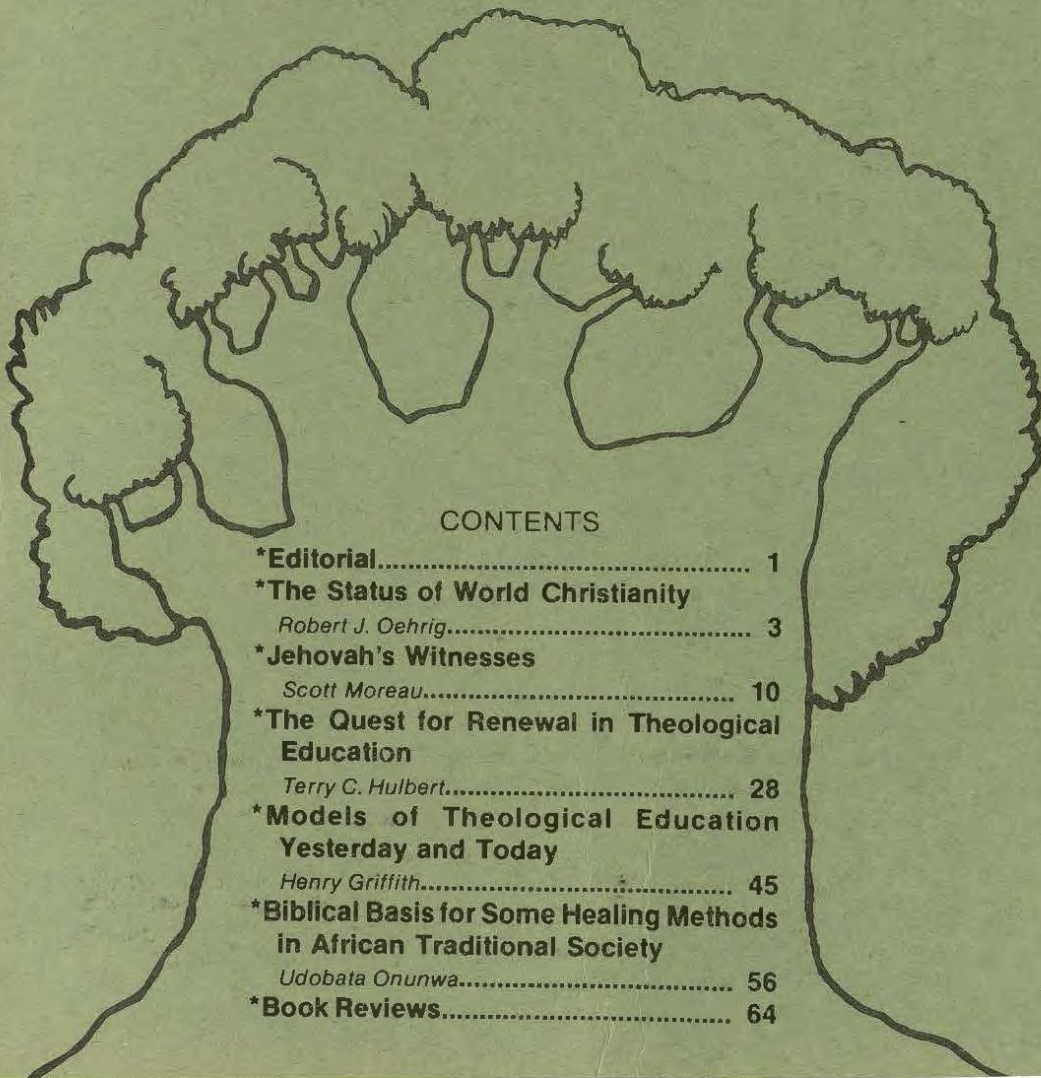
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east africa journal of evangelical theology

VOLUME 7

No. 1 1988



CONTENTS

*Editorial.....	1
*The Status of World Christianity <i>Robert J. Oehrig</i>	3
*Jehovah's Witnesses <i>Scott Moreau</i>	10
*The Quest for Renewal in Theological Education <i>Terry C. Hulbert</i>	28
*Models of Theological Education Yesterday and Today <i>Henry Griffith</i>	45
*Biblical Basis for Some Healing Methods in African Traditional Society <i>Udobata Onunwa</i>	56
*Book Reviews.....	64

THE EAST AFRICA JOURNAL OF EVANGELICAL THEOLOGY

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Purpose:

EAJET is published twice a year (in June and December) by the staff of Scott Theological College in order to provide African evangelical theological students with editorials, articles and book reviews on subjects related to theology and ministry.

Editorial Policy:

We welcome articles and book reviews from an evangelical perspective. Reviews and articles should be typed on one side only, double-spaced with end-notes, send to:

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Box 49
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Subscription Information.

Annual rate in Kenya Kshs.100.00
Annual airmail rate in Africa U.S. \$16.00; Brit.£10.00
Annual airmail rate outside of Africa U.S. \$20; Brit.£15.00

Checks should be made payable to EAJET. Send to Box 49, Machakos, Kenya.

Cover:



The Baobab tree is the EAJET symbol for the gospel in Africa. The good news of Christ, like the baobab tree, is ageless, enduring and firmly rooted in African soil.

EAJET is indexed in **Religion Index One: Periodicals**, published by the American Theological Library Association, Chicago, available on line in the ATLA Religion Database through BRS Information Technologies (Latham, New York) and DIALOG Information Services (Palo Alto, California).

Editorial

It is almost two thousand years now since Jesus said "I will build my church, and the gates of Hades shall not overpower it." Over the centuries Satan and all his forces have tried to prove Jesus wrong but without success. Jesus has not operated in a vacuum to maintain His church but has used His own people operating in the power of the Holy Spirit and remaining true to the Scriptures. Commitment to the Scriptures and the empowering work of the Holy Spirit remain the keys to the survival of the Christian church in Africa.

One of Satan's methods in his attempt to overcome the church has been persecution of Christians. Thanks to God that when this has happened, the Church has been strengthened rather than weakened. Even now African Christians glorify God for what He is doing with the Church in Uganda. A second method that Satan has used on the African continent is the seeming success of other religions, especially Islam. Speaking of one of the African countries, a key church leader said: "Islam is becoming the religion of the people." While the Christian church in Africa remains assured that even this force will not overcome the church of Christ, some questions need to be dealt with such as, What really attracts the African people to Islam? The church also needs to lay great emphasis on God's anointing and raising up of Jesus as a proof to His being the only Saviour. In addition to other religions, cults have prevailed, which have not only confused many but gotten many followers. The series on cults presented in this journal should serve as a beginning to the Christian's understanding of the different cults that are gaining momentum on the continent and how to deal with them.

Satan has not only attacked from without but also from within. Increasingly materialism has become a tool of the devil in attacking the Christian church in Africa. For sure Africa needs beautiful and well equipped church buildings. In this endeavor, however, there has arisen a spirit of carelessness as to the source of funds for some of their construction. There have been cases where other religious groups have given donations to the church in the name of cooperation. Another question the Christian church needs to deal with is Could slackness in the purity of the source of church funds be a tactic of the Devil in his attempt to overcome the church? Thanks to God for such ministries on the continent as the Theological Advisory Group (ministry limited to Africa Inland Church Kenya at present) which seeks ways and means of awakening the spiritual consciousness of the church.

From the theological angle, both the lack of contextualization and the dangers of syncretism need to be seen as real threats to the African Church. The African is increasingly asking the question, How does it relate to me and my situation? The Christian church needs not only to preach the Gospel handed down to it but also to demonstrate in word and deed how the Gospel relates to the Africans' "now problems" not limited to eternal benefits. This is why this journal, both in past and current issues, has repeatedly addressed itself to the challenge of contextualizing the unchanging message to the African situation.

The cry concerning the dangers of syncretism is not new. The threat is, however, a live matter. Thanks to God not only for the constant upgrading of Bible Schools and Colleges but also for the founding of seminaries on the continent, such as Bangui Evangelical School of Theology, Nairobi Evangelical School of Theology, and Nairobi International School of Theology. The challenge is not only to train more men and women but also to train them in sound doctrine. These men and women will then ground believers in sound doctrine, giving the Devil no chance to overcome in this area.

Yes, Africa remains a rich ground for the growth of the church. Let us pray and do our best so that the big church will be a mature church and although threatened, never overcome by Satan and his forces.

Contributors to this Issue

Articles

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Book Reviews

Haddon W. Robinson, Biblical Preaching --- Ralph E. Partelow

Emefie Ikenga Metuh, God and Man in African Religion --- Stephen Sesi

John R. W. Stott, The Cross of Christ --- Keith Ferdinando

THE STATUS OF WORLD CHRISTIANITY

(An outline overview for mission reflection)

Robert J. Oehrig

From time to time it is helpful for theologians, pastors and concerned Christians to stop a moment, take stock, and reflect on the unfinished task that is before us as World Christians. If we are faithful to scripture, and to the last command of our Lord Jesus Christ, we realize that our first task is to mission and the propagation of the Gospel to the ends of the earth. Many from our continent of Africa have answered the call to mission, and have engaged in both home and foreign mission activities. Still many others have only a vague understanding of our mission mandate and an even vaguer notion of the specific needs and challenges which our world presents to the Church.

Discussion has been increasing concerning appropriate structures for African Mission, and the role the Church in Africa can and must take in World Evangelisation. Before any attempt, however, can be made to look at African Mission structures and formulate strategies for outreach by African missionaries to the rest of the World, it is important for us to have a picture of our World as it is today. We do not take a very deep look before quickly realizing that the task of World Evangelisation is at once immense and daunting.

What follows, in summary fashion, is an overview of the status of world wide Christianity, with special focus on Africa and more specifically Kenya. Figures are given to help the mission student and concerned worker see more clearly the task and to hopefully provide a clearer glimpse of the mission needs region by region.

World population: 5 billion (1987) ---by the year 2000 it is estimated that it will increase to 6.2 billion. Today finds over one half the world's population in Asia:

Asia	54.7%
The West	12.8%
Africa (South of Sahara)	8.7%
Eastern Europe	8.6%
Latin America	7.8%
Middle East	6.2%
Caribbean	0.7%
Pacific	0.5%

Africa (North and Sub-Sahara) contains slightly more than one half billion people, with nearly equal numbers of Christians and Muslims. (25% of the world's Muslims live in Africa).

Africa 520 million - 236 million Christian (45%)
 215 million Muslims (42%)
 5 million refugees (80% of World's Total)

Africa by year 2000 - 820 million people

Kenya's population:

20 million (75% agriculturalists, 10% pastoral, 15% urban)
 4% population growth rate
 40 million people by year 2000 (9 million will be urban)
 Nairobi (1987) - 1.6 million; 4 million by year 2000

Languages of the World: 5,455 (excluding dialects), with about half of the world's languages found in Africa.
 97% of world's population has some Scripture in its language.

Distinct ethno-linguistic groups: approx. 12,000 (3,000 without a viable church)

Cities: 3,000 with over 100,000 population
 305 with over 1 million (30 in Africa including Nairobi, Dar-es-Salaam, Kinshasa, Lagos)
 43% of world's population is urban (year 2000-50.5%)
 29% of Africa Urban (Kenya 15%)
 35% of East Asia Urban
 74% of Europe
 67% of Latin America
 81% of N. America

Clearly the vast majority of the world's future missionaries must focus on urban ministries.

Economy:

	average income per person
Developed countries	\$9,380
Developing countries	700
U.K.	9,050
Japan	10,100
USA	14,090
Nigeria	760
Kenya	340
Tanzania	240

Religion:

Non religious/atheist*	970,000,000	20%
Muslims**	900,000,000	18%
Hindus***	650,000,000	13%
Buddhist/Chinese/ Japanese folk religions	560,000,000	12%
Jews	15,000,000	-
Traditional religions	150,000,000	3%
Christians	1,570,000,000	32%
Others (Jains, Sikhs, Baha'i, etc)		1%

* Atheists are increasing, largely found in the West and 20 Marxist-Leninist countries

** Islam is the Majority religion of 37 countries of the World (including 16 African countries), 100 million in Pakistan, Indonesia, and India, 215 million in Africa.

*** Hinduism is the majority religion in 3 countries, sizeable minority in 11).

Africa - approximately 45% Christian, 42% Muslim

Kenya - approximately 73% Christian, though less than 40% in Church on given Sunday, less than 12% of Nairobi's population in Church.

- Traditional religion - 19-20%
- Muslims - 6-7%
- Others (Baha'i, Hindu, Jains etc): 1-2%
- 26 people groups with less than 20% Christians
Kenya's unreached - fall into one or more of following categories:

- 1) Muslim
- 2) nomadic/pastoral people
- 3) geographically isolated
- 4) culturally isolated (inc. Asians)

Evangelization World Wide:

Christians	32%	1.6 billion
Evangelized non-christians	21%	1.0 billion
Unevangelized	47%	2.4 billion

Christianity (facts):

- Serious decline in Europe, thrilling growth in Africa, Asia, and Latin America.
- Overall percentage of Christians has changed little in the past century (though slight decline 34% to 32% of total population).
- In North America the number of Christians in the population has remained fairly steady for the past two decades, but Christians as a percentage of the population has declined.
- Of 218 nations, only 20 have a resident Christian population of less than 1%. Christianity has become a world religion in this century.

Christianity by Continent:

Continent	Number	% of all Christian
Africa	240 million	15.3
East Asia	22 million	1.4
Europe	420 million	27.2
L. America	392 million	25.3
N. America	227 million	14.7
South Asia	125 million	8.1
Oceanic	21 million	1.4
USSR	102 million	6.6
World Total	1,549 million	100.0

Christianity (traditions as percentage of world population):

Roman Catholics	17.5%	(majority of population in 58 states)
Orthodox	3.2%	
Marginals	1.2%	(i.e. Mormons, Jehovah Witness)
Protestants	10.4%	
Totals	32.3%	

Christianity (traditions as percentage of Africa's population):

Roman Catholics	17.2%
Orthodox	4.2
Marginals	1.7
Protestants	16.3
Indigenous	6.3
Totals	45.7%

Kenyan Christianity:

Catholics	26%
Protestants	25%
Indigenous	20%
Orthodox	2%
Total	73%

(25,000 + congregations, 300+ denominations)

"Evangelical" Christianity:

Approximately 250 million (or 5% of world's population)

Region	Number of Evangelicals	% of Region's Population
The West	72 million	12%
Asia	72 million	3%
Africa	48 million	11%
Latin America	35 million	9%
Eastern Europe	12 million	3%
Pacific	5 million	18%
Caribbean	3 million	8%
Middle East	1 million	>1%
World-wide	248 million	5%

Share of "Evangelicals" worldwide:

	1800	1900	1960	1970	1980	1985
The West and Eastern Europe	98%	91%	68%	64%	47%	34%
The "Third World"	2%	9%	32%	36%	53%	66%

Growth of Evangelical believers (1975-1985):

The West and Eastern Europe	-	1.3% annually
The Third World	-	6.7% annually

Missions:

Approx. 81,000 missionaries (Protestant) - home and
foreign (approx. 20,000 are from Third-World)
52,000 who have moved from their home countries

Ratio of missionaries to population

Asia	1:206,000
Africa	1: 33,100
Latin America	1: 33,500
The West	1: 84,500
Pacific	1: 6,540
Caribbean	1: 16,400
Middle East	1:190,200
Eastern Europe	1:950,000

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JEHOVAH'S WITNESSES

Scott Moreau

Introduction

In our series on cults in Kenya, we introduce first the Jehovah's Witnesses, who are known officially as either the Watchtower Bible and Tract Society or the International Bible Students Association. In spite of the fact that there were only 4,373 full members here in Kenya in 1987,¹ there is strong evidence of their commitment to their work. That evidence is seen especially in the urban centres, where they are well known for their regular house calls. We note here that, as an organisation, they reportedly put in 1,580,774 hours in their work in Kenya last year, an average of more than thirty hours per member per month.² Many Christians have reported to us that they have been called on more than once by a Witness who was seeking to win them to his organisation. Rarely, however, can they say that they have been called upon by a Christian trying to win them to Christ. The Witnesses' zealotry in Kenya is an accurate reflection of the whole movement; it was reported that in 1987 they spent 739,019,288 hours working in 210 countries.

The literature written about the Witnesses is voluminous and covers far more territory than we will be able to in this brief introduction. The reader is encouraged to peruse the endnotes for a representative sample of that literature. Because of the ready availability of good materials, in this article introducing the Jehovah's Witnesses we limit our goals to the following:

1. Introducing two key men in the history of the Jehovah's Witnesses
2. Overviewing briefly the work of the Witnesses in Kenya
3. Identifying several key teachings of the Witnesses
4. Explaining the basic method Witnesses use in recruiting others
5. Outlining three basic suggestions to consider in responding to adherents of the movement.

The First Two Presidents

Knowing the history of a cult can aid us in understanding the foundations, motives, and convictions of its current members. If we want to be effective in reaching Jehovah's Witnesses for Christ and in refuting their claims, their history will be a primary concern. An article of this length cannot begin to trace the complete history of any cult, let alone one that has been around for more than one hundred years. With that in mind we will present here only selected sketches of the two men who were the most important in shaping the Jehovah's Witness organisation as it exists today. They are the first two presidents: Charles Taze Russell and Joseph Franklin Rutherford.

Charles Taze Russell

Biographical sketch ⁵

Charles Taze Russell (1852-1916) was the founder and first president of the Witnesses. His father was a prosperous clothing store owner, and possibly because Russell's mother died when he was nine, he was brought into the business at an early age. His own initial success and the legacy left him by his father provided him with funds for the development of the Witness movement. His parents were of Presbyterian descent though he attended a local Congregational church for two years in his early teens. At the age of fifteen he was defeated soundly in an encounter with a sceptic. As a result he himself assumed a position of scepticism, being especially troubled by the doctrines of predestination and eternal punishment. His scepticism proved to be short lived. By the time he was eighteen, he found a small congregation of Second Adventists (related closely to the Seventh Day Adventists of today) whose teaching was more to his liking. In his new denominational home he and some other business friends formed a Bible study group in which some of Russell's main doctrinal concepts were developed. This group elected him as their "pastor" in 1876. By that time he had formulated his early thinking on the spiritual return of Christ. Finding a like minded man, N. H. Barbour, he united with him in publishing a magazine to spread their views. Out of his successful clothing business Russell provided the funds and was co-editor. The two of them merged their respective groups and began their own work of leading Bible studies and publishing materials explaining their understanding of the "true" Biblical faith. This union lasted only two years, the two parting in 1878 over a difference concerning the atonement of Christ.

After breaking with Barbour, Russell finally launched out on his own. One important date for the Witnesses is 1 July 1879, when Russell published the first edition of *Zion's Watchtower and Herald of Christ's Presence*, the precursor of today's

Watchtower. Over the years the numbers of his followers, recruited through distribution of the magazine, slowly began to grow. He organized them into a society which was granted a legal charter as a corporation on 13 December 1884. This is usually recognized as the official date of the beginning of the Jehovah's Witnesses.

The movement remained relatively obscure and grew slowly, not receiving much real public attention until around 1910 when booklets and articles began appearing which denounced Russell and his teachings. Though the movement as a whole remained unknown, Russell, on the other hand, was constantly involved in public scandals and trials from 1893 until his death in 1916.

After thirty two years of promoting the movement with tireless energy, Russell died on a train while returning to Boston from, appropriately enough, a preaching tour. Over these years the Witnesses report that he

. . . travelled a million miles, delivered 30,000 sermons and table talks . . . wrote over 50,000 pages . . . of advanced Biblical exposition, often dictated 1,000 letters per month, managed every department of a world-wide evangelistic campaign employing 700 speakers. . . ⁴

There can be little doubt that Russell devoted his life to his movement and that his energy was expended in propagating his message. The questions that remain concern the character of the man thus driven and the message to which he gave birth. Here we will review several pertinent facts of his character, leaving the teachings for later consideration.

The Character of Russell

In evaluating the Witness organisation it is necessary to consider the founder's character. What type of man was the originator of the Jehovah's Witnesses who gave so completely of himself to this organisation? Does this character portray a man uniquely chosen by God to propagate truth to a deluded and dying world? Many have found after close investigation that he was not as upright as would be expected for the position given him by the Witnesses. There are four negative character traits noted in this regard.

First, Russell was proven to be a perjurer in court -- a man who lied while under oath to tell the truth before the God he claimed to serve. J. J. Ross, a Baptist pastor in Ontario, Canada, published a pamphlet in which Russell was described as unlearned in the Biblical languages, falsely claiming the title of "Pastor", and of questionable moral character, having been divorced by his wife on grounds of cruelty and immorality. Russell promptly sued Ross for libel. ⁵ In court he testified under oath to know Greek and Hebrew yet when forced to respond to the advocate's questions was unable to even identify individual Greek letters. ⁶ Further, he initially testified that he was officially ordained by a recognized church but when pressed had to admit that he was

not. He initially denied that he had been divorced but was forced finally to admit that he had. ⁷All of these statements were made while Russell was under oath. Needless to say, Russell lost the libel suit.

Second, he was a man who developed schemes to make money by deceiving the public. These schemes included, among other things advertising false cures for typhoid and cancer. ⁸ The most infamous scheme involved an attempt to sell what Russell termed as "Miracle Wheat." He claimed that this wheat would grow

five times as fast as any other type. One newspaper exposed the scheme, and Russell sued them for \$100,000 (about 1.7 million Kenyan shillings) in another libel suit. In the trial the results of U.S. government tests to determine the quality of Russell's wheat were requested. The results showed the wheat to be of slightly inferior quality to normal wheat rather than five times better. As with the libel suit against Ross, the newspaper was cleared of the accusation. ⁹

Third, he was a man who was separated from his wife in 1897 and divorced by her in 1913. Her stated grounds in the divorce application were "his conceit, egotism, domination, and improper conduct in relation to other women." ¹⁰The most serious charge levelled against him was the last which was adultery. At first he claimed to be innocent, but ultimately under cross-examination confessed it to be true. ¹¹

Fourth, and finally, he was a man who falsely advertised that he had given sermons to large groups in "round-the-world tours". The tours themselves were real, but the large crowds and the sermons delivered to them were not. As with the "Miracle Wheat" this was exposed in the newspaper. ¹²

The picture painted only in outline form here of the founder and first president of the Witness organisation is certainly not one of a man of upright standing and clear testimony. Edmond Gruss concisely summarizes:

He lacked education; he was no theologian although he developed his own theology; he was not a scholar; he was plainly a man that at times could not be trusted; he was clearly a perjurer before the courts; he was left by his wife because of his conduct; his teachings denied almost every cardinal doctrine of the Bible. From his claims and those of his followers he certainly was the greatest egotist of his age. ¹³

Could it possibly be true, as the Witnesses claim, that "God gave Brother Russell to the church to be as a mouthpiece for him; and those who claim to have learned the truth apart from Brother Russell and his writings have been manifested by the Lord as deceivers . . ."? ¹⁴ Is this the type of man we would like to take as *the* authoritative teacher of God's Holy Word and on whose teachings we should base our entire lives? We think not!

Joseph Franklin Rutherford

Joseph Franklin Rutherford (1869-1942), the society's legal advisor, took over after Russell's death in 1916. In contrast to Russell, Rutherford was something of an enigma. He avoided personal publicity, only rarely making public appearances. His personal life was kept private, and he thus avoided the scandals that plagued Russell. At the same time, however, he displayed some of the same tendencies as Russell wielding great personal power in forging the movement into the monolithic entity that exists today.

Rutherford first came into contact with the teachings of the Witnesses in 1894 but did not give himself wholeheartedly to the movement until 1906. By 1907, however, he was the society's legal advisor. His legal expertise proved invaluable in two respects. First, it greatly aided the Witnesses, and Russell in particular, in dealing with court cases. Second, and more importantly, it provided Rutherford with the skills and background necessary to consolidate control over the organisation after Russell's death. For example it was especially helpful in enabling him to find loopholes in the charter which allowed him, in the years of the struggle for control, to dismiss others in leadership positions who were particularly troublesome to him.¹⁵

The picture painted of him is generally quite different from that of Russell.¹⁶ His ability, hard work, and success in accomplishing his goals were what made the Jehovah's Witnesses the group that they are today. His shaping of the movement, however, did not come without a high cost. From 1921 to 1931, as a result of his continual tightening of the organisational chain of command, almost three-fourths of those originally associated with the movement left. The ones that remained of course were completely committed to the party line.¹⁷

During his twenty five year tenure from 1917-1942, several significant changes took place in the movement. The name, Jehovah's Witnesses, was adopted in 1931; the emphasis was changed from that of Bible study and personal spiritual development to works - such as the number of pamphlets placed, the number of calls made, etc.; street distribution of its publications was begun; organisational structure was changed from a generally loose democratic federation of like minded local bodies to a single, highly organised, "theocratic" one.¹⁸ The last change was one of the most important as it consolidated the movement, gave it channels for quashing dissent, and solidified the "Witnesses versus the rest of the world" mentality which is so important for cults to maintain their distinctive identity.

In addition to these organisational developments, Witness theology underwent several significant changes. These included a change in emphasis from Christ to God ("Jehovah"); a reversal of several of Russell's doctrines; and a more open attack on established religion, politics, and business.¹⁹ The Witness stance on politics, seen specifically in attitudes such

as a refusal to pledge allegiance to any political leadership, caused them to fall into disfavour with the United States government during World War I. Eventually Rutherford, as leader of the movement, was incarcerated for nine months shortly after the end of World War I for his refusal to declare allegiance to the U.S. government. The net result of his jail sentence was an elevation of his status in the movement from a possibly questionable power broker to a martyr/hero, paving the way for his complete control of the Witnesses during the years to come.²⁰ By the time of his death in 1942, the organisation was a tightly controlled regime submitted completely under the authority of its one director.

The Jehovah's Witnesses in Kenya

A summary of the Witnesses' published work statistics for Africa during 1987 is provided in Table 1.²¹ The 76,904,778 total hours of work reported by the Witnesses on the continent is little short of incredible. It should serve as a strong reminder to us that the time commitment of the average Witness, who invests almost eighteen hours per month in reaching others with the Witness message, undoubtedly far exceeds that of the average Christian church member.

Table 1: Jehovah's Witnesses Africa Statistics for 1987

Country	1986 Ave. Pub.	1987 Ave. Pub.	Inc. over 1986	1987 Peak Pub.	Memorial Atten- dance	1987 Bap.	Ave. Pim. Pub.	Number of Cong.	Total Hours Work	Ave. Hours	Ave. Bible Stud.
Algeria	37	37	0.00	41	82	5	1	3	2030	4.12	38
Benin	1491	1565	4.96	1752	9005	49	114	64	304632	14.48	1744
Botswana	430	466	8.37	510	1711	29	72	18	127072	20.76	606
Burkina Faso	288	340	18.05	361	1402	71	89	15	140009	32.31	739
Cape Verde	212	244	15.09	277	1415	32	30	7	69763	20.98	434
C.A.R.	1170	1166	-0.34	1248	4042	41	140	40	249669	16.67	1250
Chad	172	186	8.13	196	1228	17	50	9	78051	33.18	416
Congo	1084	1103	1.75	1256	4725	49	91	47	238572	15.82	1807
Cote d'Ivoire	2207	2478	12.27	2584	11284	187	491	75	857057	27.63	4923
Eq. Guinea	143	144	0.69	159	466	26	34	4	50531	26.48	328
Gabon	499	553	10.82	584	2163	46	53	13	130435	18.61	1214
Gambia	18	23	27.77	26	99	1	8	1	14100	45.19	61
Ghana	28635	30430	6.26	32614	133754	2281	4726	548	7977112	20.38	52673
Guinea	151	152	0.66	206	745	22	25	11	47630	19.26	189
Guinea-Bissau	2	5	150.00	6	33	0	3	1	3795	32.15	19
Kenya	3686	4081	10.71	4373	15683	466	1021	105	1380774	30.12	6876
Lesotho	791	902	14.03	1044	4204	67	177	42	270020	21.55	1096
Liberia	1318	1446	9.71	1576	8254	118	312	33	504257	26.66	2855
Libya	5	5	0.00	10	34	0	0	0	489	4.07	6
Madagascar	2146	2424	12.95	2598	13382	241	305	37	626611	20.09	3535
Mali	50	58	16.00	63	299	8	31	1	50915	67.34	238
Mauritania	0	2	New	2	11	0	1	0	346	14.41	4
Mauritius	759	765	0.79	798	1929	65	78	9	157820	16.48	784
Mayotte	18	18	0.00	19	65	0	4	1	8432	36.98	41
Morocco	71	65	-8.45	78	194	5	7	3	14918	15.93	49
Namibia	368	416	13.04	460	1318	38	49	12	99190	17.96	503
Niger	71	83	16.90	96	365	4	17	5	30338	26.33	152
Nigeria	121670	126450	3.92	133899	429281	5647	13310	24	27057216	16.83	148345
Reunion	1093	1246	13.99	1311	3481	86	154	14	311171	19.77	1327
St. Helena	97	107	10.30	111	300	7	5	2	14922	11.20	65
Sao Tome	13	23	76.92	30	108	5	0	1	3797	10.54	69
Senegal	451	481	6.65	507	1447	46	126	14	213108	35.02	995
Seychelles	57	65	14.03	73	220	6	6	1	15111	17.25	89
Sierra Leone	635	639	0.62	708	3184	22	133	30	214028	25.19	1005
R. S. A.	38291	40456	5.65	42509	124234	2511	5196	993	9535298	18.69	41003
Swaziland	860	926	7.67	1003	3419	58	234	44	355418	29.52	1335
Tanzania	2425	2646	9.11	2800	8529	281	491	84	816025	24.28	2657
Togo	2822	3023	7.12	3366	12841	32	268	64	649948	16.09	5949
Tunisia	45	44	-2.22	52	89	3	3	1	6483	10.38	30
Uganda	310	369	19.03	401	2036	53	96	11	146654	30.47	886
Zaire	35680	33430	-6.30	38109	82069	2716	5614	1063	8433063	18.44	47196
Zambia	57624	63281	9.81	67144	381129	4933	6493	1715	12426151	15.42	79384
Zimbabwe	14557	14726	1.16	15448	51925	1119	1506	521	307855	16.57	13973
Africa Totals	322452	337069	4.53	360408	1322156	21373	41564	5686	76904778	17.78	428906
World Totals	13063289	3237751	5.69	3395612	8965221	230843	436179	54911	739019286	18.13	3005048

Source: "The Last Days—A Time of Harvest", *The Watchtower*, 1 January 1988, pp. 13-15.

Definitions of Selected Terms

Publisher ("Pub."): A baptized member of the Jehovah's Witness organisation who gives his spare time over to "preaching" for them.

Memorial: The Witness celebration commemorating the Last Supper. One does not have to be a full member to attend the celebration, and this gives a good indication of the total number of people affiliated, or at least in sympathy, with the Witnesses in a given location.

Pioneer publisher ("Pion. Pub."): A publisher who becomes a full time worker for the organisation. He may do this on a permanent basis, or for a stipulated period of time (e.g., one month per year).

Average Hours: This gives a very rough idea of the number of hours of "preaching" per witness per month in each country. It is obtained by dividing the total number of hours by 12 (for the months) and then again by the number of "peak Publishers" for the year. This is the method used by the Witnesses themselves in determining the average number of hours put in per member each month, though it does not appear to take into account the fact that it includes the hours of both the publishers and the pioneer Publishers (the latter of which, of course, put in more hours).

Bible Studies: Actual studies of Witness publications in the homes of potential converts. This figure, as far as I am able to tell, is for the number of actual studies not the number of people involved in the studies.

Preaching: (not actually used in the table, but appears in the definitions above) This is not preaching in terms of street preaching, but in terms of going door to door and trying to sell literature. It also includes back calls and Bible Studies but does not appear to include time spent during "in house" activities such as attending weekly talks or services.

The Witnesses first came to Kenya in 1931 when two of them travelled through Kenya and Uganda distributing literature. In 1937 two teams followed up this initial visit, one of them remaining in Kenya ²² and the other travelling through Uganda and Tanzania. Near the end of their four month stay, the team in Kenya experienced trouble with the colonial authorities and left as a result. ²³ Their literature was subsequently banned, and no Witnesses were allowed to enter Kenya as missionaries. This ban, however, did not apply to people who sought entry as settlers who happened to be Witnesses which is how entry into the country was affected. The success of the Witnesses in Zambia (then Northern Rhodesia) and Zimbabwe (then Southern Rhodesia) caused the local Witness leaders to send in two Witness missionaries to Kenya as settlers in 1956. They finally were given official recognition in 1962 shortly before independence. By that time some 150 Europeans had become Witnesses most of them in Nairobi. ²⁴ Official recognition meant that expatriate missionaries could enter Kenya, that house to house canvassing by members of the movement was now legal, and that they could

now approach Africans. By 1972 thirty four expatriate Witness missionaries were in Kenya, and the national movement had grown to 1161 publishers.²⁶ At that time the movement consisted primarily of young relatively well to do people.²⁶

There have been two periods of disruption for the Witnesses since they were first registered in 1962. The first major disruption began in April of 1973 when they were deregistered and banned from the country (the Attorney General reportedly referred to them as "Devil's Witnesses"),²⁷ and their thirty four expatriate workers were expelled.²⁸ The ban lasted only until August of the same year when they were reinstated as an officially registered religious group. No reasons for the lifting of the ban were given.

The second disruption to their activity in Kenya started on 16 November 1987 when they were deregistered again. To date they are appealing the deregistration, and it is reported that at least in the Nairobi area they are still actively carrying on their house to house work. To gain an idea of the scope of their activity in 1987 note the following: they averaged slightly more than thirty hours per member per month in their preaching activities during the year, grew by almost 11 per cent, baptised 2281 new members, and conducted an average of 6876 Bible studies. In addition 15,683 attended the annual celebration of Christ's last supper (see Table 1).

Kenya is not the only country in Africa in which the Witnesses have experienced disruptions from the government. They have been banned at various points in time in Ethiopia, Rwanda, Malawi, Zambia, Tanzania, Zaire, and Uganda.²⁹ Why the disruptions? In Kenya during the 1973 deregistration the government stated that it would not tolerate "people who create havoc under the pretext of religion."³⁰ The Malawian authorities accused the Witness organisation "of being dangerous to the good government of the state".³¹ What causes an avowedly apolitical organisation to be banned for apparently political reasons? Possibly because of the particular ways in which their apolitical attitudes are worked out including their refusals to salute any national flag, to become party members, or to purchase political party cards.³² As Adrian Hastings points out:

Witnesses await the imminent return of Christ to establish the Kingdom; in the meantime they see all governments as an expression of the power of Satan and, while willing to pay taxes and keep the peace, they refuse to participate further in political life -- to join a party or vote, to sing the national anthem or salute the flag. It is not surprising that they are unpopular with governments, particularly young governments sensitive to any slight.³³

In addition to their apolitical orientation, their lack of overt works of charity or development may hurt them in the eyes of political leaders. They run no hospitals, develop no community agricultural projects, and operate no schools for general education-- which seems to leave them open to the charge of being a group which refuses to participate in the development of a country.

Teachings of Jehovah's Witnesses

What do the Jehovah's Witnesses teach? Space does not permit a full presentation of their doctrines which are adequately explained in many books that are readily available. Neither does it permit refutations of the doctrines which do not agree with those of orthodox Christianity. Because our purpose is introductory in nature, we will present some of the basic teachings of the movement and leave to the reader the study of the refutations which will be found in most of the standard works.³⁴

First and foremost, the Witnesses deny the normal Christian understanding of the Trinity. In addition to using the argument that the word "trinity" is not found anywhere in the Bible,³⁵ they consistently represent the Christian doctrine in their literature as though Christendom is either polytheistic or that it teaches that God and Jesus are the same *person*,³⁶ both of which are easy for them to "refute" scripturally. Part and parcel of their denial of the Trinity is their understanding that Christ is not God. Though they deny the deity of Christ they do acknowledge Him to be "a god" from their translation of John 1:1 which they render: "In [the] beginning the Word was, and the Word was with God, and the Word was a god."³⁷ Also within the framework of their denial of the Trinity, they deny the person and deity of the Holy Spirit defining Him as "the invisible active force of Almighty God which moves His servants to do His will".³⁸

In addition¹ to the denial of the Trinity, the Witnesses deny several other major Christian doctrines. In that sense they may be considered a cult of denial. The doctrinal truths affirmed by the Christian Church which they reject include the following:

1. That Christ was resurrected physically, saying that He was resurrected as a spirit³⁹
2. That Jesus was eternally pre-existent, teaching that in His pre-human and post-human form, He is none other than Michael the archangel, a created being⁴⁰
3. That the final return of Christ will be physical, saying that He came spiritually in 1914⁴¹
4. The doctrine of an eternal Hell, saying that the grave is the final destiny of those who are not saved⁴²
5. The immortality of man, saying that man has no soul and can perish into a state of non-existence which is the final result of all who are not part of God's theocratic kingdom manifested through the Jehovah's Witnesses⁴³
6. That all believers will enter heaven, saying that heaven is reserved for the 144,000 mentioned in Rev. 7:4-8 - the rest of mankind can only hope for a place in an earthly kingdom which God will establish⁴⁴

7. That a Christian should not give allegiance to any earthly state or government as discussed above.

Two less important yet interesting doctrinal denials may be noted:

1. Blood transfusions are considered taboo, being thought of as "eating blood" which is prohibited in Lev. 17:14⁴⁶ and
2. Christmas and Easter are not celebrated, since the modern celebrations are held to be a part of Satan's religion.⁴⁶

In one major doctrine the Witnesses agree with the conservative evangelical; they hold the Bible to be inerrant and infallible in all that it teaches. Unfortunately they feel that the only correct understanding of the Bible is to be found in their own material including their own translation.⁴⁷

The Basic Methodology of the Jehovah's Witnesses

How do the Witnesses win converts to their movement? They follow a well ordered, seven step sequence, the end of which results in the baptism and consequent full membership of another Jehovah's Witness. These seven steps include: (1) getting to the door and leaving a magazine (2) making a back-call and, if the contact has not yet read the magazine, reading it together (3) getting the contact to agree to be part of an informal Bible study (4) having him come to an area wide meeting led by a Witness instructor (5) getting him to come to the local Kingdom Hall, especially for a discussion meeting after the Sunday talk (6) involving him in starting the work of calling on others (7) bringing him to the stage of full identification with the movement which is culminated in baptism.⁴⁸ The whole process may not sound very long or involved, but keep in mind that the 1987 worldwide statistics indicate that an average of 3200 hours of work (steps one through six) occur for each baptism (step seven).⁴⁹

Responding to the Jehovah's Witness

In light of the above discussion, what should the Christian do when the Jehovah's Witness comes knocking on his door? We offer the following three suggestions.

First, *do not argue* especially over doctrine! The Witness is well versed in his discussion and already has answers for the standard objections that a Christian will offer, especially if that Christian is not well versed himself on the Witnesses positions. Rather than argue allow them to go completely through their material and then simply disregard what they have said. Once they are finished, tell them the personal testimony of how you came to Christ and what He means to you.⁵⁰ If you stress anything stress the facts that you have been saved by grace not works, that you have security in your salvation, and that you experience great freedom in Christ.

Second, *politely refuse any literature* from them.⁶¹ *Refusing* the literature blocks their progression at step one in their programme making it difficult for them to feel that they are progressing in bringing you into their fold. Refusing it *politely* hinders them from feeling martyred and thereby thinking that they are gaining favour with God. They may even be curious about your attitude which they probably do not see very often.

Third, if you are interested in discussing genuine issues further, *be prepared to discuss authority* not doctrine with them. The main appeals for many involved in cults, as was pointed out in our previous article,⁶² are the appeals of authority, community, commitment, idealism, and experience. If these appeals are countered effectively then the doctrine can be dealt with at a later time. In considering the five appeals of a cult to its members, the appeal of *authority* seems to be the most vulnerable in regard to the Jehovah's Witness. If you seek to deal with doctrine first, you will be attacking only the surface level of the cult member's commitment. Even if you prove him wrong he will only return to his leaders to get better doctrinal arguments to use against you or others who argue like you. His trust in their authority will not be undermined by pure doctrinal discussion. We are not meaning to imply that doctrine is not important – it most certainly is! The point we seek to make here is that a doctrinal attack on a cult member is often the weakest attack that can be made, because it does not deal with the deep rooted spiritual and emotional dynamics that keep that person in the cult.⁶³ For that reason we suggest the approach of confronting authority as a method of witnessing to a Jehovah's Witness.

The Witness is a member of an organisation which has claimed infallibility⁶⁴ and which time has shown to be anything but infallible. The claim of infallibility has given the Watchtower organisation a stranglehold on each member. If that organisation can be shown to be false, or Satanic, or deceptive, then the stranglehold may be broken. In light of this the Christian who wants to reach the Jehovah's Witness for Christ should challenge the authority of the Witness organisation and writings.

In addition to the possible points made concerning the character of Charles Taze Russell above, a challenge on authority should follow some of the arguments in two resources that are readily available, namely Robert A. Morey, *How to Answer a Jehovah's Witness* (Minneapolis: Bethany Fellowship, 1980) and Duane Magnani and Arthur Barrett, *The Watchtower Files: Dialogue with a Jehovah's Witness* (Minneapolis: Bethany House, 1985). Both do an excellent job of laying out a detailed, systematic programme for gently undermining the authority of the Watchtower over its adherents; both include numerous photocopies of the arguments and statements as they appeared in the original Witness publications (which prevent the Witness from believing that your arguments are invented fabrications); both explain clearly how to use the photocopies to show the Witness that his organisation is not as infallible as it appears to him to be.

The basic flow of the argument used in Morey is built around one core idea which shows the Witness that the Watchtower is a false prophet with a corresponding false authority.⁶⁵ The first step is to show that the Witness

organisation claims to be a prophet of God. Once that is demonstrated the second step is to examine the Biblical qualifications for a prophet which can be found in Witness material. The Witnesses themselves are fully aware of those Biblical qualifications which include one hundred percent accuracy (from Deut. 18:18-22). This leads to the third step which is to examine the predictions made in Watchtower materials. If any prediction can be shown to be false (such as those concerning the return of Christ in 1887, 1914, 1915, 1918, 1925, 1942, and 1975) ⁵⁶ then the Witness organisation is shown to be a false prophet. Morey gives many examples of such prophecies and leaves it to the Witness to decide for himself their accuracy. We personally recommend Morey's book because, in addition to giving a sensitive but firm approach, it is more affordable than Magnani and Barrett. If you can afford them both, however, do not deny yourself the material they offer.

Conclusion

What then have we seen in this introduction to the Jehovah's Witnesses? We noted that the character of Russell as the founder of the movement falls far short of being a man of God. We touched on Rutherford's accomplishments as president of the organisation. We pointed out the many areas in which the Witnesses disagree with the Christian Church and the clear teachings of the Bible. Finally we made three suggestions for dealing with a Jehovah's Witness who approaches you.

In conclusion we remind our readers that the average Witness is concerned for you. He fears that you are headed for an eternity of non-existence in the grave and would like you to join him in God's theocratic organisation to be established here on earth. He also fears for himself not having an assurance of his own "salvation". As a result he puts in hours and hours of work each month designed to prove his worth to the organisation. Our responsibility is to love the Witness into the kingdom of Christ, to gently persuade him that he has submitted himself to a false authority, and to show him the freedom and assurance offered freely in Christ. Our hope is that the material presented in this brief article will better equip us to fulfill that responsibility.

Notes

¹ The statistics given here are extracted from "The Last Days--A Time of Harvest", *The Watchtower*, January 1, 1988, pp. 13-15.

² "Works" as used by the Witnesses refers to their "preaching" endeavours, which include door to door literature distribution, back calls, and studies of Witness materials which are called Bible studies. Note the growth rate in total hours: in 1959 it was 126,317,124; in 1974 it was 371,132,570, and in 1987, as related, it was 739,019,286 a rate of roughly 6.4 per cent per year during that 28 year period. The term "average number of hours per month per Witness" is somewhat misleading as it includes the work of both the normal congregation and the work of the fulltime "pioneer" publishers. See Table 1 in the text for further explanation and the average work per month for other African countries.

³ The information for Russell's biographical background was extracted from several sources including Anthony A. Hoekema, *Jehovah's Witnesses* (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1963), pp. 9-11; Walter Martin, *The Kingdom of the Cults: An Analysis of the Major Cult Systems in the Present Christian Era* (Minneapolis: Bethany Fellowship, 1965), pp. 34-42; Duane Magnani with Arthur Barrett, *The Watchtower Files: Dialogue with a Jehovah's Witness* (Minneapolis: Bethany House Publishers, 1983), pp. 35-56; and Edmund Charles Gruss, *The Apostles of Denial: An Examination and Expose of the History, Doctrines, and Claims of the Jehovah's Witnesses* (N.P.: Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing Co., 1970), pp. 38-52.

⁴ C. J. Woodworth and George H. Fischer, *The Finished Mystery* (Brooklyn: International Bible Students Association, 1917), p. 57; cited in Gruss, p. 50.

⁵ A libel case is one in which the accused is supposed to have made false statements for the purpose of damaging the character or public opinion of a person. The responsibility in such a case rests on the one filing the suit who has to prove in court that the statements made are false. For details on this case see Gruss, pp. 48-9 and Martin, pp. 37-8.

⁶ Hoekema, p. 14.

⁷ Martin, p. 40.

⁸ Gruss, pp. 45-6.

⁹ Martin, pp. 35-6, and Hoekema, pp. 12-13.

¹⁰ As reported by Bruce M. Metzger, "The Jehovah's Witnesses and Jesus Christ," *Theology Today*, April 1953, pp. 9-11; cited by Hoekema, p. 13. Though not as sensational, the character charges cannot be lightly dismissed. What person knows a man's true character better than his wife? In considering Russell's claims to be a true man of God we cannot neglect the court testimony of

his own wife.

¹¹ John H. Gerstner, *The Theology of the Major Sects* (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1960), p. 31; though Gruss notes that this charge was never actually proven, p. 45.

¹² Martin, pp. 36-37, recounts the expose.

¹³ Gruss, p. 51.

¹⁴ *The Watchtower*, 15 September 1922, p. 179; photocopied in Magnani and Barrett, p. 56.

¹⁵ See the fascinating account of William J. Schnell, a former insider, who gives a very negative evaluation of how Rutherford achieved his goals in *30 Years a Watchtower Slave: The Confessions of a Converted Jehovah's Witness* (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1971), pp. 34-9.

¹⁶ Though note that Gerstner, p. 31, relates that Rutherford "followed his leader in matrimonial infelicity"; see also Schnell's account, pp. 34-9. In addition we note that Olin Moyle, a legal advisor for the society, resigned under Rutherford's leadership because of "Rutherford's poor treatment of the Bethel personnel, his excessive anger, his discrimination, the allowance of 'vulgar speaking and smut,' and the 'glorification of alcohol and condemnation of total abstinence . . ."; cited in Edmund C. Gruss, *We Left Jehovah's Witnesses - A Non-Prophet Organization* (Phillipsburg, N.J.: Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing Company, 1974), p. 7.

¹⁷ Schnell, p. 38.

¹⁸ Hoekema, pp. 16-17.

¹⁹ See Gruss, *Apostles of Denial*, pp. 56-65 for discussion.

²⁰ Schnell, pp. 34-5.

²¹ Table 1 does not include the countries of Angola, Burundi, Cameroon, Comoros, Djibouti, Egypt, Ethiopia, Malawi, Mozambique, Rwanda, Sahara, Somalia, and Sudan. In most of these countries the Witnesses cannot operate legally, and so they are not listed in the annual report though statistics from them (and other similar countries around the world) are given in lump form in the report under a general category. See the category "37 Other Countries" on p. 15 of "The Last Days".

²² They primarily came to pass out Witness literature, though we note here that the colonial authorities did not allow literature distribution among the Africans; see Bryan R. Wilson, "Jehovah's Witnesses in Kenya", *Journal of Religion in Africa* (1973) 5: 129.

²³ *Ibid.*, p. 130.

²⁴ Ibid., p. 131.

²⁵ Ibid., p. 133. Publishers are full members of the Witness organisation who in their spare time go house to house selling Witness literature seeking to bring others into the organisation.

²⁶ Ibid., pp. 140-1.

²⁷ "Church Wants its Fate Clarified", *Daily Nation*, 24 November 1987, p. 14.

²⁸ David B. Barrett, *World Christian Encyclopedia: A Comparative Study of Churches and Religions in the Modern World AD 1900-2000* (Nairobi, Kenya: Oxford University Press, 1982), p. 436.

²⁹ Sholto Cross, "Independent Churches and Independent States: Jehovah's Witnesses in East and Central Africa", in *Christianity in Independent Africa*, ed. Edward Fashole-Luke, et al. (Bloomington, Ind.: Indiana University Press, 1978), p. 305.

³⁰ "Church Wants its Fate Clarified", p. 14.

³¹ "Jehovah's Witnesses Allowed to Contest Ban", *Daily Nation*, 20 November 1987, p. 4.

³² For further discussion on this, see Wilson, pp. 145-8. He feels that antagonism of the established mission organisations is another factor which should not be overlooked. For more on the political analysis, see Cross, pp. 304-15.

³³ Adrian Hastings, *A History of African Christianity 1950-1975* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1979), p. 195.

³⁴ See for example Martin, Gruss, *Apostles of Denial*, and Hoekema for some basic and fairly thorough treatments. See also the more general approach of James W. Sire, *Scripture Twisting: 20 Ways the Cults Misread the Bible* (Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 1980).

³⁵ Though it is pointed out in Magnani and Barrett, pp. 146-9, that theocracy, a favourite word used to describe the Witness organisational approach, is nowhere used in the Bible. Is their organisation thus unbiblical?

³⁶ For examples of these misrepresentations and a suggested methodology of responding to them, see Magnani and Barrett, pp. 126-45; Martin, pp. 54-63; Hoekema, pp. 45-50; Gruss, *Apostles of Denial*, pp. 105-135; and F. W. Thomas, *Masters of Deception: A Christian Analysis of the Anti-Biblical Teachings of the Jehovah's Witnesses* (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1972), pp. 4-10.

³⁷ For discussion of this translation see Hoekema, pp. 129-31; Martin, pp. 61 and 75-77; Sire, pp. 161-3; Magnani and Barrett, pp. 184-206; Thomas, pp.

39-40; Josh McDowell and Don Stewart, *Handbook of Today's Religions* (San Bernardino, Calif.: Here's Life Publishers, 1983), pp. 59-60; and William J. Schnell *Into the Light of Christianity: The Basic Doctrines of the Jehovah's Witnesses in the Light of Scripture* (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1959), pp. 178-80.

³⁸ *What Has Religion Done for Mankind?* (Brooklyn: Watchtower Bible and Tract Society, 1952), p. 108; cited in Hoekema, p. 26. As a basic refutation (following the argument presented in Magnani and Barrett, pp. 228-231) we note that the Witnesses use a simple logic test to determine whether or not Satan is a personal being. They show how he carries on conversations, is called a liar, and a murderer, and a ruler. Based on this evidence, they conclude that he is an intelligent person. The very same tests, however, can be applied to the Holy Spirit. He is our teacher and comforter (John 16:7, 13); He prays for us (Rom. 8:26-27); He has power (Rom 15:19); He speaks (Rev. 2:7); He can be lied to (Acts 5:3), insulted (Heb. 10:29), and grieved (Eph. 4:30). By applying the same test to the Holy Spirit as the Witnesses do to Satan, we can see that He is a person, just as Satan is.

³⁹ See Martin, pp. 49 and 89-93.

⁴⁰ See Hoekema, pp. 60-1. Their understanding is promulgated by, among other things, a misinterpretation of Christ as "firstborn" in Col. 1:15; see the discussion and refutation in McDowell and Stewart, pp. 50-6.

⁴¹ See Thomas, pp. 85-94.

⁴² See Magnani, pp. 102-117.

⁴³ See Martin, pp. 49-50 and 93-7.

⁴⁴ See Schnell, *Thirty Years*, pp. 42-3.

⁴⁵ See Magnani, pp. 274-81.

⁴⁶ See Magnani, pp. 263-73. They do bring up some very valid points including the uncertainty of the actual date of the birth of Christ, the excesses of the Christmas season, and the pagan origin of many current Christmas and Easter practices.

⁴⁷ Note the often quoted statement of Russell: "If the six volumes of 'Scripture Studies' are practically the Bible, . . . we might not improperly name the volumes 'The Bible in Arranged Form.' That is to say they are not mere comments on the Bible, but they are practically the Bible itself. Furthermore, . . . we see, also, that if anyone lays the 'Scripture Studies' aside, even after he has used them, . . . for ten years- if he then lays them aside and ignores them and goes to the Bible alone, though he has understood his Bible for ten years, our experience shows that within two years he goes into darkness. On the other hand, if he had merely read the 'Scripture Studies' . . . and had not read a page of the Bible as such, he

would be in the light at the end of two years, because he would have the light of the Scriptures." From *The Watchtower*, September 15, 1910, p. 298; cited in Martin, p. 41. The discussion on the New World Translation in Gruss, *Apostles of Denial*, 32-3, is also worth reading.

⁴⁸ These seven steps are presented in fair detail in Schnell, *30 Years*, pp. 119-131.

⁴⁹ This does not mean that it takes 3200 hours to *produce* one full member; those who are baptised are at the end of a chain that may have taken many years to complete. This is simply an indication of the ratio of "hours preaching" to "number baptised" seen in the year 1987.

⁵⁰ Recommended by William J. Schnell, *How to Witness to Jehovah's Witnesses* (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1961), pp. 19-21.

⁵¹ Also recommended by Schell, *How to Witness*, pp. 23-4.

⁵² A. Scott Moreau, "Introduction to Cults," *East African Journal of Evangelical Theology* 6:2 (1987), pp.10-11.

⁵³ In making this statement we are also not meaning to imply that doctrinal arguments can never win over a Jehovah's Witness. Obviously they can, but only by someone extremely well versed in the issues. In addition when the doctrinal approach does work, it does so because the Witness organisation is shown to be a false teacher, and its authority is undercut. That is why we suggest to go straight to the heart of the issue and deal with the authority from the outset.

⁵⁴ Note the documentation on this in Magnani and Barrett, 13-24.

⁵⁵ For the full arguments and materials consult the books. Morey focuses almost exclusively on this one approach, while Magnani and Barrett take a broader approach by including doctrinal and character analysis.

⁵⁶ Photocopies of the original predictions for all but the 1942 date are given in Morey, pp. 41-88; material for the 1942 date is in Magnani and Barrett, pp. 65-8 and 90-6.

THE QUEST FOR RENEWAL IN THEOLOGICAL EDUCATION

Terry C. Hulbert

The quest for renewal rests upon two assumptions: we are not perfect, and our world is not static. The former recognizes the fact that, fallen and finite as we are, we may not always have made the best decisions about our philosophy of education, our methodologies and materials, our structures, and our assessment of the kind and the extent of our clientele. The latter assumption recognizes that our world is changing and that we must continue to grow and to adjust to new situations.

But what is renewal? Renewal is the process of restoring to freshness, vigor or perfection.¹ Renewal in theological education does not necessarily imply a rejection of that which has preceded. The word *renew* suggests, rather, development--the building of that which is better upon that which has been good.

Renewal begins with *re-view*. This "viewing again" does not mean that our first view was faulty, but rather that our perspective has changed and new factors have been introduced. In the past decade developments inside and outside the world of theological education have been rapid and profound. It is essential, therefore, that we *re-view* our concept of theological education from today's perspective and then anticipate tomorrow's world in which our graduates will serve. *Re-view* leads to *refinement*; it may also lead to *redirection*.

Accrediting agencies must take the lead in establishing standards and setting forth challenges which will encourage the institutions for which they are responsible to articulate and implement philosophies of education which will constantly respond to the needs of the world in which they serve. The ICAA *Manifesto on the Renewal of Theological Education* is a landmark document in this respect, an expression of the highest ideals and criteria for theological education. Our task now is to show specific ways in which it must be implemented worldwide in the context of the last decade of this century.

Accreditation implies evaluation from the outside. Perhaps we could find a Biblical basis for this in I Corinthians 4:4 as Paul says, "I know nothing against myself." The same is true for accrediting agencies themselves. We need to "get outside of ourselves" and ask the right questions. We need to review our

purpose and performance, our methods and outcomes. Theological education should not be thought of as static or monolithic. Its basic premises must be applied with a flexibility that makes them meaningful and effective in changing times and in differing cultures.

Since our work is never perfect and our world is never static, renewal is never permanent. It must be a continuous process with built in check points and a commitment to confirm or change as evidence indicates. In the process we must avoid both the restlessness which demands change for the sake of change and the traditionalism which results in stagnation. The apostle Paul's exhortation to "stop being conformed to this world but to be continually transformed by the renewing of our minds" may well be applied to theological education. The result for our institutions will be "a testing to demonstrate the good and acceptable and perfect will of God" (Romans 12:2 adapted). Renewal is not an event but a process; it is a maturing which produces the fruit of excellence.

Like many commonly used terms, theological education is often not clearly defined in the minds of its users, and its meaning may vary from person to person. However, Ken Mulholland captures the basic ingredients most would accept: "Theological Education is all of the systematic Biblical and doctrinal teaching, both theoretical and practical, that has as its purpose the preparation of the believer, especially the leader, for the role of a special ministry in the Church."²

The term "theological" is imprecise because, used in this way, "theology" obviously includes a number of disciplines. Further, the phrase "theological education" does not indicate the purpose of the education nor the people who are being educated.

This imprecision is understandable but it has tended to blur such Biblical concepts as "teachers equipping believers for the work of the ministry for the purpose of building up the body of Christ" (Ephesians 4:11, 12). (Later we will distinguish several kinds of theological education such as "Christian education" and "ministry education.")

Mulholland's definition emphasizes the two basic elements of theological education, knowing Biblical content and training believers to minister in the church. As we consider renewal in theological education, we will need to consider these and other specific dimensions implicit in the term.

I. DISTINCTIVES OF THEOLOGICAL EDUCATION

Before noting specific indicators for renewal, we need to remind ourselves of some fundamental differences between theological and secular education.³ We need to do this so that in the accrediting process we are not tempted to imitate uncritically those patterns in secular education which are built on presuppositions which are not necessarily compatible with Biblical values or cultural considerations.

Secular education prepares people to understand, relate, contribute to, and be rewarded by their societies. Although ideally secular education should produce knowledgeable, competent, effective people--among them many Christians--the effectiveness of secular education is increasingly being measured by the marketability of the skills of the graduate and the financial reward these are presumed to guarantee.

Theological education on the other hand involves several unique presuppositions which determine the standards by which theological education must be measured and the kind of renewal we must seek for it.

Responsibility to God. Theological education presupposes a mandate from God and primary responsibility to him. Although effectiveness in method and outcomes are to be valued, theological education must first of all respond to the commands of God and not the marketplace or a value system of society. Although there is an implicit hierarchy of authorities in the educational process, from the student to the teacher to the administrator to the board and to the Church, all are ultimately responsible to God himself for their decisions and actions. This means that economic or social or other pressures of human origin must never become the dominant force in theological education.

Eternal significance. Although we marvel at the contributions which the research and initiatives of secular education make to the quality and duration of human life, there is an eternal significance to the contribution of persons trained for the tasks of evangelism and edification, the "greater works" Christ predicted. These outcomes far outclass and outlast the products of the greatest scientific, literary, and business minds in history.

Whatever the methodology, therefore, the results of our teaching, whether excellent or mediocre, are permanent. This eternal dimension of theological education constitutes both an encouragement and a challenge for renewal.

Absolute truth. Theological education began with the initiative of God himself as He revealed truth and provided for its communication to all peoples. While theological education involves the discovery of truth in Scripture and new experiences in applying it to life and ministry, it differs from secular education in that it begins with the premise that propositional truth is recorded in the Scriptures and that this truth is not to be determined but to be discovered by man. This means that we must constantly be alert for an overemphasis on "the traditions of men," and guard against a modern Pharisaism which would emphasize the theological accretions of scholars more than the Word of God itself.

Spiritual dynamic. Although many may achieve academic excellence through skill and determination, the Holy Spirit enables the believer to learn and live with a dimension unknown to the unregenerate scholar. This spiritual assistance is not a substitute for diligence but an added factor which affects the reason for and results of learning. While such virtues as personal integrity, reliability, and love for others may be

respected in secular education, they validate true theological education. Thus, without spiritual formation of the student, theological education differs from secular education mainly in subject matter. Evaluation of spiritual outcomes in the graduate, therefore, becomes one of the most important functions of the re-view and renewal process.

Centrality of the Church. Secular education prepares the graduate to work for oneself or for one's country or for a corporation. Theological education, however, prepares believers to serve the church under the authority of its Head. Whatever their office or salary, graduates are not in business for themselves but for the Lord.

The effectiveness of theological education, therefore, must be measured by how well it enhances the graduate's ability to contribute to the achievement of the building of Christ's Church. This does not imply that the Christian who receives secular education or, for that matter, no education at all, cannot make such a contribution. It does mean that the effectiveness of theological education must not be measured in terms of individual academic achievement but rather in terms of preparation for ministry through and for the Church.

II. FORCES REQUIRING RENEWAL IN THEOLOGICAL EDUCATION

Theological education does not take place in a vacuum but against the backdrop of change which continues to increase in speed and scope. In the last decade urbanization, economics, travel facility, social upheavals, political uncertainties, and medical advances have been among those forces which have drastically impacted our world.

Theological education must take into account the real and felt needs of people—inside and outside the church. In the immediate context of the church and school, however, several primary factors challenge us to renewal in theological education.

Impact of "consumerism." (especially in the West). With reference to education the questions, "What will it do for me?" and "Is it worthwhile?" are normal and appropriate. Laymen have probably always been particularly ambivalent about theological education, desiring learned authorities to lead them in spiritual matters but also being susceptible to the suspicion that theological study and seminaries in particular do not always relate to their everyday needs.

Since theological schools exist to serve the church, its members have the right and responsibility to expect from theological education positive results that will significantly edify and expand the church.

Increased value of education. Following World War II and the subsequent independence movements, the perception has grown that to obtain a degree of almost any kind is a guarantee of prestigious and well paying employment. With many countries experiencing increasingly severe and chronic unemployment, the prospect of earning a degree or some kind of academic recognition, even in a

theological school, holds a special kind of hope. This need not lead us to the conclusion that those who enter theological schools do so for unworthy motives. However, the idea generally held of the high economic and prestige value of a degree, especially in many non-Western countries, can well spill over into the church. A reverse thrust of this view is the reluctance of many extended family members to help support a young man or woman in theological training when they realize that this kind of education holds little hope of financial advantage.

Interaction between resident and non-resident programs. Doubt should no longer center on the validity of extension training as it did when TEE appeared two decades ago. Further, current discussion should not be limited to how extension type training relates to the preparation of church leaders and pastors, but expanded rather to address the question as to how it may also be applied effectively to train in context emerging leaders to disciple the great numbers of new believers and untaught believers who are filling our churches. Perhaps this is one of the greatest challenges in theological education today.

Increase in the number of church members. In places where multitudes are coming to Christ, structures and programs for theological education are often experiencing great difficulty in making productive adjustments. As noted above the issue is not just how best to train church leaders but rather to make sure that the heart of the Great Commission, "teaching them to obey all things . . .", is carried out for all believers. Theological education must also be missiological education if it is to be true to the commandment of Christ. This means making disciples who will go and make disciples.

In theory it is the graduates of our theological schools who should be accomplishing the task of edifying believers and equipping them to evangelize the lost. When the programs and practices of most churches are considered, however, we see a lack both of spiritual growth and enthusiasm for evangelism. What are we doing to meet the basic needs of those who are coming to Christ to equip and motivate them for reaching others? This question constitutes a pressing challenge for renewal in theological education.

Increase in the number of theological schools. A recent *Pulse* item notes that a theological school is born somewhere in the world every two days! ⁴ Established schools are making great strides in their academic programs. A decade ago they were putting down their roots, and now they are producing much fruit. As we multiply and gain academic momentum, however, we must always ask: What is the nature and extent of our impact? Are we responding with maximum effectiveness to Biblical mandates and contemporary needs? In what ways are we growing? What kind of fruit are we producing? Are we preparing men and women to equip believers to build up the church through edification and evangelism?

Development of accrediting agencies. The timely establishment of the International Council of Accrediting Agencies testifies to the contribution these structures are making to excellence in theological education. If theological education holds the key to the building of the Church, the task of accrediting agencies and the role of ICAA in particular are of crucial significance. Outside of North America

non-governmental accrediting functions were unknown in theological education as recently as a couple of decades or so ago. This new world wide development is now of great importance and must be used with the greatest possible effectiveness for good.

The international character of the task, however, must always be borne in mind. Although it is natural and right that national and regional aspirations in theological education should develop and that we should seek credibility through accreditation, comparing ourselves with others and the competitive spirit this generates, however, must never be our motivation for pursuing academic excellence and the recognition of it. Accreditation must never be seen as a prize to be won but as a part of the process by which an institution matures and becomes more effective in achieving its objectives.

As a unique force for cohesion and continuity in the development of theological education, accrediting agencies have the opportunity to guide theological schools towards increasingly effective and relevant contributions to the churches. This increase in the influence of accrediting agencies demands that they become catalysts in the renewal of theological education.

III. AREAS OF THEOLOGICAL EDUCATION WHICH NEED RENEWAL

Renewal in theological education at this time is not optional. A realistic look at our training institutions, the Church, and the world around us requires that we *re-view* what we are doing and ask God for guidance as we see need for *refinement* and *redirection*.

But where should we begin? When we conduct a campus accreditation visit, certain "soft spots" usually become evident. As I now look at the whole spectrum of theological education, I have several concerns. Others may add to the list, and perception of priorities will no doubt vary. But here are at least five "soft spots" which if addressed and strengthened would greatly increase the impact of theological education, especially in the churches where we must ultimately measure its effectiveness.

Definition of purpose. We need to sharpen the focus of our purpose, especially as this relates to recognizing the vocational goals of our graduates. Broadly speaking, most of them will become either "theologians" or "ministers." Lois McKinney has explained well this distinction:

... ministry education is not to be confused with theological education. Theological education prepares scholars who develop and extend theological disciplines. Ministry education prepares servant-leaders for the Church. Both theologians and ministers are needed. The problem arises when we fail to distinguish between the two in the education programs we develop.⁶

Parenthetically, we should note a later comment by Dr. McKinney on this subject which makes application to expatriate workers.

Implicit to what I have said so far is another task for missions: We must make sure missionaries are modeling ministry. We do not need more theologians, scholars, and professors in Third World schools (or in North American schools for that matter). What we need is role models for ministry. We need men and women who are both academically qualified and ministerially qualified. We need men and women who are as at home planting churches in an urban slum as they are when they are reading textbooks on ecclesiology.⁶

We should ask: Is this ideal true only for expatriates? Does it not also apply to those who in any cultural context are preparing men and women to serve?

It should be noted here that the configuration of personnel needs may vary from region to region. For instance, the Church in Latin America and Africa has many pastors but urgently needs more well trained theologians native to the area. This kind of disparity in church leadership from place to place reminds us that the purpose and the programs of theological education must take into account current and future needs of the Church with reference to these and other ministry functions.

While recognizing the value of both theological and ministerial vocations, we must also note that they differ and that these differences must be reflected in our educational processes. Robert Ferris reinforces McKinney's point:

Traditional, religious educators have viewed the instructional functions of the church in two aspects. "Christian education" usually refers to those teaching functions which are directed broadly to all church members. "Theological education," on the other hand, represents specific training aimed at preparing pastors and leaders for congregational ministry. Sometimes the distinction has been maintained for the wrong reasons. When participation in ministry has been contingent on attainments in theological education, the expansion of the church has been stifled; and distinction between clergy and laity has been heightened. There is no biblical justification for separation of "theological education" from "Christian education" if the purpose is to enhance a clerical elite.

Another reason for distinguishing between "Christian education" and "theological education," however, is rooted in the nature of the Church. The Church is represented in the New Testament as a ministering community. Those who lead this community are primarily responsible for nurturing persons under their care. Nurturing includes the teaching

functions identified above as "Christian education." The task of "theological education," on the other hand, is to nurture these gifted leaders who, in turn, nurture the church.⁷

We are faced with the questions then of when, in what ways, and to what extent should we specialize our curricula for those who will become theologians/teachers and those who will become pastors and other kinds of leaders. Further, we may not know early in their educational sequences or for that matter, until after they have graduated, who will follow one path and who will follow the other. Even if we did know, in what ways would this affect the curricula they would follow? Put still another way, should future theology professors minimize or bypass ministry preparation and experience? If so, how, would that affect the content and method of their teaching? What effect would this kind of role model have on students who are preparing for local church ministry? Or should future pastors bypass serious study of Biblical doctrines and the developing of exegetical skills? What effect would this have on their ability to "feed the flock" and to teach that flock to feed themselves and others?

As we seek to refine our definition of purpose, we will need to avoid two extremes: (1) Making no distinction in our educational processes between future theologians (teachers, scholars, researchers, writers) and "ministers"; and (2) Making the distinction in our curricula too early and too completely.

As we seek to refine the definition of our purpose, then, we must remember that the minister needs to know both Bible and doctrine; and the theologian needs to know the church. Both need spiritual maturing: growth in holy living and in the practice and power of prayer, involvement in evangelism, and the development of those qualities and that conduct which characterize servant-leaders.

Identification of clientele. We often say that we are training "church leaders." We need to think more precisely about this concept, however, because it is easy to communicate too much or too little by the word "leader." Two terms need clarification:

Church Leader: What do we mean when we say we are training "church leaders"? Do we mean pastors or other recognized officers in a local church or denomination? Should we include personnel in parachurch organizations where many of our graduates are finding fruitful ministries? Are "church leaders" only paid pastors, or male, or "preachers"? Do we realistically take into account the variety of roles and responsibilities and the gifts and skills which God uses to build and extend his Church?

Further, what about Bible taught "lay people," the spiritually mature penetrators of the worlds of education, commerce, and government? Do we have a responsibility to prepare them for these and other kinds of non-

ecclesiastical roles or at least to train their church leaders to prepare them.

Leader: What do we mean by "leader"? Does a theological degree make a person a leader? Do we promise too much when we imply that our graduates will automatically become officers in God's army when many have never been NCO's? In seeking stature and students for our seminaries, do we imply that completion of a program will insure a special status in the Body of Christ?

A sharpening of our focus with regard to our product reflected in how we advertise our schools, how we admit our applicants, and how we adjust our curricula may be an important step in discouraging elitism and, on the other hand, encouraging the development of a broad spectrum of suitably prepared, productive members of a Body of Christ--true servant-leaders.

Relationship with churches. The structure and content of much theological education probably reflects more the interests of academia than the concerns of the churches. The cry is all too familiar, "They never told me about this in seminary!" (Faculty may respond that often the "telling" was more effective than the "hearing").

While we would expect that denominationally-related schools would be more responsive to the priorities of local church needs, such is not always the case.⁸ We find this gap between the content and structure of pastoral training and the requirements of the ministry itself in the contexts of both denominational and independent churches. This is an area where accrediting agencies have the opportunity to exercise strong leadership to assure that theological schools are responsive to the churches and that graduates of our theological schools are ready for ministry, whether in the role of theologian-teacher or leader and equipper of a local congregation.

Contextualization. Contextualization of theological education involves both content (e.g. "developing ethnic theologies") and application (e.g. "dealing with the implications of theology for local issues and needs").

Theological education must be contextualized, however, not only in terms of relating it to the cultural and religious context in which graduates will minister, but also in terms of the kind of content they learn and the kinds of competencies they develop. Larry Sharp makes this point forcefully:

Our Western theology is abstract, intellectual, and propositional. And we tend to teach the same way on the mission field. Alien practices like this must end, since they stress theology without social reality.

On the other hand, evangelicals must not swing to the "obedience-before-faith" theology either. Rather, we must

evaluate how our high-level theological education relates to the realities of living. The pastors we train must be able to communicate with farmers, bus drivers and peasants. When a man is unemployed, his son on drugs, or his wife unfaithful and he can't cope, he doesn't want to hear about Barth or Bultmann or eschatological truth. He needs an understanding person who can relate biblical truth to his need.⁹

Nunez adds:

. . . in Latin America we are far behind in training leaders capable of carrying out contextualization; leaders rooted deeply in the Word of God and fully identified with their own culture; leaders who know the text and the context . . .¹⁰

The roots of our systematic theology go back to Europe, but the future of much theological thinking and education lies in the Third World. The relevance of "Western theology" is increasingly in question. Study in Western seminaries or under Western trained faculty serving overseas often raises the fear that the graduates will not be able to minister effectively in their own cultures.

From an African perspective Tony Wilmot pleads for balance:

Accrediting authorities will need all the help we can give them to insure that, on the one hand, they do not rigidly cling to curricular traditions in such a way as to enforce irrelevance and stifle the right kind of contextualization, and, on the other hand, they do not allow "contextualization" to be used as an excuse for dropping difficult studies without a persuasive argument that such studies are generally irrelevant in the context served by the school in question. We are concerned to provoke some reader of this article to contribute to the task of developing a balanced set of priorities for theological education in Africa which can be sustained on grounds of relevance to the African context or to the missionary context in which the growing African Church must increasingly serve.¹¹

Whether to establish academic credibility or to perpetuate Western precedence, we often tend to give more attention to the theological debates of centuries past than to the inductive study of doctrines explicitly recorded in the Scriptures. (Might some of the former parallel what Paul called "endless genealogies"?) We also tend to give more attention to preparing students for the traditional duties of the "senior pastor" than to training them to be competent in evangelism, discipling, and the "equipping of the saints for the work of the ministry for the building up of the Body of Christ."

A word of caution is needed concerning shaping our curricula and courses by a strictly local mold. In a world in which countries are becoming increasingly interdependent, ethnocentrism in terms of cultural pride and exclusivism can be detrimental to theological education. While by definition contextualization involves relevancy to one's own cultural setting, we have much to learn from each other, especially in the Body of Christ.

We saw this principle demonstrated in Church Growth Workshops which were held in over 60 countries. Virgil Gerber led most of the two or three member teams which differed from country to country. Conditions, cultures, and church/mission participants varied greatly. The general purpose, structure, content, and method, and even the outcomes, were remarkably constant, however. In each case people in one workshop learned much from the ideas and experiences of those in previous workshops even though they differed greatly in culture and church structures. Perhaps a parallel should be sought in theological education. The ICAA and the *Theological News* have high potential for this kind of networking.

Spiritual formation. We now have computers which can receive, process, store, and deliver information—all at the touch of a key. Graduates of our theological schools must do more than these functions; or the computer, *Time's* "man of the year" a few years ago, could become the pastor of the future! Although the parallel is ludicrous, it reminds us of the fact that our graduates need to be able to do more than passively collect and casually dispense information on command. They must be living, active personal demonstrations of the Biblical doctrines they have learned, capable of insights and initiatives.

In a recent meeting of the deans of thirteen leading evangelical seminaries in the United States, the subject which elicited the greatest concern and lengthiest discussion was the quality of the spiritual life of our students and ways in which we could help them grow. If the testimony of these deans and the spiritual quality of many churches indicates a "soft sport" in this area, this concern must be given high priority as we think about renewal in theological education.

When Jesus commanded us to "make disciples," He introduced a spiritual dimension to learning. In his day many disciples followed many teachers. But the word "disciple" came to be used in a special sense for those who reflected the character of their Teacher to the extent that the pagans at Antioch coined a new word for them, "Christians."

If we can assume that theological education rests on Christ's command, "teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you . . .", we must take very seriously the continued spiritual growth of both the teacher and the student. The importance of this relationship is noted by Ferris:

Often it is not our content which is problematic, but the processes we employ as we work toward these ends. Despite McLuhan's reminder that "the medium is the message," we have too often focused only on the content of training. While teaching truth with our lips, we frustrate our larger

goals by the way we relate to our students.¹²

The selection of godly faculty and the monitoring of their spiritual development and their impact on students must take precedence over any kind of academic criteria if theological education is to differ from that which is secular. The kind of faculty that we employ and the spiritual standards we maintain for them will largely determine the kind of person we graduate. Is there not a correlation between how well we have implemented this principle in our seminaries and the present level of spirituality in our churches?

Several New Testament words suggest facets of this spiritual dimension of the teaching ministry. *Didasko* emphasizes the communicating of truth with authority and with impact on the learner. *Matheteuo* emphasizes the relationship between the teacher and the student, especially in terms of how the latter reflects his values and conduct. *Katartizo* means to "prepare, make complete, capable, competent to meet all demands" (2 Corinthians 13:9/2 Timothy 3:17). *Oikodomeo* emphasizes community, the building up of the church through edification and evangelism (Ephesians 4:12). It involves encouragement and the application of the Word among believers --the common life experienced by the parts of an organism.

Three of these words are interrelated in Luke 6:40: "The disciple (*mathetes*) is not greater than his teacher (*didaskalon*), but when he is fully prepared (*katertismenos*) he will be like his teacher (*didaskolos*)."

The extent to which our faculty model these ingredients and thus impact positively and strongly the spiritual lives of their students will also strongly affect the quality and results of their future ministries.

Although spiritual formation is usually included in Christian accreditation standards, it is not always evaluated or emphasized as realistically as other criteria. Should deficiency here be outweighed by faculty credentials and curricular completeness? Should an institution be accredited if there is a marked lack of achievement in this area?

IV. RESOURCES FOR RENEWAL IN THEOLOGICAL EDUCATION

Emphasis on competency-based learning. The importance of competency in ministry--the ability to feed and tend the flock and to make disciples who can make disciples--can hardly be overestimated, but in some theological schools it is neither emphasized nor evaluated. In many situations academic excellence is measured mainly by the nature of the process, not by the quality of the product. But if the purpose of theological education is to prepare for ministry--academically or local church oriented--then our criterion of excellence must be the extent to which the graduate is ready (and shows potential for continued development) for functioning effectively in that ministry.

In theological education then the end does not justify the means; the end must determine the means. For instance, in its curriculum evaluation Western Conservative Baptist Seminary (Portland, Oregon, USA) has established

"competency-based learning" as its controlling criterion in determining curriculum.

The right educational process must be determined then, not by arbitrary or antiquated presuppositions, but by its effectiveness in producing the desired result. This concern has been emphasized by the (North American based) Association of Theological Schools in its Readiness For Ministry program which measures the student on admission and continues to monitor his or her progress throughout the program.

This kind of concern should put pressure on curricula and courses to achieve (or perhaps modify) stated objectives. It also involves realistic, evaluated experience as part of the education process.

Decentralization of learning through new delivery systems. Audio and video recording and playback facility, computers with capacity for desk top publishing, travel facility, and satellite communication have changed the potential pattern of education in ways we never dreamed of when our accrediting agencies were born. If TEE jarred the educational world twenty years ago, what will be the impact of current and future technology? The answer will be determined as with TEE by whether we see these developments as threats or as great new resources which can make possible quantum leaps in the efficiency and breadth of theological education.

We must avoid two extremes: resisting applications of new technology and delivery systems to theological education and relying on them to the extent that we erode the discipling dimension of the faculty-student relationship.

The challenge for involving these resources in renewal is not just to seek ways to make use of them. We need rather to envision ways to integrate them into the whole web of learning experiences. New delivery systems should not be viewed as competitors but rather as complements of the more familiar ones. The world of theological education can become a whole worldwide network of interrelated resources. For instance, by video tape, case studies from a variety of cultural contexts can be brought into the classroom, and courses can be taken to local groups who could never come to the campus.

As we seek renewal in theological education, we need to do more than review our achievements; we need to create new kinds of learning opportunities in which schools and churches worldwide can contribute to each other in practical and unprecedented ways.

Influence of accreditation agencies. Although accrediting agencies seek to insure that candidate schools are true to their mission statements and achieve their stated objectives, they are by no means limited to a passive role in theological education. They have the opportunity and responsibility not just to monitor but to motivate. They have the credibility and authority to make good things happen.

As ICAA is proving by this consultation, accrediting agencies, as they remain sensitive to the needs of the churches and remain true to biblical principles, constitute a key resource for renewal in theological education. They are more than caretakers of academic mores; they are visionaries peering over the horizon. They

are catalysts bringing together the old and the new to make crucial contributions to the life of the churches.

Accrediting agencies serve the schools which serve the churches. To serve well is to ensure the success of those served. It is not too much to say that as accrediting agencies go, so go the schools; and as the schools go, so go the churches.

V. THE URGENCY FOR RENEWAL

As we have noted some of the contemporary pressures in theological education, we conclude that renewal is not optional. We must further understand that it *is* urgent. At least four conditions challenge us to undertake renewal seriously and quickly.

Our world is changing. As Toffler predicted, the rate and extent of change is accelerating at an increasing pace. As we look at the students in our classrooms, we realize that they have come from worlds very different from ours. They are seeking answers to new questions and will have to address new conditions. They will be using new technology and techniques, and they will be wrestling with theological and ethical issues that were beyond our horizons.

One of the most important factors in their ministry will be the interaction among various configurations of the church— church/mission relations, church/parachurch relations, associations of churches and missions, and the implications of interdating among believers from different cultures and economic backgrounds. They will live their lives and do their work in the atmosphere of AIDS, economic uncertainties and catastrophes, the threat of nuclear war, the increase of violence, and the constant possibility of devastating political realignments both internationally and in their own communities.

As we reflect on our faculties and the nature of their training, the curricula and textbooks we use, and the way we teach, we must ask the questions: Are we doing the right things in the right ways to produce the right products NOW? Will our graduates know more than what theologians have been saying to each other for two millennia? Will they know what God is saying to their people in their world? Will they be able to bring their people into a growing, family relationship with God? Will they be motivated to reach out to those who have never heard of him?

Our churches are weak. With a few exceptions there is often little relationship between the extent of the pastor's theological training and the effectiveness of his ministry as reflected in the spiritual quality of the lives of his people. Of course we must take into account the resisting work of Satan and remember that even Paul's parishioners, notably at Corinth, did not always benefit from his ministry. And the Apostle John lamented that some "went out from us, for they were not of us."

Even so, we must ask: How effective are our graduates in modeling and communicating the teachings of Scripture? What have we really taught them?

What have we prepared them to do? Is there a gap between the kinds of facts and skills they learned and the kind of ministry they are expected to perform? Is the product they produce in their churches and communities a useful measurement of the kind of product we have produced in our theological schools?

These questions must be asked because throughout the world immorality, greed, spiritism, coldness, strife, and defection to non-Christian religions are evident among believers to an unprecedented extent. The predictions of the Apostle (1 Timothy 3) are being fulfilled with awful accuracy.

These questions must have better answers than we have given in the past. Their seriousness challenges us to urgency.

Our task is not getting done. Over three billion people in the world have yet to hear of Jesus Christ. With few exceptions there is little evidence that theological education is producing a measurable impact in terms of evangelism. Again we must ask the hard questions: How effective are our graduates in bringing people to Jesus Christ? Are they equipped and motivated to lead others in this? Is cross cultural evangelism one of their main concerns?

In many cases this is so. All of us could point to outstanding examples of men and women who have gone through our programs and who are being greatly used of God in this way. But as we reflect on our faculties, our curricula, and our courses, and on the experience these students had with us, are we assured that we have sent them out to win people to Jesus Christ?

Our faith is being challenged. Through the resurgence of old religions and the never ending concoction of new ones, through direct intervention by Satan in the spirit world, and through erosion by liberal theologians, God and his Word are under increasing attack. Our graduates are not going onto a beach but a battlefield. Are we training them to handle the Word as an offensive sword or as a relic to be discussed and admired? With the global aggressive thrust of Islam, the distortions of Communism, the cynicism of unbelief, and the intimidation of Satan through fear and confusion, we must consider whether our graduates should be more soldiers and perhaps less scholars in the classical sense. This is not to suggest that they pursue anything less than excellence in their study. It does affirm, however, that we need always to keep in mind the fact that they are going into battle and that we are military academies preparing them for the conflict. We must also remember that our ultimate objective is not to produce soldiers but to "win the war."

CONCLUSION

Theological education may well be the single most important issue in the church today. It is time for renewal in theological education, not a rejection of the past or a retreat from academic excellence, but a re-viewing of who we are and what we are doing and why. It is more fundamental than strategizing to "raise academic standards." It is the challenge to take the lead in the most basic area of church life, learning about God and his ways and teaching others to teach others.

As Paul challenged Timothy: "The things which you have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses, these entrust to faithful men, who will be able to teach others also" (2 Timothy 2:2). It is a task that the members of ICAA are uniquely positioned to undertake. It is a task I am confident the ICAA will undertake and in which it will, by God's grace and power, succeed.

A paper presented to the ICAA Consultation on Accreditation Unter Weisseech im Tal, West Germany, June 23-27, 1987.

Notes

¹ Adapted from Webster: *New Collegiate Dictionary*, (G & C. Merriam Co., 1976).

² Kenneth B. Mulholland, *Adventures in Training the Ministry* (Phillipsburg, NJ: Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing Company, 1976) p. 3.

³ The term is used here to refer to those institutions of higher education which do not base their philosophy of education on a Christian world view. The contrast is drawn between two generic extremes without reference to Christian institutions which provide mainly non-theological training.

⁴ *Pulse*, (March 18, 1987), p. 1.

⁵ Lois McKinney, *Evangelical Missions Quarterly*. (April, 1982), p. 90.

⁶ *Op. cit.*, p. 94.

⁷ Robert L. Youngblood, ed., *Cyprus: TEE Comes of Age*, (The Paternoster Press, n.d.), p. 43.

⁸ Western Conservative Baptist Seminary in Portland, Oregon, faced this issue head-on a few years ago when they undertook a complete review of their M.Div. program. Data was gathered from alumni, denominational delegates, missionaries, current students, missionary statesmen, denominational leaders, and pastors. This two year study and its resulting deep curricular revisions constitutes an informative case study not only in its outcomes but also in the process and interpersonal dynamics involved.

⁹ Larry W. Sharp, *Evangelical Missions Quarterly*, (July, 1987), pp. 34-35.

¹⁰ Quoted by Carl E. Armerding, *Evangelicals and Liberation* (Phillipsburg, NJ: Presbyterian and Reformed, 1979), p. 99.

¹¹ *NEGST Bulletin*, vol. 2, no. 1.

¹² Youngblood, *op cit.*, p. 45.

MODELS OF THEOLOGICAL EDUCATION YESTERDAY AND TODAY

Henry Griffith

Theological colleges and Bible schools abound in Africa. These institutions have grown to be the accepted model for the training of pastors and evangelists on the African continent. The purpose of this article is to trace briefly the history of leadership training, look at some contemporary models of theological education, and make some practical suggestions to help us improve what we are presently doing in our pastoral training schools in Africa.

Leadership Training in the New Testament Era

In the New Testament period there were no theological schools. The discipleship method was the primary means of training leaders. The disciples of Jesus learned by being with Him. Paul encouraged and taught Timothy as a father would his son. Ralph Covell and Peter Wagner describe this method as follows:

Paul followed the apprentice method of Jesus in training a company of men who traveled with him. Carefully selected by him during his missionary journeys, these men were trained "on the job" in the truths of Scripture, and in the skills necessary for their ministry.¹

Models of Pastoral Training Down Through the History of the Church

During the post-apostolic period catechetical schools were founded for training new converts. In Alexandria around 230 A.D. Origen upgraded one of these institutions founded by Clement to an advanced theological school. The curriculum of this institution included Bible, natural sciences, geometry, astronomy, philosophy, and ethics. This type of school was founded because the church was being attacked by philosophers and needed an educated clergy to provide a strong apologetic.²

Many of the clergy of the fourth to sixth centuries received their basic education in the ancient imperial schools of rhetoric where the main emphasis was on rhetoric and philosophy. In North Africa candidates for ordination were examined both in respect to their orthodoxy and their learning.³ Nevertheless, it should be noted that most of the rural priests received nothing more than a very short and informal kind of training. This continued in many churches during the entire Middle Ages.⁴

During the Middle Ages there were at least three different means of training the clergy: (1) in monasteries, (2) under the supervision of a bishop ("the episcopal system"), and (3) informally in the home of priests.⁵

The monastery arose originally in response to invasions by the Goths, Franks, Visigoths, and Lombards who threatened to destroy the very fabric of classical civilisation. Priests took young boys into the monastery and trained them to be monks. The curriculum included reading, writing, Bible memorization, doctrine, and liturgy, with an emphasis on meditation, prayer, and manual labour. It was felt that this type of training was a means of escaping the pollution of the world and establishing a Christian culture.⁶

The second type of training during the Middle Ages was the episcopal system, also called "cathedral schools" in which a group of students gathered around a bishop to receive training in church dogma, liturgy, and common law. At an earlier time general education was received through the ordinary Roman schools of the day. When the Roman system of education was destroyed by the barbarian invasions, the cathedral schools, along with the monasteries, assumed the responsibility of providing this kind of general education. In the twelfth and thirteenth centuries these schools became the first universities of Europe. Their primary purpose was the teaching of theology.⁷

At the time of the Reformation, Luther was a professor of theology in one of these universities though not one of the earliest ones. The Reformation brought with it a change in the training of the clergy with more emphasis on preaching and the study of Scriptures as can be seen in the academy founded by Calvin in Geneva.⁸

Protestant pastors in Europe during the 16th and 17th centuries received one of two types of education - either a university education with a strong emphasis on Hebrew and Greek, or an informal training which in England included study of the Bible and a book of sermons entitled Bullinger's Decades.

In 18th century England we see the emergence of a noteworthy form of informal training - that of John Wesley. His circuit riders were extremely busy in their itinerant ministry so Wesley prepared a collection of Christian literature to be studied and sold by these preachers. They were expected to give eight hours to sleeping, eight hours to study, prayer, and meditation, and eight hours to preaching, visitation, and social work.⁹

In colonial America Harvard and other colleges were originally begun primarily as a means of pastoral training. Ministerial candidates would get their basic general education at college and then do an apprenticeship with an established clergyman to learn the role of a pastor.¹⁰

A church log from a small New England parish reveals that two pastors who served that church for a span of a hundred years continually had students living with them studying Greek and Hebrew to catch a vision of the work of a pastor. The pay of these colonial pastor/supervisors was by the General Court of Massachusetts and included twelve pounds of sterling, two barrels of cider, and ten cords of wood.¹¹

The Great Awakening in America during the 1730's and 40's produced the emergence of "log colleges" or academies beginning with William Tennet's Log College in Neshaminy, Pennsylvania, around 1735. Two or three ministers were trained per year.¹² Sixty-five Presbyterian academies were founded between 1735 and the end of the century.¹³

The alternative to college study was especially important in the sparsely settled regions of western Virginia, the Carolinas, and what would become Tennessee. This system of training Presbyterian pastors was a carefully organized program of "reading divinity", administered by the presbyteries which would eventually examine the candidate for ordination. The curriculum was heavy on the academic subjects - with reading in Latin, Greek, Hebrew, ontology, pneumatics, astronomy, and the various branches of theology.¹⁴

The Methodist system of pastoral training on the frontier was less academic and patterned after Wesley's system of in-service training. The Methodist preachers were expected to read assigned books five hours a day.¹⁵ Baptists, especially in the American South, ordained the most gifted person in the congregation who then continued in his secular vocation (i.e. tent-making).¹⁶ It should be noted that partially because of these flexible ministerial patterns the Southern Baptists and Methodists, not the Congregationalists or the Presbyterians, became the largest denominations in the United States of America.¹⁷

We have seen that early pastors in America were usually trained either in a combination college-apprenticeship program or an informal system of on the job training. How then did today's system of three year seminaries arise in the United States? George I. Hunter explains it as follows:

A desire of independence from the old world, a change in the focus and constituencies of colonial colleges, a growing need for ministers, and the emergence of theological divisions and conflicts led to the establishment of theological seminaries, a development which occurred largely during the 19th century, although the first theological seminary was founded in 1784 (a Dutch Reformed seminary at Flatbush, Long Island, New York).¹⁸

Although in Europe many pastors still receive their theological education in the university, today in America four years of humanities and three years of seminary has become the norm of excellence for ministerial preparation. Some pastors in America receive their training in a three or four year Bible institute or Bible college. This movement became popular in America especially in the early 20th century because of liberalism in the seminaries.

Protestant missionaries from America have taken the two recent models of pastoral training in America, the seminary and the Bible college as the norm of excellence for pastoral training often without trying to fit them to the situation in the foreign country. At the Tambaram Council in 1938 theological education was seen as the weakest area of the missionary enterprise. After World War II several studies were carried out on theological education in the third world, and in 1957-58 the Theological Education Fund was established to correct some of the weaknesses seen in the exported models.¹⁹ This program was carried out in three mandates. The First Mandate (1958-1964) had as its goal to strengthen the academic quality of theological education in the third world. The Second Mandate was a search for a relevant theology, and the Third Mandate emphasized the need for a contextualized theological education.²⁰

Indigenous Models of Pastoral Training in the Third World Today

Among the most notable forms of Christianity that exist to a large extent apart from missionary direction and influence are the independent churches of Africa and the Pentecostals of Latin America. Let us look at how some of these groups train their pastors.

The South African Zionist churches began in 1921. Most of the founders never had formal training. Today leaders are developed by the following means. As soon as a person joins the church, he is regarded as a trainee. He is taught the doctrine of his church and expected to watch and imitate the lives of others in the group. Real training takes place in the evening services. Here younger Christians preach first and older ones follow during which they point out the mistakes made by the younger Christians as well as suggest good methods of preaching. "It is only after the leadership is satisfied with one's ability, conduct, and loyalty to the church that he is assigned to a specific task like being in charge of a congregation."²¹

Many Pentecostals in Latin America have a form of in-service training that is even more intensive than that of the African Zionists. The training of pastors among Chilean Pentecostals, studied by Christian Lalive D'Epinay, is most interesting. The potential pastor is not trained in a seminary but "in the streets". He must climb the rungs of the hierarchical ladder one by one. Lalive D'Epinay names the following stages: preacher in the streets, Sunday School teacher, preacher, church planter, pastor-deacon (first real pastoral grade), and fulltime pastor.²²

Roger Greenway describes a similar system in Mexico in which six competencies²³ are required before a man can be ordained and become a full time

salaried pastor. The competencies are: (1) street evangelism (2) jail ministries (3) church planting (4) assistantship to an older pastor during which time he is tutored in doctrine, Bible interpretation, and preaching (5) Scripture and doctrine – the candidate must pass a two-day examination before a group of pastors and preach acceptably on several texts (6) trial pastorate – he is assigned to a small church for a year. After a year the church is asked if they want him as their pastor. Only after this is affirmed can he be ordained.²³

Greenway sees this to be a good model because pastors are "trained from the ground up" in evangelism and because the system is "pedagogically sound". Greenway points out the strong points of this model: (1) Cognitive input – there is an exam on Bible doctrine and Biblical interpretation. There is also a week long pastoral refresher retreat every six months. (2) Observation of the mentor's action and discussion of his personal performance, – apprenticeship, and feedback. (3) Practice by the intern with the mentor observing. (4) Discussion of the intern's performance – his work is continually reviewed and evaluated. (5) The intern carries on with the mentor absent at the church planting stage and trial pastorate stage. (6) Discussion of the intern's performance – the whole congregation must decide whether it wants to call and support the trial pastor after a twelve month period.

(7) The mentor occasionally attends the intern's church and critiques the intern as he begins to teach another person to carry on after he leaves.²⁴

Theological Education by Extension

Probably the most well known alternative model of pastoral training is theological education by extension (TEE) first used in Guatemala in the 1960s. TEE is described by Kenneth Mulholland as a field based approach which does not interrupt the leader's involvement in the ministry. Instead of the student coming to the seminary, the seminary goes to the student. This style of pastoral training reaches the real leaders of the local congregations, thus enabling them to develop their gifts and ministries without leaving their place of service.²⁵

Walter Gammage sees the TEE system to be good in that it can:

(1) reach large numbers, (2) can reach mature family men who cannot attend a resident school, (3) be adaptable to different educational levels and cultural groups, (4) be suitable for part time, tent making ministers, (5) provide for greater mobility in student enrollment, (6) cost less per student, (7) be well adapted to provide in-service theological education, and (8) use better educational methods such as programmed instruction and group discussion rather than lecture.²⁶

Gammage also points out some of the weaknesses in this model of pastoral training. Theological Education by Extension (1) requires a much longer period than a resident school; though pedagogically sound, this fact is sometimes inconvenient for students; (2) is not well suited to research because of the lack of a library; (3) lacks suitable texts; (4) is difficult to teach homiletics and other practical courses that call for the evaluation of behavioral skills because of the

limited class hours; (5) reduces opportunity for spiritual formation because of lack of community; (6) is sometimes the object of prejudice, especially on the part of certain pastors who have completed a resident school and believe that form of education to be superior.²⁷

Other Current Models of Theological Education

We will now look briefly at other models of theological education. In the communal model the emphasis is placed on living together as part of a family. L'Abri in Switzerland, with its emphasis on living and learning together, is an example of this model. In this model study is largely individualized which allows for students to come and go at different times. Great emphasis is placed on life modeling between the teacher and the student.²⁸

Another model is the evangelistic model which places emphasis on the strategic location of the centers and is usually directed to the university student. The setting encourages the student to drop in at his own convenience. The curriculum is designed for the free flow of ideas. The faculty is highly mobile and comes from established educational institutions for short courses. This permits the program to be accredited rather easily.²⁹

The apprentice model focuses on the pastoral role. The church becomes the context in which theological understanding and pastoral practice occurs. The purpose is to keep these two aspects in a dialectical relationship to each other. There is also close supervision of the study by the elders of the church throughout this program.³⁰

In Africa other models of leadership training have been tried. A common type of pastoral training has been short term institutes, which run from one week to three months. These are especially popular for training rural church membership and leadership. A short term institute has a number of advantages over a resident school. The students can stay at home during this program, or at least they are not away from home very long. The students are usually leaders in their congregations. The local churches assume clearly defined responsibility. The students are not forced to obtain more in that short time than they can put to practice. The short term institute has, however, the disadvantage of not being workable for urban tent making pastors who cannot leave their jobs.³¹ In addition this system is usually more suitable as a means of continuing education than as a means of pastoral training.

Paul Long describes a modification of this system which is used to prepare mature leaders for pastoral ministry. This program sponsored by the Campinas Seminary in Brazil consists of one month in seminary, eleven months of guided studies at home, and one more month of resident studies. It is a shorter program than the regular seminary, and it requires no Greek nor Hebrew. Most of the graduates of this program, according to Long, are now serving as missionaries in the interior of Brazil.³²

Correspondence courses have also been used for some time as a means of

leadership training. They are inexpensive to the user and are sometimes the only method of training available to those who are isolated. Correspondence courses help students develop good study habits and are an effective means of continuing education. There is no danger of students in a correspondence program becoming isolated from the church nor the world.³³ Several weaknesses in a correspondence program include no face to face contact with the teacher, and a high attrition rate especially where there is poor reading ability,³⁴ delayed feedback, and the extremely high motivation needed for a correspondence course to be successful. Immediate relevancy is difficult to obtain, and the courses are usually not contextualized.³⁵

Interestingly a number of seminaries in the United States have developed in recent years correspondence programs or "individualized study programs" often using cassette tapes so that a student can progress at a speed commensurate with his or her background, ability, and maturity. Resources available to the student are personal counseling by his faculty advisor, a syllabus of courses, projects, seminars, specimens of the qualifying examinations, and a clear statement of the faculty expectations for student achievement. No student follows exactly the same route in reaching his goal. After completing his qualifying examinations the student is aided in structuring an individualized program of studies at a more advanced level. Here again his work is personal in terms of achievement, his interests, and his needs in present and future ministry. The content of the curriculum and the form of his study program are highly functional.³⁶

In cities another popular form of leadership training is the night Bible school. According to Mulholland, there are three hundred evening Bible schools in Latin America alone. These schools allow tent making pastors and other church leaders who work during the day to take advantage of Biblical training. They are generally characterized, writes Mulholland, by conservative theology, an emphasis on practical courses, and an atmosphere of sacrificial dedication. They are more often independent of foreign funds and control than seminaries. Though they sometimes lack well qualified teachers and materials, they are meeting real needs especially in the cities of Latin America.³⁷

Their counterpart in Africa is day Bible schools. In Africa Bible schools are often located in village areas and thus do not dislocate the students from their village culture and economic level. They stress evangelistic and spiritual concerns and the content of the Bible. They are more indigenous than seminaries and perhaps more accepted by the churches. Although their academic level is low, Bible schools are meeting a vital need in the third world church.³⁸

Suggestions for improving our pastoral training schools in Africa

Certainly many theological institutions here in Africa need strengthening by improving the faculty, the curriculum, the library, and the facilities. Let us not forget, however, that our goal in theological education is to equip our students for ministry. Qualifications for ministry lie in three basic areas: (1) character, (2) skills, and (3) knowledge. A Christian leader must possess Godly character; he must have certain skills to tend the flock, teach, and counsel; and he must know

God and His Word. How can we improve our schools by helping students grow in the first two areas -- character and skills? I believe that we need to build into our programs more one to one discipling situations between the teachers and students. This can best be done during evangelism trips away from the campus, but times set aside for prayer and discussion can also be important. So often theological education is simply imparting content rather than training men and women of God that they may grow in grace and develop their spiritual gifts for ministry within the Body of Christ.

I also see the need to have *supervised* field education for students in every level of theological schools. In addition there needs to be more continuing education for graduates of these schools. In stressing pastoral training let us not forget the importance of lay training in Africa. We need to be working to reduce not widen the gap between clergy and laity.

Quality theological colleges for training men and women at a high level are of vital importance to the growth, maturity, and theological purity of the Church in Africa. We should not forget, however, that throughout the history of the Christian Church there have been many other legitimate models of theological education. We should not place undue importance on a theological college degree as the ideal qualification for Christian ministry. Rather we should respect and work together with our brethren who have not had the opportunity of theological education at this level. Over the years God has used mightily His servants trained in many different ways.

Notes

¹ Ralph R. Covell and C. Peter Wagner, *An Extension Seminary* (South Pasadena, CA: William Carey Library, 1971), p. 53.

² *Ibid*

³ F.W.B. Bullock, *A History of Training of the Church of England in England and Wales from 1508 to 1709* (St. Leonards-on-the-Sea, England: Budd and Gillatt, 1969), p. 1.

⁴ James H. Emery, "Preparation of Leadership for the Pastoral Ministry," *Extension Seminary*, 1976, no. 4, p. 4.

⁵ Bullock, *op. cit.*, p. 2.

⁶ Covell and Wagner, *op. cit.*, p. 54.

⁷ *Ibid.*

⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 54-55.

⁹ F. Ross Kinsler, *The Extension Movement in Theological Education: A Call to the Renewal of the Ministry* (South Pasadena: William Carey Library, 1978), p. 9.

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¹³ *Ibid.*, p. 193.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 201.

¹⁵ Kenneth Mulholland, *Adventures in Training the Ministry* (Philadelphia: Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing Company, 1976), p. 7.

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¹⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 10.

¹⁸ Hunter, *op. cit.*, p. 2.

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- ²⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 90.
- ²⁵ Mulholland, *op. cit.*, p. 66.
- ²⁶ Albert Walter Gammage, *Principles Related to Theological Education in a Foreign Missions Context*, unpublished Th.D. dissertation (Fort Worth, TX: Southwester Baptist Theological Seminary, 1972), pp. 100-105.
- ²⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 96-100.
- ²⁸ Samuel F. Rowen, *Curriculum Foundations, Experiences, and Outcomes: A Participatory Case Study in Theological Education*, unpublished Ph.D. dissertation (East Lansing: Michigan State University, 1981), p. 99.
- ²⁹ *Ibid.*
- ³⁰ p. 100.
- ³¹ Mulholland, *op. cit.*, pp. 58-59.
- ³² Paul Brown Long, *Disciple the Nations: Training Brazilians for Inter-Cultural Mission*, unpublished Ph.D. dissertation (Pasadena, CA: Fuller Theological Seminary, 1981), p. 300.
- ³³ Gammage, *op. cit.*, pp. 106-107.
- ³⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 105-106.
- ³⁵ Mulholland, *op. cit.*, pp. 55-57.
- ³⁶ Covell and Wagner, *op. cit.*, p. 59.
- ³⁷ Mulholland, *op. cit.*, pp. 59-61.

⁸⁸ Gammage, *op. cit.*, p. 84.

BIBLICAL BASIS FOR SOME HEALING METHODS IN AFRICAN TRADITIONAL SOCIETY

Udobata Onunwa

In many parts of Africa and Asia, medical doctors are accustomed to seeing their patients seeking help from "traditional healers" who possess links with the indigenous non-Western medical tradition. This is evidenced especially in mental and psychosomatic disorders. In spite of the achievements of modern medicine, the tenacity of traditional medicine and therapy is still an obvious fact. One common reason for this phenomenon is that most patients view modern medicine as tackling the manifestations of disease but not its cause, so they look for someone who will tackle its cause as well.¹ Often they do so to supplement the help they get from orthodox Western medicine.

To most medical doctors trained in Western medicine, this attitude looks absurd and illogical. They ignore the fact that it is an act of faith, because Africans believe that the unaided effort of man is vain. Unconsciously some Christians and even non-Christians who indirectly associate the Christian faith with the West, think that everything African is fetish, idolatrous, quack, and unchristian. As every aspect of western medicine and therapeutic skill can not be said to be Christian, all traditional therapeutic techniques can not be branded pagan, fetish, and unscientific.

This paper will address itself to a critical search for the biblical basis and equivalents for some traditional therapeutic methods in contemporary society. It is a theological evaluation of some indigenous methods of healing (which had hitherto been neglected or ridiculed) to ascertain their acceptability to a practising Christian in Africa today. The health of the whole person is a challenge to Christians now more than ever before, particularly in respect of the United Nations' dateline for "Health for all by the year 2000." Most people still confuse everything Christian with the West or see it as a west oriented faith. To say the least Christianity, which is not the traditional religion of the Jews or Europeans but a transcendental and incarnate faith, is older in Africa than it is in Britain. It is a universal faith which offers salvation to anyone who accepts Christ (see John 1:9-13; cf. Acts 10:34-35). Christianity was established in Egypt, Lybia, Ethiopia and some other centres in North Africa before it got to Britain. As an incarnate faith, it is not culture bound but rather transcends all cultures, refines and purifies them, and expresses itself through some noble aspects of the culture, especially the language.

This paper does not intend to sound apologetic but serves as a genuine search

for the basis of making Biblical faith meaningful to the African Christian especially those engaged in the ministry of making men whole such as pastors, evangelists, and Christian doctors.

I. African Concept of Health in the Light of the Bible

In Africa one observes that the concept of health is far more social than biological. A more unitary concept of psychosomatic interrelationships is an apparent reciprocity between mind and matter. Health is, therefore, not an isolated phenomenon but part of the entire magico-religious fabric far more than an absence of disease.² So anyone trying to work out a scheme of "health for all by the year 2000" must not only think in terms of physical eradication of disease but also the proclamation of the Word of God that nourishes the soul. Dr. S. R. Burstein, a public health expert, has stated that among many non-industrialized societies

medicine in our sense . . . is only one phase of a set of processes to promote human well-being, averting the wrath of gods and spirits, making rain, purifying streams or habitations, improving sex potency or fecundity . . . it is bound with the whole interpretation of life.³

Burstein is right to point out that in traditional societies, the treatment of sickness falls within the realm of religion. This is particularly true when we understand that the traditional worldview is rooted in religion.

This comprehensive concept of health and healing is not an exclusive reserve of the African or other non-industrialized societies. For instance Bernard Haring, writing from his experience of orthodox medicine in the West, clearly states that:

a comprehensive understanding of human health includes the greatest possible harmony of all man's forces and energies, the greatest possible spiritualization of man's bodily aspect and the finest embodiment of the spiritual. True health is revealed in the self-actualization of the person who has attained that freedom which marshalls all available energies for the fulfilment of his total vocation.⁴

However, not many practitioners of orthodox medicine who adopt anti-religious philosophies (particularly anti-Christian) understand this broad concept of health (see John 10:10). In the Biblical perspective healing in all its ramifications is the symbol of the redemptive grace and manifestation of it. The healing of disease is always represented as God's victory and more particularly His victory won in Christ over sin and death.⁵ Healing and salvation are constantly associated: "Heal me O Lord and I shall be healed; save me and I shall be saved" cried the prophet Jeremiah (Jer. 17:14; cf. Ps. 91:1). The psalmist in many other places echoes similar songs of joy when he remembers the healing and forgiveness the Lord offers (Ps. 103:1-3; Ps. 116:1-5).

By the time of Jesus, the healing of the sick and the proclamation of the Gospel were an inseparable part of the same complete ministry. He sent out his disciples to preach the Good News of the Kingdom of God and to heal the sick (Luke 9:2). He had earlier in the synagogue appropriated the fulfilment of the prophecy of Isaiah 61:1-4 in his public reading of the Scripture (Luke 4:16-19).

Healing either in the traditional African society or in the ministry of the Lord Jesus Christ is therefore an elaborate enterprise in which the practitioner does not seek only the person's physical well being but also his spiritual and psychological fulfilment. It thus incorporates the reintegration of the person to the full membership of his community.

A Few Evidences of Biblical Healing: Their Characteristics

The Bible is replete with evidences of healing which are inherently miraculous. Four Old Testament examples stand out conspicuously: The healing of King Abimelech (Gen. 20:17), the healing of the Israelites bitten by the wild snakes (Num. 21:6-9), the healing of the Syrian Captain, Naaman by Elisha (2 Kings 5:1-19), and that of King Hezekiah (2 Chr. 32:24ff; 2 Kings 20:1-7). A common denominator in the above four healings is that none was performed with any physical administration of drugs and medicaments. In the case of Hezekiah, the balm recommended by the prophet was after the Lord had granted the healing and perfected the cure. The essence of the finality of the authority of God is evident in all. Rituals played some subtle part. The victims of the snake bites were only asked to look at a pseudo-snake hung on a tree as a therapeutic technique (cf John 3:14-15 where Jesus is signified as the object which is lifted high for all to behold and live). Naaman is asked to go and wash off his leprosy in a river which he considered inferior and dirty compared to the one in his home country. Each of the actions enjoined above looks absurd. In traditional societies some of the actions which the healers recommend or perform look absurd but involve nothing mystical or fetish. They sound ridiculous when analysed with the empirical methods of science. The integrity of the one recommending the action and faith in his person and ministry afford much to the patient. It is this essence of faith that undergirds the whole ritual and should be focused on the Power of God in Christ in African society today.

Jesus performed numerous acts of healing. Many of them are reported collectively in the New Testament (eg. Matt 8:16; 12:15; 14:14; Matt 14:36; 15:30-31). He healed the lepers (Matt 8:1-4; Luke 17:12-19), a woman with issue of blood (Mark 5:25-34), a man with dropsy (Luke 14:1-6), and an epileptic (Luke 9:37-43), two paralytics (Matt 9:1-8; John 5:2-47), a crippled woman (Lk 13:11-13), a man with withered arm (Matt 12:10-13), Peter's mother-in-law (Luke 4:22-28), a centurion's servant (Luke 7:2-10), the noble man's son (John 4:46-53), many blind people (Matt 9:27; 20:30-34; Mark 10:46; John 9), a man both deaf and dumb, two men with mental disease (Mark 5:1-17; Luke 4:33-37), and even in the Garden of Gethsemane, the ear of the High Priest's servant (Luke 22:50-51).

The apostles, when sent out by Christ to preach and after the Pentecost, performed many acts of healing. Many of the acts were, however, reported collectively. They include the lame at the Beautiful Gate (Acts 3:6-8), the sick in the streets healed through Peter's shadow (Acts 5:15), Aeneas, the paralytic healed by Peter (Acts 9:32-35), a cripple from birth healed by Paul at Lystra (Acts 14:8-10), and the father of Publius healed of dysentery by Paul (Acts 28:8). Many other acts of healing were performed.

The above and other acts of healing recorded in the Bible are evidences of the power of God over sin, disease, and evil (see Luke 11:14-23). S. I. Momillen has in a lucid way explained that attainment of mental, spiritual, and physical health is an obvious possibility if one lives in conformity with the stipulations of the Law of God.⁶ He was in effect echoing what the writer of the wisdom literature had earlier on stated. God speaking through the writer of the Book of Proverbs advised, "My son, attend to my words, incline thine ear unto my sayings . . . for they are life unto those who find them and health to all their flesh" (Pro. 4:20, 22). "Fear the Lord and depart from evil, it shall be health to thy navel and marrow to thy bones" (Prov. 3:7-8). "A merry heart is a good medicine, but a broken spirit drieth up the bones" (Prov. 17:22). These among other Biblical injunctions maintain that sickness is a disruption of the rhythm of the normal process of life and an external disharmony as well as an intrusion that upsets the normal working of the body.

Having found some similarities in the traditional concept of health and causes of illness with the Biblical views, it is now pertinent to establish the links in some of the basic therapeutic techniques of both systems. Sin is understood in both as harmful to a healthy body, and the Biblical cure for sin may be effectively appropriated by healers of human bodies in contemporary Africa. For instance some similar traditional skills may be purified by Biblical methods and at the same time improve on them for greater utilization.

III. Traditional Psychotherapy and Biblical Injunctions

Traditional psychotherapy involves techniques affecting community care, ego strengthening, and reintegration. These among other things make for the health for the whole person which is the goal of the Biblical healing ministry. Psychotherapy aims at influencing a patient for change, and the goals are independence, freedom, maturity, adulthood, and self reliance. The traditional society is a caring community, and the individuals are seen as personally linked with the cosmos. Every effort is continually being made to re-establish contacts when normalcy is disrupted.

The meaning and uses of confession and absolution cannot be over emphasized in the traditional society. Its place in the Biblical sense should be captured. The effects on the life and health of a patient in the traditional society are immense. For instance, among the traditional Igbo of Nigeria, relief has often been given to many sufferers from mental illness when those related to them and others included in their social network meet them either in their private homes or in the clinics of

the traditional healer and publicly confess their ill will towards them (the patients). Often a patient is allowed to speak out his grudges against his people who in turn accept their faults. The patient is thus reassured that he is a part of the healthy community which is prepared to welcome him to its fold. Without under rating the good effects of sympathy, exhortation, advice, reassurance, and doctrinal teaching, the role of confession is still important in traditional medical care.

Many functional disturbances and in the long run many organic lesions are the direct consequences of unresolved remorse and guilt. Some medical practitioners have testified that some long standing cases of insomnia, palpitations, headaches, disorder of the digestive organs, and hypertension have disappeared overnight after confessions of a lie or an immoral sex affair. The experience of David is probably a vivid Biblical example (Ps. 51). The Bible assures us that if we confess our sins, God is faithful and righteous to forgive us and cleanse us of all unrighteousness (1 John 1:9). A guilty conscience clogs the flow of vitality and inhibits the joy of a free and open heart. The Igbo of Nigeria who realise the enormity of unconfessed and unrepented sins practise a ritual of *Iku-Ogu* as a part of the therapy. This ritual is performed before or during the healing when a patient or his close relative is asked to unburden his heart by confessing his sins before seeking divine blessings. The Bible is clear about the fact that repentance and confession are essential steps towards the health of the soul (Jas. 5:16; cf. 2 Sam. 24; 17; Dan. 9:20; Acts 19:18).

One other form of psychotherapy is reintegration. It is a form of a traditional healing method which Jesus practised. Most of those he healed were asked to go back to their various villages instead of following him. When Jesus asked the healed Gerazene demoniac to go back to his kinsmen and friends and tell them all that the Lord had done for him, he was asking the cured man to reintegrate with his people. This psychotherapy aimed at making the cured man self confident when he gave testimony of his healing. Besides giving glory to God the method also intended to reassure the man of his people's willingness to accept him back into their fold (Mark 5:19-20). He was no longer ashamed of himself as people gathered around to ask how he was cured. He became the centre of attraction and thus assumed some air of importance in the community. Again after Jesus had healed the leper, he commanded him to go and show himself to the priest and perform the prescribed rituals (Mark 1:40-44). This was not only aimed at fulfilling the Levitical Law of purity (Lev. 13:49; 14:2-32), but also served another important purpose---that of reintegration into this society that had earlier cast him out as unclean. When the ex-leper, now healed, came to the priest to show him self clean, probably in the presence of the congregation at worship, the whole community would be assured of the fact of the man's new life and cleanliness. They could now associate with him.

In some traditional African societies especially among the Igbo of Nigeria, a mentally sick man on being cured performs a similar ritual of reintegration as a testimony of his recovery. He may perform an outing ceremony, or organise a party, or take a title to show his people that he is no longer insane. He is also assured that he has been fully accepted by his people as a responsible member of the community.

IV. Pharmacoreia and Physical Therapy

The Bible does not condemn medicine and its uses in healing. On the contrary it is seen as a part of the gifts of the bounty of God. One apocryphal passage speaks clearly about this and needs to be quoted in full:

We have earlier mentioned 2 Kings 20:1-7 and 2 Chr. 32:24 in connection with the healing of King Hezekiah. Read again the instructions of the prophet Isaiah in verse 7. The Lord has given every good gift to serve man's needs.

Jesus performed several miracles of healing. In John 9:6 in the story of the man born blind, Jesus adopted a completely different methodology of using natural elements. The use of spittle and mud to produce a paste is by and large a new dimension in Jesus's technique. The man was directed to go and wash off the paste rubbed on his eyes by Jesus. The cure was gradual. From science man learns the mechanism of treatment and from the Bible its meaning. Science tries to discover the wonders of the world created by God recorded in the Bible. Healings are merely restoration of the innate property to its original design and function.

Summary and Conclusion

From the foregoing discussions we have tried to establish some close relationships between therapeutic techniques in traditional African society as part of the Divine redemptive scheme recorded in the Bible. The concept of health in both systems is patterned on the same broad conceptual scheme, incorporating body, soul, and spiritual dimensions. The awful effects of sin as a factor of physical malaise are not peculiar to the Biblical view but are also found in the traditional religious system.

Psychotherapy, either in westernised Christian societies or in the traditional non-industrialised communities, may be understood as a form of theology of restoration and restitution - a methodology for change, change for the better. It does not belong to any particular profession; even though modern psychotherapy grew out of medicine when the great innovators like Freud and Adler were physicians.⁷ The traditional healer is qualified to offer this ministry in his society where his reputation is respected. He is not only seen by his people as a healer but also as a pastor, teacher, enabler, counsellor, and priest. The Church is a community of saints where every believer can serve as an agent of healing. Rightly, Charles Jackle has described pastoral psychology as a ministry that may be done by clergymen, physicians, school teachers, psychologists, social workers, and any whose training qualifies them and who identify with the historic community of faith.⁸ The Church played this role in the first century of the Apostolic era (1 Cor. 12:9). It was regarded as a valid proof of apostolic authenticity and sound doctrine (Titus 1:9). Some groups of people in the Church today have, however, been guilty of intellectual distortion of the healing power of the Gospel and of almost neglecting the gift of healing. In traditional religious systems where faith rather than intellect is emphasized, healing is given pride of place. The healing

ministry of the Church is Biblical and an important feature of the religious experience just as it an indispensable feature of the traditional faith.

A strong faith in God enables a man to decipher the basis of any sort of ritual involved in any form of traditional healing. Some of the traditional rituals (in fact many) are sordid and corrupt, shrouded in secrecy, and should not be accepted by a Christian. Nonetheless, a good number of such rituals may not be anti-Biblical but need a knowledge of Scripture to relate them reasonably and meaningfully to the pre-venient Grace of God. They may be some of the unknown seeds of Christianity which need the illuminating light of the Gospel to make them serve God's people in a wider dimension. A sound theological understanding is then necessary if a balanced assessment would be made lest we throw out the baby with the water in the bath. Such spirit directed theological study can help to check the errors of *syncretism* and *liberalism* which have been the bane of most theological positions taken in the past by many heretics.

The Bible speaks of the Jews accusing Jesus of casting out demons in the name of Beelzebulb (Matt 12:22-33; Lk 11:14-23; Mark 3:20-27). The accusation is false, but the essential thing here is to note that not all traditional or Western therapeutic methods which can produce effective results are Biblically sound and God motivated. Even though David was invited to entertain Saul with music when the King was delirious, we know that not all forms of music have that healing touch and render glory to God. Before any cultural form of healing is accepted, one must therefore examine it against the background of the Bible.

Notes

¹ H. B. M. Murphy, "The Traditional Healer: Colleague or Quack?" *Postgraduate Doctor, Africa*, Vol. 6, No. 5 (May 1984) p. 146.

² Mary Douglas, *Purity and Danger*. (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1966) p. 84. See also, S. I. Mcmillen, *None of These Diseases* (London: Lowe and Brydone, 1963) p. 12ff. cf. Mark 2:5ff. See J. B. Phillips, *Making Men Whole*, (London: Collins, Fontana Books, 1955) pp. 45ff.

³ S. R. Burstein, "Public Health and Prevention of Diseases in Primitive Communities" *The Advancement of Science* IX, 33 (1952) pp. 75-81. J. H. Thompson, *Spiritual Considerations in the Prevention, Treatment and Cure of Disease* (London: Routledge and Regan Paul, 1984) pp. 36ff.

⁴ Bernard Haring, *Medical Ethics* (London: St. Paul's Publications, 1972) p. 154.

⁵ Paul Tournier, *A Doctor's Casebook in the Light of the Bible* (London: S.C.M. Press Ltd., 1954) 205. See W.A.R. Thompson, *Faiths That Heal*, (London: A & C Black Ltd., 1980).

⁶ S. I. McMillen, *Ibid.*, pp. 12ff. See T. Seliman and J. S. Sinolowe, *Holistic Medicine - Harmony of Body/Mind/Spirit* (Renton Virginia, Renton Publishing Co. Inc.) Reviewed in *In the Service of Medicine* No. 121, (1978) pp. 31-32, Christian Medical Fellowship, London.

⁷ Charles Jackle, "Pastoral Psychotherapy: A new consciousness in Ministry," *Journal of Pastoral Care* XXVII, 3 (Sept. 1973) p. 174. P. Tournier, *The Third Dimension in Medicine - Relationships*. Contact No. 47, Christian Medical Commission, Geneva, 1978.

⁸ Charles Jackle, *Ibid.*, p. 176.

The Cross of Christ
by John R. W. Stott
Inter-Varsity Press, 1966
pp. 383.

Given the absolute centrality of the cross in the Christian faith, it is both surprising and disturbing that so little has been written on the subject at a popular level. John Stott notes the existence of this gap in the introduction to his book and goes a long way towards filling it. He sets himself three goals: to be true to Scripture, to share the fruits of his reading, and to relate the doctrine to the contemporary world.

The book is divided into four parts. Part one, "Approaching the Cross," serves as something of an introduction, establishing the centrality of the cross in the thinking of the New Testament writers and its character as a deliberate act of the Father and the Son, and examining its meaning from the information given in the Gospels. In part two, "The Heart of the Cross", Stott expounds the Biblical doctrine of the atonement, explaining it in terms of satisfaction and substitution necessitated by the problem of sin and consequent condemnation. Part three, "The Achievement of the Cross", considers the application of the cross to men and women: it saves them; it reveals God's glory, love, and justice to them; and it liberates them from the power of Satan. And finally part four, "Living under the Cross", shows how the cross should affect our daily living in practice.

The value of the book is indisputable. Most important is its solid Biblical exposition of the doctrine of substitutionary atonement which Stott vigorously defends against numerous critics from Abelard to C. H. Dodd. Biblical terms such as propitiation and justification are clearly explained, and difficult points are clarified such as the distinction between substitution and representation. There are good brief expositions of Job, Revelation, and especially Galatians, as well as a valuable discussion of why some parables such as the Prodigal Son seem superficially to rule out the necessity of the atonement. In the African context chapter 9, "The Conquest of Evil," is particularly valuable, showing the implications of the cross for the power of Satan and how the Christian is affected. The whole final section reminds us that sound doctrine must be accompanied by sound living; our faith must issue in appropriate fruit. It is a call we should take very much to heart.

Nevertheless, there are significant points which invite criticism or at least require further clarification. One example is Stott's consideration of the need for atonement which he seems to see as an absolute rather than a "consequent" necessity. That is to say, he implies not only that there was no other way to save men than the method actually adopted, but also that there was nothing else God could do but save them - he was constrained somehow to do so. Thus Stott refers to an "internal necessity" which meant that "God must 'satisfy' himself." He goes on: "the only way for God's holy love to be satisfied is for his holiness to be directed in judgement upon his appointed substitute, in order that his love may be

directed towards us in forgiveness" (p. 158). Later on he continues "there was no other way by which God's holy love could be satisfied and rebellious human beings could be saved" (p. 161). This however goes beyond the teaching of Scripture. It is no doubt true to say that the only means to save men was the method of substitutionary atonement, but God was not obliged to save at all. There is no "internal necessity." The decision to save was an act of sovereign grace and love, free and unconstrained. Men do not have to be saved to "satisfy" this love for they are not, as Stott suggests, "the sole objects of his holy love." That love is surely pre-eminently expressed in the relationships that exist among the persons of the Trinity and does not *require* an external expression. Indeed, if one argues that salvation is a necessary act of God in order that his love may find fulfilment, one must presumably argue that creation is equally a necessary act, and the sovereign creator is as dependent on his creation as the creation is on him.

Further, Stott fails to clarify the degree to which man is spiritually incapacitated by sin. On the one hand he refers to man as a slave to sin, needing to be liberated by Christ (p. 95), and he rejects the view that sinners cooperate with grace. Thus he says of the Catholic position: "They (Catholics) add that human beings have not lost their free will and are therefore able to co-operate with grace and contribute to salvation" and goes on later to say: "There is no cooperation between God and us, only a choice between two mutually exclusive ways, his and ours" (p. 187). It is therefore surprising when later on he approvingly cites Vanstone noting that "God's love is seen 'waiting in the end, helpless before that which it loves' for in giving his son to die for sinners God made himself vulnerable to the possibility that they would snub him and turn away" (p. 216). There is, to say the least, a lack of clarity here, for Vanstone clearly implies man must cooperate with grace: indeed, far from sovereign, he leaves grace impotent before the sovereign decision of men. The impression left is of a feeble God, unable to bring His purposes to conclusion, a far cry from Him "who accomplishes all things according to the counsel of His will."

The question of man's spiritual and moral capacity is also raised, though in a different form, when Stott discusses the "problem of forgiveness." He refers to the Biblical recognition that "man's responsibility is diminished" (p. 95), by the world, the flesh and the devil. But is this in fact a Biblical recognition? The exegetical evidence quoted in support by no means proves the case. Would it not be better to argue that, while sin completely paralyzes man spiritually and morally (Eph 2:1-3, Rom 8:3-8), it leaves him nevertheless fully responsible for his actions? Slavery to sin does not diminish guilt or consequent condemnation. If it did one might even argue that the more steeped a man is in sin, the less responsible he is, a somewhat perverse conclusion.

Occasionally Stott raised provocative issues which are then dismissed with very inadequate discussion. One such issue is the extent of the atonement alluded to in passing when a reference is made to the implication of the words "for many" in Mark 10:45. The author's position is made clear by a quotation from Jeremiah, but there is no discussion of the point at issue nor even a recognition that large questions are involved that need further examination. An exposition of the atonement should surely consider for whom Christ died. Similarly in the context of

a discussion of the penal nature of human death, Stott says, "To be sure, the fossil record indicates that predation and death existed in the animal kingdom before the creation of man" (p. 65). What is not discussed, however, is whether the Biblical testimony accords with the ambiguous record of fossil remains, to which Stott gives an absolute "to be sure" authority. Plainly a book on the Cross is no place to discuss questions of evolution and creation, but if such an observation needs to be intruded into the text, it should at the very least be qualified. From an evangelical viewpoint other positions are possible and even preferable on this question.

These last points raise in fact the question whether too much is attempted in the book; certainly at many points one would appreciate a fuller discussion. On the other hand, Stott succeeds in giving a remarkably full and broad picture of the glory of the cross and its significance, doctrinal, spiritual, and moral, while at the same time avoiding excessive length which would considerably restrict readership. He holds a balance between the need for both depth and breadth.

In conclusion, the book is well written and clearly set out, chapters being divided under sub-headings to help guide the reader through the argument. There are full indexes and an ample bibliography (from which however John Owen's works on the cross are curiously absent). The price is reasonable. The book will certainly be widely useful and appreciated; pastors, theological students, Christian workers of all kinds, and the "thoughtful reader" Stott has in mind would all benefit greatly from it. It is therefore highly recommended although not without reservations.

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Biblical Preaching
by Haddon W. Robinson
(Baker Book House, 1980)
pp. 230; hard cover

Is preaching out of date? Have other mediums of communication proven more effective for the Church? Should preaching be abandoned altogether in lieu of other methods in reaching people with the message of the Bible? Haddon Robinson, author of *Biblical Preaching*, says no, unequivocally.

Despite widespread devaluation of preaching (especially in the West), Robinson contends that anyone who takes the Bible seriously dares not dismiss the vital importance of preaching, even today.

Biblical Preaching is about expository preaching which Robinson defines as "the communication of a biblical, grammatical, and literary study of a passage in

its context, which the Holy Spirit first applies to the personality and experience of the preacher, then through him to his hearers." From this concise definition the author creatively carves out ten sensible steps for effective preaching from the choosing of the text to "preaching so people will listen."

While the emphasis on expository preaching is nothing new to the discipline, Robinson's methodology for taking the preacher from text to delivery is extremely innovative. From choice of text, through the exegetical process of determining its meaning, he carefully shows the student of homiletics how to arrive at the central thought, or the "Big Idea."

"The Big Idea" concept yoked to expository preaching is Robinson's genius in this book. While other homiletics have stressed the importance of focusing on one central thought from the text in sermon building, this author has put real substance to the "science" part of preaching. He stresses that it is the formation of the "idea," in the sermon which constitutes its cornerstone. The "idea," insists Robinson, is a combination of two basic things: the subject and its complement or the subject and the answer to the question, "What am I saying about the subject?"

The determination of subject and complement of a given text then give way to an exciting homiletical journey in the development of the sermon from the historical, grammatical, and literary study, through the outlining process and written manuscript, to the delivery itself. Along this journey Dr. Robinson transforms what might usually be a dull rehearsal of predictable procedures into a paragraph by paragraph discovery of how the "Big Idea" concept can infuse those procedures with new insights to yield a higher degree of effectiveness in the pulpit.

Having taught homiletics to Africans in two theological institutions over the past decade, I have struggled with those students to find a book of "how to" instructions for sermon building which would best prepare them for effective preaching. While it is still too early to formulate any conclusive results, I have recently tested this methodology with two classes at Scott Theological College (Machakos, Kenya) and have been extremely encouraged with their positive assessment and approval as well as their marked progress in sermon preparation and delivery.

Biblical Preaching is organized, clear, and balanced on the theory and practice of preaching, and impressively documented with forty three sources. With its emphasis on both expository preaching and the development of the "Big Idea" from a given text, I heartily recommend this book as both a valuable resource and constructive text for students of homiletics in Africa.

Ralph E. Partelow, Scott Theological College, Machakos.

God and Man in African Religion
 A Case Study of the Igbo of Nigeria
 by Dr. Emefie Ikenga Metuh
 (Geoffrey Chapman, London, 1981
 pp. 181, Ksh. 90.00

African Theology is no stranger to African Christianity. In the mid-twentieth century Idowu, Sawyer, Dickson, and Mbiti invented this brand of theology. Dr. Metuh, lecturer in religious studies at the University of Jos, Nigeria, now joins their school of thought by trying "to study African traditional religion as a theological system rather than as a set of anthropological facts." (p. x)

The book is an apology to defend the authenticity of ATR as the system which regulates the relationship between man and God in Africa.

Metuh's authority on this subject is worth noting. He himself is an Igbo, and his grandfather was a priest of Ala, an earth deity. He writes, therefore, from first hand information as an observer and participant.

To systematize ATR the author has taken his own tribe, the Igbo of Nigeria, as a case study. He attempts to answer five questions in nine chapters and two appendices. The five questions are:

- 1) Is the concept of the supreme being in Africa one of a living God or a cosmic man?
- 2) Is Chukwu a withdrawn god, or is he imminent in the world?
- 3) Are the norms of human conduct referred to god as their source and final arbiter?
- 4) How does god determine man's hopes and aspirations in the after life?
- 5) Is the concept of the supreme being found among the Igbo due to Christian missionary influence?

Chapters one to three attempt to answer the first question. First he discusses the doctrine of God and Creation. By the evidence of three cosmogonic myths, he asserts that God the Creator is the African God. He equates the African myths with the creation narratives in Genesis 1 and 2. Thus Metuh understands the Bible as a collection of human apprehensions of the deity. He implies that revelation is only through nature and that the Bible is not a verbal revelation of God.

In chapter two the author is to be commended for his clarification of the

term "Chi". As an Igbo he presents a comprehensive definition of the word which is tied to the Igbo names of God (Chikwu and Chineke). In this discussion Metuh portrays skill in Igbo etymology. He explains that Africans worshipped the sun, mountains, and other natural phenomena as imageries used in naming God. "It therefore might be wrong to conclude that because the same word is used for God and the sun that the group using it are sun worshippers, or that the sun or the sky is the Supreme Being." (pp. 30)

A discussion of the attributes of God concludes Metuh's theology on the deity. The Igbo believe in one moral, omniscient, omnipotent, transcendent, creator god who rules, sustains, guards, and caters to the needs of the world. The attempt to justify the unity of God in a religion where multiple deities are worshipped deserves attention. His argument is that there cannot be two uncreated creators. But the question is - Can't God create beings and give them the rights and powers of gods? And the answer is logically, yes. Therefore if the African deities are given the right to be worshipped (as God is), then they are gods. Hence Africa believes in more than one god; however, only one god is the creator of all other gods. Nevertheless they are gods.

Chapters four to six endeavour to answer the second question. Interestingly he begins with the African world view. He presents four aspects in the Igbo world view, namely, the multiplicity of spiritual beings, where he quotes the Ifa divination verse which speaks of "the one thousand four hundred and four divinities". He presents the Igbo world as one. In this one world lives the spiritual and material; the invisible and visible of European philosophy and theology is not an African concept. The hierarchy of beings, God being at the top of the ontological order and man at the bottom, is a prominent concept in African world view promoting the doctrine of cursing and blessing in ATR. The fourth aspect involves the interaction of the beings. Metuh informs us that the beings are "linked together by a network of relationships guided by fixed laws, 'omenala'" (p. 56). To deviate from these laws is an abomination which upsets the whole set up.

Again Metuh's short sighted apologetics falls short of a law of theologizing, the law of 'non - contradiction'. In chapter five he says that God is viewed as transcendent in ATR while at the same time immanent in creation through the spirits. He attempts to clarify by saying that though the deities receive worship and have divine attributes, ATR is not polytheistic. However, his attempt is short of success in that it is incoherent to worship and revere a being as god without calling it god.

Metuh's expertise in Igbo etymology is again revealed in his correction to Bible translators who translated the word 'Ekwensu' as devil. He points out that the religious dualism of a good God versus an evil devil is not found in ATR. He remarkably explains that ekwensu in Igbo is not a devil but an evil spirit of a man who died poor and without a family. The word would have been better translated from the Greek or English. In the Kikamba Bible (Kenyan tribe) the translation of devil is "ndevili" and satan is "satani".

The African concept of man, according to Metuh, is made up of four constituent

principles: the soul which links man with the other life forces in the universe; the destiny soul, the emanation of the creator; the ancestral spirit, which links man with his family; the real person, the unique individual created by God.

In the view presented above, the body of man is of nominal importance and cannot be separated from the soul. The body is a mere appearance of the spiritual being created by God prior to its existence on earth. In his discussion Metuh fails to bring out the idea that God, who created the spirit, created the body as well. For instance the Akamba name for God (Ngai mwatuangi – God the cleaver) infers that God shaped natural phenomena including the body of man.

Metuh's strong point is his criticism of Christian condemnation of African medicines. He mentions that Christians have "indiscriminately condemned most African medicines as evil and diabolical magic" (p. 98).

While agreeing with him that not all African medicine is evil and diabolic magic, sometimes African doctors use vain rituals simply because they want to be paid. This they do conscious of the fact that they are neither able to diagnose nor to treat the ailment.

His theodicy is simple; God "is given credit for all the good ... and the presence of evil is blamed on the irresponsible behaviour of a Vulture" (p. 105). The full myth is found in chapter one, pp. 14–15. His argument that physical evils are punishments for moral evils is not balanced. Some sicknesses in ATR were not caused by moral evil, and therefore they were easily treated with the use of herbs and other medicines from the specialists, e.g. stomach upsets, wounds, etc.

The author defends God's immanence by citing prayers and invocations offered directly to Chukwu. Look at this prayer offered to God in the English version:

Oh God of the Universe,
 come and take food
 take kola nuts
 Come and take drinks. (p. 131)

The question is – Was this kind of invocation not done abstractly? Is the mere mention of the name Chukwu proof that God is immanent in Igbo thought forms? Is it not evident that the spirits and deities are realities in ATR interacting with man, but the supreme being is an abstract idea?

Metuh's eschatology follows Mbiti's concept of time. He interpretes the African concept as cyclic not lineal (p. 153). Life, therefore, is conceived as a "cyclic process of birth, death and rebirth. What is, was, and will be. The centre of concern is the eternal now" (p. 137).

While the above view carries some truth, some examples in ATR show that

Africans had a lineal concept of time in some cases (though not vividly accurate). For instance the Kikuyu of Kenya trace their origin to Gikuyu and Mumbi as their first parents. Can't this be called a lineal concept of time? The Akamba refer to famines in the history of the tribe. Isn't this lineal history? While the eternal now has no age dimension, yet we know that Africans counted seasons to calculate age which is lineal concept.

Metuh's general conclusion that only ATR is life affirming as opposed to Asian religions and Christianity, which can be said to be life denying (p. 153), is unscrupulous and based on the biased discussion of his doctrine of salvation.

Christianity not only affirms that Jesus came to give man abundant life (John 10:10), but also is set to destroy death, the greatest enemy of life (I Corinthians 15:54-56).

In appendix I Metuh answers his fifth question. He strongly feels that the concept of the Supreme Being found among the Igbo is not due to Christian missionary influence. Metuh believes that God revealed himself to the African through nature.

Obviously there are good reasons to deny that what the African knows about God was imported either from the Jews, Muslims, or Christians. We may say, however, that through trade and intercultural relations in the past the concept of God in Africa was enriched by other cultures.

Dr. Metuh is a clear writer. His work is organized and his thesis documented. He presents to the world of scholars a researched piece of literature. Theological colleges on this continent should have the book in their libraries as a resource for research done on African theology. As the debate on contextualization continues, the book remains to be challenged by an evangelical theology written in an African style.

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