

See p. 13

MISSION FOR THE 21ST CENTURY

Modernizing and Mission

The Impact of Modernization/Westernization: The Missionary Implications

- Samuel Hugh Moffett

If this were to be a sermon I would take two texts:

"Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, today and forever" (Heb. 13:8); and "Behold, I make all things new" (Rev. 21:5). But the subject given to me doesn't lend itself to sermonizing. It carries the jaw-breaking title: "The Impact of Modernization/Westernization World-Wide: The Missionary Implications". That is not only too much for a sermon, it is a frightening mouthful even for a lecture. Let me just call it "Modernizing and Mission".

The very fact that the original title was about "modernization-slash-westernization" indicates a perplexing ambiguity of terms which is bound to confuse any short treatment of the subject like mine today. Modernizing and Westernizing are soft sociological words, not precise scientific terms. They are a combination of four interrelated lines of the cultural development of modern western civilization: the intellectual, the scientific, the political, and the economic. If I may risk a generalization (which will be wide open to exceptions) the intellectual line of modernization began with the Enlightenment; the political with two contrasting strands, western colonialism and western democracy; the scientific with Newton; and the economic with the Industrial revolution. These are the roots of what I will call "modernizing".

I will further narrow the scope by taking Asia, not the whole world, as the context for my description of modernization. And for better focus, I will concentrate on what happened in Korea, where I find one of the most dramatic explosions of rapid, westernizing development anywhere in the so-called "undeveloped third world". Looking at Asia through Korea, I will be asking what happens to the world and to Christian missions when one small part of the world joins the mad race to catch up with other parts that seem to be ahead of it. Korea is not typical, but it is at least a concrete Asian example.

To begin with, let me admit freely to an irresistible Asian bias. I was born there and lived there most of my life: 18 years in north Korea under the Japanese, 2 years in Kuomintang China, 2½ years in

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A. The very fact that the original title was about "modernization-slash-westernization" indicates a perplexing ambiguity of terms which is bound to confuse any short treatment of the subject like mine today. Modernizing and Westernizing are soft sociological words, not precise scientific terms. They are a combination of four interrelated lines of the cultural development of modern western civilization: the intellectual, the scientific, the political, and the economic. If I may risk a generalization (which will be wide open to exceptions) the intellectual line of modernization began with the Enlightenment; the political with two contrasting strands, western colonialism and western democracy; the scientific with Newton; and the economic with the Industrial revolution. These are the roots of what I will call "modernizing".

communist China during the revolution, and 26 years in South Korea after the division. I was married in Korea, and my mother and father were married in Korea before me.

But it is not for those personal reasons that I choose to talk about Asia, but because I believe that Asia is the greatest economic, the greatest social, the greatest political, and the greatest missionary challenge in the world. What happens in Asia, whether in modernizing or missions, will affect the whole world and the whole church. Economic and socio-political developments have always had their religious and missionary implications, ever since the division of Israel in the Old Testament, or the rise of the Roman Empire at the beginning of the New Testament, or the reunification and dividing again of empire under Constantine at the turn of the Christian church's fourth century.

So also in our time, Asia's headlong rush to modernize is already changing the face of the world with immense consequences for Christian mission, for tomorrow's Asia may well be the center of the modern world, perhaps some day even of Christian missions, as Europe once was, and North America is now. Not today's Asia, but tomorrow's Asia, for Asia is changing fast. It has changed as much in two generations as the west changed in two hundred years.

The Patterns of Modernization

There is an island off the east coast of Korea where, at least up to six years ago when television disturbed its tranquility, there was a wheel (a bicycle wheel) in the local school museum. The island is so isolated and rises so steeply from the sea that there is no wheeled transportation there, and the islanders wanted their children to know what a wheel actually looks like. Yet not far away, just down that same east coast, Korea has built what has become the largest shipyard in the world, a huge, sprawling modern thing bigger than anything either in Japan or the United States. There they now assemble and weld together in one piece the biggest oil tankers yet made, larger than the Empire State building. The two are only a few miles apart, that island without a wheel, and the great shipyard, but they are separated by three revolutions. These are the very recent social revolutions of the third world, not to be confused with the historic revolutions of the 17th to

19th century that modernized the west, though of course they derive from them.

I'm not sure that Gunnar Myrdal, in his Asian Drama¹ describes these third-world modernizing revolutions in quite the way I will, but his analysis is what suggests it. In the last forty years much of Asia has passed through three wrenching and bewildering revolutions. The 1950s were the years of the first revolution: the revolution of rising expectations. The west was affluent, the east poor. The answer was modernization. But which way: capitalism, socialism or communism? Huge sections of Asia rejected the most typically western of those answers, capitalism, though we need to be reminded that all three were western patterns. All that Asia needed to catch up, it was told, was to do away with laissez-faire capitalism, and exploiting colonialism, and let modern national planning bring freedom and prosperity, preferably under the leadership of a Marxian elite (which very few Asians realized was not Marxianism but Leninism). At any rate, it didn't work.

So the 1960s brought in a second revolution: the revolution of falling expectations. Planning, central socialized planning, simply did not produce what was planned. As Gunnar Myrdal caustically noted, Asia has been more planned against than planned.

But now, that disillusioning collapse of dearly held hopes has begun to pass, and it appears that Asia may be entering another period, not so optimistic as the first revolution, and not so discouraged as the second. Asia may be on the verge of a third revolution: a revolution of reassessment. It is pausing to look back at the failures--the fall of Mao Tze-Tung's revolution in China, for example-- and the economic mistakes and misjudgments visible everywhere in the "second world" ever since Stalin. This third revolution is more pragmatic, less ideological. But Asia is still undecided. It is envious of the "first world", the non-communist west, but its envy is mixed with large doses of criticism, and it is not at all sure yet which road it should follow into the future.

¹Gunnar Myrdal, Asian Drama, 3 vols..

Turning points like this in history come rarely to continents, and when the continent is Asia it is no hyperbole to call it the greatest challenge of our generation.

Asia's very size is the most intimidating part of the challenge. It contains two-thirds of all the land area on the surface of the globe, and 60% of all the earth's inhabitants. By contrast, North America has only 6% of the world's population. Up until fairly recently the second largest country in Asia--not the largest China, but the second largest, India, had more people than the combined populations of Africa and Latin America put together.

Even in little ^{South} Korea, which has had one of the most successful family planning programs in all of Asia, the population is still exploding, and in what is an ominous by-product of modernization, it is exploding fastest in the cities. Just how fast it is growing I suddenly realized when I saw a notice in the paper last year that Seoul, the southern capital, now has almost 10½ million inhabitants. That makes it the 6th or 7th largest city in the world by some counts. At that rate, Seoul may well have more people before long than the entire state of Pennsylvania (11 million). But what astonishes me most about that statistic is that I can remember my father saying that when he first set foot in Seoul in 1890, the city's population was given as not much more than 100,000. From 100,000 to 10 million in two generations!

But the most challenging single statistic I have come across concerning Asia's population, and its implications both for modernizing and for mission, is this. In the next twenty years, reported The [London] Economist ², one billion Asian children will pass the age of 18. That means, he said, that one billion young people would be added to the industrially active age group in only twenty years, and one billion people is about ten times the entire existing manufacturing labor force of North America, Western Europe and Japan combined. And that means, he added, that "manufacturing will go east". Asia will become the industrial center of the world.

²N. Macrae, in The Economist, (London: May 7, 1977), p.

18 yrs
Seoul in 2000, 11 m
1980, about 100,000

He may well be right. Again, Korea is an example. Japan has already drawn the industrial and financial center of world balance away from the Atlantic basin toward the Pacific. And Asia's "miracle four" as South Korea, Taiwan, Hong Kong and Singapore are sometimes called, are only about fifteen years behind Japan. If present trends continue, sometime in the near 1990s South Korea will outstrip both Great Britain and France in industrial production.

In only 25 years, since 1961, when devastated, agricultural South Korea was labelled an economic "basket-case" by American experts in comparison with North Korea, which had been industrialized by the Japanese colonialists, the south Korean "basket-case" confounded the experts, pulled itself together, learned how to use instead of misuse American aid, and not only caught up to but leaped far beyond the powerful but economically stagnant north. South Korea today is paying off its foreign loans; North Korea is defaulting. In the fifteen years between 1961 and 1975 South Korea achieved "the fastest export-led economic growth ever known by anybody. Its people are better fed, better clothed, better employed than ever before in their history".³ But not happier. And that is where the implications for Christian mission begin to demand attention.

Attitudes Toward Modernization.

In shifting from the foregoing rather triumphalist description of the modernization of South Korea, with its unintended but unavoidable undertone of suggestion that here is the model for the future of Asia, I do not want to fall into the opposite trap, a view that has paralyzed economic progress in vast reaches of the Asian continent. I cannot accept the simplistic half-truth, which is no better than a lie, that blames all Asia's economic ills on the invasion of capitalistic western materialism. After all, as Van Leeuwen wryly observed more than 20 years ago, "It is nonsense, of course, for the non-Western peoples to accuse the West of 'materialism', whilst themselves making every effort

³Ibid., p. 42.

to reach the same standard of living within as short a time as possible."⁴

Van Leeuwen's book, Christianity in World History, from which that quote comes, was a spirited defense of scientific, secularized western culture and of a large part of the process described here as modernization. His view was widely influential in the early 1960s and has been just as widely criticized ever since, particularly when misleadingly summarized by quotations out of context, such as:

"It is in the West that a human society has been transformed into the society par excellence.. It is in the West that a civilization liberates itself--and with itself all other civilizations-- from provincialism and self-perpetuation and comes to grips with the question of the future of mankind."⁵

Van Leeuwen is not as uncritical of the West as that sentence would imply, nor does he confuse modernization with the kingdom of God. "Technological progress," he says, "has always borne the mark of Cain".⁶ But he unmistakably approves the symbiosis of Christian mission with westernization. They are "two branches of one and the same tree", he says.⁷ His thesis is roughly this. The expansion of western culture is irresistible and irreversible. Two things make it superior: its scientific technology has liberated it from the false supernaturalisms of the old religions of other cultures, and its Christian roots have kept it open to a meeting of the secular mind and the religious mind. Out of such a meeting of modern minds a global culture can emerge which will understand the equally authentic realities of the physical and the transcendent in the universe. No other religion will be able to stand against the reductionist secularizing of the modern mind; only

⁴ A.Th. van Leeuwen, Christianity in World History, (Edinburgh: Edinburgh House, 1964), p. 42

⁵ ibid., pp. 31, 400.

⁶ Ibid., p. 407

⁷ Ibid., p. 16.

7

Christianity which is both religious and beyond religion, and which in large measure produced western culture, can properly mediate it, interpret it, purify it of the defects of its own limiting secularism, and prepare the world for its inevitable triumph. So the Christian mission in our time, he concludes, has as "one of [its] most urgent lines of Christian service", not to repudiate western modernization, but "to make ready, materially and spiritually, for the arrival of modern civilization".⁸

There is more truth in Van Leeuwen's book than some of his critics are willing to admit, but though the words are more true than false, the one-sidedly western tune with which he ties the words together jars in our ears as strangely outdated.

It is outdated in Asia because Asia rejects the "westernizing" of culture as a necessary concomitant of modernization; and in the west some of the arrogance of its triumphalism is fading into a new mood of critical intellectual reappraisal of the very roots of the modernizing process.

Let me begin with the Asian reaction, and again take Korea as my example. About the same time that van Leeuwen was hailing the expansion of the west as a new "Copernican revolution", a research group at non-Christian but prestigious Korea University in Seoul was preparing a sociological survey of Korean attitudes to modernization which sharply opposed identification of modernizing with westernizing. One of its first conclusions was that Korea is too nationalistic to be westernized, and does not intend to lose its national cultural identity. Of the 1500 professors and journalists which the survey singled out as national opinion makers, 57% declared that modernizing in Korea will have to be quite different from westernization; 38% conceded that though the two are similar, they are the same only "to some extent".⁹

The study went on to report that Korea's concept of modernization is overwhelmingly economic and technological. In this it

⁸See ibid., especially pp. 349-355; 400-424.

⁹Scng-Chick Han, The Intellectual and Modernization: A Study of Korean Attitudes. (Seoul: Korea University, 1966), pp. 42-46 and Table 2, p. 180.

would agree with van Leeuwen but carries his realistic recognition of the importance of this aspect of modernization to an uncritically exaggerated degree. Two-thirds of the Korean intellectuals polled asserted that the most important elements of modernization for Korea are technological and industrial development, raising the standard of living, and an expansion of the middle class. Only 6% considered "democratization" to be most important; another meager 6% placed raising the educational level first; and 13% placed greatest emphasis on rational and scientific life patterns."¹⁰

But it is in the survey's analysis of the relation of religion to modernization that it becomes most relevant to our own focus of interest: the implications of modernization to Christian mission. The survey was made by a non-Christian university, as I mentioned, one related neither to Christian missions nor to government. But it discovered that of the 1500 Korean intellectuals it had picked purely on the basis of their influence on national opinion, fully half professed some kind of religious faith, a far higher proportion, the editors said, than in the general population. Even more surprising, almost a third (31%) were Christian (24% Protestant, 7% Catholic). Only 11% were Buddhist, and 5% called themselves Confucian. At that time, in 1966, Korea was considered about 10% Christian and perhaps 20% Buddhist. The survey further revealed that two-thirds of all the respondents, 42% of whom professed "no religion", accepted the fact that religion has a positive contribution to make to modernization.¹¹

Not all religions. As the editors took pains to observe, the respondents were "very negative about the predominant traditional religions of Korea, i.e. Confucianism and Buddhism...but in view of the outstanding role of Christianity..."¹² they may be expressing a

¹⁰Ibid., pp. 39-42, and Table 1, p. 179.

¹¹Ibid., pp. 51-54, and Table 45, p. 212.

¹²The editors added here "and Chondokyo", a syncretistic indigenous religion combining elements of Christianity, Buddhism and Confucianism. But the survey's own statistics do not support this, and historically
(Footnote Continued)

generalized hope that religions in Korea, if properly led, can contribute to modernization".¹³ Incidentally, the journalists were significantly less religious than the professors, a fact which the editors attributed to the striking success of Protestant mission schools. Of the professors almost 40% were Christian, of the journalists only 22%.

The phrase "if properly led" in the sentence about religion's positive contribution to modernization in Korea is important for any conclusions which may be drawn about Christian mission in a modernizing world.¹⁴ It should be remembered that the Korean reactor described in the survey I referred to above is already 20 years old, and in those 20 years Korean intellectuals have become far more critical of western economic trends, and more concerned about democracy and human rights than that 1966 survey suggests.

But ultimately more globally important than any Korean reactor will be the critical reaction within the modernized west itself to its own modernization. This is a view that is drawing increasing attention to what has been called "our post-modern age".

Compare van Leeuwen's Christianity in World History with another book on the same subject, written twenty years later, [and recommended as prerequisite reading for this conference,] Leslie Newbiggin's Foolishness to the Greeks.¹⁵ Any such optimistic illusions

(Footnote Continued)
Chondokyo, though a part of Korea University's own roots, is no longer a national factor.

¹³Ibid., p. 53.

¹⁴Further discussion of this subject, impossible here, should include a comparison of Pan's statistical survey with a larger series of more analytical and less statistical essays sponsored by Korea University: International Conference on the Problems of Modernization in Asia.., 1965, (Seoul: Korea University, 1965; and a shorter, specifically Catholic survey, Korea: Perspectives on the Church in Modernizing South Korea, (Brussels: Pro Mundi Vita, 1971).

¹⁵Leslie Newbiggin, Foolishness to the Greeks: The Gospel and Western Culture. (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1986).

as van Leeuwen's about the superiority of the west were knocked out of Newbigin when after forty years as a missionary to India he came back to inner-city Birmingham. Instead of "Can Asia be converted?", which was the usual missionary question, he found himself asking "Can the West be converted?". That was the pessimistic subtitle he gave to the original lectures at Princeton out of which his book was made, and he began with a devastating critique of the very culture which Van Leeuwen extolled. To van Leeuwen, westernization was Christianity's partner in mission. To Newbigin, westernization is the "missionary problem", and the West has become that sector of the globe which is very nearly most resistant to the gospel. Moreover the culprit is precisely the process of secular technologizing which the third world, like Korea, is now so eagerly pursuing.

In Newbigin's analysis (one in which he acknowledges his debt to Michael Polanyi)¹⁶, the Achilles heel of western scientific culture is its failure to recognize the limited validity of the inductive method in the search for universal truth. This "scientific method" is the foundation of all modern research and development, yet by itself it cannot discover the "Alpha and Omega", the beginning and the end-purpose for which the human race is intended. The single most critical defect in that scientific world-view, says Newbigin, is that despite all its benefits which are incalculably great, it has left us in a world without purpose, and a world without religious truth. It has fatally separated "scientific fact" from "human values". What science says is true has become the modern world's "fact", verified by the inductive method, and accepted as public truth. But when ethics, or morality or religion says something is true, that is only a private judgment, and who can prove one person's judgment is any better than another's? There is no longer a recognized standard of right and wrong, nor is there left any more room in this world for Christian mission. If one culture's religion is as good as any other's, and probably better for that culture than an alien, foreign religion imported from the West, no distinctively

¹⁶See Michael Polanyi, Personal Knowledge: Towards A Post-Critical Philosophy, (Chicago: U. of Chicago, 1958)

Christian mission is necessary. That, all too briefly, is Newbigin's description of the popular "modern" world view of the culture of the west.

This is a very different world from van Leeuwen's. The song of the West has lost its harmonies, and its old-fashioned ideas of purposeful progress toward universal harmony have turned into a modern acceptance of dissonance which the tolerant liberal insists on calling peace.

But that whole world view is being called into question. My colleague, Diogenes Allen, Stuart Professor of Christian Philosophy here at Princeton Seminary, points to the coming of what he calls "The 'Post-Modern' Age", an age beyond the modernizations of "the Enlightenment". "The pillars of the modern world, erected during the Enlightenment, are crumbling", he says. He describes the four crumbling pillars as: 1) The illusion that we are living in a self-contained universe, whereas in fact, science has itself discovered that it cannot explain everything in its measurable universe by its own measurements. The concept of God, therefore, is no longer dismissed as being beneath intellectual inquiry. 2) The second pillar is the belief that reason can be the basis of morality and society. But a scientific universe is morally indifferent. None of the presuppositions of morality can be vindicated by reason, says Allen, suggesting Basil Mitchell's Morality: Religious and Secular (1980) for further reading on that subject. 3) The third pillar was belief in inevitable progress, an optimism sadly shattered by wars, depressions, the atom bomb and the rediscovery of evil. And finally, the fourth pillar is the belief that knowledge is inherently good. But science has proved by the visible results of its own technological achievements "that knowledge is not holiness". We are in a post-modern world, says Prof. Allen,¹⁷ and if so, this will have stupendous implications for Christian mission.

4 crumbling
pillars: —
1. Self-contained
universe
2. Reason as the
basis of morality
3. Inevitable progress
4. Knowledge is
inherently good

¹⁷Lecture notes from Diogenes Allen's presentations at the Princeton Institute of Theology, July 2, 1984. See his more extended treatment of these themes in "The Restoration of Sacramentality in a Postmodern World", in Reformed Liturgy and Music (Spring, 1985).

Conclusion.

By way of drawing this to some useful conclusion, and preparing for the discussion that will follow, let me remind you of Newbigin's summation in Foolishness to the Greeks. Most importantly, he refuses to accept that the price of modernization is the "death of mission". You have read the book. I think I need only outline his seven-fold statement about the continuing urgencies of Christian mission in a Post-Enlightenment world. Essential for mission today to the west, and to the world, he says, are:

*These appear
not only in
Lore*

1. The recovery of a true eschatology, both public and private--a future for me and a future for the world, even after death;
2. The recovery of a Christian doctrine of freedom, as distinct from the secular concept of neutral tolerance;
3. A "declericalized" theology no longer the monopoly of professionals but infused with the vigour of the laity;
4. A radical critique of denominationalism;
5. A willingness to see our own culture through Christian mirrors in other cultures;
6. The "courage to..proclaim a belief that cannot be proved to be true in terms of the axioms of our society"; and
7. Lives of praise and love in response to the supernatural reality of the presence of God, and the joys of the community of faith.¹⁸

Does this fit Korea? My Korea is not Newbigin's India. If anything, every year Seoul is beginning to look more and more like his Birmingham. But there are great differences which should alert us against drawing easy parallels from broad generalizations. As the church growth movement reminds us, modernization and mission have as many different faces as there are cultures and subcultures in a world which is no "global village" but far more like a global mosaic. How does Korea fit an analysis moulded by India and England?

Not too badly, but not too well, either. It fits best when the subject is modernization, though the great difference in the stages

¹⁸L. Newbigin, Foolishness..., pp. 134-150.

of modernization reached by the three countries must be closely ¹⁴noted. ^{his} Britain is the most secularized and modernized, ^{his} India the least, and ^{my} Korea ^{is} in the middle but moving westward fast. In terms of Christian mission, however, the correlation to Newbiggin's analysis is less exact, yet curiously confirms his conclusions. Britain is most modernized, but I doubt that it is really more resistant to the Christian gospel than religious India. True, church membership is declining faster in Britain than in India, but I have yet to be convinced that Britain's secular materialism is more of a barrier to the spread of the gospel than India's religious materialism. India is still one of the three largest and most impermeable blocs of resistance to evangelism anywhere in the world, and the other two, Islam and the Chinese, are also in Asia. As for Korea, the vote is not yet in. All I can venture to say is that, as the Korean survey suggests, the race toward modernization has actually fueled the growth of the Korean church rather than dampening it.

How long that will continue, no one can tell. It may simply mean that in another twenty years we will find that Korea in the 1980s ^{1990s} is still enjoying a fleeting touch of van Leeuwen's Indian summer of optimistic modernizing, but that when it catches up to Newbiggin's Birmingham, if Korean Christianity has been too uncritically modernized, it must be ready for the religious winters of the secularized west. And then it had better read more Newbiggin and Polanyi, and less van Leeuwen and Max Weber.¹⁹ Better yet, read more Bible. But Koreans are already closer to the Bible than most of the West, and in that, perhaps, is ~~its~~ ^{their} best hope.

To Newbiggin's conclusions, I would briefly add, from the Korea experience, these five observations:

- 1). Christian missionary evangelism must have greater social and intellectual content if it is to be both Christian and relevant in the modern world.

¹⁹Max Weber's The Sociology of Religion (Boston: Beacon Press, 1964) is properly negative, I believe, about Asia's traditional religions, but overly optimistic about ascetic, "scientific" Protestantism.

2). Christian mission in social action must relate itself more closely to Biblical theology and evangelism if it is not to repeat the mistakes of western modernization.

3). Christian mission must seek a better balance between church growth and Christian unity if it expects to have a Christian influence on society. Most of Asia's Christianity has little political weight because it is too small; but Korea's massive Christian community is losing its influence because it is too divided.

4). Christian mission must shed its "western" image, but need not uncritically condemn "modernization". Modernization does raise living standards and can, if it will, improve the lives of the poor.

5). And a final word. If there is one more thing I would recommend to the missionary in the modern age it would be this: keep the mission personal. Modernizing and westernizing are abstractions, and as the west has discovered, by themselves they do not bring happiness. So in this and every age, the Christian mission at its simple best is one person talking to another about what Jesus Christ has done and can do for us in this wandering, wounded world, and what hope ^{to him} is ours in the new world ~~he~~ ^{he} has prepared for us.

"Jesus Christ is the same, yesterday, today and forever."

"Behold, I make all things new".

-- Samuel Hugh Moffett

Center of Theological Inquiry

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dwyer

Samuel Hugh Moffett

MISSIONS IN THE 21st CENTURY

1 Cor. 3:6: I planted, Apollon watered - but God gave the growth

It is a great privilege and honor to be here, but I hope you realize what you are doing. You are asking me to speak on "Missions in the 21st century". The 21st century? That's impossible. My name is Moffett, not prophet. I'm a historian. I'm always looking backward. I've barely gotten used to the 20th century, and here you want me to talk about the 21st.

But if you'll let me get a running start from what has gone before in missions, I'll give a try towards looking ahead into the uncertain future. I can't be sure about the shape of missions in the future, but of one thing I am very certain, the Lord of the mission, Jesus Christ, will still be there, and he will still be telling his disciples, "Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel". That is one great thing that will not change, for Jesus is "the same, yesterday, today and tomorrow".

Let me try to get a handle on the future in this way: by looking back first toward missions in my father's day, and mission in my day, and then I'll peek around the corner toward missions in the day of the next generation. It divides out fairly evenly: fifty years for my father who went to Korea a hundred years ago in 1890; fifty years for me--I went to Korea in the 1950s--and fifty years ~~forty years~~ into the next century, though I don't dare look that far ahead. I will try to focus on a few people, and one country, Korea, rather than world statistics, to keep it understandable. Like this: *Like giving the big picture in a little frame*

- I Missions 1890-1940: 19th century missions; and my father and mother as 19th c. missionaries, and Pastor Kiel, an early Korean Christian. yi
- II Missions 1940-1990: 20th century missions; here I'll use myself as a 20th c. missionary (not the best model, by the way), and my wife Eileen (a better model). And as a contemporary Korean Christian, Dr. Han Kyung-Chik.

III Missions 1990-into the 21st century. Some educated guesses, and great hopes. I'm not afraid of the future because I know its Lord.

I. 1890-1940/50. Begin with my father. He was a 19th century missionary. When he went to Korea a hundred years ago, he was stoned in the streets. Korea was still a closed country. It was forbidden to preach a foreign religion openly. Foreigners were limited to two treaty ports. But father refused to stay in the treaty ports. He said, "The Lord didn't send me just to these two cities, Seoul or Pusan. He sent me to all Korea. And he went inland, to the north.

Pyongyang, and father. Nevius Plan
Pastor Kiel and the Great Revival

The miracle of church growth. [Chart I to 1950]:

1890:	17,500 RC;	265 Protestants.	Total 17,800
1940:	150,000 RC;	370,000 Prot.	Total 520,000
1950:	250,000 RC;	600,000 Prot.	Total 860,000

In last ten years (1940-50), 40% increase

II. 1950-1990. I went back to Korea in 1955. But I wasn't stoned in the streets. I was a 20th century missionary. I was met at the airport by Christians with arms full of flowers. What had happened? What had happened was the miracle of God's grace, the continuing growth of the Christian church in Korea through persecutions and wars and even the loss of Korea's independence through the forty years of Japanese occupation, 1905 to 1945.

Well, why did I go back to Korea in 1955 if the Korean church was already growing so fast. I went back because no matter whether the church anywhere grows or not, there will always be a need for missionaries, and the Lord will always be saying, "Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel".

So what happened to me and my wife, Eileen? Well, I was met with flowers, ^{but} and I never became a missionary hero like my father, if you will forgive me for talking about my own father like that. But for the next 26 years as a missionary in Korea, we never doubted that Korea was the place the Lord wanted us to be.

Andy

Andong Bible Institute: not a pioneer, but a helper.
 Presbyterian Seminary: training leaders, not leading.
 Bible Clubs, Mangwondong: the whole gospel.

And the church still grows [Chart I, 1950-90:.

1950: 250,000 RC; 600,000 Prot. Total 850,000

1980: 1,300,000 RC; 5,800,000 Prot. Total 7,100,000

1990: 2,600,000 RC; 10,600,000 Prot. Total 13,200,000

(That is ⁵⁰46% growth in last 10 years, 1980-1990)

But not because I was a good missionary. There are three secrets of Korean church growth I want to share with you, because these will be the hope of the church around the world, under God and by the power of the Spirit, in the 21st century.

The Korean Christians are evangelists. Dr. Han. *intermission Yi*

The Korean Christian pray. *Bright Star church*

And the Korean Christians believe in the Lord Jesus Christ as the only Lord and Saviour.

The Korean Christians are missionaries. 3rd world missions.

III Now it is ^{almost 2,000}1992. What will happen if some of you ^{students} should hear the Lord say, "I want you to go to Korea as a 21st century missionary."

Well, the first thing that may happen will be someone saying, "Don't go. We don't need missionaries any more":

19th c.- century of missions

20th c.- century of ecumenicity

21st c.- century of interfaith dialogue

Don't you believe them.

New partners in mission. 3rd world missions.

We (American missionaries) are still needed.

The number of missionaries is still growing.

The need is still there:

Half of world is hungry.

Half of all adults can't read.

Most of the world is physically sick, 38,000 children die every year unnecessarily.

And if this is not enough of a challenge: the sickness unto death. two-thirds of the world, after 2000 years of missions,

still does not know the Lord Jesus Christ as Lord + Saviour.

- S. Mykitt

(a) "No limits to the Great Commission"

11

"Is The Day of the Missions Over?"

Romans 10: 9-15

21st century

Or after the way I left you humping last night, I could call it, "Whatever Happened to the Great Commission?" Sunday morning I told you ^{not} you're paralyzed. Sunday evening I told you you're polarized. And when I look ^{back} at that ^{kind of a} bare bones ^{outline} of what I said, I suppose I ought to be ashamed of myself.

The trouble is I'm a Calvinist, and we Presbyterians believe in original sin, and all too often practice it. The Methodists are smarter. They begin with grace: Wesley's "strange warming of the heart." But both are Biblical - and I don't know which is better at any particular time - to begin with grace and be surprised by sin, or to begin with sin and be happily surprised by grace.

Anyway whether by the paralysis of fears ^{or} by the kind of polarization ^{that separates the inseparable - evangelism and social concern} ~~of evangelism from social concern~~ social concern - in either case it is the mission that suffers. No wonder people are saying that the day of the missions is over, that the world Christian movement has been washed down the drain with its partner, imperial western colonialism.

They say that the 19th century was the great century of missions, but that the 20th century is the century of ecumenics - of Christian churches cooperation and church union, ^{and} They go on to say that the 21st century, moving in the same enlightened direction, will be the century of civilized religious pluralism. - of the world's great religions learning how to get along with each other. No more missions! Missions go home.

In. 20: 21
Luk 24: 46-49
Mark 16: 15-18
Matt. 28: 18-20
Acts 1: 8

I don't believe it. I don't believe the 19th century was the last great century of Christian missions. ^{As that in the next c. Xty will meet down into a multi-religious state.} ~~Have you~~ ~~me~~
Don't forget the Great Commission? There is no more of a time limit on the commissioning of ~~mission~~ for mission in the Bible, than there is a limit on the love of God that ends our paralyzing fears, or that there is a time limit on the Great Commandments that forbid us to polarize evangelism and social concern. The "great Commission" is ~~to~~ ~~is~~ ~~to~~ ~~send~~ ~~you~~ ~~to~~ ~~the~~ ~~ends~~ ~~of~~ ~~the~~ ~~earth~~ ~~and~~ ~~to~~ ~~the~~ ~~end~~ ~~of~~ ~~time~~.

Take all five versions of the Commission - ⁱⁿ ~~in~~ ~~the~~ ~~gospel~~ ~~and~~ ~~read~~ ~~each~~ ~~in~~ ~~its~~ ~~own~~ ~~way~~ ^{read} ^{different} ^{aspects} ^{of} ^{the} ^{commission}:-
Matthew, Mark, Luke, ~~and~~ John and the book of the Acts. ^{These are} ~~there are~~ ^{Matthew} ~~with~~
no limits. No limits to the authority - "all authority" ^{on} ~~the~~ ~~earth~~ ~~and~~ ~~in~~ ~~heaven~~ ~~and~~ ~~on~~ ~~earth~~ (Acts 1: 8); "as the Father sent me, so I send you" (John 20: 21). No limits to the urgency - says Jesus in Mark, 16: 7 "Whoever believes will be saved, but whoever does not believe will be condemned." (Mark 16: 16). No limits to the location, "Begin in Jerusalem, in the city, ^{right} ^{where} ^{you} ^{are}" says Jesus in Luke (24: 46-49). ^{But} ⁱⁿ ^{Mark} ^{is} ^{not} ^{so} ^{impatient}, ^{evangelistic} Mark, ^{Jesus} ^{says} ⁱⁿ ^{effect}, ^{"Go} ^{into} ^{all} ^{the} ^{world} ^{and} ^{preach}" - and the mission explodes with enough signs and wonders to make a sober Presbyterian tremble. ~~But~~ ^{Matthew} ^{is} ^{more} ^{sober}.
Calms my ^{Presbyterian} ^{mainline} ^{fear}, "Go and teach," ^{says} ^{Jesus} ^{"all} ^{that} ^I ^{have} ^{commanded} ^{you} ⁻ ^{to} ^{preach} ^{the} ^{good} ^{news} ^{to} ^{the} ^{poor}, ^{and} ^{to} ^{bind} ^{up} ^{the} ^{loose} ^{and} ^{loose} ^{what} ^{is} ^{bound} ^{on} ^{earth} ^{shall} ^{be} ^{bound} ⁱⁿ ^{heaven} ^{and} ^{what} ^{is} ^{bound} ⁱⁿ ^{heaven} ^{shall} ^{be} ^{bound} ^{on} ^{earth}" ^{and} ^{liberty} ^{for} ^{the} ^{oppressed}." There's no limit to the Commissioning - no moratoriums, no mission area no national exclusive rights for westerners, or for national churches either, for that matter.
no ^{shall} ^{need} ^{the} ^{HS}, ^{and} ^{no} ^{end} ⁱⁿ ^{time}. ^{If} ^{the} ^{19th} ^{century} ^{was} ^a ^{"great} ^{century} ^{for} ^{missions}" - ^{so} ^{we} ^{unwittingly} ^{and} ^{let} ^{me} ^{compare} ^{the} ^{two} ⁻ ^{emphasizing} ^{tempt} ^{the} ^{world}.
And if you ~~don't~~ ^{think} ^{mission} ^{has} ^{been} ^{declining} ⁱⁿ ^{the} ^{20th} ^{century} ^{look} ^{at} ^{the} ^{statistics}.

[delete]They call this century, the 20th, the ecumenical century, That's all right, but it depends on what is meant by ecumenical". It doesn't mean the century of the World Council of Churches, though we need one, we need to let the world know that even Protestants are not hopelessly divided. And ecumenical does not mean "interfaith", as so many use it today. As Christians have used the Greek word from which we derive "ecumenical", it means Christian unity, not religious unity, and it means "global" in the sense of "world-wide". But it falls apart unless it is combined with that 19th century word, "Mission." Which is why Marge Carpenter, our moderator of the General Assembly a few years ago, still covers the country saying, "Mission, mission, mission". And why John Mackay, when he was moderator of the General Assembly forty years ago, told us Presbyterians, " Mission loses credibility without some visible evidence of Christian unity; but ecumenics without mission ceases to be Christian".

So despite some dark shadows, it's precisely because of the 20th century in missions that I can't be a pessimist about the 21st century and the third millennium. In terms of actual, visible progress, the 20th was greater than the "great century" the 19th.

--but what intrigues me and challenges me as a mainline Protestant about the Pentecostals, is that while we talk a lot about our missionary "option for the poor", the poor themselves choose charismatic Pentecostalism.

But don't be discouraged. Asia is another story. In Korea it's the other way around. Scratch a Korean Christian and in most cases you'll discover a Presbyterian, not a Pentecostal. When my father went to Korea as a 19th century missionary in 1890, there were less than 300 Protestants on the whole peninsula, north and south. Today just in the south, there are more Presbyterians in Korea than in the United States.

How in the world did that happen?. Well, when the Presbyterian Mission in Korea celebrated its 50th anniversary in 1934, a committee came out all the way from America to ask why the church was growing so fast. My father's answer was surprisingly like that of the Pentecostals in Latin America, though he was no Pentecostal. He said, "The Holy Spirit." His full answer was, "For fifty years we have held up the Word of God and the Holy Spirit did the rest".

DELETE?

[delete ??] As a Christian, I don't buy the Big Bang theory, unless--unless, and this unless is important--unless we're talking not about

the whole universe, but thinking only about this little ball of dirt we call our earth. The beginning of reality, of all existence, was not a big bang but God.g bang come out of nothing?. "In the beginning God"...that 's our Old Testament. "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was God", a God with a purpose. And his purpose unfolded into His mission. He sent his only begotten Son on that mission. . "Mission, mission, mission", as Marge Carpenter, the moderator of the General Assembly a couple of years ago, used to say. [delete?]

[delete??] I spent three happy years at the Center of Theological Inquiry in Princeton. At its door was a bronze plaque with a quotation from Henry Luce for whom the building was named. Luce was an interesting man; his father was a missionary to China, and he founded a little news magazine called Time, which grew and grew into the mega-corporation Time-Warner. The quotation is a little startling coming from him. It says, "Meaning was built into life, in the beginning, by the Creator" The meaning, as the whole Bible says, from Gen. 3 to the Book of Revelation, was "mission", that the world might be saved. [delete?]
[delete /]

[That's a slippery slope. It moves straight down hill. First the move from "mission to ecumenicity" paralyzes paralyzing our outreach in global Christian mission. It cuts the missionary carotid artery, evangelism, and turns inward to its own problems, calling for an improved, united ecclesiastical bureaucracy. And the next step, when the bureaucracy falters-- the move from ecumenics to interfaith humanity--is just as dangerous and potentially scarcely even christian, It deifies humanity. It dethrones the Lord Jesus Christ. It nails him again to the cross, should he be ungracious enough to refuse to join the religious ruling committee of the new millenniums--Buddha, the Dalai Lama, Allah, Confucius, a shaman or two and the three million bewildering Hindu gods. If that is what lies ahead, Jesus will be asking us, "Why did I die on the cross?"]

But that's all wrong. I'll admit that there were 19th century missionaries who were too narrow. Perhaps they should have been more ecumenical. But their successors in the 20th century were often too shallow. Perhaps they should have been more evangelistic.

'Don't expect too much from the end of the world!'

Hopes at the beginning of the third millennium

Gerhard Sauter

Apparently — so it was said a few months ago — John the Baptist has been brought back to life and is wandering about the desert in Judah, announcing that the end of the world is nigh; the television cameras must soon have been hard on his heels. Enthusiasts for the apocalypse gathered in Jerusalem, expecting the Messiah to arrive there at the turn of the millennium. 'Here we go again!', we probably commented, with a tired smile. Troubled spirits like these may still get into the news today as they keep the Israeli security authorities busy. This year they won't even be statistically of any significance — unless they manage to light the fuse of the powder keg in the Middle East with their show of eccentric behavior and thus cause a catastrophe, if not the end of our civilization.

The opposite conviction is that history will carry on, with no ifs or buts, regardless of groundbreaking changes, far-reaching fault-lines and abrupt cracks across the human landscape. People who hold this belief will be inclined to put any expectation of the end of the world out of the question, because it could cloud the image of what is historically possible and historically effective.

Expectations of the apocalypse then easily come to be seen as a characteristic of fanatics, agitators or outsiders of all sorts, cases where faith and delusion can be named in one breath. Expectations of the end of the world often begin to demonstrate a strained attitude towards the course of history — an attitude which then becomes so over-strained that we probably tend to distance ourselves from it at once and say, 'We don't want anything to do with that!' How can we think our way into the constitution of such ideas, what does the lifestyle associated with them open up for us, what are the reasons for them? How can all this be described without letting a thing which is of central meaning for those whose lives it has shaped, remain odd or extravagant for us?

We have lost, I fear, the sense for various spiritual experiences of ending and new beginning

and therefore the sense for the complexity of true hope. Without such a sense, we become narrow-minded in judging if there is a sound, rich and far reaching hope, which can endure disappointments and, more important, afflictions. Most of us tend to measure hope only by means of its effects on our acting, our striving for things to come about without transcending the possible. To remain sober in our expectation for the sake of not becoming disillusioned: that seems to be the formula for a well tempered Christian life, at least for main-stream Protestantism that is eager to conform itself to the course of history, being interested in contributing its best to that course and not in distorting it by exaggerated hopes. However, if soberness lacks true, sometimes even ecstatic hope it can be converted and perverted into the confinement of mere repetitions. Christian hope is many-layered. For instance, are we still capable of understanding the paradox "waiting for and hastening the coming of the day of God," as 2 Peter 3:12 tells us? Waiting for means: being steadfast instead of escaping the place God has given us - hastening includes leaving behind what is really behind, for not being restricted by looking backwards.

Last year there has been a banner in front of many German Protestant churches proclaiming "every year is a Christ year". This was meant in opposition to the spreading millennium fever, but it was addressed especially against to the Roman Catholic proclamation of the new millennium as an important step in salvation history by intensifying the mission of the Church and her propagation. Opposed to that, the parole "Every year is a Christ year" will avoid any illusion about an evident progress in history to be claimed by the Church as significant for faith and hope. But the message reads: "There will be no real difference between last year and next year - related to Christ they remain all the same!" That notion is right concerning the presence of Christ in the proclamation of his death until he comes (1 Cor. 11:26), and concerning Christ's hidden presence in people who are in need (Mat. 25:35-45). But are we aware of the fact that Jesus, the crucified and resurrected Christ who promises his presence, is the Coming one? Is the prayer of the Early Christians in every worship "*Marána tha*" with the double meaning "Our Lord is coming" and "Our Lord, come!" (1 Cor. 16:22) - maybe both in one breath - still vivid in our Sunday services? The parole "Every year is a Christ year" sounds more, it seems to me, like a magic formula for the blessings of Christ which were, are, and will be present again and again. It evens up all

hope and tells us: "Don't exaggerate and don't be presumptuous in expecting Jesus Christ - his saving presence is already there!"

Now, as the great millennium spectacles are over, it may be the right time to think about the nature of changing times and times of change. It remains to be seen whether the year 1999 really did round off a period of time, so that the year 2000 can bring the fascination of a new beginning — or whether, exactly calculated, the new millennium only starts on 1 January 2001. For the turn of the millennium, like the turn of every century and every new year, is the artificial product of our measuring of time; it is an arbitrary, or at least conventional caesura but not a real break in the continuum of time. At most, the attention we have paid to the turn of the millennium may be an opportunity to pause: it can make us look around before we are forced to move along because time inexorably pulls us along at the same pace as itself, even if we would rather stay a little longer and imagine that we can stem the tide of time. Like every notable change of digits, the date which we have been persuaded is the beginning of a new millennium, offers us the opportunity for a look back and a look ahead. As we look back we connect pieces of information that we have stored away to what we have experienced, in order to place ourselves at a distance from both: the distance which is necessary so that we can set our sights on what is to come. And as for the view of the future which has formed in us, or which may just be a construct of our imagination: we would like to be a little clearer on what lies ahead, and we try to achieve this by weighing up hopes and fears against each other. There is no more than that to what is pretentiously called the 'threshold of a new epoch' — we merely seek to think in terms of greater periods of time than at the end of every year.

In the meantime, the view could be taken that we are hardly aware of true breaks in the flow of time and that we very rarely notice how naively we stand at the threshold when part of the past really has come to an end. We are expected to make transitions but their essence continues to elude us because we don't have the time to take our leave properly. Wasn't this our experience ten years ago, when we were surprised by the fall of the Berlin Wall? That event aroused great hopes which have since been only partly fulfilled, at best. But the hopes of many were also destroyed, suddenly unmasked as illusions. Their prospects collapsed,

leaving only shards behind, shards which either then cut other people too, or which caused wounds which open and bleed again and again. All this could and should make us conscious, in an exemplary way, of how basically speechless we are when it comes to putting a profound change into words. We are unable to do more than simply discuss this change, unable to express it in such a way that it is clearly distinguished from the very things that did not change, the things that must not change at all, if possible, if history — as is said vaguely — is to 'continue'.

'Don't expect too much from the end of the world!', warned a Polish satirist some years ago¹ — such paradoxical instructions probably wouldn't occur to a theologian! After all, should we expect any less from the end of the world than a radical change in everything? But the paradox is ambiguous. The satirist is playing a little on the words 'end of the world', just as the propagandists of the apocalypse play with our expectations as they put about their promises. These include nothing less than world revolution, for example — this is what the Polish satirist has in mind — which promises to build a new world from scratch on the ruins of the 'old' world. That — as he says ironically — will become a painful illusion. Many things will indeed change, some things even for the better, maybe, but there will not be any really far-reaching changes in a revolution of that kind. Our 'world' will stay in its orbit, as long as we don't destroy the earth. What can there be that well and truly deserves to be called 'new'? Real newness has a different sense from the prescriptions of time measurement, which distinguishes what is later from what is earlier and momentarily establishes the 'newness' of things which are already old in the next second. We shall have to return to this question.

The proposed end of the world: the Poles could tell us a thing or two about that - and other nations too which have experienced some sort of the end of the world, a world revolution, with its promise to build a new world from scratch on the ruins of the old. That, in the opinion of the Polish satirist, will make for bitter disappointment. Many things will change,

¹Stasinslaw Jerzy Lec, *Allerletzte unfrisierte Gedanken*, ed. and trans. Karl Dedecius (Munich/Vienna, 1996), p. 13.

true enough, but what will really be fundamentally different? The world will go on somehow all the same. The experience of all revolutions: when we promise to do everything differently, the emphases may be shifted, which can change a lot, but the world does not come to an end, thank God.

The deeper meaning of this phrase, however, is 'don't hold back from expressing your ideas of the end!' Don't let them just lie dormant within you, for they can then slip into your subconscious and play an evil game there. What you really think about the end of the world reveals a great deal to you of how you see your present time. They are not mere fantasies which are cast far into an empty future. They shed light on what we see as our present time, what elements of it we would like to keep, and what our dreams are in it. Blaise Pascal, the French mathematician, philosopher and lay theologian (1623-62) has called this into question:

We recall the past; we anticipate the future as we found to too slow in coming and were trying to hurry it up, or we recall the past as if to stay in too-rapid flight [...] The past and the present are our means, the future alone our end. Thus we never actually live, but we hope to live, and since we are always planning how to be happy, it is inevitable that we shall never be so.²

Don't we live in memories of better things or in the hope of better things? Do we live, or do we hope to live? That, too, is a crucial theological question.

Now I would like to give an outline of significant understandings of hopes within the last century, and I will focus on attempts to restructure the image of Christian life by the understanding of hope. This heritage remains important, either because there are only a limited number of possible orientations recapitulated again and again - or because there are unresolved problems. We will see that the reference to hope and the framing of hopes very often reshaped the whole concept of Christianity, later pushed aside by just the contrary valuation. Eschatology often is the field of radical changes in theological orientation.

²Blaise Pascal, *Pensées*, trans. A. J. Krailsheimer (Harmondsworth, England: Penguin Books, 1966; reprint, 1981), 43 (fragment 172).

One hundred years ago — in German Protestant theology, at least — remarkably little was said of hopes; theologians were generally far too convinced of the progressiveness of Protestantism and its strength as the religion of an inner experience. Of course, this inner experience must grow, but it does not depend on things to be hoped for. The religious self certainly is called to shape life conditions in order to enrich human existence. Religious experience would be perfectly able to keep up with breathtaking technological developments, as it was immeasurably capable of integration. This outlook was represented by liberal Protestantism, at its best in the journal *Die christliche Welt, The Christian World*. All the more, Protestantism in the United States backed a moral reorganisation of society, which was completed by technology controlling existence: the magazine *The Christian Century* was founded in those days. The title was a programme, proclaiming, 'the twentieth century will become the embodiment of the Christian century.' After-effects of this programme are still to be found in the world-policy of America today. The beginnings of the ecumenical movement also came about under these hope-saturated conditions. Join up in the task of facing up to life together — that is where hope lies for a mankind which has been laid waste by wars and divided by religions and churches. Prove what you hope by your actions.

In 1946 the legal historian and sociologist Eugen Rosenstock-Huessy published his book *The Christian Future or The Modern Mind Outrun*.³ Rosenstock-Huessy had emigrated from Nazi Germany to the USA, and his book spoke to a period in which Germany was busy with coming to terms with the immediate present while in the USA, visions of the future of humanity were blossoming. Rosenstock aims to remind his readers of the Christian hope of salvation. This is a hope which has become the main thrust of western history: it has set a static social and intellectual order in motion and proved itself so alive, time and time again, that it has brushed away any cobwebs that have formed, so as to overcome backward thought and set up a new way of thinking which can help to trigger the battle for peace and justice. Theology, in this case, would be a consciousness that is always ahead of its time and demands appropriate action.

³(London: Jarrold & Sons, 1947).

In sharp contrast to such a hope interwoven with the formation of public life and social history, German theological existentialism, represented by Rudolf Bultmann and Friedrich Gogarten, pleaded in 1954 for a "pure hope" as an attitude of sheer openness facing a future which cannot be construed and planned. The future of Christian hope is related neither to any extrapolations of technical knowledge nor to any social utopias. Real hope and those construed futures are incompatible, even in ethical terms. There is no hope outside the very personal openness to a unknown future. In a broadcast discussion on "The Christian Hope and the Problem of Demythologization", Rudolf Bultmann was asked by his disciple Guenther Bornkamm what he had to say about the expectation of the cosmos in travail, which (according to Romans 8:19ff.) longs for the revelation of the children of God. Bultmann calmly replied that this longing did not affect him. He could only say with Luther, "Christian hope knows that it hopes, but it does not know what it hopes for."⁴

Being a Junior studying theology, I was curious about this authoritative quotation and looked it up in Luther's works. And I found that Bultmann was wrong - that was my first step into historical-critical research. Luther says in his *Lectures on Romans* (1515/16) that hope leads one across "into the unknown and hidden, into inward darkness so that it does not know what it hopes and yet does know what it does not hope for"⁵, namely that what I and you can expect naturally. Luther describes the dramatic process which gives birth to hope created by God's action that we can only suffer. We are formed to "hope against hope" (Romans 4:18) -- transferred into hope as spiritual dimension.

In the sixties, Ernst Bloch's voluminous work *The Principle of Hope* was quite another stage. Bloch argued in favor of hope as vigorous, stimulating human energy to imagine possibilities and anticipating their reality in order to bring them into effect. In 1964, it was taken up by Jürgen Moltmann in his book *Theology of Hope*, one of the theological best-

⁴Guenther Bornkamm, Rudolf Bultmann, and Friedrich Karl Schumann, *Die christliche Hoffnung und das Problem der Entmythologisierung* (Stuttgart: Evangelisches Verlagswerk, 1954), 47.

⁵*Luther's Works*, American Edition, 5 vols. ed. Jaroslav Pelikan and H.T. Lehmann (St. Louis and Philadelphia: Concordia and Fortress, 1955ff.), 25:

sellers of this century, consonant with the widespread readiness for new departures, the overcoming of the status quo, a socio-critical outbreak and breakthrough.. One of Moltmann's core sentences is:

The transforming mission [...] seeks for that which is really, objectively possible in this world, in order to grasp it and realize it in the direction of the promised future of the righteousness, the life and the kingdom of God. Hence it regards the world as an open process in which the salvation and destruction, the righteousness and the annihilation of the world are at stake.⁶

Above all it is the idea of the world as the *laboratorium possibilis salutis*, a laboratory of salvation to be accomplished, which has shaped this face of hope to a large extent. Its profile was formed by attacks on Christian existentialism and private piety which declines to get involved in society as its fortunes flow and ebb. Moltmann became one of the most influential advocates for criticism on Christian inwardness.

But what appeared to be the immeasurably wide scope of human action then has since narrowed dramatically. It has been replaced or made up at least by a new sensibility for the limits of our world, for its givenness, for the limitations of our possibilities, and especially for the linkage of creative possibilities with global life conditions. There is no longer only this urgent search for opportunities to act, because otherwise history will be at an end. Bloch's title, meanwhile, is quoted even in the mass media but denoting ironically a desperate heroism which is left to the principle of hope because there is no really promising prognosis. Or it is perceived as a sample of illusions which might be helpful because they bridge over a ruthless dead-end reality.

Let us not forget people who were born in the 1960s and grew up, many of them, conscious of living near the very end of civilization, facing the nuclear self-destruction of humanity which lay immediately ahead. I can never forget the voice of a younger colleague who uttered: "I am one of the generation who thought to be the last one on earth".

⁶Jürgen Moltmann, *Theology of Hope. On the Ground and Implications of a Christian Eschatology*, trans. by J. W. Leitch (London, 1967), pp. 288-9.

Without being pessimistic we can say that the readiness for new departures in the 1960s has disappeared — and the insight into the boundaries of growth has contributed to this sobering up. What has remained is the fear that mankind could bring about its own end sooner or later — not only in a nuclear war, but also gradually, by irresponsibly destroying the very conditions of life.

Finally the slogan about the end of history. I don't want to elaborate on the political slants which have been put on this image. The slogan is widespread among contemporaries who cannot see any cultural space opportunity for moving on, especially those social and cultural critics who had promised themselves another world order and now feared a political-economic ice age from which the future must be freed so that it would become fit for human beings again.⁷ Above all, these critics took issue with the projected 'global commodification of all things'. And yet the horror might go considerably deeper than that: *an end looms when no other alternative seems to present itself* — a terrifying scenario which freezes historical thought.

On the other hand, the confidence that life will continue — that the world will continue to exist for an unforeseeable length of time — is shaken by the sciences. All long-term forecasts speak against hope. Arnold Benz publicizes his book *The Future of the Universe: Chance, Chaos, God?*⁸ as follows,

All forecasts of the future, whether they are made for living beings, planets, stars, galaxies or universes, point towards disintegration: the sun will cool down, Earth will be lost in space, and even the matter of the universe will undergo radioactive decay. For this reason there is no scientific basis for hope.

Cosmological explanations lead to the theory that the world will come to an end by cooling down, slowly but surely, or exploding into a ball of flame. The general prognosis of ossification, decay and decline has a paralyzing effect, because it gives us no perspective to which we can actively adapt. This horrifying vision of extinction acts, so to speak, as an

⁷ For example Jürgen Moltmann, *Das Kommen Gottes. Christliche Eschatologie* (Gütersloh, 1995), pp. 154, 250ff.

⁸ *Die Zukunft des Universums. Zufall, Chaos, Gott?* (Düsseldorf, 1997).

objection to the ambivalent awareness of life which is expressed in the common-sense statement 'life goes on!'

Long-standing bridges of hope — such as 'life going on' in a family, a nation or a 'mission' — no longer seem to be sustainable. What tears down the supporting pillars of bridges of hope like these is, for example, cosmological assertions which seem to illustrate different variations on the end of the world. They rob me of the illusion that I, for all my finite and mortal make-up, can at least be a fragment of an overarching and lasting whole, so that my life fulfils its natural purpose, integration. In this striving for integration, both things are given due attention, the need for self-preservation as well as the yearning for the power of self-will. Both needs are shots in the dark if we dispute that the world will always carry on the same. This empty darkness in which man is no longer at the center, but in which there are also not even any standards, let alone human standards, this empty space for the strange and the unimaginable, the space of the stars, the galaxies and the black holes, of falling meteors and unforeseeable catastrophes — this emptiness is what lurks, to some extent, at the borders of our everyday sense of life. Predictions of the future and cosmological investigations, which we dare to make within a framework of scientific evidence, give rise to the futuristic fairy-tales and horror visions of a popular 'science-fiction' culture. And it is possible that, when we ask ourselves whether extra-terrestrial life is possible, we are in fact expressing our amazement at ourselves and our search for an opposite number (which will allow us to counter our own improbability with a degree of certainty).

In this sense, the state of having been created really does present a reason for hope. The threats and brushes with danger, and the nihilistic perspective of a changed cosmology really only mark out what was already present in a similar way in the doctrine of the *creatio continua*, of the continuing creation, what humankind experience as their reality is threatened from all sides and is not, in itself, resistant to the possibility of destruction.

So far I have only spoken about the bold outward side of Christian thought about hope. Modern Protestantism, seen from the outside, at least, has strongly urged sobriety, has fought against withdrawal from the world. It has denounced seeking consolation in the next life and

turned it into the consolation given by this life. The power which it can exert in public in terms of hopes — and also under the ecumenical banner of 'peace, justice and protecting the creation' — concentrates on averting an unnatural end to all things. Its goal is to avoid a global catastrophe which could be caused precisely by the masses expecting too much from the end of the world, expecting a paradise, a heaven on earth, in aid of which we humans could alter the creation and converting it into sheer chaos..

This outside view of Protestantism, however, hides some signs of hope which have grown out of the theological work of the past decades. They are not so obviously recognizable as slogans of hope, but they help in discovering the character of Christian hope and then to account for the hope which is in us. This, after all, is what in 1 Peter 3:15 is demanded of every Christian.

That there is hope within us - that is the precondition of hopes for theology. Hope within us is not our hope, given with our human existence: that was the basic notion in the New Testament. Early Christians knew, of course, that hope belongs to every sound human condition. But in Ephes. 2:12 it was stated very concisely:

Remember that you were at that time [i.e. before Jesus Christ died for you] without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers to the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God [átheoi = atheists] in the world.

Hope is created in us because we are adopted into the community of God's promise.

This close attachment of hope to God's promise needs to be explained theologically. In doing so, there have been discoveries in Biblical scholarship and in dogmatics within the last decades. To follow these traces gives us distinct hopeful tasks for theology.

First, the conception of God's promise has been very much enriched by Old Testament scholars in the fifties, especially by Gerhard von Rad in his "Theology of the Old Testament", and by my teacher Walther Zimmerli. Zimmerli opened up a new understanding of the *fulfilment of God's promises*: God is working on his promises in a surprising way, shaping our expectations, not closing them. There cannot be found in the Old Testament the

simple scheme of promise and fulfilment understood as prediction of certain events or constellations for the life of the people of God being realized sometimes later in history. Fulfilment does not mean the execution of something predicted by God, being finished at a certain point and time in such a way that people can assert: "It is done, from now on we can build up on this ground by ourselves". In contrast, fulfilment does characterize the very special way and manner God is acting to pursue his will. Therefore, fulfilment often shatters expectations based on God's promises, it reshapes them and leads to a renewed hope. The paradigm of this character of fulfilment is the story of the two disciples on their way to Emmaus (Luke 24:13ff.). Here the resurrected Christ encounters them, showing them that the death and resurrection of the Messiah had been promised in the Scriptures. To be confronted with fulfilment is linked with a *relecture* of the Scripture.

I wonder if this understanding of promise and fulfilment transforming expectations might be guiding especially for American Christians. In their country there was and - as far as I can see - there remains a strong tendency to perceive the own history as a kind of continuation of some Old Testament stories like the Exodus, the conquest of the promised land, the strive for building up a new society as a model for other nations, more recently the claim for social justice and liberation. Or there is the quest about Divine promises already fulfilled and settled, and others not yet fulfilled and therefore to be searched for in the present time and in the time to come. But God's promises are no blueprints for history. They are given to the people of God in order to create faith in God's acting and therefore establish hope to be bound to this acting like an anchor - the symbol of Christian hope. God's promises are heard and understood in the process of perceiving God's judging and saving work and of pointing to it. Our explanations of hope are parts of a never ending approach for articulating this perception. Look e.g. to the promise of justice, perceived by Paul as the revelation of the righteousness of God (Romans 1:17). Is this not a new formulation of the promise of justice on the grounds of the fulfilment of this promise in the Christ story - of course not wiping away all our longing for social justice, but shaping it critically through the notion of self-righteousness. Or the promise of peace is received as justification in the peace with God (Romans 5:1), as reconciliation (2. Cor. 5:18ff.), and more in the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace (Eph. 4:3). I understand extensive parts of the New Testament as struggling

with such new formulations of God's promises in the light of the Christ event. The art of reading the Bible in such a way gives way to hope.

Second, the New Testament as a whole might be read as a document of dramatic enterprises for articulating the *newness* of Gods acting on and in Jesus Christ. What true newness means, different from mere novelty: that is the critical point of all our images and conceptions of ending and new beginning. What is so new that it will be never old, but everlasting? The witnesses speaking in the New Testament experienced "the end" in the crucifixion of Jesus - and his new life in the resurrection, but in such a way, that they had been terrified. Despite of all their traditional understanding of a resurrection from the dead: to be encountered by the reality of a life united forever with the reality of God - this shakes and makes speechless. Many parts of the New Testament are documents of wrestling with the language, whose elements are old and often old fashioned, but they become apt and even sufficient to bear the newness of God's acting. I propose an art of reading the New Testament in this perspective, not exclusively, among other points of view. That notion of newness might help us to come to terms with so many claims for newness in our time, especially within a culture like the US American impregnated with imagines of newness as the ultimate cultural value.

Finally, there is the intimate connection between terms which seem to be contradictory or at least not consistent with one another. In the last century and even earlier on, there have been numerous contrarities defining the Christian hope in relation to hopes in the cultural context. For example: transforming, even radically changing activity versus escapism, hope as radical openness to an unknown future against futurology, hope nourished by insights in the course of history - or in opposition to the *status quo* - versus hope arising from personal inner life withstanding destructive powers from outside. But there is hope - I am really hoping -, that we will discover the spiritual unity of sound distance or attachment and activity, of vigilance and imperturbability (*Gelassenheit*), of patience and engagement, of hope which is not self referential but opened to that what is hoped for, and the confident entering the needs of today. Those *dialectics shape the momentum of hope*.

What constitutes true Christian hope at the beginning of the third millennium? John Calvin

stated in his Geneva catechism of 1537: 'Hope is none other than the expectation of what faith has believed as the true promise of God..' What we can perceive as this promise, how we read the figure of his realization, shaping our everyday expectations, and at the same time waiting for the transfiguration of our notion when God 'fulfills' his promises in his own, often strange way, therefore being open for groundbreaking surprises: this all together will characterize our hopes at the beginning of the new millennium.

Subject: Fwd: [pffstaff] Darrell Guder's "Missional Church" Lecture to Seattle Pby, 1/...
Date: Tue, 21 Jan 2003 14:11:15 EST
From: CodyUWatson@aol.com
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Subject: [pffstaff] Darrell Guder's "Missional Church" Lecture to Seattle Pby, 1/4/03
Date: Tue, 21 Jan 2003 00:55:37 -0800
From: "David Hackett" <hackett@pff.net>
Reply-To: pffstaff@yahoogroups.com
Organization: Presbyterian Frontier Fellowship
To: "drh" <hackett@pff.net>

Dear Friends,

I am reporting on Dr. Darrell Guder's "Missional Church" lecture - six hours long - that he offered to the Seattle Presbytery on 1/4/03. It was an outstanding time. I was impressed by the response to this presbytery-wide invitation to spend most of a day learning about mission.

This report does not detail the productive sessions spent in small groups discussing particular issues that Guder raised. But I hope it conveys some of the essence of what he taught. I want to point out that this report is drawn from my notes, and while I have attempted to record them faithfully, I am responsible if they do not accurately reflect what Dr. Guder taught.

Here are my notes from the seminar.

Dave Hackett

Dr. Darrell Guder, Princeton Theological Seminary
Speaking to a gathering of Seattle Presbytery members
January 4, 2003 (notes by David Hackett)

We are in a rapidly changing church - one going through rapidly changing social passages.

Our PCUSA is informed by the Christendom legacy, which is over. We will discuss the nature of the church, the missional church. We will assume the Christendom legacy gives us significant challenges about how we understand the church. Because of that legacy there are powerful forms of resistance in us. It will take a long process. We will need revival. But this begs the question of how the church can be revived? How can you book the Holy Spirit? Make a sign that says, "Revival, Wednesday-Sunday"?

This is a special challenge for you in Seattle. Seattle: The country's most highly secularized city in the US. Here, Christian identity is looked at strangely. Though Seattle is post-Christendom, the people in your pews still assume they live in a Christendom!

Let's define some terms:

Missional: (1830 was the first mission course in the country at

212
L.

Princeton.) Our conviction is that the very nature of the church is its sentness. It exists because God has called, shaped and sent it for his mission. This hasn't translated over to much of our church. Karl Barth took it seriously.

Christendom: This legacy is going through profound change. Events that signaled it: Reformation was a break of one large Western tradition (The RC church). It ended in the US with the legal separation of church and state. It's taken 200 years to untangle it.

Antidisestablishment: Antidisestablishment advocates are those who, for instance, want the Ten Commandments back in courtrooms, etc.

We still think that the GA can issue a political or policy statement that someone cares about. No one cares about it in the world anymore! In fact, we find some who live most persistently in the Christendom legacy back in Louisville.

Question: What has the Christendom legacy done, and what is it doing now and how is it affecting us now? The answers are in three categories:

1) Equations: In Christendom, the Gospel and church are equated. Obedient members of the church are seen as being obedient Christians. And vice versa. To be a Christian is seen as the same as going to church. Also, to be a Christian equals savedness. Those not in church are not saved. These matters have to do with who is saved and how do we know it.

Christendom equates Western culture with that that God intended. It is seen as normative Christianity. There is no awareness of Asian orthodoxies. It's a normativity thing that is seldom questioned. We have difficulty doing anything that is outside of it. But no one culture is normative. It is multicultural. It was the Imperial movement that tried to unite the various churches.

That the Western missionary movement has generated the global church shows grace in action because most mission was to show the benefits of the gospel AND Western culture. Church buildings look western, etc. Western Christianity is actually not normative. Many of our new church partners in the two-thirds world tell us, "We never went through an enlightenment so we don't have to deal with your issues." And we're floored! Because we can't get beyond our Christendom and Enlightenment background!

70% of the world's church in 1900 was rooted in the old traditions. Now, in 2000, ^{western} 70% of Christians are in the Non western church, and only 30% are in the western church is 30%. Our Recession is now booming.

2) Dichotomies: We make false dichotomies between gospel and the inbreaking reign of God (ROG). The ROG got lost in the 4th century. It was the Holy Roman Empire vs ROG. We have a severe loss of eschatology, vibrant sense that God is doing it. We have a dichotomy between individual savedness and God's purposes for all of creation. God's love for world turns into God's love for Christians.

There is a dichotomy between clergy and laity. A dichotomy between what we say in the Great Ends of the Church and what we expect of ordinary Christians and what they expect from membership. The ROG is reduced to a reign of personal spirituality. The Church in the west is about maintenance. The Eastern European churches now with freedom to practice are spending all their energy trying to recreate their Christendom form (!) - if they had four theological colleges before, they want four of them now. They want to reopen the schools that they used to run, etc. As in the Reformed Church of Hungary.

We are experiencing the consequences of our reductionism. People discover that nothing happens if/when they start going to church. They discover it makes no difference. So we lose people not to conservative churches but to no church.

What is public witness in a post Christendom situation? We are called to it, but what does it look like? How do we deal with congregational resistance to the fact that Christendom is over? One response is Avoidance: "Can't we just create an intact world inside the church? Make the church the one place that doesn't change, a temple rather than a tabernacle?" We need to recognize that some wonderful things are gone. This is why the exilic literature is appealing to us.

3) Renewal and conversion.

Are the "healthy" churches among us still actually sick - as in healthy for the wrong reasons? There is an awareness that we have problems in our society. There is a sense of malaise in mainline churches, loss of members, confusion about loss of cultural authority.

The legacy we got was that the church has become fixed rather than being a pilgrimage church, gaining a permanent presence. The "pilgrimage" (of the church) has become personalized and it's the person (individual) who makes pilgrimage.

I prefer not to use the word "renewal." Renewal is a "re" word - it implies returning to some golden time. What golden time would be good? I prefer, rather, the word "conversion" - a process. It's much better at describing what we need.

Rom 12.2 - YOU ALL don't be conformed to the world but be transformed. This is the community called to its own conversion. Jesus practices his lordship in that he shapes his people to be sent out. Formation is a process of healing and growing in submission to him. Salvation is for vocation.

Our Task: Our task is the formation of people who go out and find the answers. That's how I see my task. The reason a Christian community exists is that God has called, formed and sent it.

Mission in the Book of Confessions: Mission is not mentioned in the 1600s, although it is in Q-87 in the Heidelberg. But Paragraph 35 in the 1905 Westminster confession speaks of Love of God in Missions (but it's Eurocentric). Also in the Barmen and modern confessions. We do get the comment that we don't exist for the benefit of members but as beneficiaries for the people of God so that the church can extend out to the world so that Christ is represented in every discreet group of humanity.

Communities have good reasons to ask themselves, How has God gifted us for ministry? What legacies do we have to move beyond or build on?

The essential and first form of every congregation's witness is its way of living together. "Lead your life worthy of the calling... Being patient, longsuffering. Put up with each other in the Lord."

We're to be about changing people from being those who say, "I'm here because..." to being those who say, "We're here because God has brought us here." It's about God's action.

The key to the interpretation of the NT is to understand missiology. Nothing in the NT is addressed to pagans. It's all addressed to Christians, most to Christian communities for the continuing formation of these congregations for the apostolic commission. "I have finished my work in Asia," Paul says, because missional communities had been established. Each NT community was founded so that witness would

continue. The NT literature assumes their missionary orientation. The central question is how do they get shaped, trained, corrected, and encouraged so that they can continue their missional task. Eg, There is the question of the credibility of their witness if they quarrell. Wrong motives for mission are corrected for integrity's sake.

This is hard work, forming for missional service. It involves girding up the loins of your mind. Which I would rephrase as putting on the jogging suit of your mind. Strip down for hard mental growth. Make yourself ready for hard work.

The formation of congregations takes place in all the practices of the congregation. What do we do as a community of faith? What about our life of prayer and worship?

What is corporate worship's relationship to mission? Most talk about worship forgets about eschatology. All our worship is anticipatory. I have no qualms in saying that worship is the first form of our mission. Worship is not an end in itself. Our worship in all its form and liturgy is looking forward to the time in heaven. We witness to the world in worship the fact of God's love. Worship is counter-cultural, not publicly pleasing, but we allow the entertainment world to impact us. It's always going to be mysterious. Here we can learn from our Orthodox friends. Our worship is before a watching world. It needs to have integrity before God, needs to raise questions for those who watch us.

Missional ferment is in congregations where there is fervent prayer, open ended prayer, that expects that God will do things that are not expected. "God is bringing something to us through you" - that's the anticipatory sense. We help them understand how Jesus is coming to them.

Things we need to address:

- 1) Membership patterns.
- 2) The Lord's table: bread for a missionary people.
- 3) Disagreeing Christianly so we don't stop loving each other.
- 4) Infant baptism: What if we gave up Infant Baptism for awhile in repentance for not taking it seriously?
- 5) The Missional appropriateness of letting a congregation die.

Every practice of the church contributes to the missional preparation or ordering of its life.

No culture is normative for the gospel and no culture is excluded from being a fit vessel for the gospel.

Changes we need to incorporate:

- * I to We
- * A sense that God is doing something that I'm a part of
- * prayer is our central working priority
- * Biblical formation is taken seriously
- * Identify reconciliation as a conscious practice
- * Get so we don't seem to be preoccupied with success.
- * Get so we are willing to take risks
- * Leadership roles become collegial and very characterized by discerning whose gifts are for what - no role is frozen.

(end)

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THE **Atlantic** MONTHLY
OCTOBER 2002

The conclusion of
AMERICAN GROUND
BY WILLIAM LANGEWIESCHE

Plus:
**THE NEXT
CHRISTIANITY**

*The modern world arose from
the trauma of the Reformation.
Brace for a Second Reformation—
a global convulsion that will
shape the coming century*
BY PHILIP JENKINS



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THE NEXT CHRISTIANITY

We stand at a historical turning point, the author argues—one that is as epochal for the Christian world as the original Reformation. Around the globe Christianity is growing and mutating in ways that observers in the West tend not to see. Tumultuous conflicts within Christianity will leave a mark deeper than Islam's on the century ahead

BY PHILIP JENKINS

Photographs by Abbas

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Ever since the sexual-abuse crisis erupted in the U.S. Roman Catholic Church in the mid-1980s, with allegations of child molestation by priests, commentators have regularly compared the problems faced by the Church to those it faced in Europe at the start of the sixteenth century, on the eve of the Protestant Reformation—problems that included sexual laxity and financial malfeasance among the clergy, and clerical contempt for the interests of the laity. Calls for change have become increasingly urgent since January, when revelations of widespread sexual misconduct and grossly negligent responses to it emerged prominently in the Boston archdiocese. Similar, if less dramatic, problems have been brought to light in New Orleans, Providence, Palm Beach, Omaha, and many other dioceses. The reform agendas now under discussion within the U.S. hierarchy involve ideas about increased lay participation in governance—ideas of the sort heard when Martin Luther confronted the Roman Catholic orthodoxy of his day. They also include such ideas as admitting women to the priesthood and permitting priests to marry.

Explicit analogies to the Reformation have become commonplace not only among commentators but also among anticlerical activists, among victims' groups, and, significantly, among ordinary lay believers. One representative expert on sexual misconduct, much quoted, is Richard Sipe, a former monk who worked at the sexual-disorders clinic at Johns Hopkins University and is now a psychotherapist based in California. Over the years Sipe has spoken regularly of "a new Reformation." "We are at 1515," he has written, "between when Martin Luther went to Rome in 1510 and 1517 when he nailed his 95 theses on the door in Wittenberg." That act can reasonably be seen as the symbolic starting point of the Reformation, when a united Christendom was rent asunder.

Historians continue to debate the causes and consequences of the Reformation, and of the forces that un-

leashed. Among other things, the Reformation broke the fetters that constrained certain aspects of intellectual life during the Middle Ages. Protestants, of course, honor the event as the source of their distinctive religious traditions; many Protestant denominations celebrate Reformation Day, at the end of October, commemorating the posting of the theses at Wittenberg. And liberal Catholics invoke the word these days to emphasize the urgency of reform—changes both broad and specific that they demand from the Church. Their view is that the crisis, which exposes fault lines of both sexuality and power, is the most serious the Church has faced in 500 years—as serious as the one it faced in Luther's time.

The first Reformation was an epochal moment in the history of the Western world—and eventually, by extension, of the rest of the world. The status quo in religious affairs was brought to an end. Relations between religions and governments, not to mention among different denominations, took a variety of forms—sometimes symbiotic, often chaotic and violent. The transformations wrought in the human psyche by the Reformation, and by the Counter-Reformation it helped to provoke, continue to play themselves out. This complex historical episode, which is now often referred to simply as "the Reformation," touched everything. It altered not just the practice of religion but also the nature of society, economics, politics, education, and the law.

Commentators today, when speaking of the changes needed in the Catholic Church, generally do not have in mind the sweeping historical aftermath of the first Reformation—but they should. The Church has developed a fissure whose size most people do not fully appreciate. The steps that liberal Catholics would take to resolve some of the Church's urgent issues, steps that might quell unease or revolt in some places, would prove incendiary in others. The problem with reform, 500 years ago or today, is that people disagree—sometimes violently—on the direction it should take.

The fact is, we are at a moment as epochal as the Reformation itself—a Reformation moment not only for Catholics but for the entire Christian world. Christianity as a whole is both growing and mutating in ways that observers in the West tend not to see. For obvious reasons, news reports today are filled with material about the influence of a resurgent and sometimes angry Islam. But in its variety and vitality, in its global reach, in its association with the world's fastest-growing societies, in its shifting centers of gravity, in the way its values and practices vary from place to place—in these and other ways it is Christianity that will leave the deepest mark on the twenty-first century. The process will not necessarily be a peaceful one, and only the foolish would venture anything beyond the broadest predictions about the religious picture a century or two ahead. But the twenty-first century will almost certainly be regarded by future historians as a century in which religion replaced ideology as the prime animating and destructive force in human affairs, guiding attitudes to political liberty and obligation, concepts of nationhood, and, of course, conflicts and wars.

The original Reformation was far more than the rising up of irate lay people against corrupt and exploitative priests, and it was much more than a mere theological row. It was a far-reaching social movement that sought to return to the original sources of Christianity. It challenged the idea that divine authority should be mediated through institutions or hierarchies, and it denied the value of tradition. Instead it offered radical new notions of the supremacy of written texts (that is, the books of the Bible), interpreted by individual consciences. The Reformation made possible a religion that could be practiced privately, rather than mainly in a vast institutionalized community.

This move toward individualism, toward the privatization of religious belief, makes the spirit of the Reformation very attractive to educated people in the West. It stirs many liberal Catholic activists, who regard the aloof and arrogant hierarchy of the Church as not only an affront but something inherently corrupt. New concepts of governance sound exciting, even intoxicating, to reformers, and seem to mesh with likely social and technological trends. The invention of movable type and the printing press, in the fifteenth century, was a technological development that spurred mass literacy in the vernacular languages—and accelerated the forces of religious

change. In the near future, many believe, the electronic media will have a comparably powerful impact on our ways of being religious. An ever greater reliance on individual choice, the argument goes, will help Catholicism to become much more inclusive and tolerant, less judgmental, and more willing to accept secular attitudes toward sexuality and gender roles. In the view of liberal Catholics, much of the current crisis derives directly from archaic if not primitive doctrines, including mandatory celibacy among the clergy, intolerance of homosexuality, and the prohibition of women from the priesthood, not to mention a more generalized fear of sexuality. In their view, anyone should be able to see that the idea that God, the creator and lord of the universe, is concerned about human sexuality is on its way out.



If we look beyond the liberal West, we see that another Christian revolution, quite different from the one being called for in affluent American suburbs and upscale urban parishes, is already in progress. Worldwide, Christianity is actually moving toward supernaturalism and neo-orthodoxy, and in many ways toward the ancient world view expressed in the New Testament: a vision of Jesus as the embodiment of divine power, who overcomes the evil forces that inflict calamity and sickness upon the human race. In the global South (the areas that we often think of primarily as the Third World) huge and growing Christian populations—currently 480 million in Latin America, 360 million in Africa, and 313 million in Asia, compared with 260 million in North America—now

make up what the Catholic scholar Walbert Dillmann has called the Third Church, a form of Christianity as distinct as Protestantism or Orthodoxy, and one that is likely to become dominant in the faith. The revolution taking place in Africa, Asia, and Latin America is far more sweeping in its implications than any current shifts in North American religion, whether Catholic or Protestant. There is increasing tension between what one might call a liberal Northern Reformation and the surging Southern religious revolution, which one might equate with the Counter-Reformation, the internal Catholic reforms that took place at the same time as the Reformation—although in references to the past and the present the term “Counter-Reformation” misleadingly implies a simple reaction instead of a social and spiritual explosion. No matter what the terminology, however, an enormous rift seems inevitable.

Although Northern governments are still struggling to come to terms with the notion that Islam might provide a powerful and threatening supranational ideology, few seem to realize the potential political role of ascendant Southern Christianity. The religious rift between Northern and Southern Europe in the sixteenth century suggests just how dramatic the political consequences of a North-South divide in the contemporary Christian world might be. The Reformation led to nothing less than the creation of the modern European states and the international order we recognize today. For more than a century Europe was rent by sectarian wars between Protestants and Catholics, which by the 1680s had ended in stalemate. Out of this impasse, this failure to impose a monolithic religious order across the Continent, there arose such fundamental ideas of modern society as the state's obligation to tolerate minorities and the need to justify political authority without constantly invoking God and religion. The Enlightenment—and, indeed, Western modernity—could have occurred only as a consequence of the clash, military and ideological, between Protestants and Catholics.

Today across the global South a rising religious fervor is coinciding with declining autonomy for nation-states, making useful an analogy with the medieval concept of Christendom—the *Res Publica Christiana*—as an overarching source of unity and a focus of loyalty transcending mere kingdoms or empires. Kingdoms might last for only a century or two before being supplanted by new states or dynasties, but rational people knew that Christendom simply *endured*. The laws of individual nations lasted only as long as the nations themselves; Christendom offered a higher set of standards and mores that could claim to be universal. Christendom was a primary cultural reference, and it may well re-emerge as such in the Christian South—as a new transnational order in which political, social, and personal identities are defined chiefly by religious loyalties.

The first Reformation was a lot less straightforward than some histories suggest. The sixteenth-century Catholic Church, after all, did not collapse after Luther kicked in the door. The Counter-Reformation was moving in a diametrically opposite direction, reasserting older forms of devotion and tradition, and reformulating the Church's controversial claims for hierarchy and spiritual authority. The Counter-Reformation was not just survivalist and defensive, as is commonly assumed; it was also innovative and dynamic. For at least a century after Luther's Reformation, in fact, the true political, cultural, and social

centers of Europe were as much in the Catholic South as in the Protestant North. The Catholic states—Spain, Portugal, and France—were launching missionary ventures into Africa, Asia, North and South America. By the 1570s Catholic missionaries were creating a transoceanic Church structure: the see of Manila was an offshoot of the archdiocese of Mexico City.

By about 1600 the Catholic Church had become the first religious body—indeed, the first institution of any sort—to operate on a global scale. Even in the Protestant heartlands of Northern and Western Europe—England, Sweden, and the German lands—the heirs of the Reformation had to spend many years discouraging their people from succumbing to the attractions of Catholicism. Conversions to Catholicism were steady throughout the century or so after 1580. It looked as if the Reformation had effectively cut Protestant Europe off from the mainstream of the Christian world. Only in the eighteenth century would Protestantism find a secure and then strategically preponderant place on the global stage, through the success of booming commercial states such as England and the Netherlands, whose political triumphs ultimately contained and in some cases pushed back the earlier empires.

The twenty-first century will be regarded by future historians as a century in which religion replaced ideology as the prime animating and destructive force in human affairs.

The changes that Catholic and other reformers today are trying to inspire in North America and Europe (and that seem essential if Christianity is to be preserved as a modern, relevant force on those continents) run utterly contrary to the

dominant cultural movements in the rest of the Christian world, which look very much like the Counter-Reformation. But this century is unlike the sixteenth in that we are not facing a roughly equal division of Christendom between two competing groups. Rather, Christians are facing a shrinking population in the liberal West and a growing majority of the traditional Rest. During the past half century the critical centers of the Christian world have moved decisively to Africa, to Latin America, and to Asia. The balance will never shift back.

The growth in Africa has been relentless. In 1900 Africa had just 10 million Christians out of a continental population of 107 million—about nine percent. Today the Christian total stands at 360 million out of 784 million, or 46 percent. And that percentage is likely to continue rising, because Christian African countries have some of the world's most dramatic rates of population growth. Meanwhile, the advanced industrial countries are experiencing a dramatic birth dearth. Within the next twenty-five years the population of the world's Christians is expected to grow to 2.6 billion (making Christianity by far the world's largest faith). By 2025, 50 percent of the Christian population will be in Africa and

9%

46%



Latin America, and another 17 percent will be in Asia. Those proportions will grow steadily. By about 2050 the United States will still have the largest single contingent of Christians, but all the other leading nations will be Southern: Mexico, Brazil, Nigeria, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Ethiopia, and the Philippines. By then the proportion of non-Latino whites among the world's Christians will have fallen to perhaps one in five.

The population shift is even more marked in the specifically Catholic world, where Euro-Americans are already in the minority. Africa had about 16 million Catholics in the early 1950s; it has 120 million today, and is expected to

have 228 million by 2025. The *World Christian Encyclopedia* suggests that by 2025 almost three quarters of all Catholics will be found in Africa, Asia, and Latin America. The likely map of twenty-first-century Catholicism represents an unmistakable legacy of the Counter-Reformation and its global missionary ventures.

These figures actually understate the Southern predominance within Catholicism, and within world Christianity more generally, because they fail to take account of Southern emigrants to Europe and North America. Even as this migration continues, established white communities in Europe are declining demographically, and their religious



beliefs and practices are moving further away from traditional Christian roots. The result is that skins of other hues are increasingly evident in European churches; half of all London churchgoers are now black. African and West Indian churches in Britain are reaching out to whites, though members complain that their religion is often seen as “a black thing” rather than “a God thing.”

In the United States a growing proportion of Roman Catholics are Latinos, who should represent a quarter of the nation by 2050 or so. Asian communities in the United States have sizable Catholic populations. Current trends suggest that the religious values of Catholics with a Southern ethnic

and cultural heritage will long remain quite distinct from those of other U.S. populations. In terms of liturgy and worship Latino Catholics are strikingly different from Anglo believers, not least in maintaining a fervent devotion to the Virgin Mary and the saints.

European and Euro-American Catholics will within a few decades be a smaller and smaller fragment of a worldwide Church. Of the 18 million Catholic baptisms recorded in 1998, eight million took place in Central and South America, three million in Africa, and just under three million in Asia. (In other words, these three regions already account for more than three quarters of all Catholic baptisms.) The annual baptism total for the Philippines is higher than the totals for Italy, France, Spain, and Poland combined. The number of Filipino Catholics could grow to 90 million by 2025, and perhaps to 130 million by 2050.

The demographic changes within Christianity have many implications for theology and religious practice, and for global society and politics. The most significant point is that in terms of both theology and moral teaching, Southern Christianity is more conservative than the Northern—especially the American—version. Northern reformers, even if otherwise sympathetic to the indigenous cultures of non-Northern peoples, obviously do not like this fact. The liberal Catholic writer James Carroll has complained that “world Christianity [is falling] increasingly under the sway of anti-intellectual fundamentalism.” But the cultural pressures may be hard to resist.

The denominations that are triumphing across the global South—radical Protestant sects, either evangelical or Pentecostal, and Roman Catholicism of an orthodox kind—are stalwartly traditional or even reactionary by the standards of the economically advanced nations. The Catholic faith that is rising rapidly in Africa and Asia looks very much like a pre-Vatican II faith, being more traditional in its respect for the power of bishops and priests and in its preference for older devotions. African Catholicism in particular is far more comfortable with notions of authority and spiritual charisma than with newer ideas of consultation and democracy.

This kind of faith is personified by Nigeria’s Francis Cardinal Arinze, who is sometimes touted as a future Pope. He is sharp and articulate, with an attractively self-deprecating style, and he has served as the president of the Pontifical Council for Inter-Religions Dialogue, which has given him invaluable experience in talking with Muslims, Hindus, Jews, and members of other faiths. By liberal Northern standards, however, Arinze is rigidly conservative, and even repressive on matters such as academic freedom and the need for strict orthodoxy. In his theology as much as his social views he is a loyal follower of Pope John Paul II. Anyone less promising for Northern notions of reform is difficult to imagine.

Meanwhile, a full-scale Reformation is taking place

among Pentecostal Christians—whose ideas are shared by many Catholics. Pentecostal believers reject tradition and hierarchy, but they also rely on direct spiritual revelation to supplement or replace biblical authority. And it is Pentecostals who stand in the vanguard of the Southern Counter-Reformation. Though Pentecostalism emerged as a movement only at the start of the twentieth century, chiefly in North America, Pentecostals today are at least 400 million strong, and heavily concentrated in the global South. By 2040 or so there could be as many as a billion, at which point Pentecostal Christians alone will far outnumber the world's Buddhists and will enjoy rough numerical parity with the world's Hindus.

The booming Pentecostal churches of Africa, Asia, and Latin America are thoroughly committed to re-creating their version of an idealized early Christianity (often described as the restoration of "primitive" Christianity). The most successful Southern churches preach a deep personal faith, communal orthodoxy, mysticism, and puritanism, all founded on obedience to spiritual authority, from whatever source it is believed to stem. Pentecostals—and their Catholic counterparts—preach messages that may appear simplistically charismatic, visionary, and apocalyptic to a Northern liberal. For them prophecy is an everyday reality, and many independent denominations trace their foundation to direct prophetic authority. Scholars of religion customarily speak of these proliferating congregations simply as the "prophetic churches."

Of course, American reformers also dream of a restored early Church; but whereas Americans imagine a Church freed from hierarchy, superstition, and dogma, Southerners look back to one filled with spiritual power and able to exorcise the demonic forces that cause sickness and poverty. And yes, "demonic" is the word. The most successful Southern churches today speak openly of spiritual healing and exorcism. One controversial sect in the process of developing an international following is the Brazilian-based Universal Church of the Kingdom of God, which claims to offer "strong prayer to destroy witchcraft, demon possession, bad luck, bad dreams, all spiritual problems," and promises that members will gain "prosperity and financial breakthrough." The Cherubim and Seraphim movement of West Africa claims to have "conscious knowledge of the evil spirits which sow the seeds of discomfort, set afloat ill-luck, diseases, induce barrenness, sterility and the like."

Americans and Europeans usually associate such religious ideas with primitive and rural conditions, and assume that the older world view will disappear with the coming of modernization and urbanization. In the contemporary South, however, the success of highly supernatural churches should rather be seen as a direct by-product of urbanization. (This should come as no surprise to Americans; look at the Pentecostal storefronts in America's inner cities.) As predominantly rural societies have become more urban over

the past thirty or forty years, millions of migrants have been attracted to ever larger urban areas, which lack the resources and the infrastructure to meet the needs of these wanderers. Sometimes people travel to cities within the same nation, but often they find themselves in different countries and cultures, suffering a still greater sense of estrangement. In such settings religious communities emerge to provide health, welfare, and education.

This sort of alternative social system, which played an enormous role in the earliest days of Christianity, has been a potent means of winning mass support for the most committed religious groups and is likely to grow in importance as the gap between people's needs and government's capacities to fill them becomes wider. Looking at the success of Christianity in the Roman Empire, the historian Peter Brown has written, "The Christian community suddenly came to appeal to men who felt deserted. Plainly, to be a Christian in 250 brought more protection from one's fellows than to be a *civis Romanus*." Being a member of an active Christian church today may well bring more tangible benefits than being a mere citizen of Nigeria or Peru.

Often the new churches gain support because of the way they deal with the demons of oppression and want: they interpret the horrors of everyday urban life in supernatural terms. In many cases these churches seek to prove their spiritual powers in struggles against witchcraft. The intensity of belief in witchcraft across much of Africa can be startling. As recently as last year at least 1,000 alleged witches were hacked to death in a single "purge" in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. Far from declining with urbanization, fear of witches has intensified. Since the collapse of South Africa's apartheid regime, in 1994, witchcraft has emerged as a primary social fear in Soweto, with its three million impoverished residents.

The desperate public-health situation in the booming mega-cities of the South goes far toward explaining the emphasis of the new churches on healing mind and body. In Africa in the early twentieth century an explosion of Christian healing movements and new prophets coincided with a dreadful series of epidemics, and the religious upsurge of those years was in part a quest for bodily health. Today African churches stand or fall by their success in healing, and elaborate rituals have formed around healing practices (though church members disagree on whether believers should rely entirely on spiritual assistance). The same interest in spiritual healing is found in what were once the mission churches—bodies such as the Anglicans and the Lutherans. Nowhere in the global South do the various spiritual healers find serious competition from modern scientific medicine: it is simply beyond the reach of most of the poor.

Disease, exploitation, pollution, drink, drugs, and violence, taken together, can account for why people might easily accept that they are under siege from demonic forces, and



that only divine intervention can save them. Even radical liberation theologians use apocalyptic language on occasion. When a Northerner asks, in effect, where the Southern churches are getting such ideas, the answer is not hard to find: they're getting them from the Bible. Southern Christians are reading the New Testament and taking it very seriously; in it they see the power of Jesus fundamentally expressed through his confrontations with demonic powers, particularly those causing sickness and insanity. "Go back and report to John what you hear and see," Jesus says in the Gospel according to Matthew (11: 4-5). "The blind receive sight, the lame walk, those who have leprosy are cured, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, and the good news is preached to the poor." For the past two hundred years Northern liberals have employed various nonliteral interpretations of these healing passages—perhaps Jesus had a good sense of the causes and treatment of psychosomatic ailments? But that is not, of course, how such scenes are understood within the Third Church.

Today, as in the early sixteenth century, a literal interpretation of the Bible can be tremendously appealing. To quote a modern-day follower of the African prophet Johane Masowe, cited in Elizabeth Isichei's *A History of Christianity in Africa*, "When we were in these synagogues [the European churches], we used to read about the works of Jesus Christ—cripples were made to walk and the dead were brought to life... evil spirits driven out... That was what was being done in Jerusalem. We Africans, however, who were being instructed by white people, never did anything like that... We were taught to read the Bible, but we ourselves never did what the people of the Bible used to do."

Alongside the fast-growing churches have emerged apocalyptic and messianic movements that try to bring in the kingdom of God through armed violence. Some try to establish the thousand-year reign of Jesus Christ on earth, as prophesied in the Book of Revelation. This phenomenon would have been instantly familiar to Europeans 500 years ago, when the Anabaptists and other millenarian groups flourished. Perhaps the most traumatic event of the Reformation occurred in the German city of Münster in 1534-1535, when Anabaptist rebels established a radical social order that abolished property and monogamy; a homicidal king-messiah held dictatorial power until the forces of state authority conquered and annihilated the fanatics. Then as now, it was difficult to set bounds to religious enthusiasm.

Extremist Christian movements have appeared regularly across parts of Africa where the mechanisms of the state are weak. They include groups such as the Lumpa Church, in Zambia, and the terrifying Lord's Resistance Army (LRA), in Uganda. In 2000 more than a thousand people in another Ugandan sect, the Movement for the Restoration of the Ten Commandments of God, perished in an apparent mass suicide. In each case a group emerged from orthodox roots

and then gravitated toward apocalyptic fanaticism. The Ten Commandments sect grew out of orthodox Catholicism. The Lumpa Church began, in the 1950s, with Alice Lenshina, a Presbyterian convert who claimed to receive divine visions urging her to fight witchcraft. She became the *lenshina*, or queen, of her new church, whose name, Lumpa, means "better than all others." The group attracted a hundred thousand followers, who formed a utopian community in order to await the Second Coming of Jesus Christ. Since it rejected worldly regimes to the point of refusing to pay taxes, the Lumpa became increasingly engaged in confrontations with the Zambian government, leading to open rebellion in the 1960s.

Another prophetic Alice appeared in Uganda during the chaotic civil wars that swept that country in the 1980s. Alice Lakwena was a former Catholic whose visions led her to establish the Holy Spirit Mobile Force, also pledged to fight witches. She refused to accept the national peace settlement established under President Yoweri Museveni, and engaged in a holy war against his regime. Holy Spirit soldiers, many of them children and young teenagers, were ritually anointed with butter on the understanding that it would make them bulletproof. When Lakwena's army was crushed, in 1991, most of her followers merged with the LRA, which is notorious for filling its ranks by abducting children. Atrocities committed by the group include mass murder, rape, and forced cannibalism. Today as in the sixteenth century, an absolute conviction that one is fighting for God's cause makes moot the laws of war.

The changing demographic balance between North and South helps to explain the current shape of world Catholicism, including the fact that the Church has been headed by Pope John Paul II. In the papal election of 1978 the Polish candidate won the support of Latin American cardinals, who were not prepared to accept yet another Western European. In turn, John Paul has recognized the growing Southern presence in the Church. Last year he elevated forty-four new cardinals, of whom eleven were Latin American, two Indian, and three African. The next time a papal election takes place, fifty-seven of the 135 cardinals eligible to vote, or more than 40 percent, will be from Southern nations. Early this century they will constitute a majority.

It may be true that from the liberal Northern perspective, pressure for a Reformation-style solution to critical problems in the Church—the crisis in clerical celibacy, the shortage of priests, the sense that the laity's concerns are ignored—seems overwhelming. Poll after poll in the United States and Europe indicates significant distrust of clerical authority and support for greater lay participation and women's equality. The obvious question in the parishes of the developed world seems to be how long the aloof hierarchy can stave off the forces of history.

From Rome, however, the picture looks different, as do the "natural" directions that history is going to take. The Roman church operates on a global scale and has done so for centuries. Long before the French and British governments had become aware of global politics—and well before their empires came into being—papal diplomats were thinking through their approaches to China, their policies in Peru, their views on African affairs, their stances on the issues facing Japan and Mexico. To adapt a popular activist slogan, the Catholic Church not only thinks globally, it acts globally. That approach is going to have weighty consequences. On present evidence, a Southern-dominated Catholic Church is likely to react traditionally to the issues that most concern American and European reformers: matters of theology and devotion, sexual ethics and gender roles, and, most fundamentally, issues of authority within the Church.

Neatly illustrating the cultural gulf that separates Northern and Southern churches is an incident involving Moses Tay, the Anglican archbishop of Southeast Asia, whose see is based in Singapore. In the early 1990s Tay traveled to Vancouver, where he encountered the totem poles that are a local tourist attraction. To him, they were idols possessed by evil spirits, and he concluded that they required handling by prayer and exorcism. This horrified the local Anglican Church, which was committed to building good relationships with local Native

American communities, and which regarded exorcism as absurd superstition. The Canadians, like other good liberal Christians throughout the North, were long past dismissing alien religions as diabolically inspired. It's difficult not to feel some sympathy with the archbishop, however. He was quite correct to see the totems as authentic religious symbols, and considering the long history of Christian writing on exorcism and possession, he could also summon many precedents to support his position. On that occasion Tay personified the global Christian confrontation.

The cultural gap between Christians of the North and the South will increase rather than diminish in the coming decades, for reasons that recall Luther's time. During the early modern period Northern and Southern Europe were divided between the Protestantism of the word and the Catholicism of the senses—between a religious culture of preaching, hymns, and Bible reading, and one of statues, rituals, and processions. Today we might see as a parallel the impact of electronic technologies, which is being felt at very different rates in the Northern and Southern worlds. The new-media revolution is occurring in Europe, North America, and the Pacific Rim while other parts of the

globe are focusing on—indeed, still catching up with—the traditional world of book learning. Northern communities will move to ever more decentralized and privatized forms of faith as Southerners maintain older ideals of community and traditional authority.

On moral issues, too, Southern churches are far out of step with liberal Northern churches. African and Latin American churches tend to be very conservative on issues such as homosexuality and abortion. Such disagreement can pose real political difficulties for churches that aspire to a global identity and that try to balance diverse opinions. At present this is scarcely an issue for the Roman Catholic Church, which at least officially preaches the same conservatism for all regions. If, however, Church officials in North America or Europe proclaimed a moral stance more in keeping with progressive secular values, they would be divided from the growing Catholic churches of the South by a de facto schism, if not a formal breach.

For thirty years Northern liberals have dreamed of a Third Vatican Council to complete the revolution launched by Pope John XXIII—one that would usher in a new age of ecclesiastical democracy and lay empowerment. It would

The changes that Christian reformers are trying to inspire in North America and Europe run contrary to the dominant cultural movements in the rest of the Christian world.

be a bitter irony for the liberals if the council were convened but turned out to be a conservative, Southern-dominated affair that imposed moral and theological litmus tests intolerable to North Americans and Europeans—if, in other words, it tried to implement not a

new Reformation but a new Counter-Reformation. (In that sense we would be witnessing not a new Wittenberg but, rather, a new Council of Trent—that is, a strongly traditional gathering that would restate the Church's older ideology and attempt to set it in stone for all future ages.) If a future Southern Pope struggled to impose a new vision of orthodoxy on America's Catholic bishops, universities, and seminaries, the result could well be an actual rather than a de facto schism.

The experience of the world's Anglicans and Episcopalians may foretell the direction of conflicts within the Roman Catholic Church. In the Anglican Communion, which is also torn by a global cultural conflict over issues of gender and sexuality, orthodox Southerners seek to re-evangelize a Euro-American world that they view as coming close to open heresy. This uncannily recalls the situation in sixteenth-century Europe, in which Counter-Reformation Catholics sent Jesuits and missionary priests to reconvert those regions that had fallen into Protestantism.

Anglicans in the North tend to be very liberal on homosexuality and the ordination of women. In recent years, however, liberal clerics have been appalled to find them-



selves outnumbered and regularly outvoted. In these votes the bishops of Africa and Asia have emerged as a rock-solid conservative bloc. The most ferocious battle to date occurred at the Lambeth World Conference in 1998, which adopted, over the objections of the liberal bishops, a forthright traditional statement proclaiming the impossibility of reconciling homosexual conduct with Christian ministry. As in the Roman Catholic Church, the predominance of Southerners at future events of this kind will only increase. Nigeria already has more practicing Anglicans than any other country, far more than Britain itself, and Uganda is not far behind. By mid-century the global total of Anglicans could approach

150 million, of whom only a small minority will be white Europeans or North Americans. The shifting balance within the church could become a critical issue very shortly, since the new Archbishop of Canterbury, Rowan Williams, is notably gay-friendly and has already ordained a practicing homosexual as a priest.

The Lambeth debate also initiated a series of events that Catholic reformers should study carefully. Briefly, American conservatives who were disenchanted with the liberal establishment in the U.S. Episcopal Church realized that they had powerful friends overseas, and transferred their religious allegiance to more-conservative authorities



in the global South. Since 2000 some conservative American Episcopalians have traveled to Moses Tay's cathedral in Singapore, where they were consecrated as bishops by Asian and African Anglican prelates, including the Rwandan archbishop Emmanuel Kolini. By tradition an Anglican archbishop is free to ordain whomever he pleases within his province, so although the Americans live and work in South Carolina, Pennsylvania, and other states, they are now technically bishops within the province of Rwanda. They have become missionary bishops, charged with ministering to conservative congregations in the United States, where they support a dissident "virtual province" within the

church. They and their conservative colleagues are now part of the Anglican Mission in America, which is intended officially to "lead the Episcopal Church back to its biblical foundations." The mission aims to restore traditional teachings and combat what it sees as the "manifest heresy" and even open apostasy of the U.S. Church leadership. Just this past summer Archbishop Kolini offered his protection to dissident Anglicans in the Vancouver area, who were rebelling against liberal proposals to allow same-sex couples to receive a formal Church blessing.

Ultimately, the first Christendom—the politico-religious order that dominated Europe from the sixth century through the sixteenth—collapsed in the face of secular nationalism, under the overwhelming force of what Thomas Carlyle described as "the three great elements of modern civilization, gunpowder, printing, and the Protestant religion." Nation-states have dominated the world ever since. Today, however, the whole concept of national autonomy is under challenge, partly as a result of new technologies. In the coming decades, according to a recent CIA report, "Governments will have less and less control over flows of information, technology, diseases, migrants, arms, and financial transactions, whether licit or illicit, across their borders. The very concept of 'belonging' to a particular state will probably erode." If a once unquestionable construct like Great Britain is under threat, it is not surprising that people are questioning the existence of newer and more artificial entities in Africa and Asia.

For a quarter of a century social scientists analyzing the decline of the nation-state have drawn parallels between the world today and the politically fragmented yet cosmopolitan world of the Middle Ages. Some scholars have even predicted the emergence of some secular movement or ideology that would command loyalty across nations like the Christendom of old. Yet the more we look at the Southern Hemisphere, the more we see that although supranational ideas are flourishing, they are not in the least secular. The parallels to the Middle Ages may be closer than anyone has guessed.

Across the global South cardinals and bishops have become national moral leaders in a way essentially unseen in the West since the seventeenth century. The struggles of South African churches under apartheid spring to mind, but just as impressive were the pro-democracy campaigns of many churches and denominations elsewhere in Africa during the 1980s and 1990s. Prelates know that they are expected to speak for their people, even though if they speak boldly, they may well pay with their lives. Important and widely revered modern martyrs include Archbishop Luwum, of Uganda; Archbishop Munzihirwa, of Zaire; and Cardinal Biayenda, of Congo-Brazzaville.

As this sense of moral leadership grows, we might reasonably ask whether Christianity will also provide a

guiding political ideology for much of the world. We might even imagine a new wave of Christian states, in which political life is inextricably bound up with religious belief. Zambia declared itself a Christian nation in 1991, and similar ideas have been bruited in Zimbabwe, Kenya, and Liberia. If this ideal does gain popularity, the Christian South will soon be dealing with some debates, of long standing in the North, over the proper relationship between Church and State and between rival churches under the law. Other inevitable questions involve tolerance and diversity, the relationship between majority and minority communities, and the extent to which religiously inspired laws can (or should) regulate private morality and behavior. These issues were all at the core of the Reformation.

Across the regions of the world that will be the most populous in the twenty-first century, vast religious contests are already in progress, though so far they have impinged little on Western opinion. The most significant conflict is in Nigeria, a nation that by rights should be a major regional power in this century and perhaps even a global power; but recent violence between Muslims and Christians raises the danger that Nigerian society might be brought to ruin by the clash of *jihad* and crusade.

Muslims and Christians are at each other's throats in Indonesia, the Philippines, Sudan, and a growing number of other African nations; Hindu extremists persecute Christians in India. Demographic projections suggest that these feuds will simply

worsen. Present-day battles in Africa and Asia may anticipate the political outlines to come, and the roots of future great-power alliances. These battles are analogous to the ideological conflicts of the twentieth century, the alternating hot and cold wars between advocates of fascism and of democracy, of socialism and of capitalism. This time, however, the competing ideologies are explicitly religious, promising their followers a literal rather than merely a metaphorical kingdom of God on earth.

Let us imagine Africa in the throes of fiery religious revivals, as Muslim and Christian states jostle for political influence. Demographic change alone could provoke more-aggressive international policies, as countries with swollen populations tried to appropriate living space or natural resources. But religious tensions could make the situation far worse. If mega-cities are not to implode through social unrest and riot, governments have to find some way to mobilize the teeming masses of unemployed teenagers and young adults. Persuading them to fight for God is a proven way of siphoning off internal tension, especially if the religion in question already has a powerful ideal of martyrdom. Liberia, Uganda, and Sierra Leone have given rise to ruth-

less militias ready to kill or die for whatever warlord directs them, often following some notionally religious imperative. In the 1980s the hard-line Shiite mullahs of Iran secured their authority by sending hundreds of thousands of young men to martyr themselves in human-wave assaults against the Iraqi front lines. In contemporary Indonesia, Islamist militias can readily find thousands of poor recruits to fight against the nation's Christian minorities.

Some of the likely winners in the religious economy of the new century are precisely those groups with a strongly apocalyptic mindset, in which the triumph of righteousness is associated with the vision of a world devastated by fire and plague. This could be a perilously convenient ideology for certain countries with weapons of mass destruction. (The candidates that come to mind include not only Iraq and Iran but also future regional powers such as Indonesia, Nigeria, the Congo, Uganda, and South Africa.) All this means that our political leaders and diplomats should pay at least as much attention to religions and sectarian frontiers as they ever have to the location of oil fields.

Perhaps the most remarkable point about these potential conflicts is that the trends pointing toward them

have registered so little on the consciousness of even well-informed Northern observers. What, after all, do most Americans know about the distribution of Christians worldwide? I suspect that most see Christianity very much as it was a century ago—a

predominantly European and North American faith. In discussions of the recent sexual-abuse crisis "the Catholic Church" and "the American Church" have been used more or less synonymously.

As the media have striven in recent years to present Islam in a more sympathetic light, they have tended to suggest that Islam, not Christianity, is the rising faith of Africa and Asia, the authentic or default religion of the world's huddled masses. But Christianity is not only surviving in the global South, it is enjoying a radical revival, a return to scriptural roots. We are living in revolutionary times.

But we aren't participating in them. By any reasonable assessment of numbers, the most significant transformation of Christianity in the world today is not the liberal Reformation that is so much desired in the North. It is the Counter-Reformation coming from the global South. And it's very likely that in a decade or two neither component of global Christianity will recognize its counterpart as fully or authentically Christian. ■

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Extremist Christian movements have appeared regularly across parts of Africa. In each case a group emerged from orthodox roots and gravitated toward apocalyptic fanaticism.
