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Introduction

ED STETZER

If you go to a shopping mall this weekend, you’ll notice that the mall has anchor stores at each end. Typically malls are developed around large anchor stores like Macy’s or JCPenney that are well known and advertise widely. These anchor stores attract shoppers to the mall; and while they are there, they also browse the boutiques and enjoy a double mocha latte at Starbucks. This book is like a missions mall. It is anchored by three significant essays, written by three of the foremost missiologists of our time: Charles Van Engen, Paul Hiebert, and Ralph Winter. Charles Van Engen discusses mission’s past in his essay. Paul Hiebert analyzes mission’s present in his articles, and Ralph Winter predicts mission’s future in his. In a sense the three essayists are explaining where we have been, where we are, and where we’re going in missions. We (the editors) also have enlisted outstanding writers in the field of missiology to interact with our essayists. You’ll discover some lively, stimulating debate in their responses. So order your favorite coffee and sit down for an enlightening read.

CHARLES VAN ENGEN’S ESSAY: MISSION IN THE PAST

In his essay Charles Van Engen explains how the church has understood and defined its mission through the centuries. Van Engen uses this historical survey as a springboard to defining mission
today. This is appropriate because how we define mission today determines to a great degree how we’ll do missions today and tomorrow. He quotes Bishop Stephen Neill who wrote, “If everything is mission, then nothing is mission.” Van Engen finds hope in the missional church movement. He believes this redefinition of the church in terms of its obligation to fulfill God’s purpose in the world (missional purpose) will lead to great progress in mission. He concludes his essay by offering his personal and lengthy definition of mission. Because I’ve interacted with each of the essays and the responders, I won’t share my responses now, but you’ll find those in each section of the book.

Keith Eitel and Andreas Köstenberger express concern with Van Engen’s essay, especially his enthusiasm for the missional church movement. They both fear that the missional church movement and the emergent churches have deemphasized biblical authority in order to interact with postmodern North American culture. Eitel is concerned that missiological creativity, while desirable in some respects, may lead Evangelicals away from a biblically defined mission. Of course, this was the crux of the debate between Evangelicals and the World Council of Churches in the 1960s. Who or what defines the church’s mission in the world and in a particular locality? The World Council insisted that the context (the culture) must define the church’s mission, while Evangelicals held that the Bible must define the church’s mission. Andreas Köstenberger is a Bible scholar of note, so it is not surprising that his “12 theses” emphasize the inspiration and authority of the Scriptures. He also reminds his readers that good hermeneutics are not just necessary but a divine mandate.

Enoch Wan finds much to like in Van Engen’s essay. He appreciates Van Engen’s historical survey, and he likes the concept of missional churches. Wan criticizes Van Engen’s theology of mission as insufficiently trinitarian. For his part Wan espouses a theology of mission that is thoroughly trinitarian.

Darryl Guder perhaps is the most affirming and appreciative responder to Van Engen. As a key figure in the missional church movement, Guder is grateful for Van Engen’s endorsement, and like Van Engen he sees the missional church movement as the way forward for Protestant missions. Guder finds his
theological inspiration in the missiology of Karl Barth, and he commends Barth’s Christocentrism to a new generation of seminary students.

**PAUL HIEBERT’S ESSAY: MISSION IN THE PRESENT**

This essay is one of the last that Paul Hiebert wrote before he died. In the essay he addresses mission’s present in terms of contextualization. Of course, contextualization is not the only thing going on in Evangelical missions today, but it is surely the most controversial. It is hard to imagine a writer more qualified than Paul Hiebert to address this topic. His writings on contextualization have shaped the thought of a whole generation of missionaries, and missions professors too.

In his essay Hiebert explains the development of contextualization in the history of missions. The early missionaries practiced minimal contextualization. That is, they did little to contextualize the gospel. This was due to ignorance of cultural anthropology and a firm belief in the absolute truth of the Bible and their theology. Later missionaries felt embarrassed by the lack of contextualization by the pioneer missionaries of the nineteenth century, and they practiced uncritical contextualization. This uncritical approach allowed the culture to dominate. The result was often syncretism (the combination of two or more religions). Hiebert rejects these two extremes and argues for critical contextualization, a contextualization that is true to biblical teaching and also sensitive to the culture.

Michael Pocock responds to his former professor at Trinity Evangelical Divinity School with great respect and affirmation. Pocock views Hiebert’s critical contextualization as the solution to the problem of appropriate contextualization. In recent years much of the debate about contextualization has swirled around the radical contextualization advocated by missionaries to Muslims, such as John Travis. Pocock discusses the C1-C6 Model as an example of this debate. For himself Pocock views the C5 approach as too extreme, but he does approve the C4 approach advocated by Phil Parshall.

Darrell Whiteman expresses great appreciation for Paul Hiebert. In his response Whiteman explains that the gospel affirms
most of culture, confronts some aspects of culture, and transforms all of culture. He agrees with Hiebert that critical contextualization is an appropriate response of missionaries to cultural issues. However, he applies critical contextualization to the radical contextualization employed by some missionaries to Muslims and affirms the C5 approach. Thus, both Pocock and Whiteman affirm critical contextualization, but they come to different conclusions.

Norman Geisler is a theologian, not a missiologist, much less a professor of missionary anthropology like Hiebert and Whiteman. Geisler applies a theological template to Hiebert’s essay and finds it lacking. He believes Hiebert’s view of propositional truth is weak, and that weakness leads to a concern about Hiebert’s belief in the inerrancy and authority of the Scriptures. Geisler holds that the way to improved evangelism on the part of field missionaries is not to be found in critical contextualization but rather in worldview research and apologetics.

Avery Willis also affirms Paul Hiebert and critical contextualization. Having affirmed Hiebert’s approach, he devotes much of his response to an application of contextualization—orality. In recent years Willis has been an ardent advocate of contextualized communication with people in oral cultures. As oral learners comprise approximately 60 percent of the world’s population, Willis sees orality as an absolute necessity for contextualization.

**RALPH WINTER’S ESSAY: MISSION IN THE FUTURE**

Ralph Winter was given the assignment of writing about the future of missions. Before he addresses missions in the future, Winter recounts the history of evangelicalism. As part of that discussion, he discusses evangelical awakenings, which he calls First-Inheritance Evangelicalism and Second-Inheritance Evangelicalism. Winter combines the First Great Awakening and Second Great Awakenings into First-Inheritance Evangelicalism. This period lasted from the beginning of the First Great Awakening, about 1726, until the popularity of Dwight L. Moody (1880). In Winter’s view Evangelicals during the First Inheritance engaged in intellectualism and civic leadership. They sought both to preach the gospel and to minister to the needy. Second-Inheritance Evangelicalism was dominated by the Bible college movement and the
Fundamentalist movement. Both movements were anti-intellectual, and their premillennial eschatology led them to reject social ministry. In his essay Winter affirms missionaries that engage in micro-projects to alleviate suffering in the world, but he challenges Evangelicals to develop and implement macro-projects on a continental scale. Though Winter does briefly mention some future trends in missions, his essay primarily is an exhortation to Evangelicals to engage in large-scale human needs ministries. He sees these ministries as a preevangelism strategy that will open doors for the gospel.

Scott Moreau agrees that evangelical missions should be holistic, but he is not sure that Evangelicals have the financial resources to operate on the scale Winter desires. Moreau undertakes to write the essay that Winter did not. He forecasts the future of missions, emphasizing the role of technology, especially the Internet, in the future of missions.

Mark Terry takes a similar track to that of Scott Moreau. Terry laments that Winter did not share his views on the future of missions. Terry agrees that the New Testament and church history support a holistic approach to missions. He then shares his vision of the future of Evangelical missions, listing a number of trends in Evangelical missions, especially missions to youth.

Chris Little’s response to Winter is worth the cost of the book. He provides a thorough biblical and theological critique of Winter’s call for massive human needs projects. While Little affirms the need to respond to human suffering, his biblical and theological findings lead him to reject Winter’s challenge. Little sees Evangelism as the priority for evangelical missions.

Mike Barnett, who holds a Ph.D. in church history, sees Winter’s historical survey of Evangelicalism as overly broad and simplistic. Barnett is not convinced that Second-Inheritance Evangelicalism was as socially deficient as Winter claims. Barnett agrees that Evangelicals need to engage in social ministry; however, he disagrees with Winter that the social ministry should come first. In Barnett’s view we must see situations as different and deal with them on a case-by-case basis. Regardless of whether missionaries begin with the gospel or with social ministry, both Word and deed are necessary for a balanced approach. Ultimately,
the church is the key. Churches must be mobilized to fulfill the Great Commission and the Great Commandment.

The editors wish to thank the writers, both the essayists and the responders. All wrote for their love of the Lord and a concern for missions, not for money. Mark Terry, Bob Hughes, Keith Whitfield, and Philip Nation also gave additional help to make this book what it is today.
INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this essay is to peer into the immediate future and make some educated guesses as to what might be and should be the focus of missions and missionaries in the next generation. A great deal of the future of the Evangelical movement and its mission vision can be deduced by looking closely at its roots, so that is where I begin. In this first section I shall discuss the history of Evangelicalism, explaining what I call First-Inheritance Evangelical and Second-Inheritance Evangelicalism. The essay will demonstrate the difference between the earlier Evangelicalism, which was characterized by both spiritual and social concern, and the latter Evangelicalism, which emphasized evangelism predominantly. I mean to call modern Christians to return to the holistic Evangelicalism of the earlier period.

My larger goal in this is to open conversation about what missionaries, mission agencies, and mission scholars should address next. Evangelical missions in the twentieth century has emphasized evangelism and church planting, but this essay will call for a more balanced approach. In this sense my essay addresses the future of Evangelical missions.
THE MEANING OF THE WORD EVANGELICAL

The word *evangelical* in the Catholic tradition refers to those people who take seriously the four Evangelical Gospels and specifically to the members of Catholic orders. Later, in the Protestant tradition, the word came to refer to a political party where the *evangelici* were opposed to the *pontifici*. The idea was that those who were of the *evangelici* party adhered to the authority of the Bible rather than to the Roman *pontif* (the Pope), thus distinguishing two essentially political spheres.

By the time of the Reformation, other things were going on besides the tensions between two parties—Luther and the Pope, or Calvin and the Pope. There were the Anabaptists; later, the Pietists; still later a different kind of “Evangelical,” the Quakers; and eventually came the Methodists, who became a world force.

As a broad generalization all of these “third force” movements came to understand the word *evangelical* to mean more than correct belief. It began to refer to those individuals who had had a personal “evangelical experience,” by which they meant that something real had happened in a person’s heart and life, not just a purely mental assent to some sort of intellectual creed.

Thus, a major concern in the various streams of this “third force” was a wide variety of personal and emotional experiences, which were regarded as manifestations of the Spirit’s power in a person’s life. The Quakers actually got their name from a characteristic of their meetings in which they “quaked” with emotion. The concept of a “born again” experience was almost entirely unknown at the time of the Reformation. But in 1738 John Wesley, a university-trained Anglican, in a little Moravian chapel on a street called Aldersgate, sensed the *warming of his heart* as he listened to a verse being read out loud from the book of Romans in a commentary by Luther. The verse spoke of people being “saved by faith.”

It was not long before the idea of a need for a heart-warming *experience* was followed by a concept of an even deeper work of grace or “second blessing,” also called “entire sanctification,”
“infilling of the Spirit,” and “baptism of the Spirit.” In fact, other things like falling, groaning, howling, women whipping their hair, and speaking in tongues eventually were added, each new tradition tending to canonize particular aspects of experience with a specific phraseology to match. For example, there were, and still are, people who make a big distinction between “the baptism of the Spirit” and “the infilling of the Spirit.” Yet there is no question that many people have been significantly affected by these movements.

PART 1: AN OVERVIEW OF FIRST-INHERITANCE AND SECOND-INHERITANCE EVANGELICALISM

Evangelicalism presents a complex picture. But as we enter the period beyond 1700, it may be of value to distinguish between First-Inheritance Evangelicalism (FIE) and Second-Inheritance Evangelicalism (SIE), both my terms. For this chapter we can define the FIE as that which was characterized by a broad social and spiritual spectrum of concern ranging from foreign missions to changing the legal structure of society and even war. This spectrum is seen in the heady combination of earthly and heavenly perspective in the Evangelical Awakening in England as related to Wesley. It is seen in America where a simultaneous awakening occurred called the Great Awakening, which both increased church membership and led to the Revolutionary War, and where a Second Great Awakening brought thousands more into the churches, drastically transformed society, and led to the Civil War. These major “awakenings” are far more significant in American history than our secularized schoolbooks reveal. Even R. Fogel (a secular Nobel Prize winner) wrote a book called The Fourth Great Awakening, which recognizes the foundational importance of four spiritual awakenings in American history.

To generalize, FIE ran from about the earliest glimmers of the Great Awakening with T. Frelinghuysen in 1721 in the Raritan Valley in New Jersey to the onset of D. L. Moody’s enormous influence around 1875. This period was significantly characterized by Evangelicals in positions of civil leadership. This is the reason they could readily believe not only in an emotional transformation of individuals but also in a wide range of different aspects
of social transformation and God glorification. Nevertheless, this was an inheritance that in later generations after 1875 suffered two gradual reductions, each concentrating on one of the two formerly united emphases.

One of the reductions after 1875 continued to be social concern, and the other continued the emphasis on sin and salvation, and, specifically, on the necessity (and supposed sufficiency) of a personal experience coupled with an otherworldly focus. The followers of the first reduction, being college people, became a relatively small stream outnumbered greatly by a surge of noncollege people.

The followers of the second reduction became the mainstream I am calling SIE. They were mainly noncollege masses swept into faith by popular evangelists—Moody, Billy Sunday, and many others. But they were not in positions of social influence and tended to turn away from the idea of transforming society at a macro level. This, to me, is a key point.

This new and soon dominant SIE was itself the result of two forces. One was the impact of massive immigration from the Catholic parts of Europe. The population of the USA jumped from 44 million to 106 million between 1875 and 1920. Many leading families of FIE influence gradually slipped in both faith and political standing. At the same time Moody and others impacted millions of noncollege Americans who, even after conversion, were almost completely isolated from both civic leadership and college education.

This new Evangelicalism of the masses, characteristic of SIE, significantly boosted church attendance in the USA and created 157 Bible institutes. However, it had little stake in politics or social action and tended to suspect the smaller number of continuing, socially upscale college-educated Evangelicals from the FIE as being “liberal” (which by then they often were). As a result, the post-Moody Evangelicals in the noncollege stratum tended to react against social schemes and even to banish the word kingdom from their vocabulary, thus tending to undergo their second type of reduction of the gospel to a theology of “this world is not my home, I’m just a passin’ through,” producing an opposite pole from the other reduction to social action alone.
My prediction in this chapter is that in the twenty-first century the mainstream of Evangelicalism in the USA, and of Evangelical missions in particular, will recover a broader perspective, moving from what has been dominantly SIE to a rediscovery of the earlier full spectrum of the FIE tradition. The latter possessed a theology that combined both personal salvation with vast social responsibility, thus uniting concern for the glorification of God in both individual and social transformation.

We can see that kind of integrated strategy in the character of all truly effective mission history. This unity is in the Bible itself since Jesus validated, illuminated, and empowered His words by His deeds. This type of virile wide-spectrum faith, without being given much credit, contributed enormously to the earlier development of America. I hope it will become the new mainstream of global Evangelicalism with the same effect.

Undoubtedly not everyone will embrace the healed polarization. Two dangers can be anticipated. One danger is that the avoidance of social transformation in SIE may endure in some circles. The opposite danger is a continuing focus on social transformation stripped of an adequate emphasis on individual transformation that is, ironically, so essential to any significant social transformation.

The full spectrum of FIE I am talking about is not a “holism” that often merely adds many good things but leaves a “hole” where evangelism should be. Holism sometimes seems to assume that our “battle” is merely to benefit humans, a suspiciously anthropocentric or even humanistic point of view.

In heaven’s war against Satan, our priority is to recruit soldiers, freeing them from “the power of Satan” (Acts 26:18) by winning their allegiance to Christ. But even that is merely prior if we are going to gain effective soldiers. Obviously, recruitment before battle is a priority, but merely a priority. As these new soldiers in their transformed lives seek through Christ’s power “to destroy the Devil’s works” (1 John 3:8), their good deeds will “give glory to [their] Father in heaven” (Matt 5:16). These new deeds will then validate and empower further evangelism that will gain still more recruits for the battle of the kingdom. But merely recruiting and not battling does not win wars.
This perspective is no longer a tension between God and man, as our Reformation heritage tends to portray it, but it is a war between God-plus-His-people against the kingdom of darkness. But seeking to destroy the dominion of Satan must not be confused with the tendency to seek dominion in society through the saints holding worldly power, which is called Dominion Philosophy. The next three sections look more closely at these issues.

**PART 2: FIRST-INHERITANCE EVANGELICALISM**

Romanticized histories of colonial America portray the American colonies as highly religious. That was true of the early settlements in New England—the Pilgrims and Puritans—but most who came to the new world were fortune seekers. They had little time for worship; they were concerned with earthly riches. For example, many settlers at the Jamestown Settlement in Virginia spent their time digging for gold rather than cultivating crops and gardens. Because of this and a paucity of pastors and churches, the American colonies became degenerate morally and religiously. A spiritual awakening was needed. This awakening began in the early eighteenth century and profoundly changed the religious landscape in North America.

*The Great Awakening*

In the USA J. Edwards in Massachusetts and T. Frelinghuyser in the Raritan Valley in northern New Jersey—the latter bringing over some of Pietism from the old country—have been identified as the precursors of the widespread and powerful Great Awakening of the Middle Colonies in the early 1700s. This profound movement was then stirred up further by G. Whitefield, a friend of Wesley, who came from England to do powerful outdoor preaching. His major impact from Boston to Charleston built on those earlier events. Whitefield had emerged alongside the Wesleyan movement in England, the Evangelical Awakening that transformed English society more than any other movement in English history.

This new form of personal-experience Christianity was so significantly different that, in the colonies, it split the majority group, the Presbyterians, right down the middle for a number of years—one side reflecting the more intellectual Reformation
requirements and the other side emphasizing an experiential and identifiable “work of grace.” This kind of emotional evangelical experience came early to be considered essential to salvation among Evangelicals, just as “speaking in tongues” was considered essential to salvation at a later time in much of the Pentecostal sphere.

However, as surprising as it may be to most Evangelicals in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries, the key point of this chapter is that this FIE of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries was by no means oriented only to personal experience and the next world. In contrast to the almost exclusively personal salvation orientation of SIE, the mountain of social reforms connected with Wesley’s profound social impact in England were also powerfully present in America.

In America it is said that 100 colleges were born as a result of the Great Awakening of the Middle Colonies. Also, one of the characteristics of this Evangelical mutation in this early period was that accusations abounded of “unconverted pastors.” This new spirituality resulted in the founding of what was condescendingly called the “Log College” in Neshaminy, Pennsylvania, which eventually became a major contributor to the founding of Princeton University. There W. Tennent and his sons were vitally involved in ordination training for the first time on American soil, and through this the Great Awakening instigated a new movement within the Presbyterian Church called (again derisively) the “New Sides.” This movement was at first rejected but eventually took the lead in healing the breach with the older group as the new group rapidly became far larger.

The Great Awakening in the Middle Colonies was a powerful movement that actually forged a democratically governed church structure ranging from Boston to Charleston and gave crucial impetus to the Declaration of Independence, the Constitutional Convention, and a single government for the colonies. Without this democratically governed intercolonial model, the birth of the new nation wouldn’t have occurred the way it did. The crafting of the American Constitution was done one block away from meetings redrafting the Presbyterian Constitution. Many of the same men were involved in both meetings.
Just as Evangelicalism today is becoming more politically aware and active, so in the Great Awakening the whole idea of breaking away from England derived in part from the religious individualism of the Awakening. Indeed, the emphasis on individual decision and the rights of individuals influenced many people (such as T. Paine) who had no formal connection to the church at all. Indeed, the secular concept of individual freedom and rebellion against authority became so strong that when carried to France, in the total absence of grassroots democratic church structure, the French Revolution became a stridently secularist and even anti-Christian phenomenon as well as a ghastly bloodbath. Forget the guillotine. It was too slow. Thousands were killed at a time, Rwanda style, not with machetes but by chaining people together on large barges that were then sunk in major rivers.

Among America’s leaders, the initially Christian vision for wholesale social change became so widespread that it was easy for many (whether, as with Paine, spiritually alive or not) to be enthusiastic about this world cause. Thus, by the time of the American Revolution, the spiritual roots of the Great Awakening became paradoxically overshadowed in public life—virtually snuffed out—by the political and military events going on between the Declaration of Independence in 1776 and the conclusion of the War of 1812 in 1815.

Thus, the idea of revolutionary power sufficient to make wholesale change in society, although spiritually rooted, became such a heady experience—some 75 years before Marx—that by 1800 it is said that you could hardly find a single student at Yale or Harvard who would admit to being a Christian. Students were even calling each other by the names of leaders in the French Revolution, such as Robespierre, Marat, and St. Just.

This anti-Christian spirit, picked up to some extent from the French, ruled in other colleges as well. In western Massachusetts at Williams College, due to severely antagonistic student opposition, the famous Haystack Prayer Meeting took place outdoors. Those five young men did not lack the intelligence to come in out of the rain. They simply could not hold their prayers in the college dorms because the bulk of the students were violently opposed to
any religious behavior. This handful of believers couldn’t even keep their personal diaries in anything but code. It is a surprising thing that the American foreign mission movement was born in the icy cold crib of the context at that time. At Yale the few students who wanted to pray together had to take refuge in the president’s office.

In contrast to both this mood and to the frightening aftermath of the French Revolution was the Cane Ridge Revival of 1801 and other revival movements of that kind. They became especially significant in the first half of the 1800s.

*The Second Great Awakening*

Many scholars refer to certain events of roughly 1815–1840 as the Second Great Awakening, which was at least a renewal of the earlier Great Awakening. This era saw the contribution of C. Finney, an attorney who found Christ and definitely believed in a “second work of grace.” The impact of his ministry, camp meetings, other itinerant preachers, and many local revivals were to be seen in much of America. These spiritual events did not ignore social transformation but fueled it.

Just as the Great Awakening of the Middle Colonies in the 1700s made a great contribution to both the Declaration of Independence and the subsequent Revolutionary War, so toward the middle of the 1800s the Second Great Awakening (and some of its precursor events like the Cane Ridge Revival) provided the moral outrage that underlay the events leading to the Civil War.

In many respects the most prominent event of the early 1800s in America was the unexpected outcome of the War of 1812. Between the time of the Declaration of Independence in 1776 and 1815—quite a lengthy period—the rebellion of the colonies against the British government was considered by many a risky and shaky and perhaps only temporary achievement. Indeed, in 1812 the New England states wouldn’t even contribute troops to help the other former colonies fight that war. Thus, when Napoleon headed for Russia and the British turned their full military force against the USA in the War of 1812, many assumed this would be the end of the “glorious experiment” of the American nation.
Unexpectedly for the Americans, when the war was not lost but went to a draw, this amazing turn of events popped the balloon of fear of British reprisal. This miracle—along with the recently acquired Louisiana Purchase, which doubled the landmass of the new country—unleashed a truly massive migration to the West, which was part of the major shakeup in which ongoing revivals took place. It certainly increased the sense of freedom, vision, purpose, and promising future of the new nation, particularly among Evangelicals.¹

This euphoria of freedom—this sense of ownership for the first time of a vast land of their own (never mind the Native Americans)—gave life to all kinds of radical experiments in the social, political, and religious arenas; and it dynamically sparked the imagination, vision, and even the rethinking of the Christian religion itself. In one case, the Shakers, no one married anyone. In another case, the Oneida Community, everyone married everyone. The pendulum swung on the college campuses, and the Greek and Roman classics were banned from schools on the grounds that they were pagan. Hebrew became a major study. For many decades college presidents were expected at commencement to deliver an oration in Hebrew because it was (supposedly) the language of heaven.

Oberlin College, established with the encouragement of Finney and the financial resources of the wealthy Tappan brothers, was both a fruit of the revival temperament and also socially upscale. Oberlin was the first interracial school, the first coeducational school, the first vocational school, the first school to teach music, the first antislavery school, the first temperance school, and so forth. No holy reform was outside their purview. Students prayed that God would help them improve the efficiency of the Franklin Stove, and so was invented the Oberlin Stove. The entire period represented incredible ingenuity, innovation, and—more specifically—attention to what today we would call social transformation. In this mix Evangelicals were the main leaders—not the reluctant followers of secular initiatives.

It would be impossible to overstate the significant changes of

¹ Enough religious people still ran things to keep alive the larger social vision of First-Inheritance Evangelicalism.
direction of both the Christian movement and our nation between 1815 and 1850. By 1850, for example, virtually all of the states had banned alcoholic beverages. In fact, vast numbers would not drink tea or coffee, so extensive was the application of Christian faith to everyday life. Dozens of reform movements sprang into life—the temperance movement, the movement for the abolition of slavery, a movement to use whole grain in wheat flour, which was called Graham Flour because it was preached by a minister named Sylvester Graham.

Both the Mormon and the Adventist groups emerged at this time. They differ greatly in theology but today equally represent museum pieces of the concern for food and health, which had become part and parcel of the mood of that revival period.

All this ferment was the forerunner of mood, morale, and morals, which fueled both aspirations of national unity and the elimination of slavery, which in turn prompted the Civil War. At one point, it is widely reported, President Lincoln met Harriet Beecher Stowe—the Oberlin-related Evangelical author of *Uncle Tom’s Cabin* (which sold over six million copies). He said, “So you are the little lady who started this great war.”

T. Smith’s dissertation at Johns Hopkins University was published as a book titled *Revivalism and Social Reform.* This book blew the lid off the tremendous ignorance of SIE advocates concerning the intimate relation between evangelism and social reform that held in this earlier FIE period. Many other authors have followed along to point out and confirm the same thing. But what these scholars are saying about the startlingly wide spectrum theology of that period is still not well understood today.

In the early twenty-first century, serious polarization still continues regarding linkages between evangelism and social action. C. Little helpfully sums up the background and varying points of view and suggests an alternative: “Doxological mission . . . [in which] the chief end of mission is the glory of God.” He rightly bewails the success of the Enlightenment in “dislodging God and placing humankind’s dignity, aspirations, values, and needs at the center of the universe.”

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Gaining a new relationship with God for as many humans as possible—or, as one mission leader put it, “peopling the kingdom”—can logically be claimed to be the “priority,” that is, what to do first, as has already been mentioned. But that is only a first phase in glorifying God. Those once reconciled to God are expected to proceed to glorify Him by their good works (Matt 5:16). However, for globally minded people, good works must go beyond just personal good deeds to organized good deeds that will include such matters as the deliberate discovery and exposition of the glories of God’s creation (Ps 19:1–4) as well as serious concern for global poverty and disease. Otherwise, we misrepresent the character of God, and our proclamation activity lacks both credibility and authenticity.

Universities commonly have two major foci: arts and sciences. Art is the study of the handiwork of man. Science is the study of the handiwork of God. Both can be studied for the wrong reasons. In the world of art, we see the praise of man for works of art. In the world of science, we see the praise of man for Nobel Prize-winning discoveries of science or for the technological or humanitarian utility of such discoveries. However, both can also be pursued as a means of pure joy and a demonstration of God’s glory.

PART 3: SECOND-INHERITANCE EVANGELICALISM

Remember that, as defined, the period of FIE can be seen as a time when Evangelical leaders at levels of national influence (as well as common people who followed them) briefly and uniquely worked within a window of awareness that made the transformation of society feasible—something that was within their grasp.

But what happened after the FIE period? What happened to that kind of socially active Evangelicalism? There are at least two factors. First, as mentioned earlier, European immigration became significant during the latter part of the 1800s. So many Catholics flooded into Protestant Massachusetts that by 1880 there was hardly a city or town in Massachusetts that was not predominantly Catholic. Second, Moody came into the picture from the backwoods of Massachusetts. He was a man who was extremely overweight, impulsive, had dyslexia to the extent that he
could not even spell the simplest words. Worst of all—to some—his rural upbringing did not prepare him to speak the right kind of English. But he diligently sought the empowerment of God for ministry, as Finney had urged Christian leaders to do earlier. Moody reportedly said, “The world has yet to see what God can do through one man wholly committed to him.” Perhaps no one in American history has come closer to that ideal. When God raised up this seemingly unlikely minister, Moody won millions of non-college people (and a few college students). Through his ministry Evangelicalism became, for the first time in America, a predominantly lower-class movement.

The people who were Evangelical leaders in the earlier days, both before the colonial period and after the War of 1812, were by comparison well educated. They tended to be the ones who ran things in the public sector. America, unlike England, could not boast of a Clapham Sect—a politically powerful group of wealthy Evangelical leaders in England with whom W. Wilberforce bloodlessly took down the slave trade in England. Although America had in many ways possessed a functional equivalent, things had massively changed 100 years later. The American population had exploded from 7 million to more than 90 million by 1910; it was a different country. Leading citizens of the Second Great Awakening were now a tiny minority. But the Evangelical movement had burgeoned marvelously both within the ranks of the immigrants and the uneducated stratum of society. Yet it was no longer true that people of faith ran the country.

It was somewhat of a lingering anomaly that 100,000 upscale college students could be caught up in the Student Volunteer Movement for Foreign Missions and provide leadership to the World Missionary Conference in Edinburgh in 1910. Few of these student volunteers came from the mainstream of Moody’s converts even though Moody himself, somewhat accidentally, had helped to spark both the Cambridge Seven in England and the Student Volunteer Movement in America.

The last fling of wide-spectrum FIE advocates was arguably the Prohibition era, but the cleavage between college people and Bible institute people, already emerging by 1900, had by the 1920s unfortunately become a major feature of the Evangelical
movement—a culture war within Evangelicalism. Upper-class people who were still thinking in terms of social reform were more and more often labeled liberal due to their social reform concerns, whether or not they were liberal in their theology.

Meanwhile, the newer lower-class Evangelicals had never had a chance to elect one of their own as a mayor. Their Bible institute graduates did not pursue the professions or the universities. They were for the most part not college people at all. They sometimes assumed that elite, influential believers must have something wrong with them, and to some extent they were right. To the noncollege people—as with slaves and their “Negro spirituals” that focused on heaven—the idea of reforming society seemed utterly impossible, theologically unexpected, and therefore evangelistically objectionable. The Civil War itself, to this day the bloodiest in American history, had caused a loss of faith in the theory of progress—even though a college teacher in 1895 wrote the words to “America the Beautiful,” which describes a vision of the impact of the gospel where “alabaster cities gleam” and in which “thy good is crowned by brotherhood . . . undimmed by human tears.”

Soon within the SIE we see a diminishing of the goal of reforming society and in its place a belief in a coming tribulation preceded by a pretribulation rapture. The goal of reforming individuals, while properly considered basic, was often improperly considered all that was needed, despite commendable “intuitive” good works lacking theological guidance. The Moody Bible Institute tradition, including the 157 Bible institutes following in this new perspective, to a great extent typified the SIE type of Christianity that was generally antagonistic to the earlier FIE brand. The remnants of FIE soon became regarded simply and objectionably as “liberal.”

Thus, the dominant force of SIE essentially went socially underground for 60 or 70 years, while those Bible institutes, one by one, became Bible colleges, then Christian colleges, and eventually Christian universities. However, as a result of this gradual reemergence of culturally standard educational patterns, even Congress and the White House itself became once more populated by people of Evangelical convictions. But increased social
influence was unaccompanied by a theology corresponding to such new opportunities.

The Bible institute stream thus constituted the backbone of the Evangelical movement for a lengthy period, and its eventual marriage with the ethos of the college cultural stream was a long time in coming. During that long transition it was possible for such definitive books to be written, such as C. F. H. Henry’s prophetic *The Uneasy Conscience of Modern Fundamentalism* and later M. Noll’s *The Scandal of the Evangelical Mind.*

The delay in a recovery of the FIE’s wide-spectrum sense of mission was not so much because twentieth-century Evangelicals couldn’t think. They may not have continued to think of major reforms in society, but they did develop all kinds of new and creative understandings of the Bible. A typical example was their emphasis on eschatology, the rapture, and the second coming of Christ. Such ideas for many years characterized this SIE brand of Evangelicalism, to some extent following J. N. Darby. Moody Bible Institute may have led the way, but virtually all Bible institutes took part. Prophecy conferences abounded. Social reform seemed illogical if only because the world was predicted to get worse and worse until true believers were raptured out of it. A social gospel was anathema.

**PART 4: THE RECOVERY OF FIRST-INHERITANCE EVANGELICALISM**

As Evangelicals work their way into social and even political influence, many other changes will take place in the context of mission. Discussion of all such new developments could occupy many pages, but some of the issues include the following:

- There is the shrinking of the globe and the tendency of local churches in the West to have a more direct hand in what happens at a distance. The urgent value of veteran mission agencies will tend to be overlooked.
- The massive trend to send out young and old for two weeks will continue to drain money from more serious mission,

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adding helpful education to the local sending churches but little direct or indirect contribution to missions.

- An unexpected but growing trend is “Insider Movements,” which requires us in the West to recognize modern parallels between (1) the much-disputed decision of the Jerusalem Council in Acts to allow Greek culture to become another “earthen vessel” for the gospel, and (2) the decision of millions of Chinese, Hindus, and Africans who have already chosen to follow Christ within their own cultural traditions without identifying with formal Western Christianity. This new appearance of biblical faith is already a phenomenon as large or larger than formal Christianity in those three continents.

- The special challenge of cities will continue to be studied.
- The challenge of nonliterate masses will continue to grow.
- The need to do something about poverty, human slavery, and the eradication of disease (much exacerbated by globalization) will increasingly occupy everyone, but more specifically emboldened and wealthy Evangelicals.

This list could go on and on. However, only the last item is directly related to the thesis of this chapter, namely, that mission theology will follow upon the growth of the civil stature of the Evangelical movement, forcing into existence new interpretations of the Bible in regard to the use of that vastly increased influence. That is what this chapter continues to pursue in view of the far-reaching and novel implications it will have.

Thus, the future of Evangelicalism and Evangelical missions is likely to involve a difficult and painful shift away from decades of polarization between “social action” and “the pure gospel.” This shift, which is already taking place, has brought new opportunity and responsibility, but it shares the dangers to which the children of FIE eventually fell prey. As the twentieth century wore on, many outstanding Evangelicals ranging from J. R. W. Stott and others in the Lausanne movement tried hard to point out that there can be no real dichotomy between faith and good works, despite a continuing Reformation-triggered bias in that realm.
As already seen, one example of this is the simple fact that the word *kingdom* was almost totally banned from Evangelical literature for at least 50 years. Only recently has this word, so prominent in the NT, been recovered as some expositors have written books about the kingdom of God and tried to bring it back into the fold. But the word is still suspect in many Evangelical circles.

In missions the polarization is reflected by the fact that on the social action side there is one entire association of over 50 agencies, the Association of Evangelical Relief and Development Organizations (AERDO), which includes a number of strong Evangelical mission agencies, such as World Vision, World Concern, the World Relief Department of the National Association of Evangelicals, and so on. Their social action has gained quite a following; otherwise, it wouldn’t be possible for World Vision to achieve an annual half-billion-dollar budget.

Yet, until recently in books by B. Myers, World Vision has not vigorously advanced a theological basis for what it is doing. Fortunately, many Evangelical donors have obviously felt intuitively that things World Vision was trying to do were worth supporting. This is in some way a nontheological, intuitive recovering of one part of FIE focused primarily on helping human beings even though it is not as yet as concerned for social transformation in general (e.g., eradicating disease and rehabilitating science as declaring God’s glory).

Meanwhile, in the first five years after the Second World War, when 150 new mission agencies were founded, most of the new agencies were characterized as “service agencies” that added muscle to existing missions—technology like airplanes, radios, or literature to the already existing mission movement. This meant that all of this new vigor almost entirely emphasized what was already going on, that is, the preaching of an intellectual and emotional gospel plus an emphasis on a restoration of individual fellowship with God. If it had not been for the informal theological intuition of loving missionaries, it would not have resulted in such extensive “good works” but merely in the evangelism of still

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5 E.g., A. Glasser, *Announcing the Kingdom* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2003).
others mainly oriented toward the next world—an emphasis on the eternal not the temporal.

In other words, the reason SIE is a complicated phenomenon is that the most extensive and the most influential social transformation-as-mission activity (even in the twentieth century) was actually accomplished (though much was not reported to donors) by the Evangelical mission agencies established before 1900. Evangelical momentum in the mainline denominational missions, the work of the great interdenominational mission agencies like Sudan Interior Mission or the Africa Inland Mission, plus the work of the smaller Evangelical denominational missions—all of these employed *an intuition not undergirded by formal theology* but still made tremendous contributions to the entire educational framework of whole countries like China and Nigeria. The world’s largest technical university was founded by missionaries in Sao Paulo, Brazil. Asia’s largest agricultural university was founded by missionaries in North India. The university system itself was taken to the field explicitly by Evangelical missionaries in the first half of the nineteenth century. We think of projects like Yale in China. This was in part the final momentum of the FIE wave, some of it carrying over into the twentieth century. It also reflected the keen intuition of socially sensitive missionaries.

It was understood back in the nineteenth century and in these major missions that there was no rift whatsoever between learning and gospel, or good works and gospel, or schools, hospitals, vocational schools and the planting of churches. Nevertheless, today, as far as donors are concerned, the enormous impact of social transformation arising (intuitively) in the work of standard church planting mission agencies is widely resented and underestimated. Indeed, it is virtually unknown in certain spheres, in part due to an intentional downplaying of this effort in reports to donors who want to hear only of spiritual conversions. This is incorrectly rationalized as a tension between the so-called liberal and conservative perspectives, when in fact it is largely due to the inherently different perspective of socially influential Evangelicals and the era of social impotence among most Evangelicals in the twentieth century. People like C. Colson (who was a civil leader) have no trouble envisioning sweeping changes in the whole world’s prison
systems, nor in helping to resurrect the powerful social and political example of Wilberforce in England.

**Empowered Evangelism**

Obviously, there is a theological problem here. We know we must take seriously the fact that Jesus was concerned with handicapped people, sick people, children, women, Greeks, and so on, and that His ministry embraced and encompassed those things. When Jesus responded to John the Baptist, who wondered if he was the one to come, Jesus sent back descriptions, not of the text of his message, but simply a report of good works He was doing. This He did, not only as an authentication of who He was but as a demonstration of God’s character. His ministry was congruent with His own statement, “In the same way, let your light shine before men, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father in heaven” (Matt 5:16). In the synagogue in Nazareth Jesus quoted Isa 61:1–2 (see Luke 4:18–19):

The Spirit of the Lord is on Me,
because He has anointed Me to preach
good news to the poor.
He has sent Me
to proclaim freedom to the captives
and recovery of sight to the blind,
to set free the oppressed,
to proclaim the year of the Lord’s favor.

Does Jesus’ declared intention to “free the oppressed” apply to 27 million men, women, and children held as slaves in the world today? This is more than were sold in the four centuries before slavery was abolished. Christians today would do well to emulate the activities of the nineteenth-century Christian abolitionists like William Wilberforce.

It has been said that because the gospel is a message of hope, the poorest must see some concrete reason for hope before they can understand the gospel. Words themselves have no power if they do not refer to reality. Jesus’ words were constantly accompanied and informed by the things to which His words referred. Thus, just as faith without works is dead, so evangelism without works is dead. Unless words refer to works, to reality, they are
worth nothing. Just as it is a Reformation myth that faith can be separated from works, so it is meaningless if words are separated from the reality to which they were meant to refer.

It seems that just as we believe that works ought to follow faith in the life of believing individuals, it is equally true that in our outreach to unbelievers those works displaying God’s glory better come first. We see this clearly when we recognize that the usual way in which individuals come to faith is primarily by viewing the good works of those who already have faith—that is, by observing Christians’ good deeds that reflect the character of God. Immediately after speaking of His followers being salt and light in the world, Jesus spoke the verse we have already quoted, “In the same way, let your light shine before men, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father in heaven” (Matt 5:16). That is how people glorify God and are drawn to Him. Those who may be drawn by mere desires to be blessed personally will have trouble with Jesus’ plain statement, “For whoever wants to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life because of Me and the gospel will save it” (Mark 8:35).

Thus, in order for people to hear and respond to an offer of personal salvation or a ticket to heaven, it is paramount for them to witness the glory of God in believers’ lives—seeing the love and goodness in their lives and deeds, and their new motives and intentions. This is the reality that gives them reason to turn away from all evil and against all evil as they seek to be closer to that kind of God and His will in this world.

Personal salvation alone can still be a glorious transformation of people who may never arise from a sickbed or from poverty, knowing that God loves them and wants them to love Him. At the same time many believers are not poor and have time and energy to do things other than simply talk to people about the next world. For them, a concept that is hard to avoid (because it is happening throughout the whole Bible) is that works are necessary to authenticate and demonstrate the true character of God. That is the true basis for empowering evangelism.

Further, this potent continuity of word and deed is the mainstream of mission history. It may not have been so large a factor among affluent people in a country like Japan, but in much
of the world the stunning achievements of medicine and healing have demonstrated to potential converts not only the love of God for them but also the power of God that is on their side against the forces of darkness. People like Simon the sorcerer may try to emulate that activity without the corresponding concern. Others may gain a different message: one of hope and love, not just power to be acquired.

**Defeating the “Works of the Devil”**

Jesus spoke to Paul about delivering people “from the power of Satan to God” (Acts 26:18). Peter summed up Jesus’ ministry by speaking of “how God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and with power, and how He went about doing good and curing all who were under the tyranny of the Devil, because God was with Him” (Acts 10:38). This kind of demonstration of the person and the power of God certainly should not be considered antagonistic to evangelism. In most cases it is, again, the basis of an empowerment of evangelism.

But by taking a quick glance at the current record of missions of good works, it is perfectly obvious that thus far no great dents in world poverty have been achieved by missionaries of Jesus Christ, even though their intentions and even their record is highly respectable. Recently more and more high-minded young people have shown themselves willing to go and live among people in extreme poverty. This is also good, but most poor people need more than another apparently poor and powerless person to come and live among them. The dramatic rescue of a handful of individuals from such situations does not materially change structured poverty. Mother Teresa’s gift to the world was not so much the problems she directly remedied but the quality of her concern pled for solutions at the roots of her patients’ problems.

Once individuals find faith, they have often pulled themselves up by their bootstraps—through their honesty, abandonment of liquor and drugs, and their ability to build businesses that would succeed. This has gradually lifted them up out of the poverty category into the middle-class category, not just in England but also in America and in many parts of the world. This kind of
individual salvation is the primary focus of Evangelical missions today even though it may not be the whole picture.

I went to Guatemala in 1957 with the gospel in my heart, my head, and my ministry, and worked for 10 years among a wonderful and responsive people. Now, almost five decades later, there are not just the three churches in that valley when I left but more than 30. By now there is a high percentage of the indigenous population in that entire valley who are out and out believers in Jesus Christ. But during my 10 years there, the people—both believers and unbelievers—were in desperate straits in terms of poverty. The need was so great that a visiting pastor from Chicago after two days with us sharply criticized me for overlooking the people’s poverty and for talking just about spiritual salvation, although I had started 17 small businesses. He offered to raise some money in Chicago and send it down if I would use it solely for food. When I informed him that the food necessary for the 70,000 people in that valley would require about $1 million every two months, he practically fainted and went back to Chicago without ever sending a penny.

Thus, it is a fact that most missionaries, and especially their individual converts, rarely have the wherewithal of either knowledge or power to make major, fundamental changes in society. This is why the entire sphere of large-scale social action and social transformation is beyond the reach of less powerful people, who have for a lengthy period been thinking of personal transformation rather than social transformation. They may also be people whose knowledge of the past is vague or perhaps completely nil. By the past I refer to the tremendous period of Evangelical-led social transformation in the middle of the nineteenth century, what I have called First-Inheritance Evangelicalism.

However, without even studying the past, it is apparent that there is a crescendo of concern for the serious problems of our world. The AIDS crisis has thrown us into a lot of confusion but also into serious contemplation about what can or should be done. Since malaria annually detracts significantly from productive work in Africa, then eradicating malaria might eliminate the poverty of that continent all by itself. Yet malaria is simply not
something that can be driven into extinction by the local efforts of individual mission stations or churches.

In view of my first wife’s five-year descent into a cancerous death and my own current struggling with the same kind of cancer, I am well known for believing that disease is probably the greatest killer and producer of suffering in the entire world. Yet, in many international development books, the idea of setting out to fight various diseases to a standstill is not even mentioned, although that has been done in the case of smallpox and now soon Guinea worm. Why isn’t it mentioned? Perhaps because such challenges may have seemed too big for them to handle, but also because they have probably possessed no theology undergirding that kind of effort.

But nine out of 10 Americans in our wonderfully blessed country die prematurely—and by no means painlessly—because of disease. Yet to the average citizen, church congregation, or Evangelical donor, the idea of banishing malaria entirely from Africa seems to be unthinkable—again, for the simple reason that it really is totally impossible on a small scale. We have banished malaria almost entirely from America, but that was a geographically limited project compared with eradicating smallpox from the face of the entire earth. Significantly, the effort to eliminate smallpox was not theologically driven.

It is embarrassing to me that former President Jimmy Carter—a Sunday school teacher, not a theologian or a mission executive or a missiologist—has actually done more than anyone else in arousing world opinion to the need to eradicate diseases, not just extend health care after people get sick. Carter is the one who took the initiative to found the International Task Force for the Eradication of Disease. This task force has now attracted funds from the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation.

It is unfortunate that Carter has not been able to get substantial money from Christian sources for this activity. His sources are almost entirely commercial. What he is doing is something that to my knowledge no theologian, mission executive, or television evangelist has ever had the theology to promote. His efforts have already reduced Guinea worm in West Africa by 99.9 percent. The Carters, in a brief visit to West Africa, had witnessed
victims of that disease clearly knocked out of the workforce and in pain for months, suffering from a tiny water-born parasite that grows in the body to 30 inches in length. The last few sufferers today are largely located in nearly inaccessible places in Sudan. President Carter’s actions in this regard can serve as a model for Christian agencies to emulate.

Thus, in all of our commendable haste to get to the ends of the earth and to the last group that has never heard the gospel, we may be overlooking the fact that the vast bulk of the Western world no longer believes in the Bible and no longer follows our faith. Does this mean our immense overseas achievements are only temporary? Statistics show that 80 percent of the people in France consider themselves Christians, but only 20 percent believe in God. Further, only a small percentage of teenagers brought up in Evangelical homes will retain their faith after they leave home. Is that the future of Christianity in the Southern Hemisphere?

We hear other similar things about the collapse of the Evangelical awakening in England, where church attendance has dropped to 4 percent. We have been successful to a degree in tracking down the last unreached people on the face of the earth, but we face a considerable shortfall in maintaining our faith among educated people. Is this decline due to an absence of recognized signs of God’s glory? Is it because the involvement of missions in eradicating disease is so minor that a Harvard professor can observe, “If the god of the Intelligent Design people exists he must be a divine sadist that creates parasites that blind millions of people”? 6

**PART 5: THE FUTURE OF EVANGELICAL MISSIONS**

So what is the future of the Evangelical mission movement? The mission movement—more so than the church movement and considerably more so than the secular world—holds the key to a great new burst of credibility that could win new millions. For example, despite all its secularism and Marxism, the first three of China’s “Four Modernizations” promoted by Deng Xiaoping (agriculture, industry, science and technology, national defense)

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were precisely great emphases of missionaries in China before 1950. Surprisingly, as a result, the Chinese government today, which we have known to persecute the church, may today have a better appreciation of the real impact of the gospel of Christ in their country than do the heavenly minded donors funding the missionaries who, in contrast to many donors, were concerned with both heaven and earth. This is an irony.

The Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation and its concerns—along with Bono and other actors and actresses such as Madonna—would seem to pressure other moneyed people to concern themselves similarly. This is no longer the old interest in getting buildings named after them and so forth but in seeking credit for things like the eradication of poverty and disease and suffering. This unexpected trend of philanthropy clearly indicates the potential of people in high places who grow up in a highly Christianized society, even if they haven’t regularly gone to church. They need to understand that their efforts will be disappointingly ineffective without a certain minimum of transformed individuals whose character is essential to these major efforts. In that sphere missions have the monopoly on transformed individuals who can be trusted.

But at the same time, I yearn to see Evangelical missions be able to give more direct, credible credit to Jesus Christ for the impetus behind the social transformation they have been and are doing. Practically none of the major religions, by comparison, has any significant contribution to good works, small or large. Islam has the giving of alms as one of its five pillars, but there is absolutely nothing in the entire mammoth global Islamic movement that compares even remotely to the hundreds of major Christian mission agencies or the thousands of ways in which the Christian movement has reached out with love and tenderness to those who are suffering. Islam has a nearly similar vacuum of nongovernment agencies. The West also has thousands of NGOs that are not explicitly Christian. Islam has only a few.

The work of Christ in the Gospels, Christ’s references to the coming of the kingdom of God, and the present outworking in this world of the “Your will be done” in the Lord’s Prayer (Matt
6:10) are actually echoed by the Great Commission itself. Looking closely at Matt 28:20, it isn’t just the *teachings* that Jesus commissions His disciples to pass on; it is the actual enforcing, so to speak, of *obedience to those teachings*. We hear later in the NT about people who do not “obey” the gospel. Obviously, the gospel is not just mere information in the way of good advice. There is an authority and command from God in the gospel. This is the clear meaning of the Great Commission: Jesus sent His disciples out to teach “all nations . . . to observe everything I have commanded you.”

As I have suggested, the older missions with roots in the nineteenth century have in actual fact been doing exactly what Jesus did, both demonstrating the love of God and inviting into eternal life all who yield to that love and that authority. The trouble is that the fact of this breadth hasn’t been as clearly theologized to the point where we would plan to tackle some of the bigger problems such as the wiping out of Guinea worm, problems which have existed for over a century under the very noses of missionaries. *Such extra breadth must not be seen to be a divergence from the preaching of eternal life but rather an empowerment of the message of a gospel of a kingdom, which is both here and hereafter.* This is the gospel of Jesus Christ. It is the gospel of the kingdom, the announcement of a rule and reign of God that must be extended to the whole world and all of creation. We must stand up and be counted as active foes of the world’s worst evils. This is the biblical way, the way more than any other in which missions have in the past and can now more powerfully and extensively than ever demonstrate who God is and what His purposes are.

The Great Commission is great in part because it does not refer merely to the communication of a message such as “teaching them . . . everything I have commanded you.” No, it precisely says, “Teaching them to *observe* everything I have commanded you.” This implies the conquest of evil when the Lord’s Prayer is read in this light: “Your will be done *on earth*” (Matt 6:10).

This more extensive influence will come if agencies will simply take the practical conclusions of their missionaries’ magnificent local intuition up into national levels and into international campaigns to drive out the things that not only cause hundreds
of millions of people to go to bed at night with severe suffering and pain but also cut their lives short. Otherwise, all such unadressed evil is blamed on God and His mysterious purposes. This new, expanded influence may thus measurably help us win the West to a faith that works and to a God who is not doing bad things for mysterious reasons but who opposes the evil one and all his works—and He asks us to assist Him in that campaign.

Evangelicals are increasingly again in a position of social influence. But we are still mainly in the business of sharing the faith, a faith that does not include much of a mission beyond converts converting still others. However, a return to a full-spectrum gospel could mean an enormous change. Doors will open. Attitudes about missionaries will change. It will no longer be the case of missionaries thinking that they have to use adroit language to cover up the “real purpose” of their work. Their real purpose will be to identify and destroy all forms of evil, both human and microbiological, and will thus be explainable without religious jargon. This will provide common ground in almost any country.

In that event there is no doubt in my mind that the future of the Evangelical mission movement will be bright indeed. A. Judson correctly stated, “The future is as bright as the promises of God.” We must not forget that God is the one who asked us to pray, “Your kingdom come, Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven” (Matt 6:10).

CONCLUSION

The future of Evangelical missions will reflect how this generation of missiologists, missions administrators, and missionaries understand the New Testament and the history of the Christian church. If these missions scholars and practitioners embrace the holistic mission of Jesus Christ, then missions in the future will address both the spiritual and physical needs of the world’s population. If the missions scholars and practitioners emulate the example of First-Inheritance Evangelicals, they will seek the transformation of both souls and society. These emphases truly will serve to make the future bright.
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