Locked up in the German language till today is knowledge of one of the most creative missionary minds of the twentieth century. Christian Keysser's innovative, soundly Christian, deeply anthropological, and tremendously important contribution to modern missiology is all but unknown outside Germany.

## KEYSSER THE MAN

The genius was born in Bavaria in 1877, went to Kaiser Wilhelm Land (East New Guinea) in 1899, remained in or near Sattelberg as a missionary till 1921, when he returned to Germany.

His writings consist of ten large and about three hundred small books and essays. His dictionary of the Kate (Kawtai) language contains more than 10,000 words and phrases. He undertook many scientific journeys and was a correspondent of the German Geographical Society. He discovered hundreds of plants, insects and rare animals, some of which are named after him. The rich treasure of New Guinean Christian songs can be traced back to him. He constantly encouraged Christian tribesmen to compose their own songs and put their own thoughts to music.

Back from his beloved New Guinea, he taught missions in the mission seminary in Neuendettelsau. The University of Erlangen granted him a Ph.D. in 1929. Vicedom and Neumeier were two of his students. He inspired men like Herman Strauss, Wilhelm Bergmann and others who wrote anthropological monographs. More than thirty of his students became missionaries to New Guinea and a larger number became missionary pastors in other lands, notably Brazil.

Keysser's wide ranging, courageous mind continually took the German churches to task for not being genuine Christian congregations, leaving too much in the hands of the professional paid clergy, and not acting as truly Christian ~communities~. He crossed swords with Hans Hoekendijk who, later, was one of the main architects of the New Mission which has been adopted by such a large section of the missionary world. Hoekendijk criticized Keysser. Nothing daunted, Keysser wrote him saying, "All theologians theologize, but they do not shape the life of the church. They lecture, but they do not reform. In mission everything depends on life and transforming power (1 Cor. 4:20). Because we in the homeland only look after theology and doctrine and not God's reality and power at work, we have the present lamentable weakness of the church. Deadness is prevalent despite all good doctrine." He died in 1961 at the age of 84.

# THE ENGLISH EDITION

Since about 1958 I have purposed to get Keysser's famous book, *Eine Papuagemeinde* into English. When Rev. Gernot Fugmann, Keysser's grandson, studied at the Fuller School of Missions, on his way to the Lutheran Church in New Guinea, I saw the book and my purpose was strengthened. When Alfred Allin, who had been a missionary in New Guinea, studied here and undertook to translate the book, the dream began to materialize. When Rev. Doctor John Kuder, a Lutheran pastor in Ohio, and earlier a bishop of the Lutheran Church in New Guinea, who knew Mr. Keysser, agreed to assist Mr. Allin in getting an accurate translation, the success of the project was assured. The world of missions owes these two men a deep debt of gratitude for many months of labor, repeated typings, letters innumerable, and a constant improving of the manuscript. In the competent translation, the reader will note some Germanism. These have been deliberately used. I trust they add to the interest. They witness that Christian Keysser was an extraordinary German as well as a luminous Christian. A literal translation of the title is "A New Guinean Congregation." A

truer better title is: A People Reborn: Caring Communities, Their Birth and Development~. The book invites the attention of missiologists and churchmen for six reasons.

## PEOPLE MOVEMENTS TO CHRIST

First, it is a most able exposition of the thesis that tribes or peoples should be discipled. Around 1900 Keysser found himself evangelizing the Kate (pronounced Kawtai or kotte) tribe in the mountains near the sea. Sattelberg, his station, was about eight miles from Finchhaven, at an elevation of about three thousand feet. The mountainous country was full of narrow fertile valleys separated from each other by forested ridges rising to 6,000 feet or more. In the valleys in hamlets and villages, lived clans and groups--physically separated from each other and living a fiercely independent life. Inter-village warfare was endemic. Enemies were killed and eaten. The men were the warriors. The women cultivated the land and raised the food. In each cluster of houses, either all the people stood together or the village was wiped out by enemies. Each village was a vividly conscious community.

Keysser's genius recognized that Christianization ought to preserve this people consciousness, and transform it into Tribal Christianity or Folk Christianity. He frequently uses the term "Volkskirche"--"a people church." Since Hitler's day the term has come into disrepute, as being the religion of blood and soil, opposed to orthodox Christianity. But if Volkskirche is understood rightly as a genuine Church (a Congregation) of a *people*, it will be accepted as a thoroughly good term.

In 1928-1933 Waskom Pickett, a young Methodist missionary in India, was making a nationwide study of the so-called "mass movements" there. These were in fact movements of peoples, *Volk* movements; but because they brought in large numbers, in sharp contrast to the slow one-by-one-against-the- current mode of church growth which was typical all across India, they were miscalled mass movements. As he studied these, quite independent of Keysser's convictions and writings, which while published in 1929 were sealed up in German, Pickett also saw *peoples* in process of becoming Christian. Because the peoples were castes, spread out among many other castes, and because only a small part of the caste ever became Christian, Pickett did not see as clearly as did Keysser that the caste (the organism) was becoming Christian while remaining the caste. Nevertheless Pickett made important discoveries and published these in two books--*Christian Mass Movements in India*, 1933, and *Christ's Way to India's Heart*, 1936.

In the thirties, Bruno Gutmann, a German Lutheran missionary, evangelizing the Chaga and Arusha tribes in Tanganyika Territory (which had been German East Africa) saw the same truth. He said that the Church was an organization and ought not to replace the organism, the tribe. He, too, worked for a people movement to Christ. Gutmann probably knew of Keysser's views. German was his mother language, and Keysser's book had been published in 1929.

In 1935, largely through Pickett's writings and lectures, I woke to a discipling of ethnic units. I accompanied him while he studied missions in Mid-India and contributed several chapters to his *Christian Missions in Mid-India*, 1938. I, too, saw that the goal was not one by one conversion out of the castes and tribes, but rather the conversion of social units which remained part of the caste or tribe, and continued living in their ancestral homes. For the next two decades I worked at encouraging a Satnami people movement to develop--and failed. In 1955, my *Bridges of God* called castewise or tribal movements to Christian Faith *people movements*. I chose the word "people" because I was writing for the world. The concept of people movement embraces clans, tribes,

classes, and even neighborhoods where the inhabitants think of themselves of one blood. "A people" is an endogamous society. In marries within itself and sees itself as "thank God, quite different from other peoples and from the mongrel assemblages of individuals which compose so much of urban society." *Bridges of God* was originally titled *How Peoples Become Christian*. Its first chapter was titled "The Crucial Question in Christian Missions: How Do Peoples Become Christians?" It proposed that "peoples" are found in all continents and all countries, and that the great growth of the Christian Church has always taken place as people after people flooded into the Christian Faith. It did not take place as pastors, evangelists and missionaries extracted individual after individual from ancestral societies and formed them into conglomerate congregations.

The rest of the book in considerable detail describes people movements (Keysser would have called them tribal movements) as the normal and preferable way for non-Christian societies in all continents to move to Christian Faith. What Keysser, Pickett and Gutmann had described in New Guinea, India and Tanganyika, *Bridges of God*--indebted only to Pickett--described in universal terms. The discovery of all of us was that group decisions, which preserved the corporate life of the society and enabled men and women to become Christians without social dislocation, was the route by which most humans have moved to Christian Faith from non-Christian Faith, and *was a good route*. For all four of us, the discovery was difficult because missionaries came out of the most dedicated parts of the Western Church. They had learned that real Christians are those who individually and at great cost believe in Jesus Christ, love Him, obey His Word, and venture out alone across the seven seas to do His bidding. They believed that "one-by-one-against-the-tide" was the right, the best, and often the only way for men and women to become Christians.

Then, too, when Christ is first proclaimed, those who become Christians usually are ostracized by their fellows. Thus missionaries see that the only practical way for anyone to become Christian is to come alone--literally to leave father and mother and sister and brother for Christ. Most missionaries, if asked to consider a people movement to Christ, will reply, "That is an interesting theory, but it won't work. Furthermore, any who come by that route will not be real Christians. People movements are exactly what after Constantine debased the Church."

Keysser's discovery in 1903 should be seen against this common erroneous conviction. He broke through that mind-set to see that for a people to come to Christ *with social structure intact* was the best possible way. He, of course, went on immediately to describe the way in which such a people movement should be nurtured, guarded against formalism, fed on the Word, and made strong through constant exercise of its Christian options. This is his great contribution. His book is essential reading for any who wish to understand a) that discipling ethnic units is a splendid way for multitudes to become Christian, and b) how discipling and perfecting can be done *so they result in genuine Christians in a truly Christian Congregation*—a true Homogeneous Unit Church.

## THE ANTHROPOLOGIST

A People Reborn commands respect from missiologists because second, Keysser in 1900 to 1921 was achieving and using with great effect a *genuine understanding of the tribal structure, culture and mind*. He learned the language without benefit of trained teachers. He lived with the Kate, hunted with them, caught and ate crawfish with them, slept in their houses, came to understand what they thought, why they thought it and how they responded to what he thought was right and reasonable. He argued with them. They argued with him. The constant interplay of his mind with theirs is evident in the amazingly detailed conversations with which A New Guinean Congregation

is filled. Keysser did not have the benefit of the abundant anthropological studies available to today's missionaries. He came to sound anthropological knowledge by his own unaided effort. He tells of the visit of a professional anthropologist who arrived--I quote the professor himself--with: "a congenital instinctive hatred toward . . . . the missionaries, who rob the people of their originality . . . . This hatred filled me from the crown of my head to the sole of my foot; but a stay of nearly two years in German New Guinea has taught me better . . . . Yes, we hear the despairing ethnologist who bewails the vanishing culture in heart rending lament. 'If only these damned saints had never come into the land, then one could revel in the study of old customs.' What a mistaken judgment. The nature of the New Guineans would have been a book with seven seals on it for all time if the missionaries had not unlocked it. Christianity has here brought us complete knowledge of (these people)." The professor, beyond doubt, had seen the New Guineans through Keysser's eyes, read many of his recorded conversations, and heard his many accounts of how those tribesmen think and feel and act. Keysser, the anthropologist, speaks in this book. His understanding of the tribe commands respect, though he does not use technical anthropological language.

Secular anthropologists will rejoice in his keen insights, exact reporting, and generous appreciation of the tribesmen. Keysser's chapter on "The Money Magic" is a meticulous description of a mass delusion, which in later manifestations became famous as The Cargo Cult. How the tissue of hopes, hypotheses, rationalizations, and lies was formed in 1922, how it spread among the Kate and Hube peoples, how it captured many Christian leaders and appeared to buttress the Christian Faith is well told. The story of how it persisted for fifteen years and was finally exposed and renounced, holds the reader enthralled. Indeed, the chapter is an anthropological classic. Keysser knew the tribal mind better than most secular anthropologists. That he did not share their relativistic religion made his judgments truer and more objective. Secular anthropologists, whose inerrant dogma is that all cultures are equal, will wince at Keysser's confident judgments that the Christian modifications and transformations of tribal conduct are superior to the old. The unbiased reader, however, will be inclined to agree with Keysser; and so will the educated Kate and Hube leaders of today.

Keysser records faithfully that these tribesmen were divided into small hostile groups and clans. "This disunity combined with the urge to separate . . . constituted an almost invincible hindrance to the formation of a congregation." He tells of young men who went to the coast to work for Europeans and in a couple of years returned "laden with conceit and disdain for their countrymen." He makes wry comments on how congregations in Germany were not really whole communities, i.e., congregations. They were truncated and warped conglomerations of individuals, led by pastors. Keysser saw social wholes and their laws of being. Keysser stresses that a powerful factor in the formation of a new conscious congregation was the independent frame of mind of the Kate. These tribes had been fiercely self-sufficient. They were a proud people accustomed to choose their own way. For centuries they had wielded the power of life and death. No king or conqueror had ruled them. After missionaries came among them, they remained independent in their thinking. They often told the missionary he was wrong. Only if convinced would they yield to him; and then not so much to him as to what their own minds told them was reasonable and believable.

# THE BIBLICAL CHRISTIAN

The third reason for the missiological weight of the book is that Keysser was an educated biblical Christian, and never wavers from a thoroughly Christian stance. He is not interested in the success of the German mission, nor in the spread of the German empire. He is not concerned whether few or many are baptized. He is concerned that the life of Christ be reproduced in the New Guinea congregation. He feeds it on the Bible and insists that it react to the Bible *in its own way*. Christians

must *make their own* real response to the Word and the Spirit. Memorized responses are no good. This is one of his strongest characteristics. He believes that these people are abundantly able to be good Christians within their tribal context, while being thoroughly themselves. The missionary must lead; but must not dominate. He must lead them to think for themselves, to act as independently as possible--under the Word. While admiring Keysser's ethnology, we are never uneasy lest he betray his Lord. While championing the people and their culture vigorously, he leads them in the paths of righteousnss, and helps them to achieve a consciousness of Christ which is truly remarkable. A typical sentence of this great Christian reads, "Today Christ, the Living One, leads, chastises and rears His Church into all truth." Keysser, a student of the great Warneck, is deeply theological in the Lutheran fashion, and consistently applies his theology and his Bible to the actual situations which face him in that primitive society. He has a high view of missionaries. He conceives them to be "ambassadors in Christ's stead" for whom Paul sets up the strictest requirements and to whom Scripture gives "great powers." "A Christian congregation is formed by God and His Word in the mouth of His ambassadors." Again, "A congregation is awakened through years and decades of care." The missionary's task is to produce the congregation by knowing the people, shepherding them, and "impressing the divine Word deeply enough on the heathen so they do not forget it the next moment." One can hope that in the coming decades, as missionaries stream out from Asia, Africa, Latin America, Europe and North America, they will read this sensitive and moving account of the missionary's task. To be sure, they will not duplicate Keysser's methods; but will be inspired by his view of their high calling.

In this volume Keysser illustrates on page after page how Christians must be educated, fed on the Word, rebuked, exhorted, comforted, encouraged, unified and challenged to be what they in fact *are*--the Redeemed of God. Occasionally, the reader may say, "This particular speech or act of the missionary would not work with my people in Latin America, it may be, or India." To which Keysser would immediately reply, "Of course not. It was addressed to a particular tribe under particular circumstances at a particular moment in history. You must similarly suit your thoughts, speeches and actions to your audience and your time. You must also lead them out of the old sinful life without Christ into the new righteous life with Christ. Great changes are needed in every believer--whether he lives in Germany, America or in Timbuktoo. Insist on them."

Keysser speaks freely about "heathenism" and "heathen customs." Today such phrases sound rude and unmannerly. In a world where all nations now live in one global village and every effort is made to avoid offending others, we never call anyone heathen. Yet the discerning reader will not judge Keysser to be a western imperialist. He will rather be amazed at Keysser's vast experience with these villagers, his championing them on every occasion, his patient and effective efforts to understand them, and his unselfish love for them. Keysser speaks out of 22 years experience. Keysser, like every man a son of his own time, loved the pre-Christian people enough that he could openly recognize that they were not disciples of Christ. They were not yet Christian, i.e. were heathen, and Keysser freely used the word. Similarly, a father might often speak of his "young rascals" or his "little children." Keysser used the word descriptively, never contemptuously. He always meant, "these brothers and sisters of mine who I hope to form into a truly Christian congregation, are at present far from the Kingdom."

Only good Lutherans will agree a hundred percent with Keysser's theological formulations. But all Christians will rejoice in the depth of this commitment, and the intelligence and common sense of his application of Scriptural Truth.

#### THE OBJECTIVE THINKER

The fourth reason for the missiological significance of Keysser's work is that, while being vigorously *for* New Guineans and utterly opposed to their imitating Europeans, he retains a commendable *objectivity of judgment*. He does not so glorify their culture, that he declares it just as good as any other. He realized that their cannibalism, illiteracy, habitual lying, and easy marital infidelities, are cultural components which must go. So must their fear of evil spirits, and ignorance of God's will.

When thirty-four men and women turned up for baptism and did not answer a plain question repeated four times in language they readily understood, Keysser took them severely to task. "You have let me ask in vain four times . . . . You should have spoken regardless of whether the answers were right or wrong. Instead you sit quiet, thinking, 'Let someone else speak. Let the other person do it.' You will have to change completely. Everyone of you must think 'it is I who must speak. It depends on me. The Word is intended for me.' Your behavior is clear proof that you lack much. You do not act from inner convictions or because you hear God. You let others push you. You just mimic them. If others are devout, so are you. If they do evil, you join them, if they keep silent you keep silent. You act this way at home in your villages, too. How often I would like to have heard a frank confession of a committed offence, but instead you keep silent or even lie. You are not ready for baptism. Therefore you must go home without being baptized." Strong action of this sort was taken just because he believed so firmly in their innate abilities. When these tribesmen had been freed from old cultural chains into the glorious liberty of Christ, they became *God's* own people.

The outcome abundantly justified what to many readers will seem very authoritarian action. The people movement really began to roll. The outlying clans and villages clamoured to become Christian, precisely because they saw that the Christians had become *greatly changed for the better*. This is the fundamental reason why people movements occur. Human beings are highly intelligent. After all, man is homo sapiens. When he sees that the new order, the Church, is actually different from and *superior* to the old order, then homo sapiens in corporate decisions moves to Christian Faith. A chain reaction runs through the tribal fabric. Congregations multiply. In general, it may be said that the higher the standard of Christianity achieved by the first groups to become Christian, the more influential is their example. Keysser, the objective thinker, saw this. Keysser believed that the New Guinean in his own framework was just as intelligent as any European. He also believed that the New Guinean culture (and the pre-Christian culture of the Teutonic tribes) was lower than that of modern Europe. His book is one long appeal to estimate indigenes highly, to meet them as man to man (not as superior to inferior) and to let the Christian Faith transform their lives. Keysser was too honest, however, to permit his appreciation of his friends to be exaggerated into a statement that their illiterate animistic culture was fully equal to that of the Chinese, Germans, or other advanced peoples--or to that of the New Guineans in the year 2000. He is absolutely confident they have everything to gain by becoming Christian.

# KEYSSER THE MISSIOLOGIST

Keysser was a missiologist before the word was used. He saw the missionary's life as a profession. He would have said a calling. Keysser's great merit is that he saw missiological issues clearly and described what *under his circumstances* he believed missionaries ought to do. The missiologist of the late 20th Century finds Keysser right most of the time. Sensitive, sensible, well informed, his wide ranging mind discerns the heart of many matters and speaks intelligently to each. He is certain as to the goal, that is, to bring this people to Christ and form it into a true Church. He treats most of the key concerns of missions in all ages. If at times it seems that he is too authoritarian--and it does-

-the reader will remember that he repeatedly guards against undue or ignorant paternalism and constantly urges the ability of the New Guineans to manage their own affairs. Keysser was a strong man in a situation which cried aloud for strength. He was also a compassionate man who insisted that strength be used wisely to create independent mature communities, not to perpetuate dependency.

Keysser's dramatic way of presenting the truth delights an educator's heart. However, his muscular evangelism could have been used only in a population to which Christianity came with an overwhelming sense of its superiority. In *that* context, Keysser's pictorial evangelism was accepted gladly and was enormously effective. Only among a people determined to become Christian would it have been possible for Keysser's strong methods to have aided a Christward march. But, given the determined people, given a powerful people movement resolved to burst into the Christian Faith, and given cultural compulsives impelling the people to accept Christ, Keysser was able to bring a truly remarkable degree of change.

Keysser presents us with a running commentary on how truth is to be presented, how far people are to be pressed, and when enough is enough. In this book the missionary describes the missiology he is practicing, the anthropology in the midst of which he is evangelizing, and the theology which guides his labors. It would have been a joy to know and work with or study under this great practitioner of the art.

A word must be said about Keysser's grasp of the corporate mind as an essential element in missiology. Through living with these tribes, learning their thought forms, intuitively knowing how they felt, Keysser in hundreds of passages describes *the corporate mind* as it bears on the Christian life and as the Christian life affects it. How does being a Christian affect the tribal mind, tribal loyalties, and group affections? How does the Church become the new unified and mightily expanded clan? Keysser describes competently this neglected aspect of Christianization. Chapter Five discusses this important missiological principle under the title, "The Individual and the Clan," but the whole book stresses the corporate mind. Keysser tells us how villagers think, and the individual does not think apart from the group. We see how groups do and do not become Christians. This missiological chapter might well be reproduced as a pamphlet and widely circulated.

The book is missiologically important because it is replete with innumerable illustrations from experience. Missiological theory is one thing, experience as to how the theories worked out, failure as well as successes, is an entirely different thing. We have much missiological theory. We have not enough experience truthfully reported in interesting, readable accounts. Keysser gives us exactly that. The book is filled with examples of how men and women reacted to varied situations, what they said, and how they felt. The vivid descriptions of actual experience by an unusually perceptive and articulate participator is a real contribution to experiential missiology.

Occasionally the modern missiologist may think Keysser mistaken, the missionary he portrays too paternalistic, the New Testament not translated soon enough, or tribal custom not sufficiently understood. In most such cases, the missiologist will be imagining that his insights of today were possible to the missionary of seventy years ago. He would do better to wonder at Keysser's keen insight. Without benefit of anthropological studies, he discerned correctly whole realms of the tribal mind

Few missionaries in the future will meet the conditions in which Keysser worked--a very mountainous country, many small separate clans and villages, perpetual fightings and killings, each village a law to itself, many languages or dialects, the people deeply convinced that the powerful new culture was the wave of the future, readiness to follow the missionaries' leading--all these and similar factors keep this brilliant description of mission from being a pattern for the coming decades in most lands. Nevertheless, Keysser's missiology will be both interesting and valuable to church leaders and missionaries for years to come. Changes of faith, reorganization of life around Jesus Christ and the Bible, development of a caring responsible community (the Church) and the role of the missionary are perennial problems in the expansion of Christianity at all levels, among all peoples, rural and urban, advanced and developing.

# FORMING A TRUE CONGREGATION

The sixth reason why missiologists will profit from this book is Keysser's determined emphasis on the privilege and duty of the missionary to form a Christian congregation and of various villages and clans. By this he does not mean taking individuals, as separate pebbles, and forming them into a new organization called the church. Rather, he means taking the social organism, which the clan or village had been from time immemorial, and by exposing it to God's will and God's Word, and by leading it to act in a Christian fashion transforming it into a Christian tribe. This is not done simply by baptizing it. Hearing the Gospel, seeing the Gospel, receiving ample instruction, some of it in dramatic form, being baptized with clanal approval, and then for years led by the missionary and the Word, thinking through what in specific circumstances Christ requires the village, clan or tribe (the Christian Congregation) to do--all these steps are required to transform non-Christian social units into a Christian congregation.

The new congregation must learn how to recognize transgressions, how to discipline transgressors, how to forgive enemies and how to serve people in need. The missionary, as he leads the congregation in this long process of education and transformation, must be prepared to face resolute opposition by new Christians who say, "What you think Christian conduct is, does not appear to us to be Christian conduct in our circumstances." Often they are right. Often the missionary, particularly if he has learned to think like an indigene, is right. The homogeneous unit concerned must do the thinking on its own. The Christians must not passively accept what the missionary tells them. Only by active self-direction will they be able to function as a Christian congregation in his absence. Only so will the code of conduct which they fashion be truly their own.

Keysser used the word "congregation" to mean primarily "the Christian community, the cluster of like-minded worshipping groups, the denomination." Occasionally he means a single worshipping group. "The congregation" means both the ideal koinonia, indwelt by love, peace, joy, and the Holy Spirit, *and* the actual empirical group of Christians pressing on toward the goal. As a good Lutheran, he wrestles with the problems of Churches within the State Church. It is a joy to read his honest illuminating discussion. He believed that the congregation became a far better tribe than it was in the pre-Christian days. He would have said "in the heathen days."

It must not be thought that Keysser's tremendous emphasis on the congregation was merely a desire to put things in the hands of the nationals. That aspect was certainly there; but in addition, Keysser believed that the Church (the congregation) has been given power by its Lord, power to unify the warring villages, power to discipline, responsibility to love, serve and reform, and to act as the Household of God under God's laws. Hence each congregation had the power to regulate the life of

every member--including the elder and the missionary. The congregation was obliged to discipline Christians who were acting contrary to God's laws. Discipline should be redemptive in purpose, should patiently seek to bring rebels back to God; but should be prepared in extreme cases to punish and to excommunicate. Since the people from tribal times had a very strong people consciousness, and the group in matters of great importance had always acted as one man, once it became consciously Christian and knew God's Word, the congregation accepted responsibility for the behavior of all its members.

Chapters 19 to 33 (and some others) deal in great detail with the way in which sins of individuals and of groups were dealt with by the congregation. Any missionary who has lived with Christians who have a keen "people consciousness" will recognize the situations described; and applaud the rigorous way in which Keysser encouraged *corporate action by the group*.

However, before *Christian* corporate action was possible to these people, years of biblical teaching, by word of mouth, by action, by dramatic pictures, by repeated explainings had been given. Keysser's genius, patience, and incredible labors must be seen as the foundation on which the Christian congregation was reared. Intensely conscious of the old way, they had been taught the new Christian way, and their reborn corporate action was a deliberate application of the Christian way to new circumstances. The chapters dealing with adulteries, infidelities and marital problems illustrate the process well.

Dr. Keysser's adverse judgments concerning the churches in Germany must be seen as part of his convictions concerning the True Church. Throughout this volume he criticizes congregations in Germany for not being true communities, i.e. true *congregations*. His are no carping criticisms. Rather during his twenty-two years in New Guinea, Keysser had been part of real communities. They had ~power~ to regulate the lives of their members. Individuals existed as parts of the group. When the village or clan became Christian, the corporate entity became a caring power community.

When in 1922 Keysser went back to Germany, he experienced culture shock in reverse. He found *churches* which as churches exercised little if any pastoral care of their members. To be sure the paid professional exercised pastoral care, but the loose assemblage of individuals who worshipped at the building knew little about other members and did not love and care for them. The congregations were not real communities.

Keysser had been telling the tribesmen, with abundant confirmation from the New Testament, that a *True Church is a loving caring powerful community*. When a member strays into sin, fights with his wife, or steals from his neighbor, the *congregation straightens him out*. Back in Germany, this never occurred. In the fragmented western social order, there were no true communities, and hence no caring powerful congregations. Keysser's criticisms are really illustrations of what his main thesis meant in Germany. The true Church is a community, an organism, not an organization of individuals. He explains what this means in New Guinea, and what it should mean in Germany.

Today, when the establishment of caring communities in western churches has become one of the main purposes of contemporary Christianity, Keysser's comments about the German Church are particularly pertinent. They can be affirmed about the Church in most developed nations. When society becomes fragmented, individualism rages out of control and loneliness afflicts millions. The Church must provide loving caring powerful *communities*. Life is richest when lived in such. In the ancient world New Testament churches were such communities. Churches can again become such

in New Guinea and New York, in Tokyo and Berlin, and in short, in every land. ~True Churches are functioning communities.

## VALUABLE READING FOR LEADERS OF THIRD WORLD CHURCHES

Later chapters tell of the Lutheran Church as it met the Gold Rush, the expulsion of German missionaries following World War I, the coming of American missionaries, the Second World War, the Cargo Cults, and the increasing impact of the outside world. Missionaries who worked in the Third World during the tumultuous fifty years, 1920-1970, will recognize many of the influences which played on the maturing denomination for good and for evil. Keysser's high view of the Church, the Gospel, the power of God, and the Christian life, make his account relevant to developing Churches in many lands.

The book is valuable reading for *leaders of the Churches of the Third World*. In these days when the direction of young Churches is correctly in the hands of the nationals, Keysser's "Guidelines for Missionaries" are equally applicable to pastors, elders, and superintendents. The formation of Particular Churches in all segments of the world's population is a process extending over decades and generations. In the first stage of each Particular Church, missionaries play an essential role. In later stages, direction is increasingly in the hands of nationals. Keysser would, I am sure, extend his high view of missionaries to national leaders. With the change of a few words, the last chapter would apply equally well to national leaders.

Professor Keysser has given the world of missions many insights which will be of great use in the coming century. In his day, animistic tribes were turning to Christ by people movements and forming genuine communities (congregations) in the Christian fold. In the twenty-first century, we shall see great segments of developing *and developed* nations turn to Christian Faith without social dislocation. They will remain real communities in becoming real congregations. Modern missiology is indebted to Christian Keysser.