

The goal of this article is to explore evangelical mission commitments in the context of a twentieth century post-Constantinian, post-Christian culture.<sup>11</sup>

Western society is becoming more pluralist, endorsing tolerance and idolizing relativism. This produces unique challenges for the Church. A Christian plausibility structure no longer holds, and modernity languishes. This context is new for the Western Church. Yates suggests, "... an inescapable reality in the twentieth century remains the relationship of the Christian gospel to relativism, how to balance the great danger of absolutes, with their oppressive and suffocating effect when improperly deployed, with a prevailing relativism."<sup>12</sup> He is referring to the absolutes of totalitarian regimes, and he would agree that some forms of Christianity could also become such.

Christian missions has always been involved in crossing cultural boundaries. Issues of cultural relativism are not new. What is new in Western society is the incipient pressures to idealize relativism and quash dogmatism. Certitude is not a virtue, and absolutes are anathema. How do we defend a gospel in a society that rejects absolutes and truth and is agnostic and even antagonistic towards matters of faith and belief?

## EVANGELICAL IMPULSE

A definition of terms is always helpful especially when such terms are in a state of flux. Are we clear what is meant by evangelical? Shenk states, "The hallmarks of evangelicals have been their fidelity to the Bible, passion for missions and evangelism, and disciplined lifestyle. Evangelicals maintain that they have kept faith with the Reformation whereas theological liberals have abandoned the historic doctrinal commitment. Evangelicals also tend to be conservative in their social and political views and in their patriotism."<sup>13</sup>

Furthermore Shenk alludes to the possibility of an historical center. He states, "A basic premise of the Christian

faith is that men and women can be saved only through faith in Jesus Christ." He notes that this has been taught by the leading historical confessions of the Christian Church. While affirming that only those who come to Christ are saved, the Westminster Confession states, "much less can men, not professing the Christian religion, be saved in any other way whatsoever, be they ever so diligent to frame their lives according to the light of nature and the law of that religion they do profess; and to assert and maintain that they may be very pernicious, and to be detested." The Christian Church's mission to the world has been based on this very premise.<sup>14</sup>

## MISSIOLOGICAL CORE

I am proposing four theological constructs that are at the core of evangelical missiology. They are: 1) Revelation (the Scriptures), 2) the Trinity, 3) Religions, and 4) Eschatological Destiny. I will briefly explore how evangelicals have viewed these in a convergence model and how fragmentation occurs.

One's view of the Bible determines theological outcomes. This is an epistemological issue. The acquisition and certainty of knowledge and the ascription of meaning are related to the authoritative stance one is willing to give to a source. Issues of revelation, truth and absolutes, cultural conditioning and hermeneutics are all relevant here.

Theology as the acquisition of knowledge must be explored. Hiebert attributes the missionary movement with raising profound questions about the nature and limits of Christian theology. This is the result of the movement toward contextualization and the proliferation of "Christian" theologies around the globe. Hiebert queries, "If now we must speak of 'theologies' rather than of 'theology,' have we not reduced Christian faith to subjective human agreements and thereby opened the door for a theological relativism that destroys the meaning of truth?"<sup>15</sup> Does contextualization automatically introduce a theological relativism? If so, how do we

relate to truth and absolutes? We will explore this issue and highlight Hiebert's distinction between *theology* and *Theology*<sup>16</sup> as it relates to the matter of revelation.

Christology is critical to the missiological debate. An acknowledgment of Christ's deity, and salvific work is central. Both Christ's words and His works must be analyzed to decipher the missiological imperative and communicational impact. But the missiological issues are really Trinitarian. The nature of God, the work of the Spirit and the Church as the body of Christ are equally important in understanding the missional task.

Missions has recognized to varying degrees that it functions in dialogue with other religions. Should the Christian attitude be one of superiority, confrontation, supplanting, or of supplementing other faiths? It is often around one's view of religion that commitments waver, doubts are cast, agnosticism flourishes and missions is compromised. When answers cannot satisfy one's sensibilities or sympathies, beliefs are syncretized to assuage the angst.

Eschatology also plays predominately in missiological urgency. Patterson and Carpenter have documented well the Fundamentalists' focus on pre-millennial hopes and evangelical urgency.<sup>17</sup> Moody and Torrey painted the picture of life boats in a sea of humanity, trying to pluck souls from the horrors of hell. The eternal state of the lost exerted a heavy burden on the shoulders of the saints. Eschatological vision framed the horizon.

## CONSENSUS AT THE TURN OF THE TWENTIETH CENTURY

The New York World Missions conference of 1900 was one of several global conferences of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Ten years later the Edinburgh World Missions Conference excelled in the magnitude of its tasks and breadth of its endeavors. Edinburgh became a benchmark for evangelical missions and a barometer for trends to follow.

leadership from around the world. "Its aim was to demonstrate and inspire rather than plan and reflect"<sup>27</sup> Commission IV of Edinburgh dealt with the "Missionary Message and the Non-Christian Religions." In preparation for this report, D. S. Cairns posted a massive mailing to missionaries around the world, dealing with issues such as "points of contact between the Christian gospel and the non-Christian religions and 'the chief moral and intellectual and social hindrances' to the acceptance of Christian belief."<sup>28</sup>

Two of the respondents to Cairn's report represent contrasting views about other religions. These have been described as fulfillment "yes" and fulfillment "no." N. Farquhar, Oxford scholar and missionary to India with the London Missionary Society, represented the fulfillment "yes" school of thinkers "who saw Christian faith as a fulfillment of Hinduism even as it fulfilled Judaism."<sup>29</sup> There was much in Hinduism that Farquhar saw as expressing doctrines of grace, forgiveness and salvation. Yates notes, "Farquhar stood for a view of Indian religion which said a firm 'yes' to much in it." Yet he still held to the Lordship of Christ and "while he saw Christ as bringing the best of Hinduism to fulfillment, the relationship was also one of supersession and replacement."<sup>30</sup>

On the other hand, A.G. Hogg, Professor of Philosophy at the Madras Christian College represented the "no" side to fulfillment. Hogg noted that, "...if this be the real relation of Christianity to Hinduism, to call it one of fulfillment may be... permissible but the description obscures the fact that it fulfills by, at least partially, destroying."<sup>41</sup> While in some vague way Hogg acknowledged the Hindus' yearning for God, he could not in any direct way equate that with Christian teaching expressed supremely in Jesus Christ. "Cairn's report laid out one very significant area of understanding, an approach to the non-Christian religions, which was to be sympathetic and charitable while holding to the claims of finality and 'absolute-ness'... for Christ."<sup>32</sup>

The debate was forwarded through the years of the First World War and again focused at the IMC meetings in Jerusalem in 1928. Here we experience the strains of evangelical commitment and missiological fragmentation. It is my thesis that the kind of fragmentation that followed Jerusalem is paralleled in contemporary history. Evangelicalism is witnessing the same kind of stresses that were experienced during these pre-WCC days, although the Western ethos is somewhat different. A reflection on the fundamentalist-modernist controversy may help here.

Patterson suggests that "consensus served the missionary movement well for many years [but] it gradually unraveled in the 1920s and 1930s." Financial and cultural issues as well as the fundamentalist-modernist conflict were the reasons for divergence.<sup>33</sup> Fundamentalists worried about compromising theological truths. They "emphasized the priority of evangelism and the centrality of Christ's divine nature, as a measure of orthodoxy."<sup>34</sup> They were also concerned about the direction in which ecumenism and social involvement were going. Liberals on the other hand took a different approach to foreign missions "that sacrificed traditional conceptions of evangelism and the relationship of Christianity to other faiths."<sup>35</sup>

### THEOLOGICAL REASONS AND SOCIOLOGICAL REALITIES

We have reason to understand weaknesses in the Fundamentalist approach. It held to an extreme idealism buttressed by a scientific rationalistic worldview. Newbigin refers to the tragic split that divides Christians—liberals and fundamentalists.<sup>36</sup> Fundamentalists identified God's revelation as a series of objectively true propositions while liberals saw the essence of Christianity in inward spiritual experiences. Newbigin credits fundamentalists for the necessity of seeing the need of a tool (e.g., the Bible) through which to challenge the reigning plausibility struc-

ture. Their flaw was their propositional approach that co-opted the Bible as an inerrant factual scientific manual.<sup>37</sup> Newbigin states, "What is unique about the Bible is the story which it tells, with its climax in the story of the incarnation, ministry, death and resurrection of the Son of God. If the story is true, then it is unique and also universal in its implications for all human history."<sup>38</sup>

Herein lies the issue we need to address as twenty-first century missiologists. If we move away from a fundamentalist epistemology (e.g., idealism or naïve realism), how do we reinforce the kind of certainty that buttressed their claims? How can the fundamentalists' commitments to evangelism, Christology, the Faith, and their view of other religions remain in tack with a shift in epistemological understanding? Can evangelicals avoid the trap of liberalism and maintain a burning commitment to Christ's kingdom, which of necessity involves missions? Newbigin feels that much of Western Christianity has made a move away from fundamentalist epistemology which is flawed but in that move has left no room for any "proper confidence" in the Gospel.

As a result of some of the work done at Jerusalem and the intense debate generated by the Laymen's report, the IMC commissioned Hendrick Kraemer to prepare a volume for Tambaram in 1938 which was entitled *The Christian Message in a Non-Christian World*. There was a certain sense of inclusiveness in many of the reports given at Tambaram. The years between the Jerusalem, Tambaram, and Madras Conferences of the IMC (1928-1938) were years when "...missiology focused particularly upon the relationship of Christian faith to other religious traditions."<sup>39</sup>

Carpenter tried to decipher what gave the fundamentalists mission their force and what it was that led to the demise of mission focus in the SVM and the conciliar mission movement. The theme of the SVM conference December 28, 1928 to

Two other themes developed out of Lausanne '74. Van Engen suggests they were the reflection of John Stott, who moved away from a solely 'proclamational' stance at Berlin in 1966 and articulated the social dimension of the Gospel at Lausanne. After much debate, Peter Wagner of Fuller Seminary acquiesced to the concept and endorsed the notion of "holistic mission" as he distinguished it from "holistic evangelism."<sup>51</sup>

The second major shift for Stott was the evangelical response to *missio dei* as articulated by the WCC. Van Engen notes, "So the motivation of the Church's mission was understood to lie in the Trinitarian nature of God's character itself and, by extension, in the nature of the Church. With such broad foundations, Lausanne's vision and goals became wider and more holistic."<sup>52</sup>

The decades of the seventies and eighties saw a new flurry of activity in evangelical missions. Consultations on *Theology and Mission* were held at Trinity Evangelical Divinity School on two occasions in the late seventies. Under the Lausanne banner a major conference was held at Pattaya in 1980 and the "First Conference of Evangelical Mission Theologians for the Two Thirds World" was held in Bangkok in 1982. In the midst of this discussion new forces coalesced. Globalization, technology, and travel brought world religions into closer proximity. They were given new attention by theologians and missiologists. It appears that Hendrik Kraemer's earlier prediction was being fulfilled. He prophesied 50 years ago that the real meeting between the gospel and non-Christian faiths was still ahead.<sup>53</sup> This meeting was becoming a reality. That is the context in which we find ourselves—a context, Newbigin suggests, for which the churches of the West are ill prepared.<sup>54</sup>

### NEW FRAGMENTATION

A new genre of literature is being investigated by evangelicals today. Paul Knitter identifies the writing as a subset of the "Mainline Protestant Model" rather

than conservative evangelical.<sup>55</sup> This is the work of evangelical ecumenists such as Lesslie Newbigin, David Bosch and Stephen Neill. Gordon Smith suggests that their value lies in the fact that they have not been part of North American evangelicalism.<sup>56</sup> Each author affirms the uniqueness of Christ, and the scandal of particularity, but upholds the necessity of continuity between the gospel and non-Christian religions. We need to explore this literature and acknowledge the writers' contributions to the debate concerning other religions, a discussion which Smith suggests is "one of the most critical theological debates of our day."<sup>57</sup> Because these writers represent ecumenical and reformed traditions their contribution is broader than traditional Western evangelical theology. We must therefore take into account the diversity they bring to the field of missiology.

At the beginning of this article we alluded to the direction that David Bosch was taking, and pointed out the imprecision in his definition of mission theology. We cannot underestimate his stellar contribution to the field of missiology and particularly his thoroughness in appraising us of the spectrum of theologies being formulated. I suggest though that Bosch is one of the authors contributing to the diversity and fragmentation of mission.

In the introduction to his book he talks about "Mission: The Contemporary Crisis," a predominant theme of his work.<sup>58</sup> Bosch seems to be uncomfortable in prioritizing the missionary task.<sup>59</sup> Drawing from his panoramic perspective of history he identifies thirteen different elements of the emerging missionary paradigm, elements that could be labeled as thirteen different paradigms for mission. The difficulty with the paradigms is that sometimes they focus on the task of the Church, sometimes on the activity of God, and other times on the context of ministry. One of his significant conclusions is that evangelicals have strongly used eschatology as the focus for world evangelization<sup>60</sup>

In describing the evangelism paradigm Bosch notes, "Basic to my consider-

ations is the conviction that mission and evangelism are not synonyms but, nevertheless, indissolubly linked together and inextricably interwoven in theology and praxis."<sup>61</sup> His eighteen addendum are informative and provocative. Whereas evangelicals focused on the task of evangelism and the centrality of the Church and Christ, some of Bosch's paradigms have these critical dimensions notably reduced. It behooves each mission board to assess their ministries in light of each paradigm.

### THEOLOGICAL ORIENTATIONS

A recent book, *Readings in World Mission*,<sup>62</sup> collates original missiological writings, identifying and classifying the foci of missions over the centuries. Part II reviews contemporary paradigms of missions. The editor, Norman Thomas, takes the thirteen paradigms that Bosch identified and uses more extensive missiological literature to illustrate each.<sup>63</sup>

The contribution of Lesslie Newbigin must be noted. Newbigin began to be recognized in broader evangelical circles with the writing of *The Other Side of 1984*. He suggested an agenda for the churches in Europe and more specifically Great Britain, elucidating the missional context that needed to be addressed there. His writing became better known in North America with the publications of *Foolishness to the Greeks* (1986) and *The Gospel in a Pluralist Society* (1989). Subsequently the Gospel and Culture Network continues to build on the contribution of Newbigin, exploring the post Christendom context in which the Church functions and ministers. Hunsberger states it as follows: "[Newbigin] has thrown down the gauntlet, challenging the churches of the West to look to our own contexts as missionary settings and to be as rigorous about what that must mean for our own missionary life as we have been about mission done elsewhere."<sup>64</sup>

Newbigin recognizes the post enlightenment context of Euro/America, and sug-

## ISSUES FOR THE TWENTY-FIRST CENTURY

At one time in our history exclusivist and universalist categories identified contrasting views regarding other faiths—other religions. Today the agenda around the lostness of man, original sin, other religions, and Christ's salvific work is receiving more attention. Consequently other theories or theologies such as "inclusivism" muddy the waters.

As a result of this cursory historical review, I would suggest five things that contemporary evangelical missiology must take into account. While cultural and theological centering has definite validity, the tendency for a promising future exists. Here are a few reasons.

First, a centering of evangelical missiology will not be found in denominational theological formulations. Since the West is in a post-denominational era, evangelical constructs will be centered in larger, pragmatic churches and parachurch organizations. New congresses such as Lausanne need to step in the gap to help redefine mission for the twenty-first century.

Secondly, fragmentation will continue to be the pull of the twenty-first century. The pluralistic Western context lends itself to fission and diversity. Globalization is an example. While on the one hand globalization portends toward a global village, "glocalization" is on the increase. Religious, cultural and tribal localized identities are becoming more important in a "Mac World." Missiology will not escape the pull towards diversity and local expressions.

Missions have always had to confront cultural diversity. Issues of relativity are not new. However, in some respects, Western missions is traveling down a new road. In others, they are merely mirroring history. It is fairly certain that evangelical missions cannot return to the center it ascribed to for 150 years of history past William Carey (1792).

Thirdly, theological centering will be discovered outside the West. The Asian

Church has had to operate in a multi-faith, multi-cultural, relativistic context for millennia. The Western Church has not. The West has not learned to adapt to the new realities of relativism and non-majoritarianism. How does one address the "failure of nerve," and yet hold onto the universal claims of the gospel not in a triumphalistic manner but yet with conviction and passion?

Fourthly, missiology has only come into its own as a viable academic discipline in North America in recent years. It is obviously nuanced by contextual, theological, philosophical, and historical factors. I have explored the possibilities of a traditional evangelical missiological center and offered the reasons for suggested fragmentation.

Evangelical theologies of mission will proliferate. Hiebert was right that in this day of contextual theologies a theology of doing theology is required. The *process* of theologizing is equally as important as the *product*. Recognizing this, evangelicals need to explore the concepts of core commitments and acceptable boundaries. This is no easy matter.

Patterson has this insightful historical observation:

*On the right, fundamentalists worried that crucial theological verities were being compromised—so they initiated divisive searches for modernists among the denominational boards, and some even set up competing missionary organizations. On the left, liberals began to clamor for a radically different approach to foreign missions that sacrificed traditional conceptions of evangelism and the relationship of Christianity to other faiths. Caught in this squeeze, the previously resilient Protestant missionary consensus fell victim by the mid-1930s. While the controversies between fundamentalists and liberals cannot completely explain this development, they contributed heavily to the loss of consensus.<sup>74</sup>*

Fundamentalists and liberal categories have proven deficient. Labels polarize. However we need to explore these categories and discern whether they are

anachronistic because of their content or their package. Covell recognizes that American evangelicals are not a unified group.<sup>75</sup> He identifies with Paul Knitter's classification of fundamentalists, conservative evangelicals and ecumenical evangelicals. The last two categories seem to coexist in the self-identity of those subscribing to the Lausanne covenant. It would be profitable to find out how each of these groups works out the covenant in practice.

## LESSONS TO BE LEARNED

Early in this article I suggested that Evangelical missions witnessed exponential growth where there existed core commitments or convictions that forged a compelling vision—a vision of God's goal for His Church, His love for the world and His plan for the future. The conviction arose out of a commitment to God's revelation, both in the Word and in His Son, the particularity of that revelation and presence of the Kingdom. These framed an evangelical worldview or plausibility structure through which the world made sense. This article has tried to identify the cracks that shattered the structure and the tensions that challenge its existence. The biblical doctrine of revelation, trinity, eschatology and sin are core doctrines that comprise a matrix of beliefs—all of which affect missionary awareness and mission commitment.

The approach of this article has been historical. I trust its lessons will point us in a direction for the future. The point is not necessarily to seek convergence. The point is to seek faithfulness to a God who is faithful. The point is to discern weakness where we have erred. The point is to affirm the missional intent of the Creator, the missional purpose of the Church and the corrupting nature of the world.

Is there anything we can learn? Let me suggest a few lessons. The above context necessitates five considerations in developing a theological process. They relate to: 1) revelational centers, 2) pre-

and bounded sets. The centered set analogy identifies the direction toward which those with a faith commitment are traveling. The bounded set establishes the boundaries of a concept, object, or reality. They still are needed in classifying reality. What are the cognitive and existential boundaries that define a Christian, that define missions, or identify the role of "other religions?"

The centered set theology exhibits a Christological focus that acknowledges Christ's deity, and His salvific work. No one has explained this better than Van Engen.<sup>83</sup> In a day when the meaning of Christ's lordship in a religiously plural world is one of the most critical issues the Church deals with, history can surely teach us a few lessons and point us in the right direction. May Christ be our point of convergence and in His mission may we find ours!

## END NOTES

- James Alan Patterson, "The Loss of Protestant Missionary Consensus: Foreign Missions and the Fundamentalist-Modernist Conflict," in *Earthen Vessels*, Joel A. Carpenter and Wilbert R. Shenk, eds. (Grand Rapids, Eerdmans, 1990), 73.
- The International Missionary Council (IMC) was one of the continuation committees from Edinburgh 1910, which perpetuated discussions on Protestant missions themes until its merger with the WCC in 1961.
- Timothy Yates, *Christian Mission in the Twentieth Century* (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1994), 72.
- James Alan Patterson 1990, 86.
- Clark H. Pinnock, *A Wideness in God's Mercy. The Finality of Jesus Christ in a World of Religions* (Grand Rapids, Zondervan, 1992).
- The WCC journal *International Review of Missions* was changed to *International Review of Mission* because it was felt that missions had become too anthropocentric and it was really God's mission *missio dei* that should be the focus and not man.
- David Bosch, *Transforming Mission* (New York, Orbis Books, 1991), 4.
- Ibid.*, 8.
- Ibid.*
- Ibid.*, 511.
- See Lesslie Newbigin, *The Gospel in a Pluralist Society*, (Grand Rapids, Eerdmans, 1989), C. Jeff Woods, *Congregational Megatrends* (New York, The Alban Institute, 1996), Gene Edward Veith Jr. *Postmodern Times*, (Wheaton, ILL., Crossway Books, 1994), Graig Van Gelder and George Hunsberger, *The Church Between Gospel and Culture*, (Grand Rapids, Eerdmans, 1996).
- Timothy Yates 1994, 5.
- Wilbert R. Shenk in *Modernity and the Decentering of Conviction*, article presented at the Overseas Ministries Study Center, April 1999, 5,6.
- Ibid.*, 7, 8.
- Paul Hiebert, *Anthropological Reflection on Missiological Issues* (Grand Rapids, Baker Books, 1994), 93,94.
- Big "T" theology must be acknowledged if we subscribe to any notion of truth or absolutes. See Paul Hiebert 1994:70. The postmodern issue of perspectivism also addresses the same issue. See *Onto-theology, Metanarrative, Perspectivism and the Gospel*, by Merold Westphal, article presented at Overseas Ministries Study Center, April 1999.
- Joel A. Carpenter and Wilbert R. Shenk, eds., *Earthen Vessels: American Evangelicals and Foreign Missions, 1880-1980*, (Grand Rapids, Eerdmans, 1990), 73-103.
- Patterson 1994, 74.
- Ibid.*, 74,75.
- Ibid.*
- Ibid.*, 76.
- Patterson 1994, 78.
- Yates 1994, 7.
- It is well recognized that colonialism favored the expansion of Christian missions more than hindering it. Newbigin therefore intimated that missions flowed down the corridors of world power. With the explosion of independence in the post-1950 era, geopolitical factors were not as favorable.
- Lesslie Newbigin, *A Word in Season* (Grand Rapids, Eerdmans, 1994), 7,8.
- Hiebert 1994, 9.
- Yates 1994, 9.
- Ibid.*, 24.
- Ibid.*, 26.
- Ibid.*, 26,27.
- Ibid.*, 28.
- Ibid.*
- Ibid.*, 77.
- Ibid.*, 78.
- Ibid.*
- Newbigin 1989, 24
- Yates 1994, 97.
- Ibid.*
- Ibid.*, 94.
- Ibid.*, 94, 95.
- Ibid.*, 131.
- Ibid.*, 132.
- By 1985 the NCC had fallen to 4,349, while the evangelicals or independents sponsored 35,386, "Charles E. Van Engen," A Broadening Vision: Forty Years of Evangelical Theology of Mission," in *Earthen Vessels*, Joel A. Carpenter and Wilbert R. Shenk, eds. (Grand Rapids, Eerdmans, 1990), 209.
- Ibid.*, 209. Lindsell, *Missionary Principles and Practice* (Westwood, NJ, Revell, 1955), 28-30.
- Ibid.*
- Ibid.*, 214.
- Ibid.*, 215.
- Ibid.*, 204.
- Ibid.*, 219.
- Graham, "Why Lausanne?" in *Let the Earth Hear His Voice*, 28-30.
- Van Engen 1994, 220.
- Ibid.*, 221. Van Engen gives an excellent overview of the Evangelical activities of the eighties that influenced missiology. See pp 224-232.
- Lesslie Newbigin 1994, 19.
- Ibid.*
- Gordon T Smith, "Religion and the Bible: An Agenda for Evangelicals" in *Christianity and the Religions: A Biblical Theology of World Religions*, Rommen and Netland, eds. (Pasadena, William Carey Library, 1995), 13.
- Ibid.*
- Ibid.*
- Bosch states, "From all sides the Christian mission is under attack, even within its own ranks," 1991, 518.
- See his concluding chapter in *Transforming Mission*, 1994, 511-519.
- Ibid.*, 419.
- Ibid.*, 411.
- Norman Thomas, ed., *Reading in World Mission* (Mary Knoll, Orbis Books, 1995).
- More reflection needs to be given on each of these paradigms. Furthermore, a taxonomy needs to be established that reflects evangelical paradigms of mission. For starters I would suggest mission as church planting, discipling, spiritual warfare, engagement, obedience, kingdom fulfillment, the gospel in culture.
- George Hunsberger, "The Newbigin Gauntlet: Developing a Domestic Missiology for North America" in *The Church between Gospel and Culture* (Grand Rapids, Eerdmans, 1996), 6.
- Newbigin, *Proper Confidence: Faith, Doubt and Certainty in Christian Discipleship* (Grand Rapids, Eerdmans, 1995), 32.
- Ibid.*, 32, 33.
- Ibid.*, 33.
- Newbigin 1989, 169.
- Ibid.*, 175.
- Ibid.*, 177.
- Clark Pinnock 1992, 18.
- Ibid.*, 15.
- Ibid.*, 158.
- Patterson 1994, 77.
- Ralph Covell, "the Christian Gospel and World Religions: How Much Have American Evangelicals Changed?" in *International Bulletin of Missionary Research* January 1991, 12.
- Ibid.*, 68.
- Paul Hiebert 1994, 11,12.
- In writing *A Wideness in God's Mercy*. Pinnock stated his pre-understanding, or overriding commitments that controlled his lesser assumptions and beliefs. He acknowledged that in his approach to the Scripture there was an issue that took priority over others. It is here that we agree with or critique the remainder of Pinnock's thesis.
- Hiebert 1994, 37.
- See Gene Veith 1994, 16-18.
- Samuel Rowen, *Missionology and the Coherence of Theological Education*.
- Ibid.*, 47.
- Charles Van Engen, "The Uniqueness of Christ in Mission Theology," in *Christianity and the Religions: A Biblical Theology of World Religions* Rommen and Netland, eds. (Pasadena, CA, William Carey Library, 1995), 183-217.

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