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Brief History of Methods and Trends of  
Missions

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## Brief History of Methods and Trends of Missions

How did we get to where we are today, and  
what can we learn from the past?

Although in this short space we can never treat all the trends and paradigm shifts that have occurred throughout the history of the Church this chapter will introduce the major shifts in strategy and methodologies of doing missions since the beginning of the Church.

The major divisions of Church history to be discussed will be:

*Ante Nicene 100-325*

*Post Nicene 325-500*

*Medieval and Renaissance Missions 500-1792*

*Great Century of Mission Pioneering 1792-1910*

*Century of Technological Missions 1910-Present*

### I. Ante-Nicene Mission Efforts 100-325

The Early Church initially spread among only the Jews until after Acts 11:19 or about 20 years, and then the gentiles began to dominate the Christian church becoming more unique and varied than when controlled by early Jewish Christian leaders. As the gospel spread and churches were established throughout Asia Minor, Palestine, North Africa, Greece, Macedonia, Cyprus and Rome. The impact was soon to reach a “critical mass” when persecution was ineffective due to the numbers of followers.

Not only do we depend on the writings of the NT, but also the early writings of the Early Church leaders to understand the spread of the gospel. Tradition says Thaddeus went to Edessa, Mark to Alexandria, Peter to Bithynia and Cappadocia, Paul to Spain, and Thomas to India. "The strength of this witness, however, was uneven. The strongest areas were Syria, Asia Minor, North Africa, and Egypt, with a few other noteworthy cities such as Rome and Lyons. Village people in most areas were largely untouched." (Shelley, 1995, p. 32)

Local churches were small and able to meet in homes, but multiplied rapidly. Presbyters and deacons would lead multiples of these small groups, while Bishops were responsible for the multiplication of leaders of small groups. Their focus was the writing and training of multiple leaders. Much of their writings have survived, detailing their apologetic defense of Christianity against heresy and governmental false accusations.

By the end of 1<sup>st</sup> century, there was an estimated 100 city churches, mostly Greek-speaking, meeting in thousands of homes throughout these cities. Copies of the OT and NT were few and mostly incomplete until the third or fourth century when the canon was finally compiled. The gospel spread throughout this period was mostly by oral teachings, probably similar to the Chronological Bible Storying of modern times.

### Factors of Growth

The Roman road system gave the ability to walk on pavement and created a mapping system for navigating across countries.

In a wild environment with little law, safety of travel was secured by the *pax romana*, “Roman Peace,” through the universal military presence enforcing strict laws against sedition and marauding. Cairns states that freedom of travel would have been difficult for evangelists before Augustus Caesar (27 BC- AD 14), who swept the Mediterranean of pirates, and soldiers protected the roads primarily for commerce, but coincidentally for spreading the gospel.

As English is the universal language today, so Greek was in the first centuries. Although every region had their own dialect (there were 19 mentioned in Acts 2 from among the Jews living in these regions), but the common Greek language gave unity and ability to communicate (even if this were a second language or trade language).

With the Roman conquests local people lost confidence in their gods since they were not able to protect them from the Romans. The Roman gods were little different from the local ineffective gods. Pagan mystery religions, which gave an emotional experience, became the chief rival of Christianity. "The worship of Cybele...goddess of fertility had in its rites ... the drama of the death and resurrection of Cybele's consort, Attis, that seemed to meet the needs of the people." There were similar expressions with Isis, imported from Egypt, Mithraism, from Persia, each with parallel resurrections and saviors (Cairns, 1981, p. 37). These became the chief competitors for the gospel. Mysticism would eventually infiltrate into Christianity and distort its truth-based foundation.

Greek philosophy provided intellectual concepts that Christianity could bridge for transmitting truth as well as by destroying older religions. Polytheistic religions became rationally unintelligible, but philosophy could not meet the spiritual needs, so one either became a skeptic or sought comfort in the mystery religions of the Roman Empire... namely Stoicism or Epicureanism (Cairns, 1981, p. 39). Philosophy focused on a subjective individualism for personal truth, by the destruction of their ancient superstitions, while creating a love of new truth, yet revealing the inability of human reason to reach God.

Jewish synagogues were everywhere teaching the values of a sound spiritual monotheism thanks to the residual groups from the captivities (722 BC thru 586 BC) called the *diaspora*. They taught that a personal God would hold them accountable for their sins, but that He also wanted a relationship with every people because He provided a way to cover their guilt.

The Scriptures were proven again correct that God's perfect timing makes no mistake, "But when the fullness of the time came, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born under the Law" (Galatians 4:4)

## **2<sup>nd</sup> Century Dynamic Growth**

Wherever the roads went the gospel spread along the Roman Road system (as when the British built the train system in Argentina, the Christian workers from England planted Plymouth Brethren churches in every town). Evangelists were Greek speaking, then Latin speaking, which appealed to educated and upper class.

The main opposition during this period was a growing Gnosticism, which emphasized the spiritual over the material, virtually denying the humanity of Christ and focusing on a higher level of "spiritual" or mystical knowledge.

"Many Gnostics recognized a kind of proletariat and bourgeoisie of heaven. The lower spiritual class lived by faith and the upper class, the illuminated or the perfect, lived by illuminated knowledge. Still a third group, the spiritually disadvantaged, were not capable of *gnosis* ("knowledge") under any circumstances. Some capricious deity had created them without the capacity to "see" even under the best guru." (Shelley, 1995, p.

52) Many of the Gnostic influences would find their counterpart in Christianity for centuries. Their appearance of super-spirituality deceived many.

Gnosticism was a challenge from without, but also from within a new challenge pushed the Church to formalize the conclusion of God's revelation: Montanism.

Montanus' doctrine of the new age of the Spirit suggested that the Old Testament period was past, and that the Christian period centering in Jesus had ended. The prophet claimed the right to push Christ and the apostolic message into the background. The fresh music of the Spirit could override important notes of the Christian gospel; Christ was no longer central. In the name of the Spirit, Montanus denied that God's decisive and normative revelation had occurred in Jesus Christ (Shelley, 1995, p. 65).

Many of these concepts have infiltrated again into the Church in the twentieth century. The combination of mysticism, Gnosticism and Montanism has brought many to seek for a fresh revelation virtually discarding the value of the inspired text of the Apostles. The popularity of these movements, however, brought many from paganism and secularism into the sphere of the gospel knowledge.

What a brutal world it was in which the Christian virtues were displayed! It was a world where an emperor's son celebrated his birthday by watching animals tear people apart in the arena; where married life was usually a failure; where promiscuity, temple prostitutes, and homosexual practice were common; where the population decreased for the first three centuries of the Christian Era (simply because the world was too miserable a place to raise children); where so many newborn daughters were exposed and left to die that men greatly outnumbered women; where callous enslavement of conquered peoples supported the lifestyle of the elite few. Even their religious practice was abhorrent: Roman deities did not promote morality among their followers but rather lewd, occult rites and costly ceremonies (Blincoe, 2003, p. 100).

There is a hint of church size seen in Eusebius' letter at AD 251: he lists 46 presbyters; 7 deacons; 7 sub deacons; 42 clerks; 52 exorcists, and readers; 1,500 widows and needy in the church of Rome. Estimates approach 30,000 members (Eusebius 1984:265)

Kenneth LaTourette, church historian, states that Christianity was active in all provinces of Empire before the beginning of the third century.

### **3<sup>rd</sup> -4<sup>th</sup> Century—Less Dynamic Growth**

Emperor Diocletian inherited an Empire in decay and acted decisively to end any type of anarchy. Two years before the end of his 20 year reign he decided suddenly that Christians needed to be purged from the Empire and began the worse persecution in its history. Diocletian's Edict of Persecution in AD 303 was continued under Galerius. His tactics became so gross that the population became more sympathetic towards the Christians. Finally Galerius issued an edict of toleration in his last official act in AD 311. It is estimated that 15,000 died as martyrs, and some recanted under torture as did the Bishop of Rome.

In the struggle for control of the Empire, Constantine won a decisive battle against Maxentius outside of Rome when he saw, in a dream, "In this sign conquer." He attributed his victory to the God of Christianity, so in AD 312 he issued his Edict of Tolerance for Christianity.

The enemies of the Empire usually came from the east or northeast, and now Constantine's new religion was based in the east, so it became natural to move the capital out of corrupt Rome

to rebuild it on new principles. With the enormous dislocation of the economic center of the Empire, a political vacuum was left in Rome.

The Edict of Milan AD 313 made Christianity the state religion (Kane 1975:32). From outlaw to favored child, Christianity suddenly came into power, prestige and respect. All these were for its future.

In 380 emperor Theodosius made belief in Christianity a matter of imperial command: "It is Our Will that all the peoples we rule shall practice that religion which the divine Peter the Apostle transmitted to the Romans. We shall believe in the single Deity of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, under the concept of equal majesty and of the Holy Trinity.

We command that those persons who follow this rule shall embrace the name of Catholic Christians. The rest, however, whom We adjudge demented and insane, shall sustain the infamy of heretical dogmas, their meeting places shall not receive the name of churches, and they shall be smitten first by divine vengeance and secondly by the retribution of Our own initiative, which We shall assume in accordance with divine judgment (Shelley, 1995, pp. 96-97).

This occurred in spite of the fact that "the Christians represented not more than 10 percent of the total population" (Kane, 1978, p. 35). As a result of this edict for over a thousand years the Roman Church began to hunt down any dissident "heretic" to torture and kill them.

### **Special characteristics of Early Church: Bishops**

"Bishops" continued the itinerate work of apostles and prophets, among house churches in urban areas. In this period the Bishops "grew up" the work, that is they did the initial evangelism, training and organization. They were the founders of the ministry. As it grew, they grew in power and prestige. Later Bishops would be assigned to a territory where none existed; though there may have been a few Christians. Then they would be expected to develop a metropolitan church in an area that they had been assigned. *Presbyters* would pastor the smaller local church bodies under the Bishop's supervision and authority. Instruction would continue until they could elect their own presbyters and bishops.

Gregory Thaumaturgos was appointed bishop of Pontus (S. coast of Black Sea in N. Turkey) about AD 240. Tradition says that he started with a congregation of 17, and died with only 17 unconverted in the city.

The British Isles were probably won to Christ through Christian soldiers and merchants. The Celtic ascetic monk and reformer, Pelagius (AD 354-440), was a proponent of free will (original sin did not affect human nature) and the human ability to choose to overcome sin without Divine help. He taught that man has full control and thus full responsibility for his own salvation, and/or full responsibility for every sin. Because man does not require God's grace for salvation, Jesus' death does not offer redemptive quality, but only left us an example. He argued against Augustine of Hippo (AD 354-430) in the deterministic controversy, represented the Celtic churches in AD 414. Pelagius claimed Augustine was influenced by Manicheanism belief, of which he was a disciple before his conversion, which held to fatalism and predestination that took away all of man's free will.

Providentially, missionary work among the Goths began with Ulfilas (AD 310-383), bishop, missionary and Bible translator, who brought an Arian Christianity<sup>1</sup> to these

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<sup>1</sup> Arianism taught that the Trinity is not one Being, but three. The Son was begotten or created before time began and was in fact the Creator, then the Father working through the Son, created the Holy Spirit who

Germanic tribes just before they overran the Roman Armies. Ulfilas was not only a Bible translator, but he also reduced the Gothic language to writing and giving them the Scriptures in their own language. When they conquered Rome, just 30 years after Ulfilas' death, they were sympathetic to the Christian church and protected it.

In order to make Christianity more easily acceptable, they substituted celebration feasts for martyrs for pagan feasts, which was an accommodation to their former traditions.

### **Lay Missionaries**

Once the Church gained her freedom of expression no longer did they have to keep it a secret. Businessmen carried the gospel on trips, conversations typically included a discussion on Christ, though more often it discussed the Church, especially the Roman Church. Christianity was the topic of the day, since now everyone had to become one, but few knew what it meant beyond baptism.

Roman soldiers and merchants first brought the gospel to Britain until the beginning of the fifth century, until they withdrew to defend the eastern front from invading barbarians. This left the Celtic peoples vulnerable, and most were slaughtered by invasion of the the Angles, Saxons and Jutes. Those who escaped fled to the western and northern hills of modern day Scotland and Ireland.

Military personnel retired with large estates on the frontier of the Empire, especially in Gaul, to act as a buffer zone, since they were skilled in warfare. Those who were believers opened their estates and homes to Christian meetings. This modified house-church concept often started larger congregational churches, esp. in SE Europe.

House-churches multiplied under the area Bishop's care. Most bishops had been successful lay workers.

### **Missionary Methods**

Now that they were free to do so, there was much preaching in public. Those who understood the gospel now faced an extremely difficult task of assuring the genuine conversion of the new multitudes. Every opportunity for conversations about Christ was exploited.

As the new reality set in, many sought opportunities to teach in schools, and develop training schools for presbyters and other church leaders.

Using their homes, without buildings, the congregations divided into cells. This simple methodology was beginning to disappear as soon as the huge Cathedrals became available to the Christians. Soon every church had to model the prestigious Cathedrals.

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was subservient to both the Father and the Son. This was made famous by Arius (AD 250-336), who taught in Alexandria, Egypt. Eventually the Eastern Church would become Semi-Arian, while the Western Church would maintain the Nicene Creed of the Trinity.

The gospel spread mostly through oral witnessing, personal testimonies and word-of-mouth sharing of personal faith. Literacy was scarce, especially on the fringe of the Empire.

The Church Fathers utilized their only means of communication: writing literature especially on evangelism, apologies, letters, and polemic discussions of the time.

Likewise, much time was spent copying Scriptures as the only means of duplicating the texts in Greek, Hebrew and mostly Latin.

There was a public testimony by conduct, trials, or martyrdom of many Christian as well as the leaders before the Edict of Tolerance. After AD 313, there were no public displays of courage or faithfulness, so people looked to the new, popular and prestigious religious leaders instead of to their neighbors on a more public forum.

A notable public testimony was their dedication to show the love of Christ through social service: Harnack lists 10 different ministries from supporting widows and orphans, to helping prisoners and slaves that characterized the early Christians.

Christianity eventually became identified with the Roman Empire, thus to be a Christian, one had to be a Roman, and visa versa. The Christianity that spread throughout the Roman world – Roman-Empire Christianity – only extended to the imperial borders. In order to expand still farther, the gospel message needed to be *de-Romanized*. Not until the faith broke free from its Roman cultural identity would it be able to bless other nations (Blincoe, 2003, p. 101).

## II. Missions in Post-Nicene Era (AD 325-500)

The Nicene Council was the first ecumenical conference of bishops which met to unify the Christian doctrine. It marked a major clarification over the watershed issue (one is either on one side or the other) of the deity of Christ and the nature of the Trinity, as well as the date of Easter. Was Christ God incarnate or a created perfect being, but not eternal? Constantine presided over the council with the title of *Pontif Maximus*, a title later transferred to the Pope. Arianism would be a conflict for years, but this forced the Coptic, Nestorian and Armenian churches to break with Roman Christianity. However, succeeding emperors would seek to reconcile this division with a modified, middle of the road position to unify the empire.

The Church experienced great growth within Roman Empire through government involvement and subsidy. Now government tax money paid for huge churches (cathedrals or basilicas) to be built to house the masses. The Roman governorate, the *diocese*, became ruled by a Christian *vicar* (the imperial word for governor).

Approaching pagan tribes presented a challenge that would eventually bring havoc to the Christianity of modern Europe. Meanwhile the isolated pockets in Ireland of an earlier Celtic Christianity in the extreme western part of the Empire would mount missionary ventures back into modern Europe to re-Christianize the newly conquered portions of the Roman Empire.

Constantine identified Christianity with the Empire and best way to pacify warlike tribes, so he sponsored the evangelism outreaches to the “barbaric” tribes outside the Empire’s borders. Eventually this would identify becoming a Roman, with becoming a “Christian.”

Great preachers in this period made early translations of Scriptures into tribal dialects and benevolent work, which won many to Christianity.

### Monasticism and Missions

Monasticism began in the deserts of Egypt probably around AD 318 after Pachomius’s model of self discipline. However, the St. Benedict model became the Roman Catholic model through the Middle Ages. These monasteries so contributed to the religious, economic, educational and governmental life of their day that the years 550 to 1150 can be called the Benedictine centuries.

The dualistic views from Gnosticism had invaded the Catholic Church teaching that the flesh is evil and the spirit is good. Thus to crucify the flesh by withdrawal from the world, which was corrupt and sensual, and then to develop the spiritual life by meditation and ascetic acts were seen as spiritual. The Great Commission got buried in a selfish goal of becoming righteous to become acceptable to God. Monastic life was a way to earn or merit your salvation. The gospel of God's righteousness had long been lost.

Shortly after the days of the apostles the idea of a lower and a higher morality appeared. ...The New Testament, "The Shepherd" teaches precepts of faith, hope, and love binding upon all. But, it also offers advice for those who aspire to do more than what is required of the ordinary Christian. Soon other Christians sang the praises of self-denial, especially of celibacy -- the renunciation of marriage. Once it was introduced, the practice of penance encouraged acts of exceptional virtue as a means of removing sin. Thus Tertullian, Origen, Cyprian and other leaders threw their support behind the idea of a higher level of sanctity (Shelley, 1995, p. 118).

However, the purpose of the monasteries was not as much to contribute to culture as it was to ensure the salvation of its members. They sought to become holy by solitude in order to gain acceptance with God. They took vows to remain in the monastery for life and to be submissive to their superior, because he/she held the place of Christ in the community. They lived a highly regimented life in silence.

Tension eventually arose when some wanted a life of service, while others wanted solitude. Eventually other orders were developed that encouraged interaction with the population. Monasticism became a refuge for those in revolt against the growing decadence of the times.

Too often monasticism merely pandered to spiritual pride as monks became proud of ascetic acts performed to benefit their own souls. As the monasteries became wealthy because of community thrift and ownership, laziness, avarice, and gluttony crept in. Monasticism aided in the rapid development of a hierarchical, centralized organization in the church because the monks were bound in obedience to superiors who in turn owed their allegiance to the pope (Cairns, 1981, p. 155).

### **Most outstanding evangelist: Patrick of Ireland (AD 389-461)**

Patrick began as a lay evangelist, as a captive in war while a teenager. He would later preach to the Irish Chieftains and to crowds in open fields. He often gave presents of large sums of money to Irish Chieftains in order to obtain their favor. He used great sums of money to buy the freedom of many slaves. (Slavery was so prevalent in Ireland that "one woman" was a monetary unit of measurement) (Morrison, 2004). Of course, Patrick is famous for explaining the Trinity to the Irish Chieftains with the illustration of the Shamrock with its three leaf clover. The three are distinct but not separate.

There were Christians already in Ireland before Patrick, but he organized those already in Ireland. His organized effort of evangelism and church planting resulted in over 200 churches and converted over 100,000 people (some accounts give 200,000) to Christianity.

It should be noted that Patrick's autobiographical confession was difficult to translate as the grammar was poorly written. In the beginning of his writings he explained how unworthy his writings were, but that he felt compelled to write anyway. The only written language he knew was Latin, which he only marginally knew. Regardless, his efforts are commended as one of the few records of his time. Those with little skill can still change the world.

Following the example of Patrick, the Irish Christians became some of the most daring missionaries and educators in all of history. Leaving their homeland to carry the gospel elsewhere was an important part of the Irish Christian tradition. It should be noted

that Patrick was neither Irish nor Catholic. He was a Briton by birth and was part of Celtic Christianity, which in his day was independent from Rome. Later when Celtic Christianity succumbed to Roman Catholicism, but the missionary tradition of the Irish continued through the period of the Catholic Counter-Reformation, over a thousand years later.

### **Factors of Post-Nicene Expansion**

“Conversion” became the Norm—convenience or assimilation rather than a bold faith brought about their change. The mass methods of conversion of some these Catholic monks brought mostly nominal Christians into the fold. "If a ruler accepted Christianity, he and his people were baptized whether or not they fully understood the meaning of the act or the implications of Christianity for their lives." (Cairns, 1981, p. 155)

Whatever Constantine's motives for adopting the Christian faith, the result was a decline in Christian commitment. The stalwart believers whom Diocletian killed were replaced by a mixed multitude of half-converted pagans. Once Christians had laid down their lives for the truth; now they slaughtered each other to secure the prizes of the church. Gregory of Nazianzus complained: "The chief seat is gained by evil doing, not by virtue; and the Sees [central government of the Catholic Church] belong, not to the more worthy, but to the more powerful." (Shelley, 1995, p. 118)

Expansion outside the Empire was impeded by Persian Zoroastrianism (in modern Iran), especially when they came to power after AD 228, yet many early Christians reached India, Ceylon, and Arabia.

The Roman Catholic Church provided an element of stability and security in a disintegrating society. When the Empire divided between East (Constantinople) and West (Rome), most of the leadership left to go to the Eastern Empire. Rome was bankrupt of leaders, so the Bishop of Rome took great political and governmental authority over much of modern Italy.

The moral living of Christians showed superiority, but it was not easy to transform. The task of converting these northern peoples was enormous. To bring them to a nominal adherence to Christianity was not so difficult, because they wanted to enter into the grandeur that was Rome. Christianity was, in their eyes, the Roman religion. But to tame, refine, and educate these peoples, to transmit to them the best of the culture of antiquity, to teach them the Christian creed and, above all, to instill in them even a modicum of Christian behavior-- all that was another matter (Shelley, 1995, p. 155).

Zealous missionary activity came especially from the Irish missionaries who re-evangelized Britain after the Saxons destroyed the churches when the Romans left them. Then the Celtic monks continued evangelistic trips to the Continent, again to re-evangelize after the barbarians had brought havoc to the scattered churches and monasteries. The fact that these Celtic missionaries did not recognize the Pope at this time it was a disturbing factor in Rome. "More than half of the commentaries written between AD 650 and 860 were by Irishmen" (Blincoe, 2003, p. 103).

Demonstrations of the power of the gospel come to us mostly through legends, but were believed and became factors in many conversions. "Many tales circulated about the miraculous powers of the saints. The story was told of two beggars, one lame, the other blind. They happened to be caught in a procession carrying the relics of St. Martin and were fearful lest they be cured and so deprived of their alms. The one who could see but not walk mounted the shoulders of the one who could walk but not see, and they hurried to get beyond the range of the saint's miraculous powers, but, poor fellows, they failed to make it" (Shelley, 1995, p. 158).

Cairns describes this period of monasticism which brought admiration by helping the poor and defending the oppressed. Monasticism went through four main stages during the period of its emergence in the Western civilization. At first, ascetic practices were carried on by many within the church. Many later withdrew from society to live as anchorites or hermits. Thirdly, a cloister for common exercises or disciplines might be built. And fourthly, monasteries with organized communal life within a monastery appeared (Cairns, 1981, p. 152).

Monks, particularly from Britain, became the missionaries of the medieval church. They went out as fearless soldiers of the Cross to found new monasteries, and these became centers from which whole tribes were won to Christianity (Cairns, 1981, p. 155).

Neighboring tribes that migrated to the Empire quickly converted in two ways: directly from paganism and indirectly through Arianism, a heresy that denied the eternity of Christ. These tribes liked to think of Christ as a real human and not so divine; He was seen as a glorified warlord. Arian Germans were slow to accept the centralization through Rome.

#### **IV. Medieval and Renaissance Missions (500-1792)**

The Roman church became the base of great expansion, but Romanism was in decadence by now. Shelley quotes Pope Gregory around the end of the sixth century as saying,

"All of Western Europe was in chaos. Serious men...thought that the end of the world was at hand." [Pope Gregory asks], "What is it that we can at this time delight us in this world? Everywhere we see tribulation, everywhere we hear lamentation. The cities are destroyed, the castles torn down; the fields laid waste, the land made desolate. Villages are empty, few inhabitants remain in the cities, and even these poor remnants of humanity are daily cut down. The scourge of celestial justice does not cease, because no repentance takes place under the scourge. ... If we love such a world, we love not our joys, but our wounds." (Shelley, 1995, p. 166)

Gregory clarified the Catholic message showing that in water baptism God grants forgiving grace freely for Adam's sin without any merit on man's part, but for sins committed after baptism man must make atonement by penance, which is a form of self punishment inflicted by the man himself. If man punishes himself, then God will withhold his punishment. Forgiveness is three-fold: repentance, confession and meritorious works, which involves personal sacrifice or suffering. The greater our sins the more we must do to make up for them. Sadly, whether we have done enough to atone for them we cannot know until after death. If insufficient, then the horrible pains of

Purgatory await us for a determined sentence of time. With this message the Roman Catholics sought to “evangelize” the world.

As the persecution from Rome ceased, in the eastern part of the Empire the Zoroastrian rulers in Persia (Iran) sought to eradicate Christianity from the middle of the 4<sup>th</sup> century and continued through the sixth century since any association with Rome was a disadvantage in Persia, China and India. Nestorius was a Syrian in Antioch who became the patriarch of Constantinople in 428. At that time the rival theological schools of Antioch and Alexandria hotly contested their views concerning the relationship between the humanity and divinity of Christ. The controversy was over the use of the term "Mother of God" to describe the Virgin Mary. Nestorius opposed this term, arguing that it implied Mary was the mother of the whole pre-incarnational Godhead rather than just the human mother of Jesus. He preferred the term "Mother of Christ".

The Council of Ephesus, convened in AD 431, was a sad display of petty church politics. It resulted in the excommunication of ....Nestorius... who went into exile, living out the rest of his life in monastic seclusion until he died. After the verdict of Ephesus, many followers of Nestorius fled to Persia. The Church of the East, struggling to survive in the non-Christian and often hostile Persian Empire...welcomed the Nestorians, not as heretics, but as fellow victims of religious persecution. Eventually the Church of the East officially adopted the Nestorian Christology..." (Miller, 2003, p. 112)

Over a thousand years later in the Protestant Reformation, some groups denied the real presence in the communion (transubstantiation) and the communication of attributes between the two natures, they were accused of restoring the Nestorian *heresy*.

Providentially, the Persian government gave refuge to the fleeing refugees. Nestorian Christianity reached China by 635. The Nestorian Stele, set up on 7 January 781 at the capital of Xi'am province, describes the introduction of Christianity to China from Persia. They also reached Mongolia and Korea. In the twelfth century it was one of the widespread religions in the empire of India and China in the time of Marco Polo.

“For over a millennium, in the centuries between the reign of Constantine and the Protestant Reformation, almost everything in the church that approached the highest, noblest, and truest ideals of the gospel was done either by those who had chosen the monastic way or by those who had been inspired in the Christian life by the monks. ... These monastic movements revived the church and were the source of most missions outreach throughout the ‘Dark Ages’” (Blincoe, 2003, p. 103).

However, the missionary gains of the first 500 years were mostly lost to Islam in the Middle East and N. Africa and Buddhism in S.E. Asia.

## **V. Encounter with Islam (600-1215)**

Just after winning over animistic idolatrous tribesmen within the Arabian Peninsula, militant Islam attacked outside Arabia from 630 till 732. During this period most of the Middle East, N. Africa and Spain fell under their control. The options offered to these conquered peoples were to die by the sword, pay tribute or convert to Islam. The Eastern Church (Constantinople) lost more than the Western Church (Rome), including the loss of Jerusalem. Missionary activity in the East virtually ceased in the

defense against the invaders. Nearly all of the Eastern Empire would fall to Islam in the Second Wave of conquest 700 years later.

In 732 the armies of Charles Martel at the Battle of Tours, in central France, stopped the Islamic invasion from conquering all of Europe through Spain. Charles Martel became the grandfather of Charlemagne who would expand the Frankish (French) kingdom into an Empire in an attempt to revive the Roman Empire in the West.

Islam took all of N. Africa to Afghanistan and Tunisia. Islamic rulers imposed the Islamic law (*sharia*) which encompassed all aspects of the lives of their followers, called Muslims ("those who submit" to God's will in the *sharia*). The political control over conquered territory was in the name of the *caliph* (the successor of Muhammad as the supreme earthly leader of Islam). Within a hundred years Muslim conquerors surpassed the achievement of Alexander the Great in a decentralized, but religiously unified empire from Spain to Indonesia. This vast area remains the most unevangelized peoples of the world.

In addition to loosing vast territory to the Muslims, the Eastern Church was enveloped in a series of ongoing controversies within the Catholic Church, namely, which language was sacred for ceremonies (Greek or Latin), were statues or pictures (icons) to be revered in the Iconoclastic Controversy, and which dates were to be sacred days for Easter. The iconoclastic controversy was partly due to the accusations of Islam that Christianity was nothing but idolaters with their statues and images in all the churches.

## **VI. Christianity mounted a series of Crusades to take back the Holy Lands (1072-1272)**

The Roman papacy had enormous authority over the lives of everyone, including kings, in fact, kings derived their powers from the pope!

The papacy's chief weapon in support of this authority were spiritual penalties. Almost everyone believed in heaven and hell and in the pope's management of the grace to get to one and avoid the other. Thus the pope's first weapon in bringing peasants and princes to their knees was the threat of excommunication. He could pronounce their anathema and they would be "set apart" from the church, deprived of the grace essential for salvation. ...

While under excommunication, persons could not act as judge, juror, witness, or attorney. They could not be guardians, executors, or parties to contract. After death, they received no Christian burial, and if, by chance, they were buried in consecrated ground, the church had their bodies disinterred and destroyed.

The second weapon in the papal arsenal was the "interdict." ... While excommunication was aimed at individuals, the interdict fell upon whole nations. It suspended all public worship and, with the exception of baptism and extreme unction, it withdrew the sacraments from the lands of disobedient rulers (Shelley, 1995, p. 185).

When the Pope promised complete forgiveness and immediate entrance into heaven for anyone killed in the Crusade to retake the Holy Lands from the Muslims, the armies swelled. The passion for a unified Christian Empire included its Holy Lands and the rights to pilgrimages to visit the sites of Jesus' life. "It has been estimated that nearly a

million people took part in the activities associated with the First Crusade." (Cairns, 1981, p. 220) There were eight crusades over a period of 200 years, but the results were failure to accomplish their goals and were finally expelled from the Holy Lands in 1291.

The Venetian shipping merchants charged exorbitant prices to transport the Crusaders. In order to pay for their travel, they were ordered to attack several opposition cities, including Constantinople. By their conquest they established a Latin Empire of Constantinople in 1204. The defense of the Eastern empire was never the same, and as a result, would fall to the Muslims in 1453 as they crossed over into Europe once again in a vengeful effort to get even for the atrocities of the Crusades, four hundred years earlier.

The Crusades created a disaster for Christian missions due to cruelties and atrocities committed in the name of Christ by western Christianity that has never been forgotten. This bitterness has not left the region in 900 years and every westerner is blamed today for the slaughters of yesterday.

When Jerusalem was liberated in 1099, the Crusaders, not content with wiping out the one thousand-man garrison, proceeded to massacre some seventy thousand Muslims. The surviving Jews were herded into a synagogue and burned alive. The Crusaders then repaired the Church of the Holy Sepulcher, where they publicly gave thanks to Almighty God for a resounding victory (Kane, 1978, p. 54).

In spite of the atrocities of the Crusades opened the eyes of Europeans to world travel and more sophisticated and luxurious civilizations than they ever knew about. The Venetian shipping companies, gaining the Mediterranean trade in silks, spices, sugar, fruits, gems, and perfumes gave rise to enormous business of luxuries that they had seen in the Near East.

## VII. Reaction and Renewal (1054-1650)

The **Eastern Church** was isolated into pockets and maintained a fortress mentality, defending their views against the Western Catholic Church as well as Muslim accusations. In the East the priests could marry but had to be unshaven. There were differences of opinion on when Easter should be celebrated and especially the iconoclastic controversy. In 730 the emperor removed all images except the cross, in order to refute the Muslim charges of idolatry. To this day there are no statues in the Eastern churches, only icons, or pictures of Christ and the Apostles, which were to be accorded reverence, but not worship. In 1054 the two churches disagreed on the use of unleavened bread in the Eucharist (in the West). The pope issued a decree of excommunication of the Eastern patriarch and his followers, who in turn, at their Synod issued an excommunication to the pope in the West. Missionary work in the East focused toward the north into Bulgaria (864), Russia (955) and much of eastern and central Europe followed the patriarch of Constantinople.

The **Western Church** became the major power which dominated the political, cultural, economic and religious life of Europe through fear, especially the fear of excommunication. The rise of universities and Scholasticism strengthened the intellectual foundations of papal power. Monastic reform added to papal power by giving the pope many zealous monks, who were his obedient servants. "It is doubtful whether the papacy has ever exercised such absolute power over all phases of life as it did in

medieval Europe during this era. However, it would soon find nationalism in France and England and conciliarism harder to handle.” (Cairns, 1981, p. 209)

Such power brought inevitable corruption especially between 1305 and 1517. Coinciding with the unethical practices of fund raising for cathedrals and internal conflicts (“Babylonian captivity” of the papacy and papal schism), the rise of nationalism pulled the loyalties of the people toward their rulers, especially when it concerned the taxes going to Rome. The enforcement of Canon law<sup>2</sup> and submission to a rigid doctrine based on tradition through the cruelties of the Inquisition brought fear, yet rejection and lack of respect from the people.

By the sixteenth century the years of internal battling and bickering, abuses of the masses by the sale of cheap indulgences to raise money for huge cathedrals and basilicas, and the secularization or sale of religious positions (simony) increased until a reformation movement began—Luther was in the middle of it.

### **Roman Catholic Missions**

During the age of discovery priests joined the explorers of Spain and Portugal going to the Americas, Africa, Asia and the Far East. The Portuguese focused on Brazil and Africa. One of the most notable was Matteo Ricci’s Jesuit mission (1583-1610) to China which made a revolutionary approach to missions: contextualize your life and message. The Roman Church was organized around Religious Orders whose dedicated members were trained and ready for any assignment. Their vows of poverty, obedience and celibacy gave them the most ideal qualities for pioneer missionary work. They had no need to call on or be limited by volunteers.

The priests had fresh images of the Crusades and the Inquisition, which influenced their strategy of applying much cruelty and forced conversion techniques on the conquests of the new lands.

Medieval dissidents to Roman Catholic abuses back in Europe were suppressed, and documents were destroyed by the **Inquisition**. Forerunners to the reformation include men like Peter Waldo, John Wycliffe, John Hus, Savonarola and the Brethren of the Common Life. All of whom were severely persecuted as well as were their followers for centuries.

Petrobrusians, Arnoldists, Henricians, Waldensians, Bohemian Brethren, Lollards, Hussites and Taborites all sought biblical authority for faith...and paid dearly. “The followers of Wycliffe were suppressed by force in 1401. Thereafter those who held his views went underground and, no doubt, helped to prepare the way for the Lutheran and Calvinistic teachings that invaded Britain about a century later. Bohemians studying at Oxford in Wycliffe's day carried his ideas to their homeland, where they influenced the teachings of John Hus.” (Vos)

### **Protestant Reformers (1517-1650)**

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<sup>2</sup> Before legislative and judicial concepts of government were developed, the only governing power was the decisions of the rulers. The Roman Catholic Church developed laws (“canons”) not only for faith and the Christian life, but for every aspect of life to give order and justice. This, in essence, gave the Pope, as Supreme Pontiff, the totality of legislative, executive, and judicial power in every realm. Pope Gregory IV (1298) is credited with the first collection of canons.

The Reformation was led by Luther, Zwingli, Calvin and Knox, but all lacked a world vision.

One would naturally expect that the spiritual forces released by the Reformation would have prompted the Protestant churches of Europe to take the gospel to the ends of the earth during the period of world exploration and colonization, which began about 1500. But such was not the case. The Roman Catholic Church between 1500 and 1700 won more converts in the pagan world than it lost to Protestantism in Europe (Kane, 1978, p. 73).

The hermeneutic of the Reformers took Romans 10 and Psalms 19 as fulfillment of Great Commission. They were consumed with their reforms and personal survival in bitter battles with Rome and themselves. The Lutherans and Calvinists began battling each other as soon as they split with Rome, instead of uniting against a common enemy. They both thought the other was apostate or heretical. Kane wrote, "'The controversy over 'pure doctrine' played a larger role here perhaps than in any other period of church history..." Kane, 1978, p. 74). They were more concerned about maintaining their own territory and their theological distinctives than reaching out to the lost world.

There were Predestinarians, whose preoccupation with the sovereignty of God all but precluded the responsibility of man. If God wills the conversion of the heathen, they will be saved without human instrumentality. If God does not will the salvation of the heathen, it is both foolish and futile for man to intervene. Calvin wrote, "We are taught that the kingdom of Christ is neither to be advanced nor maintained by the industry of men, but this is the work of God alone." (Kane, 1978, p. 74)

They had limited contact with other religions, so they had little idea of the lostness of the pagan world.

Protestants rejected monasticism, which was the chief strategy of Roman Catholic missionary effort—but no substitute structure like the Orders was developed for the first three hundred years of the Reformation!

Reformers were very territorial—developed their own state churches to compete with the Roman Catholic churches for control of their populations. Their armies only protected them within their territories.

Eschatology taught they were in the end times, so long range plans, especially global missionary plans, were not necessary, in fact, it was futile.

### **VIII. Reform and Revival (1650-1792)**

Initially Protestantism lacked spiritual depth and had little or no notion of evangelism. Their indifference was partially pride as well as the Protestant version of the Inquisition: no one was ever allowed to dissent or disagree with their teacher's (Luther or Calvin) point of view. Since this was now the new state religion, they were content to be right with little or no concern to extend into new territory in the Reformed territories. Everything else was either Catholic or the other Protestant religion anyway.

Pietism sought to renew the spiritual life by small groups, prayer and Bible study, especially in Lutheran churches. "As the Protestant Reformation was a revolt against the false doctrines and corrupt morals of the Church of Rome, so the Pietist movement was a

revolt against the barren orthodoxy and dead formalism of the state churches of Protestant Europe." (Kane, 1978, p. 76)

Pietistic theology can be summed up in a few sentences. There can be no missionary vision without evangelistic zeal; there can be no evangelistic zeal without personal piety; there can be no personal piety without a genuine conversion experience. True religion for the Pietist is a matter of the heart, not the head; hence the emphasis on the cultivation of the spiritual life (Kane, 1978, p. 77).

University of Halle was founded on principles to equip missionaries. The Danish-Halle Mission was the first Protestant mission organization primarily to supply chaplains to minister to the expatriate colonists from their mother country. But the churches mostly criticized the university's efforts and would not support the missionaries.

The most famous graduate of Halle University was Count von Zinzendorf (1700-1760) who gave refuge to the Moravian Church and missions (Anabaptists) on one of his estates. "The Anabaptists were cruelly victimized by both Protestants and Catholics. They were forced to jump to their deaths from tops of haystacks (to land on long spikes) and to be drowned, burned, and hanged." Cairns, 1981, p. 306) Yet this radical movement has become the pioneer of modern evangelical Christianity. The four-fold foundation was:

- (1) The principle of Discipleship, which was defined as a relationship with Jesus Christ that goes beyond inner experience and acceptance of doctrines. It must involve a daily walk with God in every aspect of life.
- (2) The principle of Love, which grew logically out of the first. They acted as pacifists, neither going to war nor defending themselves against persecutors, nor acting against the state.
- (3) The principle of congregational view of church authority as each believer is voluntarily baptized upon his profession of personal faith in Christ; he, thus, becomes a priest to his fellow believers and missionary to unbelievers.
- (4) The principle of the separation of church and state. They held that Christians were a "free, unforced, uncompelled people." They insisted that the church was distinct from society. This became the first group to proclaim a true religious liberty: "the right to join in worship with others of like faith without State support and without State persecution." (Shelley, 1995, p. 185)

Count Von Zinzendorf spent his life and fortune for world missions. His connection with the Danish court and to King Christian VI enabled these projects. He personally saw the Moravian church spread throughout Germany, Denmark, Russia, England and America in 1741-42. The village of Hermhut on his estate, from which hundreds of missionaries were sent, had no money of its own, and Zinzendorf financed this vast missionary effort almost exclusively from his own resources. However, his travels forced him to be careless about his personal affairs, which were not self-productive. At times he had to borrow money and in 1750 almost was reduced to bankruptcy. This led the Moravian church to organize a financial board. He continued on for ten more years until his death. His legacy will be eternal! His support primarily provided their travel expenses one-way.

The Moravian missionaries, beginning in 1734, were purposely sent to the most despised and neglected people. These missionaries were to be self-supporting. That emphasis led to the creation of industries and business concerns which not

only supported the work but brought the missionaries into intimate contact with the people (Beaver, 1999, p. 246).

The Moravian missionaries were the forerunners of the Wesleyan revivals and William Carey's Baptist Missionary Society.

Moravian missionaries exposed the Wesleys to the gospel message while the latter were on a fruitless missionary journey to the New World and had not yet been converted. Later, another Moravian, Peter Boehler, brought the Wesleys to Christ. Shortly thereafter, John Wesley visited Zinzendorf in Germany and then embarked on his lifework (Vos).

## **IX. The Great Century (1792-1910)**

The term "the Great Century" was coined by Kenneth Scott Latourette in his seven-volume *History of the Expansion of Christianity*, in which he devoted 3 volumes to the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

The model of the Moravian Church, which would become the motivation for missions for the next 200 years, is reflected in this statement:

Within twenty years of the commencement of their missionary work, the Moravian Brethren had started more missions than Anglicans and Protestants had started during the two preceding centuries. Their marvelous success was largely due to the fact that from the first they recognized that the evangelization of the world was the most pressing of all the obligations that rested upon the Christian Church, and that the carrying out of this obligation was the "common affair" of the community. Up to the present time (1930) the Moravians have sent out nearly 3,000 missionaries, the proportion of missionaries to their communicant members being 1 in 12 (Robinson, 1915, p. 50).

What began in the 18<sup>th</sup> century as an exception became the norm in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. For a hundred years (more or less) more than a thousand mission organizations sent out thousands of recruits and most were motivated by the courage and commitment of these early Moravian missionaries to sacrifice their lives for world evangelism.

### **European Beginnings (1792-1810)**

All though we call William Carey (1761-1834) the "Father of Modern Missions," it is not entirely correct. There were at least three other mission societies dedicated to operate in the American colonies, but only one was cross cultural.

Carey was a tri-vocational Baptist pastor/shoe cobbler/teacher. In his spare time he taught himself 7 languages, world geography and Scriptures, and read everything he could get his hands on. One such book was, "The Last Voyage of Captain Cook," that described the people of India.

In 1792 Carey wrote his 87-page book, "*An Enquiry into the Obligations of Christians to Use Means for the Conversion of the Heathen*" to answer the hyper-Calvinism apathy of his day. Many believe this to be the most convincing missionary appeal ever written. Yet the Baptist Calvinists of his association of pastors, when he challenged them to discuss the Great Commission responded, "Young man, sit down. When God pleases to convert the heathen, He will do it without your aid or mine."

The whole task seemed so impossible to the Christians that Carey challenged them with this expression: “Attempt great things for God; Expect great things from God,” based on Isa 54:2-3. When they continued to be filled with uncertainty, Carey takes out a booklet called, “Periodical Account of Moravian Missions,” and said with tears in his eyes, “If you had only read this and knew how these men overcame all obstacles for Christ’s sake, you would go forward in faith.” They agreed to act and formed *The Particular Baptist Society for Propagating the Gospel among the Heathen*. Nine months later Carey sailed for India. After a five month trip on a small sailing ship he arrived to begin a 40-year unbroken service to India.

Carey’s philosophy of ministry:

1. Widespread preaching
2. Distribution of Bible in vernacular
3. Church Planting
4. Profound study of non-Christian religions
5. Ministry training

### **American Involvement (1810-1832)**

Initially the American involvement was focused on home missions on the frontier and Indian tribes. Admittedly this was often a cross cultural ministry near home.

By mid-century (1850) half of the American people were west of the Appalachians...Only five or ten percent of the American people were church members. In time, however, the crude, turbulent, and godless society of the West was tamed and more than any other single force it was evangelical Christianity that did it (Shelley, 1995, p. 384).

A group of students started a student movement at Andover Seminary and Williams College in New England. One day in 1806 they met for prayer and discussion. Suddenly, rain drove them under a haystack. They came to a conviction, “We can do it if we will,” and became known as the “Haystack Prayer Group.”

Led by Adoniram Judson, Luther Rice and four others became the first American missionaries under the newly formed the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions (ABCFM) in 1810, and went to India to work with Carey in 1812. Over the next 30 years Americans would go to India, Ceylon (Sri Lanka), Hawaii, China, Siam, Greece, Cyprus, Turkey, Syria, Persia and Africa.

Unmarried people were not allowed to enter the mission field. The mission provided a list of women that were "missionary-minded" or men that were "young, pious, educated, fit and reasonably good-looking" (Golossanov, 2006), in order to facilitate their acquaintance.

En route to India Judson became convinced about baptism by immersion and decided to leave the ABCFM, a Congregational mission. On another ship, without communicating with Judson, Luther Rice had come to the same conclusion. They were baptized in Serampore, in NE India, resigned from their mission (ABCFM) and Judson offered himself to the Baptists. As a result they were ordered out of India by the East India Company, so Judson went to Burma (today Myanmar) where he stayed for 38 years, and Rice returned to US to raise support for Judson. Upon his return, Rice met

Furman and formed the first Baptist mission association in America, the General Missionary Convention of the Baptist Denomination (origin of the International Mission Board (IMB) of the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC).

### **X. Significant Events and Missionaries (1832-1865)**

The Second Evangelical Awakening (1800-1830s) among laymen emphasized prayer, renewed personal salvation experienced through revival meetings, discipleship and godly living. The camp meeting revivals had a number of off-shoots including the Mormons, the Holiness Movement and *Camp Meetings* in the open air, which would continue for 150 years. These camp meeting were characterized by highly emotional preaching, congregational interaction, little biblical study, rather they preached “as the Spirit led.” The emphasis on continued prophecy in the meetings, led some to accept false views thinking they were from God’s fresh revelation. These revivals led to resolving social problems (slavery, poverty, women’s rights, and led to establishing numerous mission boards and hundreds of missionaries were enthusiastic about evangelizing the world.

In 1840 David Livingston went to Malawi, Africa to explore the vast interior of the African continent. No one had any idea there were thousands of tribal groups in the interior of Africa.

The Southern Baptist Convention was formed in 1845 and, also, the Foreign Mission Board (later IMB)—not to defend slavery, but to facilitate a missionary effort by cooperative effort among all the Baptist churches and through volunteer church support.

Meanwhile in England, in 1854 Hudson Taylor arrived in China and the New York Missionary Conference, organized by Alexander Duff, seeks to answer the question, “To what extent are we authorized by the Word of God to expect the conversion of the world to Christ?”

Henry Venn (1796 – 1873), leader of the Church Missionary Society, first set out the ideal of “indigenous churches” that were to be self-governing, self-supporting and self-propagating churches, later known as the “3-selfs churches.” One of his famous quotes is to encourage the “euthanasia of missions,” which meant that missionaries were to be considered temporary workers and not permanent. He knew the terrible results of dependency upon foreign missionaries and their finances. John Livingston Nevius (1829-1893) followed Venn’s concepts in developing the Nevius Plan for indigenous policy in China and Korea.

### **Golden Age of Colonial Missions (1865-1910)**

Colonialism was the extension of a nation’s sovereignty over territory beyond its borders by the establishment of either settler colonies or administrative dependencies in which indigenous populations are directly ruled or displaced. These countries were dominated for their resources, labor and markets, which would force their social, religious and linguistic structures on the conquered population. The term *colonialism* is used interchangeably with *imperialism*.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> Adapted from Wikipedia, “Colonialism.”

Mission efforts were bound to colonial expansion of the major powers. British missionaries went to British controlled countries, as did Dutch, German, etc., to their respective colonies.

*Advantages of Colonialism:*

- Brought entry into new fields
- Brought needed political development to often chaotic nations
- Brought education, medicine and technology

*Disadvantages of Colonialism:*

- “Gunboat-diplomacy” forced commercialism that was inevitably associated with missionaries’ country of origin, therefore, with them.
- Exploitive exportation of resources with little national benefit was blamed on all foreigners: Boxer Rebellion in China turned against all foreigners.
- Generated resentment against Western Christianity since Western society is not seen as distinct from its religious heritage.
- Premature indignation resulted in failures in India
- Resulted in pious paternalism or benevolent imperialism, which taught that a hand-out, begging life-style was effective.
- Missionary strategy is aimed at individual conversion, church planting, social transformation through evangelism, education and medicine, but all ministries were dependent upon foreign subsidy and, generally, could never be assumed by indigenous people.
- Initial “radical discontinuity” declined with inroads of liberalism and pluralism
- 1860 saw first single women’s appointment to a foreign mission.

**Faith Missions started**

Hudson Taylor founded China Inland Missions (CIM) in 1865 on the principle of faith and prayer for recruiting missionaries from the working class and single women (a new practice) and their support. They made no appeal for funds, but depend upon God to move in hearts of people through prayer alone. By the time of the Boxer Rebellion (1900) the anti-imperialist peasant-based movement expelled all foreigners, as well as Christians who were held responsible for the domination of China. Tens of thousands of Chinese Christians were killed.<sup>4</sup>

After the 1950 communist takeover of China they relocated their personnel in SE Asia and renamed the mission to OMF (Overseas Missionary Fellowship). Their focus was unreached provinces, identifying with the Chinese by dress, pigtailed and worshipping in Chinese homes, indigenization by the 3-selfs principles. Recruiting was based on spiritual qualifications, not education or church orientation and headquarters (decision-making) was on the field, not back at home. Revolutionary concepts.

Student Volunteer Movement (SVM) founded in 1886 sought to recruit college and university students in the US to missionary service abroad. D.L. Moody challenged the students with the Princeton Pledge, “I propose, God willing, to become a foreign

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<sup>4</sup> 48 Catholic missionaries, 182 Protestant missionaries, 222 Chinese Eastern Orthodox and 500 Chinese Protestants were killed.

missionary.” The SVM would send 6,000 to China, especially to work with Hudson Taylor. The movement’s motto: *The evangelization of the world in this Generation.*

By the turn of the century four types of Missions agencies now functioning: (1) Interdenominational, (2) Denominational, (3) Faith Missions, (4) Specialized Missions

### **Outstanding Missionaries of Era**

Charlotte “Lottie” Moon (1873) pioneer single female missionary to China for 40 years became an evangelist and church planter. She died in 1912 as a result of semi-starvation. The annual SBC missionary offering for missionary support is given in memorial of her sacrificial life.

In 1888 the first party of Americans joined the China Inland Mission led by Hudson Taylor.

Amy Carmichael (1867-1951) served in India and was the author of many books. She spent 55 years of service rescuing girls from Temple prostitution in Hindu worship. She heard Hudson Taylor speak about missionary life and committed her life to reaching people for Christ.

### **Evaluation of Colonial Missions**

William Carey envisioned a global missionary conference which began with the first all-India Missionary conference in 1872 with 136 participants.

In 1910 it was realized: World Missionary Conference, Edinburgh, Scotland, with 1200 representatives present.

The association with colonial governments gave foreign missions an imperialistic flavor or reputation especially since financial resources all came from abroad. Governmental paternalism reflected in missionary paternalistic or dependency strategies as well, since the foreign missionaries dominated everything and would not release control to the nationals, except in insignificant areas that had nothing to do with finances.

By all odds the missionaries of the nineteenth century were a special breed of men and women. Single-handedly and with great courage they attacked the social evils of their time: child marriage, the immolation of widows, temple prostitution, and untouchability in India; footbinding, opium addiction, and the abandoning of babies in China; polygamy, the slave trade and the destruction of twins in Africa. In all parts of the world they opened schools, hospitals, clinics, medical colleges, orphanages, leprosaria. They gave succor and sustenance to the dregs of society cast off by their own communities. At great risk to themselves and their families they fought famines, floods, pestilences, and plagues. They were the first to rescue unwanted babies, educate girls, and liberate women. Above all, they gave to the non-Christian world the most liberating of all messages – the gospel of Christ. They converted savages into saints; and out of this raw material they built the Christian church, which is today the most universal of all institutions. By the end of the century the gospel had literally been taken to the ends of the earth. ... The emissaries of the cross were to be found in all habitable parts of the globe, from the frozen wastes of Greenland to the steaming jungles of Africa. Churches, chapels,

schools, and hospitals were scattered with great profusion from Turkey to Tokyo, from Cairo to Cape Town, from Monterrey to Montevideo, from Polynesia to Indonesia. There were, to be sure, a few areas of the world where there were no resident missionaries, but that was because of government restrictions, not because the church lacked either the will or the power to press forward with the task of world evangelization. Included in the Christian church, for the very first time, were representatives of "every tribe and tongue and people and nation" (Rev 5:9) (Latourette, 1953, p. 469).

## **XI. Advances in 20<sup>th</sup> Century**

Wars bring havoc and danger to missions. It was one thing to be associated with the abuses of Colonial powers but another when missionaries are associated by nationality with the cruelties of war. The respect for their message inevitably deteriorated: In the period of 1900-1941 there were 24 international wars; later in the period of 1945-1969, there were 100 wars of independence from Colonial powers! With Christians on both sides of the battle front it can be difficult to evangelize.

Optimism was crushed after the holocaust of WWII. The eschatological motivation during the 19<sup>th</sup> century was often a post-millennial hope that evangelism would bring in the kingdom.

After WWII the major base of missions shifted to the US since most of the economy, resources, man-power and authority of the European powers were destroyed by the war.

Since 1950 the massive evacuation of China has remained permanent. Only in recent years has the door opened ever so slightly for missionaries to be allowed under special work visas to reside in the country under considerable observation.

### *Nationalism on rise*

In an effort to quench a future world war, 51 nations started the United Nations in 1945. As of 2007 there are 192 present members of the UN. A number of countries do not meet the criteria of membership. Operation World lists 237 of these countries that exist today.

After WWII the influence of colonial power was annulled. The political imperialism ended, but economic imperialism has continued often with the same resentments towards anyone of the dominant powers. Much of this resentment has encrusted in rebellion, while accepting any other economic system to not be dependent on the Western foreign power.

Independent people condemned former colonial masters and often by association, the missionaries from the same colonial power.

Western education contributed to nationalism because it taught the ability to be independent and self-sufficient. They learned how the West did it and thought they could do it too, often with worse abuses than the colonial powers.

Religious turbulence with the rising aggressiveness of Islam has brought insecurity in many regions of the world making missionary work risky or almost impossible by foreigners.

### *Doctrinal Issues*

In 1900 the Pentecostal Movement began inauspiciously, but would grow exponentially towards the end of the century, permanently dividing Evangelicals in a race for world evangelism.

The Protestant Ecumenical Movement began in 1910 in the Edinburgh Missionary Conference with noble goals. Rather than gather missionaries, now it was time to recognize the national leadership, so national church leaders were invited, eventually forming the World Council of Churches (WCC) in 1948 and the National Council of Churches (NCC) in 1950 in most individual countries, which included the moderate to liberal Protestants.

Comity Agreements (refers to legal reciprocity or jurisdiction over other areas), thus the mission fields divided up to eliminate competition among mission agencies, but it did not apply outside of the liberal organizations (WCC and NCC)

The theological and methodological differences (social emphasis especially) led to breakdown of any attempt at unification among mission efforts. In 1932 a move to favor social action rather than conversion became the chief aim these missions. The Liberalism controversy led to denominational splits and new mission organizations in the 1920's thru 1950's, destroying the possibility of any kind of organizational unity in the Ecumenical movement.

## **1. New Organizations**

- WCC—formed in 1948 in Amsterdam: Evangelical doctrine marginalized
- IFMA—formed in 1917 by NA “Faith” interdenominational missions (now called “**CrossGlobal Link**”)
- EFMA—formed in 1945 by NA Evangelical denominations and Para-church (IMB joined the EFMA in 1995) Now is called the “**Mission Exchange**”
- FOM—Fundamentalists Missions
- AIMS—formed in 1985 (Assoc. of International Mission Services) formed for charismatic agencies
- Independent Missions
- Many independent missions remain unaffiliated with any association
  - ◆ Wycliffe and New Tribes Mission are largest organizations
  - ◆ 50% of all missions agencies are not associated with any major grouping
  - ◆ Evangelical denominations and mission boards are growing substantially

## **2. Liberation Theology**

Liberation Theology focuses on Jesus Christ not only as Redeemer but primarily as the Liberator of the oppressed (economically, judicially, and politically). This is a theology that is driven by the concept of human rights activism. This was primarily a Catholic Church based movement since it was begun by Peruvian priest, Gustavo Gutierrez in 1968.

It is sometime called *Christian Socialism*, since it attempts to resolve inequalities by Marxist-style rebellion especially against oppressive dictatorships or insensitive democracies when they formed in the 1990s, especially in Latin America.

The allegorical interpretation of Exodus, “liberating the captives” is interpreted to mean that the poor are the privileged channel of god’s grace. The concept has been rejected by evangelicals, especially the hermeneutics and the socialist/communist guerrilla connections. With fall of dictatorships, their reason for being has pretty much dissolved, though they continue in a few countries. They have learned how to gain the political power, i.e. Chavez in Venezuela, in order to bring about their new social order.

Since the missionary effort is associated with North American missions the attitude toward all foreigners is distrust and accusations of colonial exploitations blamed on all. This has given rise to the new nationalism with increased restrictions on missions.

### 3. Pentecostal Explosion

Although there were some isolated manifestations of Pentecostal-like experiences earlier, it is generally agreed that the Pentecostal movement began in 1900 in Topeka, Kansas, in the small Bethel Bible Institute. There speaking in tongues was directly associated with the baptism of the Spirit. A young African-American pastor, William J. Seymour was taught the Baptism-tongues doctrine and was called to a small mission in Los Angeles called the Azusa Street Mission. There a revival broke out which lasted until 1924. These meetings would change the Christian world scene.

Oral Roberts and Full Gospel Businessmen’s Fellowship in 1951 became the most famous Pentecostal evangelist/healer of the movement. Though the movement sparked a number of denominations, its growth was not sensational until after 1960. An Anglican priest spoke in tongues showing that you did not have to be Pentecostal to have the same experience, thus giving birth to the Charismatic Movement.

- 1960 – 11 million (14% of Evangelicals)
- 1990—93 million (31% of Evangelicals)
- 2003 – 500 million (65% of Evangelicals)
- If Charismatics were included with the Pentecostal, their share is 52%
- Evangelicals have grown at 4.5% (but driving force is Pentecostal/charismatic growth at 7.4%)
- 70% of all Protestants in Latin America are Pentecostal.

Kane gives these reasons for Growth of the Pentecostal Movement:

- Generally indigenous from inception.
- Strong emphasis on every believer being a personal witness, especially testimony.
- Focus has been the lower classes looking for acceptance, prosperity and hope.
- Emotional and celebration worship style appeals to their emotional make-up
- Emphasis on fullness of Spirit that can be felt, thus is seen as real.
- Occurrences of healings and miracles draw many and give assurance of God’s presence (Kane, 1978, p. 100).

Charismatics have penetrated Catholics, Eastern Orthodox, Anglican and Protestant denominations around the world. There is a growing acceptance of the Pentecostal forms of worship (praise chorus, clapping, lifting hands and praise banners) even in non-Charismatic and traditional churches. The pressure is enormous to adapt Pentecostal-like styles. Acceptance of worship form has not always led to acceptance of Pentecostal doctrine, though it may eventually. When no one knows the difference between the two (Pentecostal and non-Pentecostal doctrines) the inevitable shift to Pentecostal experience

takes precedence over doctrinal issues. Female “liberation” found favor in Pentecostal movement with many women pastors and tongues-speakers.

Success and popularity of Charismatics has led many to overcome criticism and join the movement. The numbers are hard to verify, but nearly a majority of the population is declaring themselves to be Evangelical Christians in many Latin American countries.

## **XI. Post WWII Mission Innovations**

Faith Missions—following Hudson Taylor’s and George Mueller’s example, found numerous recruits following the war. Bible Institutes were filled with students wanting to prepare to be foreign missionaries. Most missionaries for decades came from Bible Institutes (esp. Moody Bible Institute).

Some of the largest mission agencies are the Wycliffe Bible Translators (also known as SIL, *Summer Institute of Linguistics*), Campus Crusade for Christ, New Tribes Missions and the IMB.

The utilization of radio, aviation, Bible correspondence, gospel recordings, cassettes, films, Theological Education by Extension (TEE), printing press and other technologies helped expand the opportunities to multiply each missionary many times.

### *Bible Translation*

Cameron Townsend went to Guatemala in 1917 and tried to reach Indians in Spanish by selling Bibles. The text was not their heart language. An Indian asked him, “Why, if your God is so smart, hasn’t He learned our language?” This motivated Townsend to found the Wycliffe Bible Translators in 1942. Today they are working in 50 countries. There are 6,528 languages in world, but 4,564 do not have any portion of Bible yet in their language. Although this represent only 6% of world’s population they are the bulk of the Unreached People Groups (UPG) which must be reached to fulfill the Great Commission. Wycliffe today has 6,267 missionaries committed to this task committed to the task of reaching the last unreached people group by 2025.

### *Media*

Literature production: Bibles, tracts, booklets, books, literacy methods, correspondence courses, SS materials, newspapers, magazines, music recordings

Radio broadcasts can reach into homes that could never be visited. The two main Christian broadcast stations are HCJB and Trans World Radio. They transmit in over 120 languages to over 100 countries utilizing shortwave, AM, FM, satellite and the internet as vehicles for transmitting the message of the gospel.

Films are excellent tools, especially the *Jesus Film* in 1,015 languages, to 5.6 billion viewers, which have resulted in 230 million conversions in 229 nations. The original project had a \$6 million price tag and was all raised by donations.

### *Student mission emphasis*

The major driving force of the missionary movement has always been the response from college/university students. Though often the decision to be a missionary is made much in the teen years, the college missionary commitment usually seals the decision.

There have been three student volunteer movements that have motivated 70% of missionary force on the field until the modern day. There will be almost 3 million young people going on short-term trips overseas every year.

### *Training of Nationals*

The major aspect of missions—multiplying leaders—has some limitations. Existing brick-and-mortar buildings can only house and train a limited number of leaders. In 2002 in Brazil alone there are 300,000 church leaders who have had no formal training.

Recent innovations seek to move the seminary to the student's home: Theological Education by Extension (TEE) and Church Based Training (CBT). Though distant training apart from a personal mentor and professor is never quite as effective as resident learning, periodic seminars or gatherings of students to meet face-to-face (F2F) with an instructor can give the personalized touch.

Introductory correspondence courses even go to non-Christians (Muslims). Recent developments in the online education in multiple languages could be a significant key to multiplying professionally trained nationals from all over the world, willing to give their lives to share the gospel to unreached peoples.

### *The Changing Role of the missionary*

In most of the countries of the world national churches have assumed much of missionary work. Some countries have Evangelical churches that number in the thousands and some in the hundreds of thousands.

Missionaries need to learn to be a mentor, coach or trainer of nationals instead of the CEO of a mission.

Dr. John Nevius was a missionary to China with the Presbyterian Church. He published the Nevius Plan to describe the plan for his denominational mission which included the following basic provisions:

1. Policy of self-support without any mission subsidy except in the early stages.
2. Policy of self propagation: every believer is to be both a learner and a teacher of someone who knows less.
3. Policy of self-government: every church must follow its own self-chosen leaders and support them when possible.
4. Policy of wide itineration of the missionary, so as to avoid dependency on him.
5. Policy of strict church discipline
6. Policy of benevolence by the national Christians.

Roland Allen was the last of the pioneer advocates of the indigenous church policies in the early 1900s. Some of his principles were:

1. Begin the works in strategic centers of population and influence
2. Do not aim at any particular class of people.
3. Converts were to remain in their occupations and witness where they worked instead of extracting them, which alienated them from the people they could reach the easiest.
4. No church programs should start what could not be supported or done by nationals. There would be no outside subsidy except at the beginning under special circumstances.

5. Gifted nationals were developed for evangelism work.
6. Nationals provided their own buildings without dependence on foreign resources.
7. The missionary was never to do any ministry or use any technology that a national could not do.

**Church Growth Movement** methodology was begun by Dr. Donald A. McGavran, founder of the School of World Mission and Institute of Church Growth of Fuller Theological Seminary in 1955. The basic foundation of Church Growth is that the goal of missions is church planting and that God wants church growth. These principles help the missionary determine how the church grows and how to discover ripe fields for the harvest. Insight are taken from cultural anthropology, sociology, social psychology in seeking answers to these questions. McGavran's principles continue to dominate much of mission strategy in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

**Research periodicals** that keep missionaries abreast of the latest research in missiology include the *International Review of Missions*, *Missiology*, *Evangelical Mission Quarterly*, *International Bulletin of Missionary Research*

**Research Organizations** that help the student and mission personnel keep up with the latest developments and statistics include MARC (*Missions Advanced Research and Communications*) Center, US Center for World Missions, Overseas Ministry Study Center (OMSC), Billy Graham Center for World Evangelism at Wheaton and the Research Division of the IMB.

**The demographic change of the world** that has changed the focus of missions include the world population in 1900 was 1.6 billion; In 1995, it was 5.75 billion; In 2000, it was 6.13 billion, and in 2006, the population was 6.3 billion.

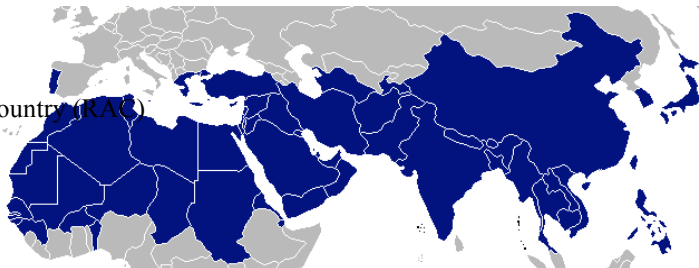
**Urbanization** has been the major change in these population statistics, therefore, in the strategies of mission: in 1900 urban populations were less than 15%; in 2000, it was 53% of the world's population.

The **10/40 Window focus** was coined by Luis Bush in 1990 to refer to the 10° N. latitude to the 40° N. latitude across the eastern hemisphere where there exists the least access to the Christian message and resources on the planet. This area has three key elements that focus our attention: the greatest poverty (82% of the poorest), the lowest quality of life (84% of lowest life expectancy, infant mortality and illiteracy) and the largest number of unevangelized people groups of the world (97%). The population is more than 2+ billion, made up of Chinese, Hindus, Muslims, animist or atheists virtually unreached: the most neglected people in world. Likewise, this area contains many governments that are formally or informally opposed to Christian work of any kind within their borders. It takes a lot of creativity to accomplish God's purpose here, thus the term Creative Access Countries (CAC).<sup>5</sup>

#### *View of world as people groups rather than geographical divisions*

The shift to understanding the world through the concept of People Groups, especially Unreached People Groups (UPG) stemmed from the Joshua Project. It is where "there is no indigenous community of believing Christians with adequate numbers and resources to evangelize this people group." In 1998

<sup>5</sup> Also known as Restricted Access Country (RAC)



these PGs numbered approximately 11,874 ethno-linguistic people groups; with 3,915 UPGs being virtually untouched with the gospel.

### **IMB Concept**

The International Mission Board of the Southern Baptist Convention represents the primary mission arm of over 40,000 churches. They have chosen to primarily target the 4,000 people groups, or 1.6 billion unreached people that are still alive with little or no access to the Gospel. They have approximately 5,184 field personnel and reported 475,072 baptisms in 2006 in 135,252 churches with an active membership of 8.8 million. They started 23,486 new churches in 2006 among 1,170 different people groups.

Since about 1995 the IMB has focused on research and survey of unreached people around the world. Their strategic coordinators have developed a strategy of evangelism and ministry for developing a Church Planting Movement (CPM), especially among UPGs.

The missionary is a catalyst to involve many people in different locations and nationalities as they partner together to reach a specific group. Originally these missionaries were called “non-resident missionaries”—those who don’t live in access area—and are called “strategic coordinators.”

### **Personnel for the Mission Task Unfinished**

Multiple options exist today for unique ministries with 4,400 mission agencies (still growing). The primary task of church planting which develops into a movement of churches planting churches without foreign intervention, has become the goal of all missionaries on the cutting edge of missiology today.

“Tent-Makers” and “Platform” ministries are designed to gain access and acceptance in Limited Access Countries (also called Restricted Access Countries (RAC) or Creative Access Countries).

Personnel skilled in TESL (Teaching English as a Second Language), technical, journalist, business professionals, teachers, sports coaches, etc., the list is unlimited. Virtually any area of expertise with missions and intercultural training can find a key part in the global task of reaching the last group of UPGs or help mobilize the churches to reach the masses of unevangelized everywhere.

As we enter the 21<sup>st</sup> century the major increase of missionary personnel is coming from the 2/3<sup>rd</sup> world (66% of world population and territory). If this statistic continues, then a strategy will need to be developed to mobilize, facilitate, train and support this group of servants that God is raising up in these last days. There were 13,000 internationals in missionary service in 1980; then 36,000 in 1988 working in 2,425 people groups in 11 countries. Today there are over 66,000 as opposed to barely 40,000 Americans!

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