

# The Manila Manifesto

---

 [www.lausanne.org/content/manifesto/the-manila-manifesto](http://www.lausanne.org/content/manifesto/the-manila-manifesto)

Available in: [Dansk](#) | [Deutsch](#) | [English](#) | [Español](#) | [Français](#) | [日本語 \(Japanese\)](#) | [한국어 \(Korean\)](#) | [Nederlands](#) | [Suomi](#) | [Svenska](#) | [Lietuvių](#)

## **TWENTY-ONE AFFIRMATIONS of the Manila Manifesto**

1. We affirm our continuing commitment to *The Lausanne Covenant* as the basis of our cooperation in the Lausanne movement.
2. We affirm that in the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments God has given us an authoritative disclosure of his character and will, his redemptive acts and their meaning, and his mandate for mission.
3. We affirm that the biblical gospel is God's enduring message to our world, and we determine to defend, proclaim, and embody it.
4. We affirm that human beings, though created in the image of God, are sinful and guilty, and lost without Christ, and that this truth is a necessary preliminary to the gospel.
5. We affirm that the Jesus of history and the Christ of glory are the same person, and that this Jesus Christ is absolutely unique, for he alone is God incarnate, our sin-bearer, the conqueror of death and the coming judge.
6. We affirm that on the cross Jesus Christ took our place, bore our sins and died our death; and that for this reason alone God freely forgives those who are brought to repentance and faith.
7. We affirm that other religions and ideologies are not alternative paths to God, and that human spirituality, if unredeemed by Christ, leads not to God but to judgment, for Christ is the only way.
8. We affirm that we must demonstrate God's love visibly by caring for those who are deprived of justice, dignity, food, and shelter.
9. We affirm that the proclamation of God's kingdom of justice and peace demands the denunciation of all injustice and oppression, both personal and structural; we will not shrink from this prophetic witness.
10. We affirm that the Holy Spirit's witness to Christ is indispensable to evangelism, and that without this supernatural work neither new birth nor new life is possible.
11. We affirm that spiritual warfare demands spiritual weapons, and that we must both preach the Word in the power of the Spirit, and pray constantly that we may enter into Christ's victory over the principalities and powers of evil.
12. We affirm that God has committed to the whole church and every member of it the task of making Christ known throughout the world; we long to see all lay and ordained persons mobilized and trained for this task.
13. We affirm that we who claim to be members of the body of Christ must transcend within our fellowship the barriers of race, gender, and class.
14. We affirm that the gifts of the Spirit are distributed to all God's people, women and men, and that their partnership in evangelization must be welcomed for the common good.
15. We affirm that we who proclaim the gospel must exemplify it in a life of holiness and love; otherwise our testimony loses its credibility.
16. We affirm that every Christian congregation must turn itself outward to its local community in evangelistic witness and compassionate service.

17. We affirm the urgent need for churches, mission agencies, and other Christian organizations to cooperate in evangelism and social action, repudiating competition and avoiding duplication.

18. We affirm our duty to study the society in which we live, in order to understand its structures, values and needs, and so develop an appropriate strategy of mission.

19. We affirm that world evangelization is urgent and that the reaching of unreached peoples is possible. So we resolve during the last decade of the twentieth century to give ourselves to these tasks with fresh determination.

20. We affirm our solidarity with those who suffer for the gospel, and will seek to prepare ourselves for the same possibility. We will also work for religious and political freedom everywhere.

21. We affirm that God is calling the whole church to take the whole gospel to the whole world. So we determine to proclaim it faithfully, urgently, and sacrificially until he comes.

## **A. THE WHOLE GOSPEL**

The gospel is the good news of God's salvation from the power of evil, the establishment of his eternal kingdom and his final victory over everything which defies his purpose. In his love God purposed to do this before the world began and effected his liberating plan over sin, death, and judgment through the death of our Lord Jesus Christ. It is Christ who makes us free, and unites us in his redeemed fellowship. (*Colossians 2:15; 1 Corinthians 15:24-28; Ephesians 1:4; Colossians 1:19; Titus 2:14*)

### **1. Our Human Predicament**

We are committed to preaching the whole gospel, that is, the biblical gospel in its fullness. In order to do so, we have to understand why beings need it.

Men and women have an intrinsic dignity and worth, because they were created in God's likeness to know, love, and serve him. But now through sin every part of their humanness have been distorted. Human beings have become self-centered, self-serving rebels, who do not love God or their neighbour as they should. In consequence, they are alienated both from their Creator and from the rest of his creation, which is the basic cause of the pain, disorientation, and loneliness which so many people suffer today. Sin also frequently erupts in anti-social behavior, in violent exploitation of others, and in a depletion of the earth's resources of which God has made men and women his stewards. Humanity is guilty, without excuse, and on the broad road which leads to destruction.

Although God's image in human beings has been corrupted, they are still capable of loving relationships, noble deeds, and beautiful art. Yet even the finest human achievement is fatally flawed and cannot possibly fit anybody to enter God's presence. Men and women are also spiritual beings, but spiritual practice and self-help techniques can at the most alleviate felt needs; they cannot address the solemn realities of sin, guilt, and judgment.

Neither human religion, nor human righteousness, nor sociopolitical programs can save people. Self-salvation of every kind is impossible. Left to themselves, human beings are lost forever.

So we repudiate false gospels which deny human sin, divine judgment, the deity and incarnation of Jesus Christ, and the necessity of the cross and resurrection. We also reject half-gospels, which minimize sin and confuse God's grace with human self-effort. We confess that we ourselves have sometimes trivialized the gospel. But we determine in our evangelism to remember God's radical diagnosis and his equally radical remedy. (*Acts 20:27; Genesis 1:26, 27; Romans 3:9-18; 2 Timothy 3:2-4; Genesis 3:17-24; Romans 1:29-31; Genesis 1:26, 28; 2:15; Romans 1:20; 2:1; 3:19; Matthew 7:13; Matthew 5:46; 7:11; 1 Timothy 6:16; Acts 17:22-31; Romans 3:20; Ephesians 2:1-3; Galatians 1:6-9; 2 Corinthians 11:2-4; 1 John 2:22, 23; 4:1-3; 1 Corinthians 15:3, 4; Jeremiah 6:14; 8:11*)

### **2. Good News for Today**

We rejoice that the living God did not abandon us to our lostness and despair. In his love he came after us in Jesus Christ to rescue and remake us. So the good news focuses on the historic person of Jesus, who came

proclaiming the kingdom of God and living a life of humble service, who died for us, becoming sin and a curse in our place, and whom God vindicated by raising him from the dead. To those who repent and believe in Christ, God grants a share in the new creation. He gives us new life, which includes the forgiveness of our sins and the indwelling, transforming power of his Spirit. He welcomes us into his new community, which consists of people of all races, nations, and cultures. And he promises that one day we will enter his new world, in which evil will be abolished, nature will be redeemed, and God will reign for ever.

This good news must be boldly proclaimed, wherever possible, in church and in public halls, on radio and television, and in the open air, because it is God's power for salvation and we are under obligation to make it known. In our preaching we must faithfully declare the truth which God has revealed in the Bible and struggle to relate it to our own context.

We also affirm that apologetics, namely "the defence and confirmation of the gospel", is integral to the biblical understanding of mission and essential for effective witness in the modern world. Paul "reasoned" with people out of the Scriptures, with a view to "persuading" them of the truth of the gospel. So must we. In fact, all Christians should be ready to give a reason for the hope that is in them.

We have again been confronted with Luke's emphasis that the gospel is good news for the poor and have asked ourselves what this means to the majority of the world's population who are destitute, suffering, or oppressed. We have been reminded that the law, the prophets and the wisdom books, and the teaching and ministry of Jesus, all stress God's concern for the materially poor and our consequent duty to defend and care for them. Scripture also refers to the spiritually poor who look to God alone for mercy. The gospel comes as good news to both. The spiritually poor, who, whatever their economic circumstances, humble themselves before God, receive by faith the free gift of salvation. There is no other way for anybody to enter the kingdom of God. The materially poor and powerless find in addition a new dignity as God's children, and the love of brothers and sisters who will struggle with them for their liberation from everything which demeans or oppresses them.

We repent of any neglect of God's truth in Scripture and determine both to proclaim and to defend it. We also repent where we have been indifferent to the plight of the poor, and where we have shown preference for the rich, and we determine to follow Jesus in preaching good news to all people by both word and deed. (*Ephesians 2:4-7, Luke 15; 19:10; Acts 8:35; Mark 1:14, 15; 2 Corinthians 5:21; Galatians 3:13; Acts 2:23, 24; 2 Corinthians 5:17; Acts 2:38, 39; Ephesians 2:11-19; Revelation 21:1-5; 22:1-5; Ephesians 6:19, 20; 2 Timothy 4:2; Romans 1:14-16; Jeremiah 23:28; Philippians 1:7; Acts 18:4; 19:8, 9; 2 Corinthians 5:11; 1 Peter 3:15; Luke 4:18; 6:20; 7:22; Deuteronomy 15:7-11; Amos 2:6, 7; Zechariah 7:8-10; Proverbs 21:13; Zephaniah 3:12; Matthew 5:3; Mark 10:15; 1 John 3:1; Acts 2:44, 45; 4:32-35*)

### **3. The Uniqueness of Jesus Christ**

We are called to proclaim Christ in an increasingly pluralistic world. There is a resurgence of old faiths and a rise of new ones. In the first century too there were "many gods and many lords". Yet the apostles boldly affirmed the uniqueness, indispensability, and centrality of Christ. We must do the same.

Because men and women are made in God's image and see in the creation traces of its Creator, the religions which have arisen do sometimes contain elements of truth and beauty. They are not, however, alternative gospels. Because human beings are sinful, and because "the whole world is under the control of the evil one", even religious people are in need of Christ's redemption. We, therefore, have no warrant for saying that salvation can be found outside Christ or apart from an explicit acceptance of his work through faith.

It is sometimes held that in virtue of God's covenant with Abraham, Jewish people do not need to acknowledge Jesus as their Messiah. We affirm that they need him as much as anyone else, that it would be a form of anti-Semitism, as well as being disloyal to Christ, to depart from the New Testament pattern of taking the gospel to 'the Jew first. . .'. We therefore reject the thesis that Jews have their own covenant which renders faith in Jesus unnecessary.

What unites us is our common convictions about Jesus Christ. We confess him as the eternal Son of God, who became fully human while remaining fully divine, who was our substitute on the cross, bearing our sins and

dying our death, exchanging his righteousness for our unrighteousness, who rose victorious in a transformed body, and who will return in glory to judge the world. He alone is the incarnate Son, the Saviour, the Lord and the Judge, and he alone, with the Father and the Spirit, is worthy of worship, faith, and obedience of all people. There is only one gospel because there is only one Christ, who because of his death and resurrection is himself the only way of salvation. We therefore reject both the relativism which regards all religions and spiritualities as equally valid approaches to God, and the syncretism which tries to mix faith in Christ with other faiths.

Moreover, since God has exalted Jesus to the highest place, in order that everybody should acknowledge him, this also is our desire. Compelled by Christ's love, we must obey Christ's Great Commission and love his lost sheep, but we are especially motivated by "jealousy" for his holy name, and we long to see him receive the honour and glory which are due to him.

In the past we have sometimes been guilty of adopting towards adherents of other faiths attitudes of ignorance, arrogance, disrespect, and even hostility. We repent of this. We nevertheless are determined to bear a positive and uncompromising witness to the uniqueness of our Lord, in his life, death, and resurrection, in all aspects of our evangelistic work including inter-faith dialogue. (*1 Corinthians 8:5; Psalm 19:1-6; Romans 1:19, 20; Acts 17:28; 1 John 5:19; Acts 10:1, 2; 11:14, 18; 15:8, 9; John 14:6; Genesis 12:1-3; 17:1, 2; Romans 3:9; 10:12; Acts 13:46; Romans 1:16; 2:9, 10; Acts 13:38, 39; John 1:1, 14, 18; Romans 1:3, 4; 1 Peter 2:24; 1 Corinthians 15:3; 2 Corinthians 5:21; 1 Corinthians 15:1-11; Matthew 25:31, 32; Acts 17:30, 31; Revelation 5:11-14; Acts 4:12; Philippians 2:9-11; 2 Corinthians 5:14; Matthew 28:19, 20; John 10:11, 16; 2 Corinthians 11:2, 3; 1 Timothy 2:5-7*)

#### **4. The Gospel and Social Responsibility**

The authentic gospel must become visible in the transformed lives of men and women. As we proclaim the love of God we must be involved in loving service, as we preach the kingdom of God we must be committed to its demands of justice and peace.

Evangelism is primary because our chief concern is with the gospel, that all people may have the opportunity to accept Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour. Yet Jesus not only proclaimed the kingdom of God, he also demonstrated its arrival by works of mercy and power. We are called today to a similar integration of words and deeds. In a spirit of humility we are to preach and teach, minister to the sick, feed the hungry, care for prisoners, help the disadvantaged and handicapped, and deliver the oppressed. While we acknowledge the diversity of spiritual gifts, callings, and contexts, we also affirm that good news and good works are inseparable.

The proclamation of God's kingdom necessarily demands the prophetic denunciation of all that is incompatible with it. Among the evils we deplore are destructive violence, including institutionalized violence, political corruption, all forms of exploitation of people and of the earth, the undermining of the family, abortion on demand, the drug traffic, and the abuse of human rights. In our concern for the poor, we are distressed by the burden of debt in the two-thirds world. We are also outraged by the inhuman conditions in which millions live, who bear God's image as we do.

Our continuing commitment to social action is not a confusion of the kingdom of God with a Christianized society. It is, rather, a recognition that the biblical gospel has inescapable social implications. True mission should always be incarnational. It necessitates entering humbly into other people's worlds, identifying with their social reality, their sorrow and suffering, and their struggles for justice against oppressive powers. This cannot be done without personal sacrifices.

We repent that the narrowness of our concerns and vision has often kept us from proclaiming the lordship of Jesus Christ over all of life, private and public, local and global. We determine to obey his command to "seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness". (*1 Thessalonians 1:6-10; 1 John 3:17; Romans 14:17; Romans 10:14; Matthew 12:28; 1 John 3:18; Matthew 25:34-46; Acts 6:1-4; Romans 12:4-8; Matthew 5:16, Jeremiah 22:1-5; 11-17; 23:5-6; Amos 1:1-2, 8; Isaiah 59; Leviticus 25; Job 24:1-12; Ephesians 2:8-10; John 17:18; 20:21; Philippians 2:5-8; Acts 10:36; Matthew 6:33*)

## **B. THE WHOLE CHURCH**

The whole gospel has to be proclaimed by the whole church. All the people of God are called to share in the evangelistic task. Yet without the Holy Spirit of God all their endeavours will be fruitless.

## **5. God the Evangelist**

The Scriptures declare that God himself is the chief evangelist. For the Spirit of God is the Spirit of truth, love, holiness, and power, and evangelism is impossible without him. It is he who anoints the messenger, confirms the Word, prepares the hearer, convicts the sinful, enlightens the blind, gives life to the dead, enables us to repent and believe, unites us to the body of Christ, assures us that we are God's children, leads us into Christlike character and service, and sends us out in our turn to be Christ's witnesses. In all this the Holy Spirit's main preoccupation is to glorify Jesus Christ by showing him to us and forming him in us.

All evangelism involves spiritual warfare with the principalities and powers of evil, in which only spiritual weapons can prevail, especially the Word and the Spirit, with prayer. We therefore call on all Christian people to be diligent in their prayers both for the renewal of the church and for the evangelization of the world.

Every true conversion involves a power encounter, in which the superior authority of Jesus Christ is demonstrated. There is no greater miracle than this, in which the believer is set free from the bondage of Satan and sin, fear and futility, darkness and death.

Although the miracles of Jesus were special, being signs of his messiahship and anticipations of his perfect kingdom when all nature will be subject to him, we have no liberty to place limits on the power of the living Creator today. We reject both the scepticism which denies miracles and the presumption which demands them, both the timidity which shrinks from the fullness of the Spirit and the triumphalism which shrinks from the weakness in which Christ's power is made perfect.

We repent of all self-confident attempts either to evangelize in our own strength or to dictate to the Holy Spirit. We determine in the future not to "grieve" or "quench" the Spirit, but rather to seek to spread the good news "with power, with the Holy Spirit, and with deep conviction". (*2 Corinthians 5:20; John 15:26, 27; Luke 4:18; 1 Corinthians 2:4; John 16:8-11; 1 Corinthians 12:3; Ephesians 2:5; 1 Corinthians 12:13; Romans 8:16; Galatians 5:22, 23; Acts 1:8; John 16:14; Galatians 4:19; Ephesians 6:10-12; 2 Corinthians 10:3-5; Ephesians 6:17; Ephesians 6:18-20; 2 Thessalonians 3:1; Acts 26:17, 18; 1 Thessalonians 1:9, 10; Colossians 1:13, 14; John 2:11; 20:30, 31; John 11:25; 1 Corinthians 15:20-28; Jeremiah 32:17; 2 Timothy 1:7; 2 Corinthians 12:9, 10; Jeremiah 17:5; Ephesians 4:30; 1 Thessalonians 5:19; 1 Thessalonians 1:5*)

## **6. The Human Witness**

God the evangelist gives his people the privilege of being his "fellow workers". For, although we cannot witness without him, he normally chooses to witness through us. He calls only some to be evangelists, missionaries, or pastors, but he calls his whole church and every member of it to be his witnesses.

The privileged task of pastors and teachers is to lead God's people (laos) into maturity and to equip them for ministry. Pastors are not to monopolize ministries, but rather to multiply them, by encouraging others to use their gifts and by training disciples to make disciples. The domination of the laity by the clergy has been a great evil in the history of the church. It robs both laity and clergy of their God-intended roles, causes clergy breakdowns, weakens the church and hinders the spread of the gospel. More than that, it is fundamentally unbiblical. We therefore, who have for centuries insisted on 'the priesthood of all believers', now also insist on the ministry of all believers.

We gratefully recognize that children and young people enrich the church's worship and outreach by their enthusiasm and faith. We need to train them in discipleship and evangelism, so that they may reach their own generation for Christ.

God created men and women as equal bearers of his image, accepts them equally in Christ, and poured out his Spirit on all flesh, sons and daughters alike. In addition, because the Holy Spirit distributes his gifts to women as well as to men, they must be given opportunities to exercise their gifts. We celebrate their distinguished record in the history of missions and are convinced that God calls women to similar roles today. Even though we are not fully agreed what forms their leadership should take, we do agree about the partnership in world evangelization

which God intends men and women to enjoy. Suitable training must therefore be made available to both.

Lay witness takes place, by women and men, not only through the local church (see section 8), but through friendships, in the home and at work. Even those who are homeless or unemployed share in the calling to be witnesses.

Our first responsibility is to witness to those who are already our friends, relatives, neighbors, and colleagues. Home evangelism is also natural, both for married and single people. Not only should a Christian home commend God's standards of marriage, sex, and family, and provide a haven of love and peace to people who are hurting, but neighbours who would not enter a church usually feel comfortable in a home, even when the gospel is discussed.

Another context for lay witness is the workplace, for it is here most Christians spend half their waking hours, and work is a divine calling. Christians can commend Christ by word of mouth, by their consistent industry, honesty and thoughtfulness, by their concern for justice in the workplace, and especially if others can see from the quality of their daily work that it is done to the glory of God.

We repent of our share in discouraging the ministry of laity, especially of women and young people. We determine in the future to encourage all Christ's followers to take their place, rightfully and naturally, as his witnesses. For true evangelism comes from the overflow of a heart in love with Christ. That is why it belongs to all his people without exception. (*2 Corinthians 6:1; Acts 8:26-39; 14:27; Ephesians 4:11; Acts 13:1-3; Acts 1:8; 8:1, 4; Colossians 1:28; Ephesians 4:11, 12; Matthew 28:19; 2 Timothy 2:2; 1 Thessalonians 5:12-15; 1 Corinthians 12:4-7; Ephesians 4:7; Matthew 21:15, 16; 1 Timothy 4:12; Genesis 1:26, 27; Galatians 3:28; Acts 2: 17, 18; 1 Peter 4:10; Romans 16:1-6, 12; Philippians 4:2, 3; Mark 5:18-20; Luke 5:27-32; Acts 28:30, 31; Acts 10:24, 33; 18:7, 8; 24-26; 1 Corinthians 7:17-24; Titus 2:9, 10; Colossians 4:1; 3:17, 23, 24; Acts 4:20*)

## **7. The Integrity of the Witnesses**

Nothing commends the gospel more eloquently than a transformed life, and nothing brings it into disrepute so much as personal inconsistency. We are charged to behave in a manner that is worthy of the gospel of Christ, and even to "adorn" it, enhancing its beauty by holy lives. For the watching world rightly seeks evidence to substantiate the claims which Christ's disciples make for him. A strong evidence is our integrity.

Our proclamation that Christ died to bring us to God appeals to people who are spiritually thirsty, but they will not believe us if we give no evidence of knowing the living God ourselves, or if our public worship lacks reality and relevance.

Our message that Christ reconciles alienated people to each other rings true only if we are seen to love and forgive one another, to serve others in humility, and to reach out beyond our own community in compassionate, costly ministry to the needy.

Our challenge to others to deny themselves, take up their cross and follow Christ will be plausible only if we ourselves have evidently died to selfish ambition, dishonesty, and covetousness, and are living a life of simplicity, contentment, and generosity.

We deplore the failures in Christian consistency which we see in both Christians and churches: material greed, professional pride and rivalry, competition in Christian service, jealousy of younger leaders, missionary paternalism, the lack of mutual accountability, the loss of Christian standards of sexuality, and racial, social, and sexual discrimination. All this is worldliness, allowing the prevailing culture to subvert the church instead of the church challenging and changing the culture. We are deeply ashamed of the times when, both as individuals and in our Christian communities, we have affirmed Christ in word and denied him in deed. Our inconsistency deprives our witness of credibility. We acknowledge our continuing struggles and failures. But we also determine by God's grace to develop integrity in ourselves and in the church. (*2 Corinthians 6:3, 4; Philippians 1:27; Titus 2:10; Colossians 4:5, 6; Proverbs 11:3; 1 Peter 3:18; 1 John 1:5, 6; 1 Corinthians 14:25, 26; Ephesians 2:14-18; Ephesians 4:31-5:2; Galatians 5:13; Luke 10:29-37; Mark 8:34; Matthew 6:19-21; 31-33; 1 Timothy 6:6-10, 17, 18; Acts 5:1-11; Philippians 1:15-17; 1 Corinthians 5:1-13; James 2:1-4; 1 John 2:15-17; Matthew 5:13; Matthew 7:21-23; 1 John 2:4; Ephesians 4:1*)

## 8. The Local Church

Every Christian congregation is a local expression of the body of Christ and has the same responsibilities. It is both “a holy priesthood” to offer God the spiritual sacrifices of worship and “a holy nation” to spread abroad his excellences in witness. The church is thus both a worshipping and a witnessing community gathered and scattered, called and sent. Worship and witness are inseparable.

We believe that the local church bears a primary responsibility for the spread of the gospel. Scripture suggests this in the progression that “our gospel came to you” and then “rang out from you”. In this way, the gospel creates the church which spreads the gospel which creates more churches in a continuous chain reaction. Moreover, what Scripture teaches, strategy confirms. Each local church must evangelize the district in which it is situated, and has the resources to do so.

We recommend every congregation to carry out regular studies not only of its own membership and program but of its local community in all its particularity, in order to develop appropriate strategies for mission. Its members might decide to organize a visitation of their whole area, to penetrate for Christ a particular place where people assemble, to arrange a series of evangelistic meetings, lectures, or concerts, to work with the poor to transform a local slum, or plant a new church in a neighbouring district or village. At the same time, they must not forget the church’s global task. A church which sends out missionaries must not neglect its own locality, and a church which evangelizes its neighbourhood must not ignore the rest of the world.

In all this each congregation and denomination should, where possible, work with others, seeking to turn any spirit of competition into one of cooperation. Churches should also work with para-church organizations, especially in evangelism, discipling, and community service, for such agencies are part of the body of Christ, and have valuable, specialist expertise from which the church can greatly benefit.

The church is intended by God to be a sign of his kingdom, that is, an indication of what human community looks like when it comes under his rule of righteousness and peace. As with individuals, so with churches, the gospel has to be embodied if it is to be communicated effectively. It is through our love for one another that the invisible God reveals himself today, especially when our fellowship is expressed in small groups, and when it transcends the barriers of race, rank, sex, and age which divide other communities.

We deeply regret that many of our congregations are inward-looking, organized for maintenance rather than mission, or preoccupied with church-based activities at the expense of witness. We determine to turn our churches inside out, so that they may engage in continuous outreach, until the Lord adds to them daily those who are being saved. (*1 Corinthians 12:27; 1 Peter 2:5, 9; John 17:6, 9, 11, 18; Philippians 2:14-16; 1 Thessalonians 1:5, 8; Acts 19:9, 10; Colossians 1:3-8; Acts 13:1-3; 14:26-28; Philippians 1:27; Luke 12:32; Romans 14:17; 1 Thessalonians 1:8-10; 1 John 4:12; John 13:34, 35; 17:21, 23; Galatians 3:28; Colossians 3:11; Acts 2:47*)

## 9. Cooperating in Evangelism

Evangelism and unity are closely related in the New Testament. Jesus prayed that his people’s oneness might reflect his own oneness with the Father, in order that the world might believe in him, and Paul exhorted the Philippians to “contend as one person for the faith of the gospel”. In contrast to this biblical vision, we are ashamed of the suspicions and rivalries, the dogmatism over non-essentials, the power struggles and empire-building which spoil our evangelistic witness. We affirm that co-operation in evangelism is indispensable, first because it is the will of God, but also because the gospel of reconciliation is discredited by our disunity, and because, if the task of world evangelization is ever to be accomplished, we must engage in it together.

“Cooperation” means finding unity in diversity. It involves people of different temperaments, gifts, calling and cultures, national churches and mission agencies, all ages and both sexes working together.

We are determined to put behind us once and for all, as a hangover from the colonial past, the simplistic distinction between First World sending and Two-Third World receiving countries. For the great new fact of our era is the internationalization of missions. Not only are a large majority of all evangelical Christians now non-Western, but the number of Two-Thirds World missionaries will soon exceed those from the West. We believe

that mission teams, which are diverse in composition but united in heart and mind, constitute a dramatic witness to the grace of God.

Our reference to 'the whole church' is not a presumptuous claim that the universal church and the evangelical community are synonymous. For we recognize that there are many churches which are not part of the evangelical movement. Evangelical attitudes to the Roman Catholic and Orthodox Churches differ widely. Some evangelicals are praying, talking, studying Scripture, and working with these churches. Others are strongly opposed to any form of dialogue or cooperation with them. All evangelicals are aware that serious theological differences between us remain. Where appropriate, and so long as biblical truth is not compromised, cooperation may be possible in such areas as Bible translation, the study of contemporary theological and ethical issues, social work, and political action. We wish to make it clear, however, that common evangelism demands a common commitment to the biblical gospel.

Some of us are members of churches which belong to the World Council of Churches and believe that a positive yet critical participation in its work is our Christian duty. Others among us have no link with the World Council. All of us urge the World Council of Churches to adopt a consistent biblical understanding of evangelism.

We confess our own share of responsibility for the brokenness of the body of Christ, which is a major stumbling block to world evangelization. We determine to go on seeking that unity in truth for which Christ prayed. We are persuaded that the right way forward towards closer cooperation is frank and patient dialogue on the basis of the Bible, with all who share our concerns. To this we gladly commit ourselves. (*John 17:20, 21; Philippians 1:27; Philippians 1:15, 17; 2:3, 4; Romans 14:1-15:2; Philippians 1:3-5; Ephesians 2:14-16; 4:1-6; Ephesians 4:6, 7; Acts 20:4; John 17:11, 20-23*)

### **C. THE WHOLE WORLD**

The whole gospel has been entrusted to the whole church, in order that it may be made known to the whole world. It is necessary, therefore, for us to understand the world into which we are sent. (*Mark 16:15*)

#### **10. The Modern World**

Evangelism takes place in a context, not in a vacuum. The balance between gospel and context must be carefully maintained. We must understand the context in order to address it, but the context must not be allowed to distort the gospel.

In this connection we have become concerned about the impact of "modernity", which is an emerging world culture produced by industrialization with its technology and by urbanization with its economic order. These factors combine to create an environment, which significantly shapes the way in which we see our world. In addition, secularism has devastated faith by making God and the supernatural meaningless; urbanization has dehumanized life for many; and the mass media have contributed to the devaluation of truth and authority, by replacing word with image. In combination, these consequences of modernity pervert the message which many preach and undermine their motivation for mission.

In AD 1900 only 9% of the world's population lived in cities; in AD 2000 it is thought that more than 50% will do so. This worldwide move into the cities has been called "the greatest migration in human history"; it constitutes a major challenge to Christian mission. On the one hand, city populations are extremely cosmopolitan, so that the nations come to our doorstep in the city. Can we develop global churches in which the gospel abolishes the barriers of ethnicity? On the other hand, many city dwellers are migrant poor who are also receptive to the gospel. Can the people of God be persuaded to relocate into such urban poor communities, in order to serve the people and share in the transformation of the city?

Modernization brings blessings as well as dangers. By creating links of communication and commerce around the globe, it makes unprecedented openings for the gospel, crossing old frontiers and penetrating closed societies, whether traditional or totalitarian. The Christian media have a powerful influence both in sowing the seed of the gospel and in preparing the soil. The major missionary broadcasters are committed to a gospel witness by radio in every major language by the year AD 2000.

We confess that we have not struggled as we should to understand modernization. We have used its methods



and techniques uncritically and so exposed ourselves to worldliness. But we determine in the future to take these challenges and opportunities seriously, to resist the secular pressures of modernity, to relate the lordship of Christ to the whole of modern culture, and thus to engage in mission in the modern world without worldliness in modern mission. (*Acts 13:14-41; 14:14-17; 17:22-31; Romans 12:1, 2*)

## **11. The Challenge of AD 2000 and Beyond**

The world population today is approaching 6 billion people. One third of them nominally confess Christ. Of the remaining four billion half have heard of him and the other half have not. In the light of these figures, we evaluate our evangelistic task by considering four categories of people.

First, there is the potential missionary work force, the committed. In this century this category of Christian believers has grown from about 40 million in 1900 to about 500 million today, and at this moment is growing over twice as fast as any other major religious group.

Secondly, there are the uncommitted. They make a Christian profession (they have been baptized, attend church occasionally, and even call themselves Christians), but the notion of a personal commitment to Christ is foreign to them. They are found in all churches throughout the world. They urgently need to be re-evangelized.

Thirdly, there are the unevangelized. These are people who have a minimal knowledge of the gospel, but have had no valid opportunity to respond to it. They are probably within reach of Christian people if only these will go to the next street, road, village, or town to find them.

Fourthly, there are the unreached. These are the two billion who may never have heard of Jesus as Savior, and are not within reach of Christians of their own people. There are, in fact, some 2,000 peoples or nationalities in which there is not yet a vital, indigenous church movement. We find it helpful to think of them as belonging to smaller 'people groups' which perceive themselves as having an affinity with each other (eg a common culture, language, home, or occupation). The most effective messengers to reach them will be those believers who already belong to their culture and know their language. Otherwise, cross-cultural messengers of the gospel will need to go, leaving behind their own culture and sacrificially identifying with the people they long to reach for Christ.

There are now about 12,000 such unreached people groups within the 2,000 larger peoples, so that the task is not impossible. Yet at present only 7% of all missionaries are engaged in this kind of outreach, while the remaining 93% are working in the already evangelized half of the world. If this imbalance is to be redressed, a strategic redeployment of personnel will be necessary.

A distressing factor that affects each of the above categories is that of inaccessibility. Many countries do not grant visas to self-styled missionaries, who have no other qualification or contribution to offer. Such areas are not absolutely inaccessible, however. For our prayers can pass through every curtain, door, and barrier. And Christian radio and television, audio and video cassettes, films and literature can also reach the otherwise unreachable. So can so-called "tent-makers" who like Paul earn their own living. They travel in the course of their profession (eg business people, university lecturers, technical specialists, and language teachers), and use every opportunity to speak of Jesus Christ. They do not enter a country under false pretences, for their work genuinely takes them there; it is simply that witness is an essential component of their Christian lifestyle, wherever they may happen to be.

We are deeply ashamed that nearly two millennia have passed since the death and resurrection of Jesus, and still two-thirds of the world's population have not yet acknowledged him. On the other hand, we are amazed at the mounting evidence of God's power even in the most unlikely places of the globe.

Now the year 2000 has become for many a challenging milestone. Can we commit ourselves to evangelize the world during the last decade of this millennium? There is nothing magical about the date, yet should we not do our best to reach this goal? Christ commands us to take the gospel to all peoples. The task is urgent. We are determined to obey him with joy and hope. (*Acts 18:1-4; 20:34; Luke 24:45-47*)

## **12. Difficult Situations**

Jesus plainly told his followers to expect opposition. "If they persecuted me", he said, "they will persecute you also". He even told them to rejoice over persecution, and reminded them that the condition of fruitfulness was death.

These predictions, that Christian suffering is inevitable and productive, have come true in every age, including our own. There have been many thousands of martyrs. Today the situation is much the same. We earnestly hope that glasnost and perestroika will lead to complete religious freedom in the Soviet Union and other Eastern bloc nations, and that Islamic and Hindu countries will become more open to the gospel. We deplore the recent brutal suppression of China's democratic movement, and we pray that it will not bring further suffering to the Christians. On the whole, however, it seems that ancient religions are becoming less tolerant, expatriates less welcome, and the world less friendly to the gospel.

In this situation we wish to make three statements to governments which are reconsidering their attitude to Christian believers.

First, Christians are loyal citizens, who seek the welfare of their nation. They pray for its leaders, and pay their taxes. Of course, those who have confessed Jesus as Lord cannot also call other authorities Lord, and if commanded to do so, or to do anything which God forbids, must disobey. But they are conscientious citizens. They also contribute to their country's well-being by the stability of their marriages and their homes, their honesty in business, their hard work, and their voluntary activity in the service of the handicapped and needy. Just governments have nothing to fear from Christians.

Secondly, Christians renounce unworthy methods of evangelism. Though the nature of our faith requires us to share the gospel with others, our practice is to make an open and honest statement of it, which leaves the hearers entirely free to make up their own minds about it. We wish to be sensitive to those of other faiths, and we reject any approach that seeks to force conversion on them.

Thirdly, Christians earnestly desire freedom of religion for all people, not just freedom for Christianity. In predominantly Christian countries, Christians are at the forefront of those who demand freedom for religious minorities. In predominantly non-Christian countries, therefore, Christians are asking for themselves no more than they demand for others in similar circumstances. The freedom to 'profess, practise, and propagate' religion, as defined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, could and should surely be a reciprocally granted right.

We greatly regret any unworthy witness of which followers of Jesus may have been guilty. We determine to give no unnecessary offense in anything, lest the name of Christ be dishonoured. However, the offense of the cross we cannot avoid. For the sake of Christ crucified we pray that we may be ready, by his grace, to suffer and even to die. Martyrdom is a form of witness which Christ has promised especially to honour. (*John 15:20; Matthew 5:12; John 12:24; Jeremiah 29:7; 1 Timothy 2:1, 2; Romans 13:6, 7; Acts 4:19; 5:29; 2 Corinthians 4:1, 2; 2 Corinthians 6:3; 1 Corinthians 1:18, 23; 2:2; Philippians 1:29; Revelation 2:13; 6:9-11; 20:4*)

### **CONCLUSION: PROCLAIM CHRIST UNTIL HE COMES**

"Proclaim Christ until he comes". That has been the theme of Lausanne II. Of course we believe that Christ has come; he came when Augustus was Emperor of Rome. But one day, as we know from his promises, he will come again in unimaginable splendor to perfect his kingdom. We are commanded to watch and be ready. Meanwhile, the gap between his two comings is to be filled with the Christian missionary enterprise. We have been told to go to the ends of the earth with the gospel, and we have been promised that the end of the age will come only when we have done so. The two ends (of earth space and time) will coincide. Until then he has pledged to be with us.

So the Christian mission is an urgent task. We do not know how long we have. We certainly have no time to waste. And in order to get on urgently with our responsibility, other qualities will be necessary, especially unity (we must evangelize together) and sacrifice (we must count and accept the cost). Our covenant at Lausanne was 'to pray, to plan, and to work together for the evangelization of the whole world'. Our manifesto at Manila is that the whole church is called to take the whole gospel to the whole world, proclaiming Christ until he comes, with all necessary urgency, unity, and sacrifice. (*Luke 2:1-7; Mark 13:26, 27; Mark 13:32-37; Acts 1:8; Matthew*

24:14; Matthew 28:20)