

# The Lausanne-Orthodox Initiative

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## “‘Love of God, Love of neighbour’: is this really an Evangelical Missiology?”

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### ABSTRACT

For at least the last half a century, evangelical churches and mission agencies have understood their divine commission to be that of ‘making disciples of all nations’ with primary reference to the so-called Great Commission of Matthew 28:18-20. The 1974 Lausanne Congress on World Evangelization cast this as ‘the whole church taking the whole gospel to the whole world’.

Meeting in Cape Town in 2010, the evangelical *Third Lausanne Congress on World Evangelization* issued its ‘Cape Town Commitment’, composed of two parts, ‘A Confession of Faith’ and a ‘Call to Action’. The ‘Confession’ is centred on the twin themes of the Great Commandments in Matthew 22:37-39: love of God and love of neighbour.

I will argue that this missiological innovation represents a re-appraisal of certain elements of the First Lausanne Congress on World Evangelization, held in 1974 in the wake of the merger of the International Missionary Council and the World Council of Churches, and that it offers a bold attempt to re-frame global evangelical missiology.

At the heart of this re-appraisal is a fresh understanding of where God; Father, Son and Holy Spirit, is to be found in mission. From this central insight, a number of further important developments may be traced.

I will outline the contours of this re-framing of evangelical missiology and will highlight the more significant points of continuity and of contrast with earlier evangelical mission practice and mission theology.

Finally, I will suggest several potential points of intersection for an ongoing Orthodox-Evangelical dialogue as it relates to God’s mission in, for and to the world.

### IMPORTANT NOTE

This is an early version of a paper presented at the inaugural Lausanne-Orthodox Initiative. It is intended for publication and I would be very happy to receive feedback. The aim with the paper is to foster reconciliation and the possibility of wider co-operation between missionally-engaged Orthodox and evangelicals. This is one consequence, I argue, of the trajectory set by the *Cape Town Commitment* itself.

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## 1. 'REACHOUT!'

From the moment that the first guitar riff rang out across the large conference venue, the atmosphere was electric. Eight hundred young people, mission agency leaders, event staff, and other evangelical leaders were here to do business with God.

"Lord, you gave yourself to save the world, I give myself to this great cause." Eight hundred voices rose in harmony, as one voice. The music grew to a crescendo before the volume slowly fell and with it the tempo. In that moment one could almost hear a hundred separate prayers, uttered in the silence of the heart, "Lord, send me! Here I am, send me! Wherever you lead, I will go! I am yours, Jesus, I am willing to be used by you!"

Welcome to *Reachout! 2013*, held over the weekend of August 10-11<sup>th</sup>, earlier this year. Reachout! is the premier, annual mission mobilisation, recruitment, and resourcing event in New South Wales. Held every year at a rural retreat on the outskirts of Sydney, it draws those who are exploring a call to cross-cultural mission and ministry as well as those who have already expressed a keen interest in serving in this way. Joining them will be approximately a hundred representatives of the various mission agencies who are keen to assist in identifying calling to cross-cultural mission, suitability for service, and precisely with which mission agency and overseas field they might best develop a partnership. In addition there will be a range of support institutions, including Colleges like my own, who will see this is an opportunity to advertise our cross-cultural training and educational resources to the intending missionaries.

Events such as *Reachout!* can be seen as the hallmark evangelical expression of mission spirituality, practice and theology. They preserve the spirit of the Edinburgh 1910 World Missionary Conference. They provide exposure to the wider world of mission and allow space for consideration of the biblical mandate to take the Gospel into all the world. Typically, this will be achieved through a range of invited main-stage speakers and preachers, frequently from overseas, Personal stories, examples of self-less missionary service, and the biblical narrative are combined in a way that is intended to allow the Spirit of God to mobilise the willing and the ready into missionary service.

The symbolism and imagery will be familiar to many readers: flags of the nations; picture galleries of the least-reached peoples; reproduction engravings, paintings, and grainy photographs of missionary heroes and martyrs; the Bible, Cross and Globe in various graphic juxtapositions.

Reachout! is one of a family of evangelical mission conferences, many of whom take a lead in certain key respects from the Lausanne Movement's conferences, activities, networks, and publications. The relatively broad range of mission issues being addressed by the mission agencies present at Reachout are a wonderful reflection of the breadth of mission vision initiated in the Lausanne Covenant (1974) and kept alive by the Cape Town Commitment (2010), the first and most recent of the documents emerging out of the Lausanne Movement for World Evangelization.

Yet, it is a strange irony that at no point during the conference did a main-stage speaker, a mission agency representative, or one of the event organisers make any reference to the Lausanne Movement or what it stands for. This absence highlights, in my opinion, the inherent tensions that exist within the world of evangelical mission theology and practice. In actual fact, these tensions characterise the Lausanne movement itself; a tension that exists between the pragmatic activism of mission strategists and the reflective theology of missiologists. Secondly, it reflects a tension between evangelicals who prioritise the evangelistic commission and evangelicals who believe social responsibility and development are addressed by the Gospel.

## 2. CATALYSTS FOR THE INTERNATIONAL CONGRESS ON WORLD EVANGELIZATION (ICOWE) 1974

I intend to focus on four developments that I will suggest were catalytic for the calling of the first ICOWE in 1974. Each in their own way served to propel and inspire those who would go on to

establish what we now know as the Lausanne Movement. They are probably not the only four but I want to suggest that they are the most significant.

#### **a. World Mission Conference, Edinburgh 1910**

*'The Cape of Good Hope is now in the hands of the English; should it continue so, would it not be possible to have a general association of all denominations of Christians, from the four quarters of the world, kept there once in about ten years? I earnestly recommend this place, let the first meeting be in the year 1810, or 1812 at furthest. I have no doubt it would be attended with very important effects; we could understand one another better, and more entirely enter into one another's views by two hours conversation than by two or three years epistolary correspondence.'*

*William Carey to Andrew Fuller, 15<sup>th</sup> May, 1806.*

Of course it would be another 100 years before Christian mission leaders gathered in Edinburgh in 1910 for a World Missionary Conference though there were earlier Missionary Conferences; the earliest of note being in Liverpool in 1860.<sup>1</sup>

Edinburgh 1910 represented cooperative missionary endeavour with a broadly evangelical participation and, perhaps unsurprisingly, it tended toward missionary activism rather than missiological reflection. This also had the merit of avoiding what was judged at the time to have been the risk of diversion by theological controversies.

Rose Dowsett, active for many years within both the Lausanne Movement and the World Evangelical Alliance, has argued that Lausanne carries the missionary vision Edinburgh 1910 whilst the Commission for World Mission and Evangelism (of the World Council of Churches) sustains the institutional forms of the Edinburgh Conference.

#### **b. World Student Movements**

Key to the success of Edinburgh 1910 was the Student Volunteer Movement, energetically led by the visionary John Mott (1865-1955), an American and a theologically conservative Methodist lay-leader, who had established it in 1888 as the 'missionary arm' of the YMCA.

The SVM experienced rapid growth in Britain and America and by 1905 there were 100,000 members in 40 countries. By 1910 the SVM had sent 4,338 volunteers to work with mission societies. It had a wide interdenominational basis and was initially strongly evangelical. After Edinburgh it was influenced by liberal theology. At a 1919-20 Convention in Des Moines the conference speakers (including Mott) were tackled by students who asked 'Why are you talking to us about the living God and the divine Christ? Why do you bring us this piffle, these old shibboleths, these old worn-out phrases?'

After a long period of deepening liberal-conservative schism, the SVM merged in 1959 with two other student movements to form the theologically liberal National Student Christian Federation. An evangelical alternative, the InterVarsity Fellowship (IVF), was founded in 1940. The International Fellowship of Evangelical Students (IFES), founded in 1947 by national groups such as IVF, took up the conservative missionary agenda of the earlier SVM. It continues to provide significant leadership within the Lausanne Movement, especially through the appointment of its International Deputy Directors (IDDs). John Stott, for example, was also a central influence within the IFES movement.

#### **c. The merger of the International Missionary Council (IMC, 1921-61) with the WCC, 1961**

The IMC was a Council of national missionary councils that picked up the work of the Edinburgh 1910 Continuation Committee. It was another lay movement led by John Mott until 1942. There were six Assemblies between 1928 (Jerusalem) and 1961 (New Delhi).

The IMC merged with the World Council of Churches to form what became the Division (later the Commission) on World Mission and Evangelism of the WCC. Of personal interest to me as a British Baptist is the fact that another British Baptist, Ernest A. Payne, co-chaired the integration process.

Despite the best efforts of Bishop Lesslie Newbigin (in his capacity as the General Secretary of the IMC then DWME from 1959 to 1965), the loss of an ecclesial focus and the introduction of a cosmic-centric trinitarianism within the WCC propelled the DWME along a path that was destined to cause friction with evangelicals and other Biblically conservative Christian groups (see Tennant, 2010, p66). Newbigin's own recollections of this period suggest that the mission focus within the merged DWME became incredibly diffuse due to WCC Desks and Departments calling on Newbigin to supervise and advise on the 'mission' dimensions of every aspect of their work. He was rapidly overwhelmed, though his capacity for work coupled with his personal energy seems to have pulled him through this demanding period of service with the WCC.

#### **d. Berlin Congress for World Evangelisation, 1966/8**

The 1966 World Congress on Evangelism, held in Berlin, was the first post-IMC international mission congress called by evangelicals and included Billy Graham, John Stott, Francis Schaeffer and Corrie ten Boom among the speakers. 'At this meeting Protestant Evangelical Christians (theologians, evangelists, church leaders) from around the world met, most for the first time.'<sup>2</sup> Participants at the Berlin World Mission Congress were mostly from Europe and the US and recognised the need to host a further event with a clearer focus on world evangelization.

### **3. THE INTERNATIONAL CONGRESS ON WORLD EVANGELIZATION (ICOWE), LAUSANNE 1974**

#### **a. Its goals and achievements**

During the late 1960s and early 70s, it was felt that the nature of the Gospel and the urgency of the missionary task was under threat. The conflict between evangelical and liberal theology from the 1920s onwards, particularly focused around Rauschenbusch's 'social gospel', tended to polarise mission practice and theology so much so that by the 1970s it was possible for David Moberg (1972) to speak of a 'Great Reversal' whereby evangelicals had retreated from most forms of social responsibility.

Evangelical mission leaders rallied around a number of key individuals, eventually finding a focus in the US evangelist, Billy Graham, and the British Anglican leader, John Stott. The world congress mooted in Berlin was eventually scheduled to take place from 16<sup>th</sup>-25<sup>th</sup> July 1974, in Lausanne, Switzerland.

In matter of fact, ICOWE was one of nine global, regional or national conferences on evangelism in 1974! (Barrett, 1987, p62) but it was the most significant in terms of size and scope. There were 2,473 official delegates at ICOWE joined by a further 1,300 volunteer staff and others; making a total attendance of 3,773 (Graham, 1997, p571).

Tizon (2008, p2) argues that to other fairly widely accepted characteristics and definitions of the word 'evangelical'<sup>3</sup> we should add 'a critical posture towards any version of the Christian faith that is perceived to be unbiblical, impersonal, powerless over sin, and lacking missionary zeal.' ICOWE 1974 should be understood as a movement of evangelicals concerned with the task of world evangelization but also equally concerned with what they perceived to be inauthentic forms of gospel mission. It was thus a critique of the DWME and the WCC and its related activities

However, the ICOWE meetings were equally characterised by internal critique and robust theological and pragmatic debate. Out of these meetings emerged a smaller group that would continue to act as a stimulus towards a wider appreciation of the gospel and its implications for the whole of society. A statement was drafted by the *ad hoc* Radical Discipleship group of several hundred leaders present

at the meeting. Al Tizon (2008, p3) concludes that *radical* evangelical 'refers to the unlikely combination of conservative evangelical theology and a radical orientation to faith and society.'<sup>4</sup>

This development is important for it reflects a key distinction within contemporary evangelical mission theology and practice. This reflects the general capacity of the Lausanne Congresses to 'spin off' agencies, partnerships and collaborative ventures. The Manila Congress (Lausanne II) in 1989 went on to spawn 300 new strategic partnerships in global evangelism. A third world congresses was held in Cape Town (Lausanne III) 16<sup>th</sup>-25<sup>th</sup> October, 2010.

Lausanne's self-identity is not primarily ecclesial. It is seen to be serving and catalysing the evangelical churches in mission. It is a movement standing within the evangelical theological tradition.

#### **b. The Lausanne Covenant**

The 1974 Congress on World Evangelisation resulted in the *Lausanne Covenant* which continues to be a focal point for many evangelicals today. The *Manila Manifesto* was issued by Lausanne II in 1989, and the third Lausanne Congress issued the *Cape Town Commitment* as its defining text. Taken together, these three texts contain a total of 120 pages outlining mission theory and practice.

### **4. THE LEGACY OF ICOWE 1974 AND BEYOND**

#### **a. Achievements**

Between 1974 and 2010 there were 67 Lausanne-related consultations, gatherings, conference, and congress meetings, in addition to the meetings of the LCWE and Executive meetings. That's a rate of two per year.

The three World Congresses have produced a further 2,000 plus pages of reports, published as 'Let the Earth hear His Voice!' and 'Proclaim Christ Until He Comes!' There are currently sixty-five *Lausanne Occasional Papers*, containing over 2,180 pages of theological reflection on mission practice and theory. A wide range of issues that emerged from the Congresses have been dealt with, including the Gospel and nationalism, technology, reconciliation, world religions, prayer, bioethics, business as mission, the arts, persecution, cities, diaspora, the poor, Gospel and Culture, globalisation, least-reached peoples of the world, oral learners, and young people. Of particular interest to this consultation will be LOP No 19 *Christian Witness to nominal Christians among the Orthodox*, of which the title alone suggests six weeks of deliberation in committee before agreeing this awkward compromise version!

Additionally, many other regional texts and related documents have been generated; evidence of a huge range of mission-focussed activity, directed towards the single goal of world evangelization. The collection grows to a total of over 4,500 pages of Congress statements, Congress Reports, Occasional papers, and Consultation texts.

Evangelical churches and mission agencies have generally welcomed the positive contribution of the Lausanne Movement. Conservative evangelical commentators have been generous,

'the Lausanne Covenant has played a major unifying role.... The Covenant may now be the broadest umbrella in the world under which professing Christians can be gathered to pray and strategize for the salvation of their cities.' (Drummond, 2001, p163)

Radical evangelicals welcomed the emergence within Lausanne evangelicalism of the rediscovery of a

'social and political implications of the message of Jesus. One clear example was the declaration at the World Evangelism Congress at Lausanne in 1974'.<sup>5</sup>

## **b. Missiological tensions, critique and dissent**

However, not every evangelical has been able to identify with the mission theology of Lausanne in its entirety. Some felt that even within the few years following Lausanne I, the focus had become too broad. David Barrett commented, somewhat dismissively, that by 1980 the hoped-for narrow focus on world evangelization of 1974 had become, 'a vast amorphous network known as the Lausanne Movement directed by the Lausanne Committee for World Evangelization'. (Barrett, 1988, p93)

A tension of missiological vision existed from the outset between Billy Graham and John Stott (though it was never personalised; the two men held each other in very high personal regard). Graham favoured the narrower focus on world evangelization with Stott favouring a broader focus on evangelism and social responsibility. Al Tizon (2008, pp43-52) has argued that there are probably three distinct missiological *consequences* of the Lausanne Congress: broad versus narrow views of mission; prioritized versus holistic views of the primary task(s) of mission; and a theology of development.

I want to acknowledge those consequences here but adopt a slightly different way of talking about missiological consequences after Lausanne I.

## **5. MISSIOLOGY AFTER LAUSANNE I**

### **a. Mission as evangelization**

In applauding the *Lausanne Covenant*, Graham (1997, p573) downplays Stott's role somewhat in its drafting 'he did not write it, as some later assumed', and describes his own contribution reviewing 'the group's progress after each session.' He then stresses that the Lausanne Covenant 'has since come to be looked upon as a classic statement on *evangelism*'. Stott (LOP3, 1975, p12) conceded as much in the commentary for the Lausanne Covenant: 'Dr Billy Graham expressed as his first hope for the Congress that it would "frame a biblical declaration on evangelism" and in his final address he declared himself satisfied that it had done so.' However, it seems clear that he personally did not see this apparent outcome to be one that described the ICOWE and the Lausanne Covenant in their entirety (LOP3, 1975, pp 15,19).

Graham pressed evangelism upon the Continuation committee, meeting in Mexico City in January of 1975. Other missiologists who championed this understanding of mission included Ralph Winter, Donald McGavran, Peter Beyerhaus, and Arthur Johnston. Stott resisted and threatened to resign unless the Committee's work also reflected the social implications of the Gospel. A compromise permitted the Committee to continue its work with the phrase in its statement of purpose 'the total biblical mission of the church' (Chapman, 2010, p143). Graham compromised on that occasion, but would later note 'Berlin and Lausanne were unquestionably highlights of our work; and yet... actually something of a diversion from what I really wanted to do...' His International Conference for Itinerant Evangelists (Amsterdam 1983) 'would be for the foot soldiers, not the generals.' (Graham, 1997, p574).

The question of focus was accompanied by a question dealing with missional priorities: social responsibility or evangelism, which should be considered primary? 'Conservatives maintained the primacy of evangelism, whilst radicals questioned the very language of prioritization over and against the holistic demands of the gospel.' (Tizon, 2008, p48)

The debate between those who wanted a singular focus on evangelization and those who focused on the full scope of the Lausanne Covenant continued. It dragged on through Continuation Committee meetings in Mexico City, the newly named LCWE in Atlanta, and after the COWE meetings in Pattaya (1980). Radicals had met in 1980 (London) for the 'International Consultation on Simple Lifestyle' whilst the LCWE vigorously promoted the COWE in Pattaya (1980), three months

after the SLC had met. Pattaya was interpreted as a success by those committed to the narrower view. Wagner praised Pattaya's *Thailand Statement* for its formulation regarding evangelisation in the face of 'dangerous tendencies' promoted by 'advocates of holistic evangelism' (Tizon, 2008, p46).

In the 1990s, it was widely felt that 'Lausanne wilted' and Graham, in turn, threatened to resign as the Chair of the 1989 Manila Congress, 'irritated by its expense'. His reluctance to commit finances to Lausanne after 1989 partly explains its inability to host a global congress again until 2010. (Chapman, 2010, p149).

#### **b. Mission strategy: efficient and economic rationalism**

Despite this observation, Lausanne has nevertheless provided a vital platform for the emergence of new missiological approaches that attempt to rationalise effort and reduce duplication of effort and energy. The Strategy Working Group has been a particularly prominent group within the Lausanne. At Lausanne I, there emerged a new emphasis on evangelism and mission, particularly Ralph Winters' E0-E3 categorisation of cross-cultural mission and evangelism. Winter was also responsible for developing the people-group missiology. Church growth insights were added by McGavran and others. Added to this must be Luis Bush's concept of the '10/40 Window', a determined effort to identify those parts of the world where Christians were mostly a tiny minority or even absent.

Interestingly, these particular aspects of Lausanne missiology have a particular significance for the resurrection of the Orthodox Church in Albania. After a term of service in Kenya, Fr. Martin Ritsi studied for a master's degree in missiology at Fuller Seminary and was eventually able to put that to good effect in the culturally and linguistically homogenous Albanian context of the 1990s.

#### **c. Mission as social responsibility and transformation**

After Lausanne I, radical evangelicals engaged in plans to develop a 'theology of development'. Meetings in 1978 and 1979 culminated in 'The Consultation of a Theology of Development' held during March 1980 in London (at the same venue as the SLC). This was convened under the banner of the WEF (now WEA) Theological Commission and its continuation work fed into Track III at Wheaton 1983.

The WEA *Wheaton Statement* (1983) and the *Grand Rapids Statement* (1982) provided the rationale for evangelical Aid and Development ministries. Transformation was required of *all* nations and societies, involved personal transformation and the transformation of social values. Social action needed the Gospel of Christ to deal with guilt, power, and consequences of sin. Social transformation required personal transformation plus people and communities to live life in harmony with God and in obedience to the Gospel. (Sugden and Samuel, 2009, x)

In 1984, Stott<sup>6</sup> expressed his view that the *Grand Rapids Consultation on Evangelism and Social Responsibility* (Published as LOP 21) had completed 'some of the unfinished business of the Lausanne Congress' and that it had clarified the Covenant's statement about 'the nature of the primacy of evangelism in the church's mission of sacrificial service' (Stott, 1984, p70).

Lausanne 1974 also span off the International Fellowship of Evangelical Missionary Theologians (INFEMIT), the Oxford Centre for Mission Studies and their *Transformation* Magazine. This range of related activities was arguably the single most important stimulus to the development of a missiology of transformation. This is well defined by Al Tizon, in the following way,

'Transformation is the change from a condition of human existence contrary to God's purposes to one in which people are able to enjoy fullness of life in harmony with God.' (Tizon, 2008, p5)

Chris Sugden and Vinay Samuel (2009, ix) welcomed the fact that the Lausanne Congress and Covenant had, wittingly or unwittingly, lent legitimacy to a growing number of evangelical relief and

development agencies, at least to a slowly growing sector of the evangelical constituency, 'even though the integrative nature of evangelism and social responsibility needed further elaboration.'

#### **d. Interim conclusions**

Tizon concludes that evangelical missiology was significantly divided at the end of the 1980s. For example, the radical evangelicals drafted a *Statement of Concern* at Pattaya, in response to the *Thailand Statement* (1980) which they felt promoted the narrow view of mission as evangelization. Their Statement gained only limited traction. Tizon's conclusions have merit but I want to humbly suggest that the continuing debate about mission as evangelism and mission as transformation should be seen as a source of health and vitality. Even Chapman (2010, p190), as a relatively critical commentator, concedes that 'Lausanne's statements had influence even if they lacked authority.'

### **6. THE THIRD INTERNATIONAL CONGRESS ON WORLD EVANGELIZATION (CAPE TOWN, 2010)**

Writing towards the end of the 2008, Tizon (2008, p43) posed the question 'Who will dictate the course of evangelical mission after Lausanne?' The Cape Town Congress and its resultant *Cape Town Commitment*, go some way towards attempting to answer that question, especially for evangelical church and mission leaders who normally and instinctively identified with the *Lausanne Covenant*. Unlike the *Manila Manifesto*, the *Cape Town Commitment* may be understood as a significant development of themes and trends that were either latent or undeveloped within the *Lausanne Covenant*.

#### **a. Achievements**

The third World Congress gathered 4,200 evangelical church and mission leaders in Cape Town from 16<sup>th</sup>-25<sup>th</sup> October, 2010. This gathering probably ranks as the most globally representative of the Congresses. This was probably not always reflected in the plenary and platform presentations, however, but small table groups met and were given some scope for interaction with the Congress themes.

Since Cape Town, the Lausanne Movement has begun developing a series of Global Consultations and already a number of smaller consultations have taken place.<sup>7</sup> A *Global Leadership Council* of 180 Lausanne leaders was held in June 2011 followed by a much larger gathering in Bangalore, during June 2013, at which 350 global leaders met for the *Global Leaders Forum*.

During 2011 plans were put in place for a regular e-publication, the *Lausanne Global Analysis*. This is now seen as a key regional and global analysis service offered by the Movement to the evangelical mission community at the present time.

#### **b. What are the distinct emphases of the Cape Town Commitment (CTC)?**

This text is clearly a document of two halves: the first composed by a small theological committee under Chris Wright, the second resulting from regional consultations and the work of the Congress itself. The first half conceives of mission with reference to the Great Commandments to love God and neighbour (Matt 22:34-40).<sup>8</sup> The second half outlines the nature of the pragmatic missionary task. The first half is a 'confession of faith', the second is a 'call to action'.

The drafting of the second half of the *Cape Town Commitment* was a result of two chief sources. Firstly, the International Deputy Directors (IDDs) each convened a regional consultation identifying the chief challenges facing the churches in their region. Six key issues emerged and these frame the *Call to Action*. Secondly, discussion at the Congress was gathered by a listening group and then edited together into appropriate sections of the *Call to Action*.

#### **i. A re-framing of evangelical mission theology and practice.**



Most of us, I suspect, tend to see evangelical mission activity as an act of obedience to Jesus in Matthew 28:19, commonly called the 'Great Commission'. Use of Mt 28:19 underlines the 1974 evangelical conviction that mission is something *we* do, either through the churches, or their mission agencies, or even through our individual initiative. Mission is likely to be overseas and it requires a special and intensely strong sense of call. For the rest it is probably an optional extra,

Once this fact has been processed we are left with the realisation that the Lausanne Movement has apparently found a new voice in which to talk about mission, a new ethic for mission grounded in an ethic of love rather than an ethic of obedience. Lausanne is hardly likely to abandon its commitment to the imperative of obedience, but now it has another imperative by which it can qualify and understand the other.

The CTC includes ten 'We love...' statements that each reflect aspects of contemporary mission challenges. It is mutual love, implying mutual service as 'the most vivid expression of the Kingdom of God' (2011, p27). More significantly, love also implies solidarity, 'to share in the suffering of members of the body of Christ' (CTC, p26).

What is the shift from Great Commission to Great Commandments likely to mean? I think that Wright is skilfully demonstrating his capacity to understand and read the whole of the Biblical text as a missional Word from God, including the ethical passages about love for God and neighbour. The reference in Matt 22 underlines the 2010 evangelical conviction that mission is something defining *who we are*. It does define everything we *do*, it may be overseas or it may not, yet it is something we are all to identify with and live out in the ordinariness of life.

### **ii. A fresh appreciation of God as the primary (or normative) agent of mission**

The *Lausanne Covenant* talks of mission as 'part of the eternal *purposes of God*' (1975, p4) it tends to expand upon the language of 'the evangelistic work of the church' introduced at an early point in the text (1975, p5). In marked contrast, the CTC uses the language of the *mission of God* at fifteen points in the 'Confession of Faith' and a further three times in the 'Call to Action'. Indeed paragraph ten of the CTC is titled 'We love the mission of God' and includes the following memorable phrase (2011, p28):

'The Church exists to participate in the transforming mission of God. Our mission is wholly derived from God's mission.'

### **iii. A fresh approach to the integration of mission practice and theology**

The theological atmosphere of the late 1960s and early 1970s was a more polarised atmosphere than it is today. Great strides have been taken in the last decade or so to rediscover a terminology and practice of integral mission. The CTC makes clear that integral mission is directed towards individual persons, society, and creation,

'All our mission must reflect the integration of evangelism and committed engagement in the world, ordered and driven by the whole biblical revelation of the gospel of God' (CTC, p28).

An evangelical perspective on mission must also take into account perspectives such as bible and mission, theology of mission, history of mission, practice of mission, related disciplines (anthropology, sociology, religions, communication, strategy, and candidacy preparation). Samuel Escobar defines missiology as follows:

"I define missiology as an interdisciplinary approach to understanding missionary action. Missiology examines missionary facts from the perspectives of the biblical sciences, theology, history and the social sciences. It aims to be systematic and critical, but it starts from a positive stance toward the legitimacy of the Christian missionary task as part of the fundamental reason for the being of the church. A missiological approach gives the observer a comprehensive frame of reference in

order to look at reality in a critical way. Missiology is a critical reflection of Christians engaged in missionary practice in the light of God's Word." (Escobar, 2003, 21)

In sum, an evangelical perspective on mission is interdisciplinary, not simply a theological one.

#### ***iv. A new appraisal of Lausanne's relationship to world Christian Families***

This is to be seen most notably the more conservative or traditional Christian groupings, but may also be seen in real relationships with the WCC (expressed at the Edinburgh 2010) and through involvement with the Global Christian Forum. In his foreward to the CTC, Dr. Doug Birdsall (CTC, p5), the then CEO of the Lausanne Movement, described the Movement as one that affirms

'the oneness of the Body of Christ, and gladly recognize that there are followers of the Lord Jesus Christ with other traditions.'

Our consultation here in Albania, and the presence of Bishop Angelos on the main stage of the Lausanne Global Leaders Forum, are indications of the way in which Lausanne is re-appraising its stance towards other Christian traditions.

The CTC represents a shift in posture on the part of the evangelical mission agencies. I want to argue that the 1974 Lausanne Covenant represented a turning of the evangelical back towards the rest of the Christian world and an embrace of the world of the lost.

I believe that we may see the *Cape Town Commitment* as representing a reorientation towards the rest of the Christian world and a more radical embrace by the evangelical community of the lost and the world they inhabit.

Evangelical mission agencies have thereby begun to re-evaluate their posture towards the rest of the Christian World; at the very least from a cold shoulder to a hesitant hand-shake.

#### **d. Three theologians and the CTC**

In significant measure the preparation for the Cape Town Commitment would not have been possible without the significant investment that John Stott poured into the theological formation of a generation of evangelical students and seminarians through the Langham Partnership. Stott was the chair of the Lausanne Theology and Education Group from its establishment. In 2001 he appointed Chris Wright as the International Director of Langham Partnerships. Wright, as a potential theological successor to Stott, was being carefully placed and readied for his significant contribution to Congresses such as the one that was eventually called for the Cape Town Congress. Wright Chaired the Theology Working Group until 2012. The current Chair of that Theology Working Group (since 2012), Dr Timothy Tennant, has in various places commended Wright's insight concerning the missional basis of the Bible (2010, p60). We can expect Tennant to continue to encourage the development of a theological perspective that builds on the work of his predecessor, Chris Wright.

## **7. POINTS OF INTERSECTION FOR ORTHODOX AND EVANGELICAL MISSIOLOGISTS**

I want to outline several modest proposals that I think offer merit for evangelicals inspired and influenced by the Lausanne Covenant and Orthodox initiative:

### **a. The love of God and the love of neighbour**

Jim Stamoolis (1986, pp81-82) notes

'That the love of God (God's love for humankind) is a foundational motive of the missionary enterprise will come as no surprise to anyone who reflects on the theological framework of the Orthodox Church'.

He adds further that,

'In the light of the centrality of agape, it is somewhat surprising that the love of God is not mentioned more frequently in the discussion of missionary motive. ...while it remains clear to Orthodox who operate within this framework, it is obscure to Western observers searching for missionary motives.'

The notion of love for neighbour and love for God are present in Orthodox theology and have been an explicit aspect of Orthodox reflection on mission since the pioneering work of Archbishop Anastasios in the late 1950s with *Porefthendes!* Evangelicals have stumbled upon this truth of late.

It is in the demonstration of our love for humankind that our love for God can be seen (1 Jn 3:14; 4:20). The sting in the tail is in the assertion that love for humankind is always more unconditional and unqualified when it is offered by people who come in 'evangelical poverty'. It might now be appropriate to add, 'and in missional poverty'.

#### **b. A robustly Trinitarian missiology: *missio Dei trinitatis***

Is this the kind of language with which Lausanne will be comfortable?

Newbigin realised at New Delhi that 'One body, One Gospel, One world' was too 'exclusively church-centred in its understanding of mission.' He continued,

'Only a full Trinitarian doctrine would be adequate, setting the work of Christ in the church in the context of the over-ruling providence of the Father in all the life of the world and the sovereign freedom of the Spirit who is the Lord and not the auxiliary of the Church.' (Newbigin, 1993, p187)

Timothy Tennant's most significant and recent contribution to missiology is a trinitarian missiology. In his book he writes that,

'to love God is to love a God revealed as 'Father, Son, Spirit. This point is vital to an understanding of mission in the context of post-Christendom. When asked, 'By whose authority do you bring this Gospel?' we cannot assume the authority of the Church. When asked we can only answer with a counter-cultural and possibly counter-intuitive response, 'We have been commissioned by God in Jesus Christ and we preach in the name of and by the authority of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit!' (Tennant, 2010, p68)

Tennant, outlines missional theology and mission practice with reference to the doctrinal formulation of God as trinitarian. He does so with reference to the concept of the *missio Dei* and talks of God the Father as

'the providential sources and goal of the *missio Dei*; God the Son as the 'redemptive embodiment of the *missio Dei*'; and God the Holy Spirit as the 'empowering presence of the *missio Dei*' (Tennant, 2010, p7-8).

It is hardly surprising, given the respective roles of Tennant and Wright that the CTC should include the lines,

'He is the missionary spirit, sent out by the missionary Father and the missionary Son, breathing life and power into God's missionary church.' (2011, p15)

The *Lausanne Covenant* did not get very far beyond pneumatological prioritisation when it discussed evangelisation. It states that 'The Holy Spirit would be the Chief Witness' (LC, p34) and that 'The Holy Spirit is a missionary Spirit; thus evangelism should arise spontaneously from a Spirit-filled church. (LC, 33)

#### **c. God's agency in mission: *missio Dei***

It is the theological reflection on this concept that Wright draws upon when drafting the CTC. As he concludes 'It is above all "the gospel of God" – the grace of God, the promise of God, the

faithfulness of God, the salvation of God, the Son of God, the people of God, and the glory of God.’ (Wright, 2010, p199).

Chris Wright again,

‘The mission of God therefore, is... to seek the ultimate well-being and blessing of human beings by bringing them into a relationship with himself in which they love, worship and glorify him, and find their greatest joy in doing so.’ (Wright, 2010, p246)

And,

“Sending in mission is a participation in the life of God.” (Wright, 2010, p211)

A paragraph from the ‘Statement on Mission’ of the British *BMS World Mission* is included here;

“Mission begins in God, whom we worship as Father, Son and Holy Spirit. It reflects his nature, eternally holy and loving. It expresses his purpose that all creation should be brought into ultimate harmony with himself. Mission is the work of God, who continually acts in the world both to judge and to save.’

#### **d. Ecclesial agency in mission**

‘The Whole Church taking the Whole Gospel to the Whole World!’ is a reflection of earlier IMC themes, and has been criticised for being too ecclesiocentric; as if mission were solely a result of human agency.

Despite the apparent contradiction of evangelicals keen to elevate the mission of God, there *are* evangelicals with an awareness of the centrality of the church as an agent of mission, sent by the Holy Spirit into mission. The importance of this for some evangelicals can be seen in the *Lausanne Covenant*, the *Cape Town Commitment*, and in the statements of various mission agencies. Another paragraph from the ‘Statement on Mission’ of the British *BMS World Mission* is included here;

In his grace, God has called out of the world a people for himself. Their story begins in Genesis and continues to this day; they are the body of Christ, the Church. In his grace, God has sent them into the world, to be an agent of his Mission and a sign of his present and coming Kingdom.”

Tennant (2010, p8) concludes his discussion of trinitarian missional theology and mission practice with a reference to the Church as the ‘reflection of the Trinity in the World’.

#### **e. The care of creation seen, for example, in God’s mission to the cosmos**

There is also a re-evaluation concerning the focus for our ministries of reconciliation; from the world of the *lost* to the *lost world*. An appreciation that the cosmos is sinful and fractured is certainly present in the *Lausanne Covenant*, but it is given greater clarity and expression with the *Cape Town Commitment*.

Our love for creation is characterised by the CTC (2011, p19-20) in a characteristically biblical fashion. It is contrasted with

‘The toxic idolatry of consumerism, prophetic ecological responsibility, missional calling to environmental advocacy and action, [and] responsible dominion and stewardship.’

This is a useful illustration of the way in which the CTC develops a latent theme within the *Lausanne Covenant*. The latter’s discussion of such matters is limited to a brief mention in paragraph 15 of the ‘new heaven and the new earth’ (1975, p33)

#### **f. Evangelical mission practice**

I especially commend this final point to you. The *Call to Action* and the way I have shaped my paper suggests that evangelical church and mission leaders are unlikely to be enamoured by the prospect

of meeting in order to make progress in theological discussion, let alone dialogue. Most are pragmatists and, dare I say it, some are highly unreflective pragmatists. They are activists (see Bebbington) and driven by their sense of the urgency of the task at hand. The *Cape Town Commitment* may have introduced them to the notion of the love of God that is extended to the lost but many are motivated, even captivated, by the prospect of the Hell that is reserved for the lost. They *will* meet, however, to discuss strategy and the latest model or method that will equip them to save the perishing.

I would like to propose that our Committee considers planning towards a second round of conversations that include representatives of the activist and pragmatic evangelical mission agencies. A strand of that conversation might focus on the pragmatic and missional aspects of the nature of authentic evangelism and that it does so with respect to the command to love God and love neighbour, as outlined in the *CTC*.<sup>9</sup> A second might be to give focus to the common experience of persecution, missionary suffering and sacrifice, and martyrdom. I would further propose that we seek the co-operation of a western evangelical mission agency in hosting and organising such a consultation. Here I am not thinking of the CMS but would suggest one of the non-denominational mission agencies.

## **8. TWO FURTHER TRENDS WORTH MONITORING**

### **a. Missional hermeneutics: a new way of reading the Bible**

Given the involvement of Chris Wright with the Lausanne Movement, it is possible that many of the themes from his books will appear at key locations within the Lausanne Movement. His two most significant books have been 'The Mission of God' and 'The Mission of the People of God'. In addition to heartily commending them to you, I would suggest that the missional hermeneutic outlined in them has the potential to engage the minds and hearts of church and mission leaders. The application is far from abstract. On the contrary it offers missiologists and mission leaders a new way of interpreting the biblical texts that are such a vital resource for evangelicals engaged in mission.

'...if we want to hear what God is saying to his people when we read the Scriptures we must employ a missional hermeneutic.' (Goheen, 2008, p49)

Wright's contribution to the discussion progresses to the point where,

'In short, a missional hermeneutic proceeds from the assumption that the whole Bible renders to us the story of God's mission through God's people in their engagement with God's world for the sake of the whole of God's creation.' (Wright, 2004, p22) That unitary story is the unfolding biblical narrative of creation, fall and rebellion, redemption and restoration.

Michael Barram (2007) argues that readers of the Bible must locate themselves in mission. The biblical texts were written in a missional context. Participating in God's mission enables contemporary readers to find common ground with the ancient text's perspective."

The New Testament leaves the task of mission incomplete. Scripture never places Paul in Rome, the Scythians were unevangelised (Col 3:11), the 'great multitude' had not gathered (Rev 7). A missional hermeneutic privileges the reader (not *over* the Biblical text) by locating her within the future horizon *towards which* the Biblical text looks.

'...the church's mission in and to the world is the practice of the biblical text in which the text is being constantly interpreted...' (Bauckham, 1999, p1)

### **b. Global-historical developments and their consequences for World Christianity and our understanding of Mission Conferences**

It is possible to speak of three global-historical movements (cf. Ott & Netland, 2006, pp28-29) Where might we locate Lausanne within this flow of movement?

- Colonisation
- Contextualisation
- Glocalisation

We can also recognize the emergence of a globalizing theology (Tennant, 2007, pp3-19) as a consequence of:

- Geographic translation
- Cultural translation
- Theological translation

This is also something that Lausanne as a global mission movement will have to negotiate. Perhaps the CTC is a sign that it may yet manage to do so.

The Edinburgh 1910 World Mission Conference is reflected in the first couplet of words (colonisation and geographic translation). Lausanne I may be said to have characterise the second (contextualisation and cultural translation) whilst the Lausanne Movement post Cape Town must now commit to reflecting upon the emerging realities of glocalisation and theological translation.

The Gospel, the Saviour that we serve and proclaim, and the Church that bears his name can never be the possession of any one culture, nationality, global region, or a particular Christian tradition, denomination, or confession. The Gospel is for all. It is universal good news that announces the 'one, holy, catholic and apostolic church' as the new community of faith in Christ into which we are all incorporated through faith, repentance, and baptism.

The very universality of the Gospel propels us along in our journey towards the fullest possible engagement with the world church, its rich experience of faithful service, its women and men of faith, and its treasure store of theological insight and contribution.

When the Gospel that has been taken to the ends of the earth is brought back and spoken in a new voice, then we are truly blessed. To God be the glory! Amen!

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<sup>1</sup> These were held in Liverpool (1860), the London Centenary Missions Conference (1888), the New York Ecumenical Missionary Conference (1900), the Indian Decennial Missionary Conference (Madras 1902), and the Shanghai Missionary Conference (1907).

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.lausanne.org/en/gatherings/global-congress/berlin-1966.html>

<sup>3</sup> See, for example, 'We recognize in one another a living, personal trust in Jesus the Lord, and this is the basis of our fellowship across so many ethnic, cultural, national, and denominational divides.' George, T. 'If I'm an Evangelical, what am I?' in *Christianity Today*, 9 August, 1999, p62. Also see Bebbington, Noll, *et al.*

<sup>4</sup> This appealed to the majority world theologians, living under the oppressive African and Latin American regimes of the 1960s and 70s. It remains influential among evangelicals in the majority world where vested business interests have replaced the oppression of dictatorial regimes.

<sup>5</sup> Gallardo, J., 'Ethics and Mission, in Shenk, *Anabaptism and Mission*, 2001, p153

<sup>6</sup> See Stott, 'Ten Years Later: the Lausanne Covenant' in Dayton, E.R., 1984, pp65-70)

<sup>7</sup> For example, the *International Orality Network* met in Hong Kong during June 2013, the *Global Diaspora Network* met in the Philippines during March 2013, and the *Lausanne-Orthodox Initiative* co-hosted a consultation during September 2013.

<sup>8</sup> Not entirely a new concept for the evangelical mission world, though very underutilised. A notable exception is the work of Scott Jones *The Evangelistic Love of God and Neighbour*, published in 2003.

<sup>9</sup> For too many evangelicals, missional authenticity implies missional *efficiency* whilst the Orthodox may at times have been guilty of equating missional authenticity with other equally challengeable practices.