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# The Third Way

A discussion of the problems for evangelism generated by the Ecumenical-Evangelical polarity and a suggested way forward.

MICHAEL CASSIDY

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THIS SYMPOSIUM IN September 1973 falls between Bangkok 1972 and Lausanne 1974. This creates both its practical dilemma and its potential destiny. For these two great gatherings represent an organisational dividedness, if not a polarity in world Christendom which in my judgement is neither healthy nor necessary. For the sake of simplicity and convenience I am calling this the ecumenical-evangelical polarity, though I personally deplore the labels and am conscious that they lack both theological precision and accuracy, many so called ecumenicals being manifestly evangelical and many evangelicals overtly ecumenical. Indeed even the term 'polarity' is in a sense a misnomer, for within the apparently polarised camps are an admixture of influence, and even opposing views, with component parts of each 'pole' relating more easily to each other than to elements within their own camp. This suggests that we may have created frameworks and structures which are more of a hindrance than a help and which may themselves need to come under the judgement of God. However in the Bangkok-Lausanne context the terms have a rough and ready usefulness for our current purposes, and one only uses them in the beginning to dispense with them in the end. Indeed it is my prayer that this symposium may constitute under the Holy Spirit of God the birth of a Third Way.

When Mr. Castro asked me to participate in this symposium, he encouraged me to look at some topic related to evangelism from my own 'very personal point of view'. I have taken him at his word and am doing just that with the topic selected. The fact is that in my ministry as an evangelist, I am endlessly confronted with the practical problems generated by ecumenical-evangelical tensions. I am therefore opening my heart in testimony, not as an expert, or a theologian, but as an Anglican layman involved in evangelism in the extremely complex context of Africa generally and South Africa particularly.

Perhaps I should add that the ecumenical-evangelical tension is not simply external to me but personal and internal. Let me explain. Born in South Africa, raised in Lesotho, and educated in an Anglican church school, I found myself as a teenager pulled by white loyalties, black sympathies and a broadly religious idealism. At Cambridge, my conversion to Christ became real through a young Anglican law student who dated his own conversion to Billy Graham's Harringay Crusade in London in 1954. Ardent involvement in the Cambridge Christian Union was followed by a call to evangelism experienced during Dr. Graham's New York Crusade (1957). This issued for me in theological training at Fuller Seminary. I later formed an interdenominational and inter-racial evangelistic team called Africa Enterprise for work in the cities of Africa. However, our commitment to inter-church evangelism, in which we have been involved for a decade, drew me into deep contact with many fine non-evangelical clergy from whom I found there was much to learn. This kind of openness and association did not always meet with approval from some of my more conservative evangelical brethren. This was disturbing, for I knew that light and truth often came to me from those outside my particular theological camp. Not only that, but the evangelical facility at setting the limits of the Kingdom of God generated an increasing unease within me. With alarm I also beheld a perilous evangelical withdrawal from the social and political arena in a land where such non-involvement seemed calculated to doom one to irrelevance. By contrast, the so-called 'ecumenical' churches were profoundly involved in these issues, thereby winning African respect, yet evangelism in these circles often seemed to have become a casualty of political preoccupation. To see the imperatives of the Great Commission relegated either to the periphery or to oblivion in the life of some of these churches became equally perplexing. Unable to turn my back on my evangelical heritage, yet disturbed about elements in it, I was equally unable to embrace fully the ecumenical way, though admiring much about it. Increasingly, I began to feel that each needed the correctives of the other, and both needed re-converting to Christ, to community and to the world, lest each end up perpetuating different species of anaemia.

Somehow or other it seemed to be desperately necessary to repent of our caricatures of each other, not to mention our jargon and polemics, and to face God's work in one another. Peter had to face what God had done in Cornelius, knowing full well that behind Cornelius marched the Gentile host. God compels both Peter and Cornelius to shed their prejudices so that from their meeting the 'new thing' could emerge for their mutual benefit, for world mission, and for the glory of God. The big question thus emerges: 'Is God at work in my brother, even if hitherto he has been my theological, social or political Samaritan?' If He is, then with Peter I must enter the new relationship and appropriate his defence—i.e., 'Who am I to resist God?' (Acts 11: 17). Differently

put, the question is: 'What does membership in the "catholic" church mean?' Nor will the question be fobbed off by retreating into conventional polemics or stalling in our conventional deadlocks. Indeed, I believe there are increasing numbers of Peters and Corneliuses in both so-called camps who are keen for personal relationship, dialogue and Bible study, so that the granite walls of our respective exclusivisms may begin to crumble for the sake of the truth, the Church and the world. Nor does this mean that truth is necessarily to be found in the middle ground of synthesis, paradox or compromise, least of all in a lowest common denominator, for truth should never be the casualty of communion, but rather its goal and offspring. Indeed sometimes truth will be found in outright capitulation of my view to my brother's, if I see myself to be in error, and vice versa. In other words, the outcome of dialogue and fellowship is to be neither prejudged nor stage-managed, but left in the Spirit's hands. The Third Way for which I plead is therefore really an attitude of openness, acceptance, contact, fellowship and trust across the ecumenical-evangelical divide, so that the right sort of atmosphere may arise in which to consider the serious theological questions which have traditionally produced division. We are not calling for loving and uncritical endorsement by everyone of everything. Rather we are calling for a shared quest for truth which involves in all of us a willingness for truth to come to us from any quarter, and not just from those we consider theologically or ecclesiastically kosher. It involves refusal to be an echo, or to be controlled by party caucuses. It involves a willingness to question our own presuppositions and assumptions in the light of Scripture. It also involves a surrendering of the polemical necessity to win arguments, and a recognition of our common participation in heresy. It involves repenting of our jargon, our reactionary way of theologising, and our stigmatising. In short, it involves the Prodigal's willingness to come to ourselves that we may come to the Father, and the Elder Brother's obligation to come to the Father so as to come to the brother. We can never graduate from love of God and neighbour. If the Son of God was full of grace and truth in that order, we can aim for no less if we would escape the clutches of our rear-guard actions so as to advance to a bridgehead. And the climate would seem to be ripe. For 'ecumenism' seems increasingly open to the kind of Bible study which makes sense to evangelicals (witness the Bangkok groups), while evangelicalism is busy building its own species of missionary ecumenism not unlike that in which the ecumenical movement had its origins. Perhaps impetus towards a Third Way is to be found in facing some of the problems for evangelism generated by the current situation. I see the problems in three main areas: the practice, the authority and the understanding of evangelism.

### *I The Practice of Evangelism*

MY thesis at this point is simple. The ecumenical-evangelical polarity hinders, impedes and sometimes prevents evangelism at grass-root levels. In the absence of an agreed theological basis for evangelism, each feels hindered by the other. At this point the church becomes for the spectating world a burden to faith in the Gospel, while evangelism itself becomes the preoccupation of the few. Not only that, but the early church's evangelistic secret of involving the whole *laos* of God is lost, with the pew becoming infected with the paralysis of the pulpit. 'Like shepherd, like sheep.'

But have we not all put an over-idealistic cart before a rather pragmatic horse in insisting on total theological agreement as the only crucible out of which co-operative evangelism can come? In our ministry in South Africa we have found deliverance from evangelistic paralysis through two allies—first a doctrine of the church which stresses 'complementarity' within the Body, and secondly a healthy pragmatism, forced upon us by the fact that the hour is too late and desperate in Southern Africa for the church to luxuriate in internal polemics. I would humbly suggest that this approach might not be without relevance as a way forward for the wider world scene. However none of this minimises those issues related to *truth* which are still capable of paralysing. The first of these concerns:

### *II The Authority for Evangelism*

#### I COMMON MEETING GROUND

IT is self-evident that this basic matter of authority affects our whole understanding of evangelism—its nature, message and aim. The problem, it would appear, if one can be forgiven for generalising, is that to ecumenicals the evangelical doctrine of inspiration appears to be a retreat from academic integrity, while to evangelicals the apparent ecumenical embrace of radical scholarship looks like a retreat from spiritual integrity. The result is that each camp is living in a reactionary manner. However, we are now at a point where to cry 'Liberal' or 'Fundamentalist' is not enough. A way out must be found. And perhaps it can be found, not by forcing either acceptance or rejection of a particular view of inspiration, but in recognising first that *truth* is personal in our Lord Jesus before it is propositional in Scripture. Scripture's witness is to Him who lives in the heart of every true believer. We therefore meet not round a theological statement but around a living Saviour. In commitment to Him to whom the Scriptures testify (John 5: 39), we can move on not necessarily to a shared view of inspiration, but to a shared resolution to take Scripture

*seriously* together, that its own intrinsic authority and light might judge our lives and ministries through the power of the Holy Spirit.

Not only that, but if we can move towards seeing the Bible as the Word of God given in history through the *words* of men, without denying either natural or supernatural, historical or supra-historical, we have basis enough, I believe, to face the evangelistic imperative together. For the recognition of revelation as the acts of God in history accompanied by an interpretive prophetic word comes close, I think, to being common ground. What George Ladd calls 'the revealing deed-word event' is acknowledged by most, and many ecumenicals and evangelicals would support his view that 'because the Bible is *history*, it must be studied critically and historically: but because it is *revelatory history*, the critical method must make room for this supra-historical dimension of the divine activity in revelation and redemption.'<sup>3</sup>

Surely then, is it really theological naïveté to believe that evangelicals who speak like this could find common ground in fellowship, study and perhaps evangelism with the many ecumenicals who would agree with Visser 't Hooft's affirmation that 'As the ecumenical movement enters into the stage of great complexity, its true value will increasingly depend on the seriousness with which it searches the Scriptures to find right answers.'<sup>3</sup> Says Hans-Ruedi Weber, 'The fact that the Bible has authority for all Christians has basic ecumenical significance'.<sup>4</sup> Indeed. To explore this 'significance' seems crucial while maintaining a commitment to keep the Bible in the continuity not the change category as that which provides the ongoing criteria for mission. Above all, our ideas of mission must be constantly related to our Lord's. To surrender this concern would seem to doom us to instability, subjectivism and further paralysis.

## 2. THE HERMENEUTICAL PROBLEM

ALL this does bring the hermeneutical problem into focus as of critical importance, because to impose different hermeneutical procedures onto a generally accepted Biblical authority is inevitably to produce divergent conclusions. This obviously has profound implications for evangelism in terms of its nature, message and aim. This would need to be one of the major areas to be grappled with in any ecumenical-evangelical conversations. It is beyond both the province of this paper and the ability of this writer to tackle this subject satisfactorily. However, herewith several personal concerns. If hermeneutics is that science investigating the method by which a reader seeks to understand an author's intended meaning in his text, then it would seem with the Scriptures:

- (a) That no hermeneutical principle which is foreign to Scripture itself should be imposed on text, whether rational, existential, naturalistic, scholastic or utopian.
- (b) That the 'essential nature' and world view of the Biblical documents

be taken into account in formulating a hermeneutical principle and that an attempt be made to let the documents answer for themselves as to how they should be approached, i.e., Scripture requires a *Biblical* hermeneutic, not a twentieth century, rationalistic, anti-metaphysical hermeneutic based on a closed system of natural causes. Our hermeneutic is to arise out of our understanding of the Bible's nature, not vice versa.

- (c) That attention therefore needs to be given to the presuppositions underlying our hermeneutical principles even more than to the principles themselves. Our hermeneutics should be controlled by presuppositions which are Biblical themselves.
- (d) That our hermeneutical principles must never constitute an evasion of the basic grammatico-historical thrust of the text. Semantics and syntactical analyses must be used to penetrate the author's intended sense.
- (e) That the claims within Scripture itself to being '*theopneustos*' (2 Tim. 3: 16) be seriously faced.
- (f) That the ministry of the Holy Spirit in Scripture's formulation as well as man's comprehension should likewise be taken seriously.
- (g) That our hermeneutical principles embody a pastoral and evangelistic concern that the text not become incomprehensible to the ordinary layman or seeker. For instance, the procedures of the 'New Hermeneutic' would thus be called in question simply because of their very complexity for the ordinary layman. Understanding the Bible's message is never to become the exclusive prerogative of the theologically literate. Nothing in modern scholarship has invalidated Luther's concept of the 'clarity' of Scripture as it presents its basic message.
- (h) That we humbly let God's truth question us more than we question it.

One final observation. At Bangkok evangelicals and ecumenicals did Bible study together, presumably without any agreed hermeneutic, except discerning the intended sense of the passages under consideration. This was apparently deeply meaningful to most, because, as one evangelical participant put it, 'the message of the Bible, and not what each one thought, or the particular teaching of a church or school, was given pre-eminence'. The result, he said was '*a remarkable affinity of thought*'.<sup>4</sup> I wonder if this does not say something basic about both the hermeneutical question and the way forward for all those who are evangelistically concerned. In any event, without this sort of affinity we can only have confusion regarding:

### *III The Understanding of Evangelism*

CONFUSION about authority and the imposition of an alien her-

meneutic on Scripture has particularly serious consequences for the total range of the evangelistic enterprise affecting not only its nature and message but its aim and scope. However, if through the Holy Spirit we will really listen to Scripture in its totality and not just quote it selectively, what emerges is not only conceptual clarification but a basis for co-operative evangelism.

### 1. THE NATURE OF EVANGELISM

Once again our understanding of a key issue is vitiated by Christendom's reactionary way of theologising. Evangelicals, over-reacting to the so-called 'social Gospel' with its horizontal concerns, have tended to confine themselves for many years to the Gospel's vertical dimension. Ecumenicals, partly out of reaction to this, and partly out of a sincere response to the very valid Third World cries for liberation and justice, would appear to be in danger of over-stressing the horizontal and redefining Biblical evangelism in terms of social and political engagement aimed at converting structures and improving man's temporal, social, political and material lot. Without denying for a moment the validity of these concerns, it would seem to this observer that to equate socio-political engagement with evangelism is to confuse evangelism, which is a restricted activity based on a limited mandate, with mission which is the total task of the Church. Perhaps it is this confusion of terms which has bred imbalances amongst both evangelicals and ecumenicals.

Douglas Webster addressed himself to this issue at the South African Congress on Mission and Evangelism: 'Mission,' he said, 'is a comprehensive word with a large meaning. Evangelism is a more restricted word with a sharply defined meaning. Mission derives from a Latin root and ranges round the whole concept of sending and being sent. Its Greek equivalent is found in our words "apostle" and "apostolic". Evangelism derives from a Greek root meaning Good News (i.e., Evangel). . . . The central concept is message or messenger or angel, and the prefix emphasises the goodness of the message. To evangelise is to tell or bring good news. Mission, therefore, has about it a sense of action, posture or process: its root is a verb with the idea of motion or movement. But evangelism is based on a noun: it is centred in news which must be reported in words, about a person, an event, a series of events. It is concentrated. Its concern is with the Gospel itself.' Webster points out that Jesus' own mission (see Matt. 11: 4-5 and Luke 4: 18-19) included many things (healing, cleansing, liberating, proclaiming) only one of which can properly be described as evangelism. Thus, 'all evangelism is mission. Not all mission is evangelism.' Likewise 'He sends his church to do many things. Their totality is the Christian mission. Of these things evangelism has its unique importance. But healing, teaching, baptising, liberating, protesting, working for peace and justice, feeding the hungry, reconciling those at variance,

are all essential parts of mission, as we see it in the New Testament. They all arise from the Gospel: they could be said to be part of the Gospel, for the Gospel is about healing and freedom, reconciliation and righteousness, all of which the Gospel offers men.' 'Nevertheless,' affirms Webster, 'however closely we may associate these activities with evangelism, the New Testament does not identify them with it. Evangelism is the proclaiming of the Gospel, particularly to those who have not heard it, or who have not understood it, or who have not responded to it, or who have forgotten it.'

To grasp this distinction is to resolve the confusion between the evangelistic and 'social-cum-cultural' mandates of the church and to end the theological schizophrenia between vertical and horizontal. Both are obviously essential and it is perilous to ignore either. However, the summary form given by our Lord to the first and second commandments (Matt. 22: 37-38) would seem to establish the priority of the vertical and evangelistic over the horizontal and socio-political. For social and political liberation is no guarantee of a liberated human spirit. A totally liberated, democratic, wealthy and educated country is not necessarily a heaven on earth. Some such countries are only 'a more comfortable and better-ventilated hell', as Dr. Edgar Brookes, one of the founding members of the South African Liberal Party, recently observed. Man's relationship then to himself and others is vital, but his relationship to God is primary. Said Jesus: 'Do not labour for the food which perishes, but for the food which endures to eternal life which the Son of Man will give you' (John 6: 27). Humanisation, therefore, which excludes spiritual salvation is not true humanisation, for it is Jesus alone who introduces men to their fullest potential and their truest humanity. Thus mission which has no place for evangelism is not mission in the Biblical sense.

The New Testament evangelist thus retains the primacy of the eternal as that which ultimately illumines and redeems the temporal. F. R. Barry puts it this way: Life in this world has 'an eternal reference. Here we have no continuing city. History and its achievements are transient. Civilisations are subject to mortality. If men indeed exist for the glory of God, then their final end and their destiny as persons are not to be found in this passing world . . . but in a communion with God which time cannot terminate, nor death destroy. . . . The church was created by the Resurrection . . . and though it exists as the Servant of God's World, its centre of gravity is not in this world. It knows that there men are strangers and pilgrims, spirits 'seeking a country of their own' (Hebrews 11: 14). The Christian valuation of the secular, both positively and negatively, depends on faith in God and eternal life.'\*

Of course the New Testament evangelist is also to draw on his Old Testament heritage and face the prophetic responsibilities bequeathed him by the Old Testament prophets, particularly where those prophetic

insights are reaffirmed in the teaching of our Lord (e.g., the Good Samaritan), and the Apostles (e.g., 1 Cor. 13). Indeed true prophetism and genuine evangelism are always life-affirming in the here and now and not life-negating. Without denying the love-ethic, they must affirm what liberates and resist what enslaves. However when the evangelist adopts the role of the prophet to address the society or the body politic, his stand will always be with that wounded Saviour who is *for* all men (publican or Zealot, oppressor or oppressed), *against* all sin, and *above* all partisanship. For example, a godly and moral objectivity will therefore lead the true prophet to condemn not just white racism, but all racism; not just right wing sin, but left wing sin; not just capitalist sin, but socialist sin; not just nationalist sin, but tribal sin. Only that way will he retain both prophetic credibility *and* the ability to proclaim the Gospel to one and all. If his indignation is selective he torpedoes both his prophecy and his proclamation.

In short, we dare not recant on the complementary nature of both witness and service, both proclamation and presence. Nor has either theology or man, in my judgement, so come of age as to outdate the definition of evangelism formulated in 1918 by the Archbishop of Canterbury's Committee on Evangelism: 'To evangelise is so to present Christ Jesus in the power of the Holy Spirit, that men shall come to put their trust in God through Him, to accept Him as their Saviour and serve Him as their King in the fellowship of His Church'. This is not to invalidate the horizontal, social or political, but to insist that these depend upon the vertical and do not precede it.

## 2. THE MESSAGE OF EVANGELISM

Webster spoke of the message as 'the central concept' in the Greek word 'Evangel'. Now if evangelicals and ecumenicals are to evangelise together there needs to be accord as to both the source and content of our message. Says James Stewart of Edinburgh, 'Now the first axiom of effective evangelism is that the evangelist must be sure of his message. Any haziness or hesitation there is fatal.' Nor, it seems to me, can this message be variable, situational or cultural in the way that the broader 'messages of mission' can be. The evangelistic message of the *Kerygma* (1 Cor. 1: 21), proclaimed by the *Keryx* or herald (1 Tim. 2: 7; 2 Tim. 1: 11) must surely represent a fixed deposit of truth, discovered by *exegesis* not *eisegesis*. This message, both in the metaphor and in spiritual reality, is committed to the messenger by the King. Evangelism exists not for propagating private views, but the mighty acts and message of God.

We are not to preach what Kierkegaard called, 'a vaporised Christianity'<sup>8</sup> but to face his question. 'Hast thou uttered the definite message quite definitely?'<sup>9</sup> Speaking of the church's crisis in evangelism, James Stewart writes: 'It cannot be too emphatically stated that if contemporary evangelism is to make its full potential impact on the

secularism of this age, it will have to go back more constantly and deliberately than it has done, and also more patiently and humbly to its own fountain-head in the New Testament and test there its message to this generation.<sup>10</sup>

Now although recent scholarship has broken down C. H. Dodd's rigid distinction between *kerygma* and *didache*, yet for me his composite six point outline of the primitive *kerygma* remains broadly serviceable. It constitutes a guideline to highlight in detail the basic New Testament message that in Christ God has intervened in the world for man's redemption. Dodd elaborates this as follows:

- (1) The age of fulfilment has arrived;
- (2) This happened in the ministry, death and resurrection of Jesus;
- (3) Jesus has been exalted to God's right hand as the head of the New Israel;
- (4) The gift of the Holy Spirit is the sign of Christ's present power;
- (5) There will be a consummation of the age in the return of Christ;
- (6) The preaching ends with an appeal for repentance and faith, the offer of forgiveness, salvation, and the promised Holy Spirit.<sup>11</sup>

The fact that aspects of this message may be either unacceptable or offensive to modern rationalistic man should not make us restructure the message to accommodate him, but to explicate its meaning *relevantly* to touch him not simply in his cultural or social context but in his existential need, perplexity and moral guilt. To proclaim *relevantly* therefore is not, as Helmut Thielicke observes, 'To accommodate ourselves or ape those we would reach. Far from it. Paul actually contradicted the Greeks and Jews and showed them God was completely different from what they had expected. But it was in terms of *their* suppositions and notions that he searched them out. He met their questions on their level. That makes all the difference. He did not ape what they were saying just to make the Gospel palatable.'<sup>12</sup> Modernity can never be an end in itself, and certainly not at the cost of reworking, or amputating the *kerygmatic* content. The world sets neither the final agenda nor the message. Nor in this connection will we forget the message of the Cross is generally *skandalon* before foundation-stone.

In short, the manner of presenting our message will take into account man's human condition which is universal and his human situation which is local. If either his general humanity or his cultural context are ignored the communication of the *kerygma* suffers. Our Gospel message is thus both *kerygmatic* to meet the universal and *apologetic* to meet the situational. And our so-called 'contextualisation', to use the current jargon, therefore becomes a prophetic encounter between God's Word and each situation, not an over-accommodation to the socio-political. However, one would acknowledge that in the evangelistic context the message of the early church was not without its situational variations, as they did permit the situation to determine

which aspects of the *kerygma* to stress (cf. Mars Hill and Pentecost), but the situation never produced an exclusion of *kerygmatic* content or the presentation of 'another Gospel' (Gal. 1: 7).

### 3. THE AIM AND SCOPE OF EVANGELISM

Whether evangelism's aim is dialogue or conversion, and whether its scope is local or universal, turns once again on the questions of authority and hermeneutics, but even more specifically on the nature and person of Christ. The question is Christological. If Jesus is indeed the *logos* of God 'Who became flesh and dwelt among us' (John 1: 14)—If He is the One to whom 'all power in heaven and on earth is committed' (Matt. 28: 18)—If He is the One through whom and for whom 'all things were created' (Col. 1: 16) that 'in everything He might be pre-eminent' (Col. 1: 16), *then*, indeed His universal mandate to 'go into all the world and proclaim the Gospel' becomes normative. His word, if true for any, becomes true for all. And we remember that 'God so loved the world. . . .' This also reminds us that God is indeed the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has made man in his image. Theology and anthropology, strictly understood, have paved the way for Christology. Christology is receivable and necessary because of Who and What has preceded it. Indeed, as William Temple observed, 'Natural Theology and a Sacramental Universe hunger for Divine Revelation'.<sup>12</sup>

This is not to say that men of other living faiths are to be approached in a proud, 'one-way traffic' type of imperialistic proclamation or triumphalism, but in a humble openness which violates neither the spirit of dialogue and mutual edification, nor the universal debt of love laid upon the Church of Christ to tell of that One who for us men and our salvation died upon a Tree outside a city wall. This He did that 'repentance and forgiveness of sins should be preached in His name to all nations *beginning from Jerusalem*' (Luke 24: 47). And Jerusalem, we will remember, was the headquarters of a living faith. Of course we might absolve ourselves of this glorious privilege in terms of a comfortable universalism, yet I believe such a view not only to be difficult to sustain exegetically, but impossible to use lightly in circumvention of the imperatives of the Great Commission. Whatever one's view of universalism, the Great Commission stands. And to those who would seek to dispose of Matthew 28: 18-20 by the expedients of radical form criticism, the answer must surely come not only in the whole apostolic mission to the Gentile world, but in the *testimonium internum* in the heart of the true believer which makes him say, 'We cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard' (Acts 4: 20). And in the last analysis, we have here the issue not only of obedience, but also of *truth*, for the law of antithesis requires from us a verdict as to the *truth*, or otherwise, of the claims and counterclaims of different living faiths.

Evangelism's preoccupation is not therefore, in my judgement, primarily with the churchly concerns of insiders, but with the spiritual needs of outsiders, even when those outsiders are part of the visible Church. Evangelism's loving and compassionate priority is to face the frontiers of unbelief and neo-paganism with the One who said: 'I am the Way, the *Truth* and the Life'. Indeed one cannot better the stated aim of the Commission on World Mission and Evangelism (CWME): 'To further the proclamation to the whole world of the Gospel of Jesus Christ to the end that all men may believe in Him and be saved' (New Delhi, 1961). The way forward for evangelicals and ecumenicals is not only in common commitment to this glorious aim, but in common commitment to Jesus our Lord, and to His Living Word, and to one another as fellow human beings, brethren in Christ and complementary parts of His Body. If such a spirit can develop in which we will take not only our Lord and His Word seriously, but also one another, then Lausanne '74 may build on the genuinely Biblical elements in Bangkok '72, and a Third Way forward may emerge for the cause of world mission and evangelism and for the greater glory of God.

<sup>1</sup> George Ladd, *The New Testament and Criticism* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1967) p. 27.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* p. 33.

<sup>3</sup> Quoted in the *Church Times*, May 7th, 1965.

<sup>4</sup> Hans-Ruedi Weber: 'The Bible, Critical Guide for the Ecumenical Movement,' *Journal of Theology for Southern Africa*, Dec. 1972, p. 24.

<sup>5</sup> Manuel J. Gaxiola, *The Evangelical Response to Bangkok* (Pasadena: William Carey Library, 1973) p. 62.

<sup>6</sup> F. R. Barry, *Christian Ethics and Secular Society* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1966) pp. 278-9.

<sup>7</sup> James S. Stewart, *A Faith to Proclaim* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1953) p. 12.

<sup>8</sup> Søren Kierkegaard, *Journals*, trans. and ed. by Alex Dru, p. 437.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.* p. 493.

<sup>10</sup> Stewart, *op. cit.*, p. 29.

<sup>11</sup> C. H. Dodd, *The Apostolic Preaching and Its Developments* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1936) p. 17.

<sup>12</sup> Helmut Thielicke, *How Modern Should Theology Be?* (London: Fontana, 1970) p. 14.

<sup>13</sup> William Temple, *Nature, Man and God* (London: Macmillan, 1964) p. 520.