

Trends in evangelical missiology – the Iguassu process

Paper presented to the Standing Committee of the Churches' Commission on Mission, by Richard Tiplady, Associate Director of Global Connections, on 24th April 2001.

The context

The worldwide evangelical missionary movement was shaped and represented by 3 different international networks throughout the 1990s. These were:

- **WEF Missions Commission**
The World Evangelical Fellowship is an international association of national evangelical alliances. It has several 'commissions' (religious liberty, women's, etc) and its 'missions commission' is an international association of national evangelical missionary alliances (from every continent) and (from 2001) the large 'internationalised' evangelical mission agencies.
- **The AD2000 and Beyond Movement**
This network formally closed on 31st March 2001. It brought together a wide variety of individuals and organisations, under the goal of "a church for every people and the gospel for every person by the year 2000". Its focus was therefore very much directed towards missionary mobilisation and church-planting, especially in the regions described as the 10/40 Window (a concept which originated within this movement).
- **The Lausanne Committee for World Evangelization**
Having been widely influential within evangelicalism in the 1970s and 1980s, LCWE struggled throughout the 1990s to redefine its *raison d'être*. It is an international network, although its strongest constituencies are in the USA, Germany, and Scandinavia, especially for evangelicals in the mainline Protestant denominations. A further attempt to give the network a purpose for the future will be made through a major consultation on key challenges facing world evangelization, to be held in 2003.

There are efforts under way to help the above 3 networks to relate more effectively together through the 'Great Commission Roundtable', the first major meeting of which will be in Malaysia from 28th April – 1st May 2001. It is as yet too early to say how this will develop. Another new network of interest is Micah, a network of national and international evangelical relief and development organisations.

Background to the WEF Missions Commission "Iguassu Consultation"

The WEF Missions Commission focussed throughout the 1990s largely on pragmatic concerns. These included the emergence of national missionary movements from Latin America, Africa and Asia, and triennial major consultations on issues of key concern (missionary training, partnerships, and missionary attrition).

Because of the AD2000 Movement's concentration on what many evangelicals considered to be a reductionist understanding of mission, and the continued inability of LCWE to provide the kind of missiological leadership it did in its early years, WEF Missions Commission considered that the time was right for its next triennial international consultation (to be held in 1999) to concentrate on issues of theological rather than pragmatic concern. The date provided an added spur to this decision (as an opportunity to reflect on developments during the century which was closing, and to consider the challenges of the coming century).

Of particular concern was the impression that the dominant evangelical missiology of the past 20 years had come from North America, and that this was reductionist in the sense that it concentrated too much on matters of evangelization and church-planting, to the detriment of reflection and action in the area of the transformation of society. A concern for relief, development and action for justice had grown considerably among evangelicals in the past 20-30 years, but these two strands were not properly integrated (or worse, the latter was seen as little more than a means to the end of church-planting).

It is important to note that the key issue underlying the Iguassu consultation was not the question of the relationship between evangelism and social action, but rather on the perceived dominance of Western methodologies within evangelical missiology. This would include the strong influence of the social sciences, especially anthropology, and the resulting concern with issues of measurement and even 'finishability' or 'success' in world mission.

The preamble to the Iguassu Affirmation summarises these concerns well:

We have convened as 160 mission practitioners, missiologists and church leaders from 53 countries, under the World Evangelical Fellowship Missions Commission in Foz de Iguassu, Brazil on October 10-15 1999 to:

- 1. Reflect together on the challenges and opportunities facing world missions at the dawn of the new millennium;*
- 2. Review the different streams of twentieth-century evangelical missiology and practice, especially since the 1974 Lausanne Congress;*
- 3. Continue developing and applying a relevant biblical missiology, which reflects the cultural diversity of God's people.*

The Iguassu Consultation

This was held, as noted above, from 10-15 October 1999, near the city of *Foz de Iguassu* in southern Brazil. The choice of location was deliberate. It is in the region of Brazil called *Misiones*, named after the long heritage of Jesuit missionary activity in the area. The Iguassu Falls are just 5 miles from the city, and are located on the border between Brazil and Argentina. It is these falls which featured in the film, "The Mission", the story of which was set during this period of Jesuit missionary work.

It would take too long to summarize every aspect of the consultation, but the key contributions were in the following areas:

- An assessment of the global situation at the turn of the century (Samuel Escobar)
- An assessment of the main streams of evangelical missiology (Samuel Escobar)
- Reflection on the issues of religious, ethical and hermeneutical pluralism (Chris Wright)
- Consideration about who should be the agents of mission (Antonia van der Meer)
- The contentious issues of spiritual conflict and worldview (Paul Hiebert)

In addition, Ajith Fernando provided a series of Bible Readings under the heading "Biblical Trinitarianism and Mission". There were also a vast array of workshops and 'think-tanks' on issues of specific concern.

The main issues raised by the conference papers, discussions, and the very experience of the event itself, were:

1. Cultural diversity

The regional representation at the event was good, with many participants coming from Africa, Asia and Latin America, as well as the usual suspects from Europe and North America. In addition, there was a fair representation of the theological diversity within evangelicalism. The age and gender distribution was less good. Of 160 participants, there were only about 20 female participants, and less than a dozen under-40s (with only 1 person who could be placed in both the above categories).

The goal was to develop a 'globalized evangelical missiology', which drew from insights of different parts of the global missionary movement. Samuel Escobar noted 3 key streams in current evangelical missiological thinking: postcolonial European (which majored on critiquing past missionary work, and on partnership with the global church), 'radical' Latin American (which was 'from the margins'), and 'managerial' North American (as characterised by objectives, management, etc, and embodied most clearly in the AD2000 and Beyond Movement).

'Managerial missiology' was given quite a hard time during the week, much to the dismay of some of its advocates who were present at the consultation. It was interesting to note that its main defenders tended to be older, male, and white (albeit not exclusively so – this missiological approach has had considerable influence on the emerging Latin American missionary movement).

As mentioned previously, the underlying issue at Iguassu was whose voices would shape evangelical missiology in the coming century (or at least the next few years). Would they be North American, or globally diverse, reflecting the emerging global evangelical missionary movement? The issue is not dead, for there are those who hope that the newly-forming Great Commission Roundtable will facilitate a 'global redeployment of resources' to enable the completion of the Great Commission.

With such a diverse group coming together at Iguassu, it was hard to develop any kind of consensus. Interestingly, almost every group felt 'marginalized' by some aspect or other of the discussion, and (perhaps encouragingly) this included those for whom this would not be a normal experience at an international evangelical missionary conference (i.e. the WASP males). This reflects the growing cultural and theological diversity of the global evangelical missionary movement, and means that we are unlikely to see a single, dominant evangelical missiology in the near future, even one which could be said to draw on insights from around the world. Instead we may see numerous evangelical missiologies, each drawn from and reflecting given local realities, and all influencing and debating with each other.

This experience has led me to wonder whether large mission events as 'single experiences' shared by all concerned are impossible, and that it may be more useful to hold smaller, more focussed discussion around issues of specific concern.

2. A 'trinitarian' missiology

It was a stated ambition that our reflection at the consultation should be sent in a trinitarian framework. While this sounded a laudable goal, with which no one could possibly disagree, I'm not sure anyone knew what it actually meant. Perhaps the best we can say is as follows:

- there was a strong emphasis from all contributors (especially the non-Western ones) on the place of weakness and suffering in Christian mission, and on the importance of character and holiness. This was seen as an important counter to the perceived excesses of 'managerial missiology'. Many of those from Latin American and Africa also saw it as a valuable emphasis in order to counter the rapid spread of 'prosperity theology' in their regions. Perhaps this can be described as a 'Christocentric' approach to mission, as in "mission in Christ's way".
- some recognised the need to reflect on the work of God outside the church, which obviously draws on the doctrine of the Holy Spirit.

The Iguassu Affirmation (for full text, see Appendix 1)

The Affirmation is the summary of the discussions that took place at the conference. It began life as the Iguassu Covenant (with obvious echoes back to Lausanne) but the title was toned down during the week to something less pretentious.

It consists of a Preamble, Declarations, and Commitments:

- the Preamble summarises the background to and purpose of the Iguassu Consultation, as outlined above.
- The Declarations summarise the core agreements among evangelicals (or at least those present at the event) about theology and the nature of Christian mission.
- The Commitments are the most future-focussed part of the Affirmation, setting out as they do the likely contours of evangelical reflection on world mission in the coming years (for those connected to WEF Missions Commission).

The Preamble is useful in setting out the context in which the Affirmation sets itself, including some sense of a *kairos* moment in history (para 2), and the diversity of the global evangelical missionary movement (para 3-5).

The Declarations are important in that they include what might be considered familiar evangelical territory, i.e. content about the uniqueness of the person and work of Jesus Christ (1-3), but also a good summary of the various areas that evangelicals are trying to hold together in order to be faithful to the biblical witness (4-9), including a holistic gospel, the recognition of spiritual realities, suffering, personal and corporate holiness and justice, unity, and economic and political realities (especially globalization).

The 14 Commitments, defining key challenges are areas for future work, can be broken down into 3 categories:

1. bits no-one will disagree with (in principle, although they do in content)
 - the trinitarian foundation of mission
 - the need for biblical and theological reflection as the foundation for missiology
 - the place of the global church in world mission
 - the relationship between gospel and culture
2. the core bits (probably the most important and widely applicable)
 - the rise of religious pluralization
 - spiritual conflict (a term which avoids the 'warfare' word)
 - mission strategy to be founded on the Bible, and not on the social sciences
 - globalized missiology/ies

- the importance of godly character
 - the cross and suffering
3. Special interest bits (not unimportant, but were not discussed much)
- Christian responsibility and the world economic order
 - Christian responsibility and the ecological crisis
 - partnership
 - member care

Discussion of the Iguassu Affirmation within the Global Connections network has brought up the following points:

- it was felt to be a good summary document, reaffirming the core emphases of evangelical missiology. However, it is in danger of trying to say 'everything', and one is left asking "what's new?". By dealing with familiar issues, it doesn't set much of a new agenda. As such, it doesn't move us on very far from the Lausanne Covenant. The desire for a trinitarian focus isn't very clearly outworked in practice.
- It ignores the 'big' issues of world religions and theologies of religion, globalization and fragmentation, hermeneutics, and the reality of diverse views (both in the church and outside of it). While these were raised at the consultation, they were not properly addressed there, nor are they so in the final document.
- does the Affirmation have a wide enough view of mission? Is mission only done by missionaries? What about the fields of work, science and the arts? What is mission? This raises important questions about motivation and 'calling'.
- The Iguassu Consultation experienced the tensions of globalization, diversification and localization, which is becoming the context and experience of many, not just the church / world mission sector. The consultation experience has highlighted the importance of this issue.

The book of the ~~final~~ consultation

WEF Missions Commission invited international feedback about the Iguassu Consultation and Affirmation. As a result, numerous other papers were commissioned, and these were recently published, along with the consultation papers, as "Global Missiology For The 21st Century : the Iguassu Dialogue". A review of this book is appended to this paper (see Appendix 2). Perhaps the most important things to say about this book are as follows:

- It is probably the best and most comprehensive (and certainly the most international) book dealing with the issues and challenges perceived at this time by the worldwide evangelical missionary movement.
- It begins to achieve one of the main aims of the Iguassu Consultation, which is to identify and promote the development of diverse evangelical missiological voices. Most of the contributions are written by non-Western evangelical missiologists.
- The book aims to bridge the gap between the activists and the thinkers within evangelicalism. It deliberately and frequently uses the term "reflective practitioners" as the ideal to be achieved.

Continuing the Iguassu process – the WEF Missions Commission *Global Missiology Taskforce*

In order to continue the work begun by the above process, WEF Missions Commission is developing a Global Missiology Taskforce. This taskforce consists of about 20 'reflective practitioners' from around the world, and it met for the first time near London in January 2001. It meets again in Malaysia in early May, and hope to complete its initial work of publication by various media in the next 2-3 years.

The stated purpose of the Global Missiology Taskforce is:

1. To continue the strategic work started at Iguassu, Brazil in October 1999, on global missiological issues vital to the health of the church and its missionary enterprise
2. To facilitate the development of a younger generation of reflective practitioners, particularly but not only from the Two-Thirds World
3. To be an ongoing forum for reflective practitioners grappling with cutting edge issues

It has identified the following desirable outcomes of its work:

1. To identify the critical missiological issues faced by the church and its missionary movement
2. To positively influence missiological thinking and practice around the world
3. To foster dialogue between and to publish the works of reflective practitioners dealing with these issues
4. To consider possibilities for electronic publications and consultations, and the production of what might be called The International Bulletin For Global Missiology, in cooperation with others
5. To consider the possibility of establishing a scholarship fund to further the development of younger reflective practitioners from the Two-Thirds World

It has identified the following key issues for its initial attention:

1. globalization and mission
2. women and mission
3. missional ecclesiology
4. interfaith encounter
5. theology of suffering
6. spirituality in mission
7. strategy and mission

It has also been stated that " reflection on these issues should be set within a Trinitarian framework, and the theological concept of the Kingdom of God should play a hermeneutical role".

The goal is undertake work in all the above areas, leading to new publications worldwide, as well as conferences where appropriate. As WEF Missions Commission is a network of national evangelical missionary alliances or mission councils (as in Scandinavia), it is well placed to facilitate widespread reflection on these issues, and dissemination of the outcomes, across the global evangelical missionary movement.

Conclusion

One of the characteristics of evangelicalism is its activism. It is one of its strengths, but perhaps sometimes also a weakness, when considered reflection is not allowed to adequately inform the goals towards which this activism is directed. The Iguassu process is a deliberate attempt to introduce just such reflection, while not undermining the activist instinct in evangelicalism that is one of its strengths. This, and the desire to include multiple evangelical voices from around the world, is, I believe, a sign of the health and maturity of the evangelical Christian missionary movement, which is now truly becoming a global movement.

Iguassu Affirmation

PREAMBLE:

We have convened as 160 mission practitioners, missiologists and church leaders from 53 countries, under the World Evangelical Fellowship Missions Commission in Foz de Iguassu, Brazil on October 10-15, 1999 to:

1. Reflect together on the challenges and opportunities facing world missions at the dawn of the new millennium;
2. Review the different streams of twentieth-century evangelical missiology and practice, especially since the 1974 Lausanne Congress;
3. Continue developing and applying a relevant biblical missiology that reflects the cultural diversity of God's people.

We proclaim the living Christ in a world torn by ethnic conflicts, massive economic disparity, natural disasters and ecological crises. The mission task is both assisted and hindered by technological developments that now reach the remotest corners of the earth. The diverse religious aspirations of people, expressed in multiple religions and spiritual experimentation, challenge the ultimate truth of the Gospel.

In the twentieth-century, missiology witnessed unprecedented development. In recent years, reflection from many parts of the church has helped missions to continue shedding paternalistic tendencies. Today, we continue to explore the relationship between the Gospel and culture, between evangelism and social responsibility and between biblical mandates and the social sciences. We see some international organizations-among them the World Evangelical Fellowship, the Lausanne Committee for World Evangelization, and the AD2000 and Beyond Movement-that have begun a promising process of partnership and unity.

Increased efforts at partnership have been catalyzed by an emphasis on methodologies involving measurable goals and numerical growth. Flowing from a commitment to urgent evangelization these methodologies have shown how our task might be accomplished. However these insights must be subject to biblical principles and growth in Christlikeness.

We rejoice in diverse missiological voices emerging around the world, but we confess that we have not taken them all into our theory and practice. Old paradigms still prevail. Participation by and awareness of the global church, as well as mission from people of all nations to people of all nations, are needed for a valid missiology in our time.

Our discussions have invited us to fuller dependence on the Spirit's empowering presence in our life and ministry as we eagerly await the glorious return of our Lord Jesus Christ.

In the light of these realities, we make the following declarations:

DECLARATIONS

Our faith rests on the absolute authority of the God-breathed Scriptures. We are heirs of the great Christian confessions handed down to us. All three Persons of the Godhead are active in God's redeeming mission. Our missiology centers on the overarching biblical theme of God's creation of the world, the Father's redeeming love for fallen humanity as revealed in the incarnation, substitutionary death and resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ, and ultimate of the redemption and renewal of the whole creation. The Holy Spirit, promised by our Lord, is our comforter, teacher and source of power. It is the Spirit who calls us into

holiness and integrity. The Spirit leads the Church into all truth. The Spirit is the agent of mission, convicting of sin, righteousness, and judgment. We are Christ's servants, empowered and led by the Spirit, whose goal is to glorify God.

We confess the following themes as truths of special importance in this present age. These themes are clearly attested to in the whole of the Scriptures and speak to the desire of God to provide salvation for all people.

- 1. Jesus Christ is Lord of the Church and Lord of the Universe.** Ultimately every knee will bow and every tongue confess that Jesus is Lord. The lordship of Christ is to be proclaimed to the whole world, inviting all to be free from bondage to sin and the dominion of evil in order to serve the Lord for His glory.
- 2. The Lord Jesus Christ is the unique revelation of God and the only Savior of the world.** Salvation is found in Christ alone. God witnesses to Himself in creation and in human conscience, but these witnesses are not complete without the revelation of God in Christ. In the face of competing truth claims, we proclaim with humility that Christ is the only Savior, conscious that sin as well cultural hindrances often mask Him from those for whom He died.
- 3. The good news of the salvation made possible by the work of Jesus Christ must be expressed in all the languages and cultures of the world.** We are commanded to be heralds of the Gospel to every creature so that they can have the opportunity to confess faith in Christ. The message must come to them in a language they can understand and in a form that is appropriate to their circumstances. Believers, led by the Holy Spirit, are encouraged to create culturally appropriate forms of worship and uncover biblical insights that glorify God for the benefit of the whole church.
- 4. The Gospel is good news and addresses all human needs.** We emphasize the holistic nature of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Both the Old Testament and the New Testament demonstrate God's concern with the whole person in the whole of society. We acknowledge that material blessings come from God, but prosperity should not be equated with godliness.
- 5. Opposition to the spread of the Gospel is foremost a spiritual conflict involving human sin and principalities and powers opposed to the Living God.** This conflict is manifested in different ways, e.g. fear of spirits or indifference to God. We recognize that the defense of the truth of the Gospel is also spiritual warfare. As witnesses of the Gospel, we announce that Jesus Christ has power over all powers and is able to free all who turn to Him in faith. We affirm that in the cross God has won the victory.
- 6. Suffering, persecution and martyrdom are present realities for many Christians.** We acknowledge that our obedience in mission involves suffering and recognize that the church is experiencing this. We affirm our privilege and responsibility to pray for those undergoing persecution. We are called to share in their pain, do what we can to relieve their sufferings, and work for human rights and religious freedom.
- 7. Economic and political systems deeply affect the spread of God's kingdom.** Human government is appointed by God, but all human institutions act out of fallenness. The Scriptures command that Christians pray for those in authority and work for truth and justice. Appropriate Christian response to political and economic systems requires the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

- 8. God works in a variety of Christian traditions and organizations, for His glory and the salvation of the world.** For too long believers, divided over issues of church organization, order, and doctrine - such as the gifts and ministry of the Holy Spirit - have failed to recognize each other's work. We affirm, bless, and pray for authentic Christian witness wherever it is found.
- 9. To be effective witnesses of the holy God, we need to demonstrate personal and corporate holiness, love and righteousness.** We repent of hypocrisy and conformity to the world, and call the church to a renewed commitment to holy living. Holiness requires turning from sin, training in righteousness and growing in Christlikeness.

COMMITMENTS

We commit ourselves to continue and deepen our reflection on the following themes, helping one another to enrich our understanding and practice with insight from every corner of the world. Our hearts' desire is the discipling of the nations through the effective, faithful communication of Christ to every culture and people.

1. Trinitarian Foundation of Mission

We commit ourselves to a renewed emphasis on God-centered missiology. This invites a new study of the operation of the Trinity in the redemption of the human race and the whole of creation, as well as to understand the particular roles of Father, Son and Spirit in mission to this fallen world.

2. Biblical and Theological Reflection

We confess that our biblical and theological reflection has sometimes been shallow and inadequate. We also confess that we have frequently been selective in our use of texts rather than being faithful to the whole biblical revelation. We commit ourselves to engage in renewed biblical and theological studies shaped by mission, and to pursue a missiology and practice shaped by God's Word, brought to life and light by the Holy Spirit.

3. Church and Mission

The Church in mission is central to God's plan for the world. We commit ourselves to strengthen our ecclesiology in mission, and to encourage the global church to become a truly missionary community in which all Christians are involved in mission. In the face of increasing resistance and opposition from political powers, religious fundamentalism and secularism, we commit ourselves to encourage and challenge the churches to respond with a deeper level of unity and participation in mission.

4. Gospel and Culture

The Gospel is always presented and received within a cultural context. It is therefore essential to clarify the relationship between Gospel and Culture, both in theory and practice, recognizing that there is both good and evil in all cultures. We commit ourselves to continue to demonstrate the relevance of the Christian message to all cultures, and ensure that missionaries learn to wrestle biblically with the relationship between Gospel and culture. We commit ourselves to serious study of how different cultural perspectives may enrich our understanding of the Gospel as well as how all worldviews have to be critiqued and transformed by it.

5. Pluralism

Religious pluralism challenges us to hold firmly to the uniqueness of Jesus Christ as Savior even as we work for increased tolerance and understanding among religious communities.

We can not seek harmony by relativizing the truth claims of religions. Urbanization and radical political change have bred increased interreligious and ethnic violence and hostility. We commit ourselves to be agents of reconciliation. We also commit ourselves to proclaim the Gospel of Jesus Christ in faithfulness and loving humility.

6. Spiritual Conflict

We welcome the renewed attention given in recent decades to the biblical theme of spiritual conflict. We rejoice that power and authority is not ours but God's. At the same time we must ensure that the interest in spiritual warfare does not become a substitute for dealing with the root issues of sin, salvation, conversion and the battle for the truth. We commit ourselves to increase our biblical understanding and practice of spiritual conflict while guarding against syncretistic and unbiblical elements.

7. Strategy in Mission

We are grateful for many helpful insights gained from the social sciences. We are concerned that these should be subject to the authority of Scripture. Therefore we call for a healthy critique of mission theories that depend heavily on marketing concepts and missiology by objectives.

8. Globalized Missiology

The insights of every part of the church are needed and challenges encountered in every land must be addressed. Only thus can our missiology develop the richness and texture reflected in the Scriptures and needed for full obedience to our risen Lord. We commit ourselves to give voice to all segments of the global church in developing and implementing our missiology.

9. Godly Character

Biblical holiness is essential for credible Christian witness. We commit ourselves to renewed emphasis on godly living and servanthood, and we urge training institutions, both missionary and ministerial, to include substantive biblical and practical training in Christian character formation.

10. The Cross and Suffering

As our Lord called us to take up our crosses, we remind the church of our Lord's teaching that suffering is a part of authentic Christian life. In an increasingly violent and unjust world with political and economic oppression, we commit to equip ourselves and others to suffer in missionary service and to serve the suffering church. We purpose to articulate a biblical theology of martyrdom.

11. Christian Responsibility and the World Economic Order

In a world increasingly controlled by global economic forces, Christians need to be aware of the corrosive effects of affluence and the destructive effects of poverty. We must be aware of ethnocentrism in our view of economic forces. We commit ourselves to address the realities of world poverty and oppose policies that serve the powerful rather than the powerless. It is the responsibility of the church in each place to affirm the meaning and value of a people, especially where indigenous cultures face extinction. We call all Christians to commit themselves to reflect God's concern for justice and the welfare of all peoples.

12. Christian Responsibility and the Ecological Crisis

The earth is the Lord's and the Gospel is good news for all creation. Christians share in the responsibility God gave to all humanity to care for the earth. We call on all Christians to commit themselves to ecological integrity in practicing responsible stewardship of creation, and we encourage Christians in environmental care and protection initiatives.

13. Partnership

As citizens of the Kingdom of God and members of Christ's body, we commit ourselves to renewed efforts at cooperation because it is our Lord's desire that we be one and that we work in harmony in His service so that the world will believe. We acknowledge that our attempts have not always been as equals. Inadequate theology, especially in respect to the doctrine of the church, and the imbalance of resources has made working together difficult. We pledge to find ways to address this imbalance and to demonstrate to the world that believers in Christ are truly one in their service of Christ.

14. Member Care

Service of the Lord in cross-cultural environments exposes missionaries to many stresses and criticisms. While acknowledging that missionaries also share the limitations of our common humanity and have made errors, we affirm that they deserve love, respect and gratitude. Too often, agencies, churches, and fellow Christians have not followed biblical guidelines in dealing with cross-cultural workers. We commit ourselves to support and nurture our missionary workers for their sakes and for the Gospel witness.

PLEDGE

We, the participants of the Iguassu Missiological Consultation, declare our passion as mission practitioners, missiologists and church leaders for the urgent evangelization of the whole world and the discipling of the nations to the glory of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit.

In all our commitments we depend on the Lord who empowers us by the Holy Spirit to fulfill His mission. As evangelicals, we pledge to sustain our biblical heritage in this ever-changing world. We commit ourselves to participate actively in formulating and practicing evangelical missiology. Indwelt by the Spirit, we purpose to carry the radical good news of the Kingdom of God to all the world. We affirm our commitment to love one another and to pray for one another as we struggle to do His will.

We rejoice in the privilege of being part of God's mission in proclaiming the Gospel of reconciliation and hope. We joyfully look to the Lord's return and passionately yearn to see the realization of the eschatological vision when people from every nation, tribe and language shall worship the Lamb.

To this end may the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit be glorified. Hallelujah!

Amen.

“Global Missiology For The 21st Century” – a book review

That’s the name of the latest publication from the WEF Missions Commission, and is an outcome of the Iguassu Missiological Consultation held in October 1999. It’s a big book (562 pages), so, apart from keeping your door open, what’s it good for?

The book, like the consultation from which it developed, is based on the recognition that not only is the church an increasingly worldwide phenomenon, so is the cross-cultural missionary movement. Therefore, missiological thinking about the challenges facing world mission in the 21st century should not come only from one part of the world (e.g. the West), but from the whole of it.

As well as an orienting introduction and conclusion, the book has 5 main sections.

1. The major issues

The first section looks at the global context facing the missionary movement at this point in history. Two massive contributions by Samuel Escobar, with responses from others, form at least half this section. Escobar provides an excellent overview of what he calls the ‘global scenario’, i.e. the global realities of which missiology must take account, and a comprehensive survey of the main streams of evangelical missiological thought until now. Other contributions address specific issues and challenges such as religious and ethical pluralism, the role of the church in mission, the vexed question of ‘spiritual warfare’, and thoughts on trinitarian missiology.

2. Trinity and mission

One of the goals of the Iguassu Consultation was to ground its reflections in a trinitarian framework. To help us understand what this might mean, Ajith Fernando led a series of biblical reflections, the text of which makes up the second major section of this book.

3. A globalized evangelical missiology

This section of 10 chapters is one of the most important in the book. Different authors look at the missiological contributions offered by different parts of the church around the world. It is worth noting here that the phrase ‘globalized missiology’ does not mean a missiology which addresses the phenomenon of globalization (although there is a chapter on this in the book), nor should it be taken to imply that the goal is a single, global missiology which is applicable in all places for all time. Instead, the book, like the consultation is about creating a debate with different contributions coming from different parts of the global missionary movement.

4. Various challenges

This section continues the theme begun in the previous section, and concentrates on the specific missiological challenges presented by the rise of Hindu fundamentalism in India (aka saffronization), the complex religious realities in East Asia, the ongoing challenge of Islam, and the rise of postmodernity in the West.

5. Mission from community and spirituality

This section is a series of reflections on 5 historical (and 1 contemporary) missionary movements. In particular, these reflections sought to show how mission flows from, and is shaped by, our understandings of spirituality and Christian community. The movements considered are the Celtic monks, the Nestorian church, the Moravians, the Jesuits, the Egyptian Coptic church, and the Antioch Community in Brazil.

Looking for reflective practitioners

As well as drawing on insights from writers from different parts of the global missionary movement, *Global Missiology For The 21st Century* has another aim. It hopes to help overcome to division between those who think and those who do, between the theorists and the activists. Bill Taylor, Director of WEF Missions Commission and editor of this book, consciously addresses both the introduction and the conclusion of the book to the 'reflective practitioners' of the global missionary movement.

This is an important book, directed to the future of world mission in the 21st century. It sets some important agendas, and should be read by those who think, those who do, and those who aspire to do both.

Global Missiology For The 21st Century is available from the Global Connections office, price £12 (including post and packing). Please make cheques payable to 'Global Connections'. Copies can also be ordered from the 'educational resources' section of the Global Connections website (<http://www.globalconnections.co.uk/educational.asp>).

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