

ship." Christian trade union leaders should be approached a) to assist in this matter, b) to encourage them to witness for Jesus Christ within their own membership and the trade union movement in general.

Resources Required

1. We make the following suggestions as to the initial membership of the interim international committee: Mr. Martin Higginbottom, co-ordinator; Mr. L. Cush, Chairman; Mr. Bob Hodel, U.S.A.; Mr. Marpaing, Indonesia; Mr. D. Arputua R.A.J., India; Mr. Sam Dagher, Lebanon; Mr. John Paul, India; Mr. Norman Hudson, South Africa; Mr. S.J. Cabral, Mexico.
2. Professional persons who are Christians can produce suitable literature for motivation and training of both pastors and lay Christians. Mr. Higginbottom has access to such professional people as a result of his research into this matter.
3. Nowhere, to our knowledge is there existing material which specializes in meeting these specific needs. Printed material is needed.
4. We prefer that financial needs be met by the sale of the literature produced, and from donations and income of the national committees. As the need arises finance could be required for:
 - a. Travel costs and salary of a key man (as, say, Mr. Higginbottom to travel particularly to the under-developed areas of the third world.)
 - b. For salaries and materials for production costs of necessary literature.

We ask the Congress Planning Committee to consider the ways and means which finances can be provided for the industrial evangelization of the third world in particular.

Conclusion

In all of this we ask for an undergirding of prayer by all concerned that the ministry of industrial evangelization shall be in the power of the Holy Spirit and that all motivational and training literature emphasize the call to prayer by all Christians for this purpose.

URBAN EVANGELISM

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Introduction

Urban evangelism begins in the Bible with Jonah's mission to Nineveh. It is highlighted in the New Testament by the ministry of Paul, the great urban church-planter of the apostolic period. During the first three centuries, Christianity grew best in the urban centers, but that has not been true in the modern period. Protestant churches in general have serious difficulties in the city and their impact on urban life is disappointing.

The purpose of this strategy paper is to focus attention on the city and the task of evangelizing city people. It is written with the conviction that the process of urbanization, which is so frighteningly swift in our day, can prove to be one of God's choicest blessings to Christian missions. But certain things must happen in order for these blessings to be realized, and that is what we intend to talk about.

PART ONE: THE URBAN SCENE

1. Growth and movement of city populations

The astonishing growth of city populations is one of the most awesome characteristics of modern life. Urban populations in the developing countries are doubling every fifteen years and are expected to number more than one billion by the end of this century. The problems generated by such large concentrations of people boggle the mind. Demographers predict that within twenty-five years, five-sixths of the population of the United States will be living on one-sixth of the nation's land, and that half of all Americans will live in two huge megalopolises, one extending from Chicago to Boston and Washington, and the other along the California coast from San Francisco to San Diego.

In the industrialized countries, urbanization began about a century ago and was closely related to industrial development and overall progress. But today, the runaway growth of city populations in non-Western countries is tragically out of pace with economic progress and industrialization. This has produced a kaleidoscope of problems for city governments, residents, and churches.

City populations grow for two principal reasons: internal, human multiplication, and rural-urban migration. People move from the countryside to small towns, and from towns to cities, because urban centers offer more opportunities for social and economic advancement. There are schools in the cities for the children, there are health care facilities, and hopefully a better way of life. Opportunities are few in the country, schools are scarce and inferior, and there is little hope for progress. Ambitious, aggressive families have no choice but to move to the city.

Alongside the mushrooming growth of older metropolitan centers, new towns planned on the drawing boards of urban designers are making their appearance in various parts of the world. New towns are generally created for the purpose of decentralizing existing urban concentrations and redirecting the flow of people to less densely inhabited areas of the country. Brasilia, the new capital of Brazil, is an example of this. Brasilia is one of the largest completely planned capital cities in the world. It was deliberately erected in the heart of Brazil's huge, almost empty interior in order to shift the growth of population from the crowded coastal areas to the underdeveloped middle of the country. Other examples are Canberra in Australia, Islamabad in Pakistan, and Chandigarh, capital of the Punjab. In East Africa, Tanzania intends to abandon its traditional port-capital of Dar-es-Salaam and erect a new capital, Dodoma, in the geographical heart of the country. Some urban planners are predicting that within the next few decades thousands of new cities, even ocean-floating towns, will be created to relieve crowded urban centers and shift the flow of population to new areas.

As one stream of population moves into the city, another tries to move out. Flight to the suburbs has characterized middle class populations in Western countries for several decades. The attitude of middle class people toward the city, and toward residential life in the city, is increasingly negative. Most North Americans, for example, show strong preference for suburban living. During the 1960s, central cities in the U.S.A. registered a 5.3 percent population gain while the suburban areas grew by 28.2 percent. A Gallup Poll conducted in August, 1972, found that only 13 percent of those questioned wanted to live in the city, which was down from 18 percent in 1968 and from 23 percent in 1966.

Protestant Christianity, it seems, prefers the suburbs also. Churches in Western countries have fled the cities along with their members. Old and stately church edifices now stand with broken windows and dreary facades like deserted "white elephants" in the inner city jungles. Around them are the poor, the unchurched, and the masses in turmoil. The congenial neighborhoods which these churches formerly served have changed. The former parishioners now worship God in the new churches they have built in suburbia, where "decent people live."

Public housing complexes, high-rise apartments, and condominiums have already changed the skylines of cities around the world, and the trend is likely to continue in that direction. If rising fuel prices keep people in the central cities and force some suburbanites to return to the cities, the percentage of urbanites living in apartment houses is certain to increase. The reasons why people prefer apartments seem to be universal: cheaper costs, safety, convenience, proximity to jobs, privacy, and freedom. Apartment dwellers develop a life-style of their own, and they are among the world's least approachable people. As the number of multi-residence structures grows, urban life in general will become increasingly conditioned by the peculiar psychology of these vertical villages. Despite their physical proximity, people will become more isolated from one another, and the friendly, open contacts upon which human society has traditionally depended will disappear.

2. Problems of city life

Crime, poverty, congestion, pollution, noise, racial polarity — these are the familiar problems of city life. They make the city so unattractive and hard to bear. Because of these problems, the city for millions is a place to avoid. It is a place to be left to the young and adventuresome, and to the poor and the elderly who cannot get away.

Why is the city plagued with such a disproportionate number of problems? The basic reason is also the most obvious: too many people, with all their needs, sinful inclinations, and diverse characteristics are pressed together in the city. The problems seem endless as the number of babies born each year keeps rising and rural-urban migration increases. Despite all the money that is spent on research and experimental programs, there is no plan in sight which will effectively ease the problems of the city or provide the social services, job opportunities, and adequate housing which the masses require.

Urban problems, like urban sprawl, take somewhat different forms around the world. Yet the overall picture is the same. Rubens Vaz da Costa, president of the National Housing Bank of Brazil, informs us that today over 60 percent of Brazilians live in cities and that in 1980 two out of every three will be a city dweller. While on the one hand he applauds urbanization as a hallmark of development, he says also:

"Our cities are growing too fast. . . Over 5 million homes are classed as unfit for human habitation. . . 500,000 units must be built annually just to keep up with present demand. . . only about 26 out of 54 million inhabitants were served in 1970 by water mains. . . only 13 million city dwellers have public sewage disposal. There is no way the 80 million people who live in cities in 1980 can have such service. . . We must learn to slow the rate of population growth so that our cities will not be inundated with people to the point where we can no longer adjust. . . no longer progress. . . no longer survive.

"The Lot of the Poor: A Struggle in Life and Death," was the title of a full-page article in *The Washington Post*. The "poor" referred to were city poor: the widow of a war hero unable to get the help that was owed her because of bureaucratic red tape; a mother of seven facing eviction and unable to find an apartment that would allow children; the body of an apartment dweller discovered after four months, sitting upright in the chair where he had died, alone. About five million people, or one-fourth of all persons over 65 in the United States, have no relatives, says the article. It is no surprise, therefore, that many live alone in bare rooms with little contact with other people. They live alone because they are poor, public transportation is not available or is difficult for them to reach, and the fear of crime prevents them from venturing far from their own residence. Since many of them are without telephones or anyone close by, there are no lifelines between them and the world outside. If they get sick in the night, they cannot call for help. They simply die.

"Urban anguish" is an expression used to describe the mental suffering, emotional insecurity, and utter loneliness of millions of city people around the world. Many of them are new migrants from rural areas, and they do not feel at home in the urban setting. Others are simply the poor, the indigent, and those who are ignorant of the basic services which even crowded, impersonal cities make available. Where but in the city are suicides so numerous and space, even cemetery space, so scarce?

The urban scene is not a pretty picture. But neither was medieval Europe with its crumbling empire, its vast movements of semi-civilized and barbarous peoples, and the external attacks of militant Moslems. Christianity suffered losses then too, and it often responded sluggishly and disappointingly to the challenges of its time. The main current of civilization seemed to be passing Christianity by, and some wondered if its days were numbered.

Nevertheless, from the bosom of the medieval church a continuous flow of missionaries poured out into unevangelized regions. Masses of people entered the Christian fold, and Christianity proved that it could survive the demise of one social order and the rise of a new. In the midst of that dark and uncertain period Christianity took firm root in Western Europe and set the stage for the most unprecedented, global expansion ever seen.

Right now, in almost every part of the world, social orders are changing, vast movements of people are taking place, and problem-filled urban centers are mushrooming. By the end of the twentieth century, ours will be an urban world. Some predict gloomily that Christianity will be lost in the city, and they point to the church's poor urban record as evidence for what they say. Others cling valiantly to the hope that the same Spirit who led the church out of the doldrums in the past will renew her again for urban mission in this hour.

"Arise, go to Nineveh the great city, and proclaim to it the proclamation which I am going to tell you." That is what God said to Jonah, and he is saying it again to churches today.

There lies the city. . . and our mission.

PART TWO: THE CITY CHURCH

1. Christian mission and the poor

The city needs the church and the church needs the city, but how does the one relate to the other? In this section we will look at various ways in which the church can relate to the changing city and fulfill its mission, especially to the poor.

The city needs the church because city life cannot endure, or be endured, without spiritual and moral dimensions. At the same time, the church needs the city because she has been commissioned by her Lord to preach the Gospel to all people, and cities are where people are. Behind every social problem threatening city life there lies a religious issue to which the Word of God speaks. Fundamentally, the crisis of the city is religious. Cities without God are beyond human endurance. Therefore, churches which proclaim the Word of God and the Lordship of Christ over city life hold the key to any real and lasting urban renewal.

Simply stated, the church's urban mission is to proclaim Christ as Savior and Lord, and to call city people to repentance, faith, and discipleship. "What is the city but the people?" To evangelize the city means to bring the Gospel to the people, rich people and poor, powerful and weak. It means to reach all races and social classes, all ethnic communities and tribal communities that live in the city. The city has institutions which are created by city people, and it has laws by which people govern themselves. The city has gods — false gods such as money, power, drugs,

and sex — which influence urban life for evil at every stage. In opposition to the demonic forces at work in the city, the church proclaims the Saviorhood and Lordship of Jesus Christ. The result is the moral equivalent of war. Christ's Gospel challenges the vain philosophies of the pseudo-intellectuals and exposes the mass idolatry of men on the street. The church calls men to repent of sin and become new creatures in Christ Jesus.

In order to do this, the church must be present in the city, it must be in contact with city people, and it must proclaim its message in ways which people will understand. Mission to the city forces churches to make hard decisions and to reach out to people to whom they would not ordinarily minister.

Poor people all across the world are clustered in cities. In many ways the evangelization of the city means carrying the Gospel to the poor. This should not discourage anyone, for almost all great movements to Christ have had their base among the poorer classes. The Lord Jesus described his own urban ministry in these words, "The blind receive sight and the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed and the deaf hear, and the dead are raised up, and *the poor have the Gospel preached to them*" (Matt. 11:5). Throughout history, God has given to the poor and the humble an openness to the Gospel that is seldom found among upper classes. It follows from this that churches which fail to preach the Gospel to the poor are missing a great opportunity in the city. "Are the poor hearing the Gospel?" is a useful thumbnail question by which to evaluate an urban strategy.

3. Mission of the neighborhood church

a. Middle class churches — (i) *Characteristics*: They are "gathered" congregations located in congenial neighborhoods and ministering primarily to the needs of middle class people. Their membership is generally composed of people of a rural background or of immigrants who retain a certain amount of ethnic identity. The Sunday School is the primary tool to recruit new members and bolster the faith of old ones.

(ii) *Strengths*: Middle class churches minister effectively to people of their own "kind," and they are especially helpful in providing a sense of personal identity and moral religious community to newcomers to the city.

(iii) *Weaknesses*: They have little effect on the urban masses. They serve the needs and reflect the values of middle class people, but they have little appeal to the poorer classes. Today, many of these churches are hard hit by migration to the suburbs and they are unprepared for evangelistic outreach to the new people who have moved into the neighborhood.

b. Institutional Churches — (i) *Characteristics*: The Institutional church is a church-centered combination of spiritual and social ministry intended to meet the multiple needs of the urban poor. Included are such features as day nurseries, reading rooms, gymnasiums, counseling services, employment bureaus, and a wide variety of social services.

(ii) *Strengths*: Institutional churches are designed to stay in the inner city and adapt to the needs of changing neighborhoods. They aim to

make the church a place where the total needs of persons in the city can be met. They rely heavily on lay men and women working with neighborhood people, and they seek to combine word-and-deed ministry in and through the organized church.

(iii) *Weaknesses*: Generally, they have been unsuccessful in bringing the urban poor and the working classes into the Protestant church. They have relieved the physical suffering of thousands of people, but they have made little lasting impact on the causes of urban suffering and the systems which keep the poor poor. Historically, Institutional churches gradually lose their spiritual emphasis and give major attention to charitable and social services.

c. *Industrial Missions* — (i) *Characteristics*: Industrial Missions aim to make Christianity relevant to modern industry and its problems, and to workers in both labor and management. Industrial missionaries spend long hours talking to working men in factory workshops and to company executives in committee rooms and paneled offices. They aim to apply the Christian faith to the circumstances of industry.

(ii) *Strengths*: Industrial Missions recognize that a serious communication gap exists between conventional churches and the modern industrial world. The approach of Industrial Missions is to try to bridge that gap by sending religious workers into industry as a mode of Christ's presence. From that base, they intend to communicate Christian teaching in the language of the laboring classes and enlighten established churches concerning the realities of the industrial world.

(iii) *Weaknesses*: Industrial Missions generally do not produce converts to the Christian faith. Nor do they add members to existing churches or found new ones. While correct in attempting to apply Christian principles to the industrial world, Industrial Missions tend to bypass the question whether laboring men and managers are born-again Christians. Moreover, workers are dealt with almost exclusively in the area of their employment and their families are unreached.

d. *The Salvation Army* — (i) *Characteristics*: Product of London's urban anguish and the evangelistic heart of William Booth, the Army was designed to meet the spiritual and material needs of the urban poor. The Army combines evangelistic fervor and social outreach with military-type dress and organization. Its specialized ministries include shelters for homeless men and women, prison work, homes for girls, rehabilitation of ex-convicts; and personal, one-to-one involvement with the city's poor.

(ii) *Strengths*: The Army has a century-long record of meeting the material and spiritual needs of the urban poor in many countries of the world. It has reached people and met needs with which conventional Protestant churches are not prepared to deal.

(iii) *Weaknesses*: The Army is neither a church nor a denomination, but a city-oriented missionary organization which has built-in difficulties as far as relating converts to regular Christian congregations.

e. *Rescue Missions* — (i) *Characteristics*: City Rescue Missions blend evangelistic fervor of a fundamental, biblical kind with a social concern for every type of human need in depressed areas of the city. Their special ministries include providing food and lodging for the hungry and

destitute, homes for wayward girls and unwed mothers, youth programs, and the rehabilitation of alcoholics. Usually, Rescue Missions are independent or interdenominational, though some are sponsored by churches and denominations.

(ii) *Strengths*: Rescue Missions work directly with poor and destitute people of different races and nationalities in the inner city. They have been responsible for the spiritual and social rehabilitation of millions of people, and have channeled many into established churches. Rescue Missions reach city people that middle class churches are unable or unwilling to reach.

(iii) *Weaknesses*: Due to no fault of their own, and because of the very nature of their ministry and the people with whom they work, Rescue Missions do not become churches. Because of this, they can never provide the same degree of fellowship, instruction, and moral and religious stability which regular churches offer to families and individuals that enter their membership. Rescue Missions reach out to a floating population, to unstable families and to individuals whose lives have been devastated by sin. Often, their converts are not welcomed by, nor feel comfortable in, conventional churches. Seldom do Rescue Mission converts have what is required for future leadership either in the mission or in a church.

f. *Store-front Churches* — (i) *Characteristics*: Store-front churches are generally located on busy streets in poor areas of the city. They have names and characteristics all their own. Their leaders are usually of a charismatic type, and they preach a simple, emotional message that appeals mainly to the uneducated, to women and to children.

(ii) *Strengths*: They provide emotional release and some religious instruction to people who do not feel at home in conventional churches. Under good leadership, a Store-front church occasionally develops into a strong and stable congregation.

(iii) *Weaknesses*: Store-front churches are generally unstable and lack adequate leadership. Sermons are superficial and Bible instruction is minimal. Store-front churches have little connection with other Christian congregations and they make little real impact on urban life.

3. *Mission of the neighborhood church*

Churches perform an indispensable function in the city when they herald the Gospel, teach Christ's Lordship, and motivate their members to promote justice and mercy where they live and work. Churches provide the fellowship which lonely urbanites so desperately need, and the moral support and integration which city families require. Churches in the city can be the most effective instruments for the relief of human suffering and the rehabilitation of individual lives. They can do all this if they know their mission, are committed to it, and are willing to stay in the city and minister to city people.

A Christian church within walking distance in every neighborhood; mission-hearted pastors who will lead their congregations to welcome ragged newcomers and barefoot children into their fellowship; a sense of mission so atmospheric that every child of the church learns to share it — that is what the city needs. And that is the choice which city churches are

asked to make. In his book *These Cities Glorious*, Lawrence H. Janssen describes the situation as follows:

"Every day is a day of decision for some church somewhere. As change sweeps around urban churches they must make decisions affecting the future of their ministry for many years to come. Some will make the decision to remain islands in the midst of a strange sea. Some will remove their place of meeting to the suburbs, and will build a whole new life upon the resources of a community more favorable to the kind of ministry they have projected. Still others will remain where they are, accept the challenge of change and continue to minister as the Body of Christ. Whether or not churches survive as institutions does not matter; whether or not they are true to their mission does."

PART THREE: METROPOLITAN MISSIONS

1. Making disciples and planting churches

The focus of this final section is on the great metropolitan centers of the Third World countries where Christian churches are scarce and large sections of the population have never heard the biblical message of reconciliation.

Unfortunately, Protestants are weak in the area of urban strategy. By and large, Protestants do not know how to evangelize urban masses and multiply churches among them. For too long, cities have been places where Christians get lost and Protestant churches do not grow.

There is urgency about this matter. For while on the one hand city populations are growing and newcomers to the city are more open to the Gospel than ever before in their lives, the opportunity to win urban masses to Christian discipleship does not last forever. Once the new city dwellers have become urbanized beyond a certain point, receptivity changes to resistance and the opportunity to win them to Christ is lost.

For example, the Ramos Millan district of Mexico City was populated by newcomers in the late 1950s and early 1960s. During that time, residents were open to the Gospel and several Pentecostal churches sprang up. Had the denominational churches of Mexico City moved in to evangelize the area, they probably would have planted a number of growing churches among the poor who came to live there. But by the late 1960s, the streets in the Ramos Millan area had been paved, the houses were improved, the poor had moved up to a more stable, laboring class level of society, and when efforts were made at last by some denominational groups to evangelize the area, only a few people showed interest.

The goal of metropolitan mission work should be to plant a Christian church in every new neighborhood. Although this goal may appear to be exclusively spiritual, in reality it is social as well as religious. For churches, composed of the residents of the area, offer more effective remedies for the "hurts" of the city than any other form of association. The loneliness, insecurity, and frustration created by city life are ministered to best through the local assembly of Christians who meet regularly for worship and fellowship and belong to one another as brothers and sisters in Christ. The social impact of the Christian religion through the transformed lives of believers has more influence than any other factor in improving the quality of life in an urban community.

2. Modes of urban church planting

There are various ways to plant city churches and the following five deserve consideration:

a. *The chapel to church method* — A mission board or committee chooses a promising location, erects a chapel, and appoints a missionary or evangelist to conduct services and develop the chapel into a church. When the group of believers has grown sufficiently, it becomes an organized church. Denominational mission work often follows this method. The high price of land in the city, plus the rising cost of labor and materials, make this method increasingly difficult since it requires a large outlay of money for land and building. Indigenous churches can seldom afford to use this method without large amounts of foreign funds.

b. *The mother-daughter method* — An established, indigenous church encourages the development of "daughter" churches in growing areas of the city where some of its members have gone to live. Services usually begin in private homes with laymen playing a leading role. The "mother" church helps with some of the expenses and, eventually, when a building must be erected contributes toward the cost. Many older, well-established churches have in this way fostered the growth and development of scores of young churches and the opportunities for this kind of urban church multiplication are unlimited.

c. *The Bible school approach* — Bible schools train evangelists and future church leaders. A large part of this training consists in practical experience in evangelism. Evangelism is biblically defined and goal-oriented. It goes beyond simply personal evangelism to the planting of churches and community witness. Teachers and students canvass new areas of the city selling Bibles and witnessing to entire families in their homes. When doors are opened, they organize family Bible studies. Neighbors are invited in and Sunday services begin. Eventually, some of these groups become organized churches. The sprawling slums and working-class areas of major cities offer endless possibilities for church-planting by Bible schools. At the same time it is an effective way to train future leaders in the work of evangelism and church growth.

d. *Apartment house evangelism* — The apartment house has been called the "modern frontier of the church's mission." Unfortunately, no widely successful method has yet been devised for reaching apartment dwellers and planting churches among them. However, in places as scattered and diverse as Singapore and San Juan, Puerto Rico, missionaries and evangelists have established beachheads in large apartment complexes. They have started Sunday schools in private residences within the buildings, and in some cases apartments have been set aside as Christian Day Care Centers. In a few cases, permission has been obtained to conduct Sunday services in the auditoriums which many apartment buildings contain.

One clue to a successful apartment house strategy is to determine the type of apartment which you plan to evangelize. Not all apartment houses are alike. There are low rent apartments which attract poorer families and are the most accessible for evangelization. There are also the middle class apartments designed for better paid office workers and business people. These are less approachable so far as evangelization is

concerned. Finally, there are the upper class, high-rise apartments where affluent, single persons or childless couples find the independence, privacy, and personal comfort which they seek. This group is the hardest to reach, and the family orientation of most churches does not appeal to them at all.

e. The house-church method — Several of the methods already discussed utilize the house-church principle. Simply stated, it is this: the church is not a building but an assembly of believers organized according to biblical patterns and meeting regularly around the Word and sacraments. Any house, apartment, or rented facility, can serve as the meeting place.

House-churches generally develop out of Bible study groups, which in turn result from house-to-house visiting and personal invitation. Only about one-third of the groups survive to become real house-churches. The success of a house-church depends to a large extent on the number of weekly calls that are made. As a rule of thumb, during the early stages it takes fifteen to twenty calls to get five persons to a meeting. Services begin with six to eight persons. Average attendance for the first year or two may fluctuate between ten and twenty persons, depending on the size of the meeting place and the amount of calling that is done each week. The majority of churches begun in this way do not attain a membership of more than fifty persons for a decade or more.

It is important that house-churches be related to other groups and to a wider Christian community for fellowship and mutual support. House-churches do not easily fit the rules and structures of traditional denominations, for by their very nature house-churches are highly flexible organizations. Nevertheless, the house-church will probably be the organizational form in which Christianity grows the fastest during the remainder of this century, and therefore church leaders should do everything possible to fit it properly into their ecclesiastical structures.

Conclusion

In some parts of the world more people can be won to Christian discipleship in rural villages than in large cities. But with the movement of masses of people to the urban centers unique opportunities are created to present the claims of Christ and plant churches. New urbanites are free from the social ties and village pressures which previously kept them from reading the Bible and attending Christian services. In the city they are free to think new thoughts and investigate new religious experiences. During their initial period in the city they are particularly receptive to spiritual truth and the opportunity for personal fellowship. That is the time when they must be reached with the Gospel.

Concentration of efforts on the teeming masses of urban people in developing countries does not mean that country people are to be neglected. In fact, urban evangelism may be the most effective means of reaching the towns and villages from which the city newcomers have moved. As relatives move back and forth between city and country, the faith which they have heard in the city travels back home. Countless village churches have been started in precisely this way.

The Mayan village of Komchen, not far from Merida, Yucatan, Mexico, was as closed to the Gospel as any village could be until five years ago. Then the local henequen industry failed and the men of Komchen had to commute to Merida to work in the factories. Some of them heard the Gospel in Merida, and they brought Bibles and Christian literature back to their village. Today, there is a thriving Protestant church in Komchen, with local leadership, their own building program, and excellent attendance at their four weekly services.

The church must learn to evangelize the city. The growth of cities is the great fact of our era and it provides the church an opportunity to win great numbers to Christ. No other area in evangelism deserves more urgent attention.