

lism at all times. We are sent to proclaim Jesus Christ and the resurrection. We must be present to be able to proclaim, and the kind of life we live in the midst of men of other faiths should be a witness to the world. Our presence cannot, however, be the static silence advocated by some. Many times our proclamation will be dialogical, but not a mere intellectual exchange of words and ideas. In the course of the dialogue, the Christian will not hesitate to proclaim "Christ and him crucified," for we are not ashamed of the Gospel. Our proclamation nevertheless is not to be conducted with the arrogance and insensitivity that disregard the cultural and religious background of the other person.

In certain situations, proclamation being a personal way of communicating the Gospel must involve a struggle to achieve understanding and to establish a human relationship. Such was the struggle of Paul to become, "All things to all men, that I might by all means win some" (I Cor. 9:22). Having preached the Gospel, we must let people express its riches from their own cultural background. Evangelical theologians should as a matter of urgency and through inspiration of Lausanne 1974 work out a positive biblical theology of "Christian Presence, Dialogue and Proclamation."

In true biblical evangelism no wedge should be drawn between these terms. The apostolic approach was by and large "dialogical-proclamation." The challenge is for Christian men everywhere to proclaim the whole Gospel faithfully with urgency and patience from Jerusalem to the teeming cities of the world and unto the utmost villages of the earth. "Let the earth hear his voice."

EVANGELISM IN BIBLICAL HISTORY AND CONTEMPORARY LIFE

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Old Testament history as the history of Good News

"Evangelism attempts to bring all men into living, active fellowship with God through Jesus Christ as divine Savior and through the regenerating power of the Holy Spirit, and to gather them into the fellowship of the church. It endeavors also to lead them to express their Christian discipleship in every area of human life, that the Kingdom of God may be realized" (Dawson C. Bryan, "Evangelism" in *Twentieth Century Encyclopedia*). In short, evangelism is the act of bringing the good news which God has given through Jesus Christ to all mankind so that the Kingdom of God may be realized. Although in Old Testament times Jesus Christ did not yet appear in the flesh as he did in the New Testament, yet the good news of God was never lacking. The Old Testament good news was given in the form of "promise" and "hope."

Old Testament history is the history of the life of Israel. It has many aspects and must not be simplified. But from the New Testament viewpoint the essential point of that history certainly should be interpreted as a history of good news. Not only the God-chosen people, but also mankind in general was never lacking the good news. To fallen mankind, which deserves only punishment of God, God was always gracious to grant the good news, especially in the form of promise and prophecy. Thus God has prepared the gospel history ever clearer as time progressed.

The calling of Abraham can be considered as the beginning of the good news in the Old Testament, though we can find many examples of good news of God already before the time of Abraham. To Abraham the promise of the blessing of all mankind was given. The blessing of all mankind was indeed good news, even more because it was from God himself. To fallen mankind God granted this good news in the form of promise. God did not stop with this one announcement of good news but was working throughout Old Testament history. God was, of course, the God of justice and judgment. Therefore the history of fallen humanity as well as the history of Israel, can be seen more in terms of divine judgment. Constant misery, wars, captivity, and famine were the characteristic of human history. This human misery can be interpreted in many ways. But at the last analysis the interpretation of human suffering in terms of human responsibility before God is most appropriate to give us hope and courage to face it in the future.

The purpose of the history was not in punishment as such. The true end is seen in the good news which developed gradually. This fact becomes more and more apparent as time progressed. Through Moses the promise of a "good land" is confirmed. Moses is always related to "law." But the positive purpose of law was the blessing of God. Es-

pecially the promise of Canaan, already given to Abraham. But it was obvious that Israel's conquering Canaan was not as such the real end of the good news. That went far beyond Israel's Canaanite conquest. At that time the real purpose was not yet so apparent. It was the coming of God himself, and God's reign to be established, namely, the Kingdom of God. To show this fact, God has given Israel the form of the Kingdom of God, namely, the monarchy through Saul and David. When the monarchy was granted to Israel, however, they were warned not to mistake it, or to lose sight of the fact that it was only the form of the kingdom of God. They had to seek the God-chosen Messiah in their kings. God declared, "I have set my king on Zion, my holy hill" (Psa. 2:6).

To this king, all the kings on the earth were to be obedient and make homage. "Now therefore, O kings, be wise: be warned, O rulers of the earth, serve the Lord with fear, with trembling kiss his feet." God has given the promise of the everlasting kingdom on the throne, "Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to establish it, and to uphold it with justice and with righteousness from this time forth and forevermore. (Isa. 9).

But, the end of the good news in connection with this monarchy was not in the Davidic monarchy as such. The earthly kingdoms were to be utterly destroyed and the people of Israel were only to be brought to captivity. It was only at this moment that the Old Testament good news became clearer. The term "good news" in the Old Testament is most frequently used in relation to the post-exilic situation of the people. The good news became prominent only in relation to the post exilic hope.

The eschatological character of the Old Testament Gospel

As the time of destruction of the Davidic monarchy drew near, the Old Testament eschatological hope also became prominent in Old Testament prophecy. Phraseology such as "in that day," "in the last day," "in the day of the Lord" were used more frequently. The final fulfillment of the promise of the Lord would be realized in those days. Naturally this final day is related also to the day of divine judgment. Amos is considered the first to have used the term "the day of the Lord." Though he may be the first one who left the word in written form, in fact, this eschatological hope was the focal point of the mind of the people of God, since the day of Abraham. The people of Israel actually have been living their historical life with this hope.

But, as time passed, it became clearer, that the day must be the day of divine judgment, and that only through this divine judgment would the great forgiveness be given to the repentant remnant. "Woe unto you that desire the day of the Lord! To what end is it for you? The day of the Lord is darkness, and not light" (Amos. 5:18). This day of the Lord was often related to the marching of the invading army and complete desolation and devastation. Shame and humility are the natural results of this violence and destruction. Habakkuk describes very vividly the picture of the invading Chaldeans. Isaiah describes the devastated

land. "Your country is desolate, your cities are burned with fire: your land, strangers devour it in your presence, and it is desolate, as overthrown by strangers." Actually, the divine judgment is to bring down all the high things before God. "The lofty looks of man shall be humbled, and the haughtiness of man shall be bowed down; and the Lord alone shall be exalted in that day" (Isa. 2).

In the total judgment and devastation God shows his grace to the remnant of Israel and all the heathen. They shall be gathered from the nations and they shall form the nucleus of a new Israel. "In that day will I raise up the tabernacle of David that is fallen, and close up the breaches thereof, and I will build it as in the day of old: That they may possess the remnant of Edom, and of all the heathen, which are called by my name, saith the Lord that doth this" (Amos 9:11, 12).

This good news is most eminent in Isa. 40-66. It starts with "Comfort ye, comfort ye my people, saith your God. Speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem, and cry unto her, that her warfare is accomplished, that her iniquity is pardoned: for she hath received of the Lord's hand double for all her sins." "O Zion, that bringest good tidings, get thee up into the high mountain: O Jerusalem, that bringest good tidings, lift up thy voice with strength; lift it up, be not afraid; say unto the cities of Judah, Behold your God!" The content of the good news is summarized in these words: "Behold your God!" "Behold, the Lord God will come with strong hand, and his arm shall rule for him" (Isa. 52:7), sings the beauty of one who brings this good news.

"How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace; that bringeth good tidings of good, that publisheth salvation; that saith unto Zion, "Thy God reigneth!" Break forth into joy, sing together, ye waste places of Jerusalem: for the Lord hath comforted his people, he hath redeemed Jerusalem."

This is the new age, the day which all the prophets have foreseen beyond the horizon of history. That is the new age which is introduced by the day of the Lord's judgment.

The world historical character of Old Testament Good News

This good news of the redemption of Israel, God's coming to reign over his people is not only related to the people of Israel but to all nations. It is the time when all nations come to Jerusalem to honor God. "It shall come to pass in the last days, that the mountain of the Lord's house shall be established in the top of mountains, and shall be exalted above hills." All nations shall come to the house of God, the final peace shall be established in the world. In that day, Israel shall be the third with Egypt and with Assyria. The Lord of hosts shall bless Egypt and Assyria: "Blessed be Egypt my people, and Assyria the work of my hands" (Isa. 19:24, 25). Therefore the psalmist calls all nations to be glad and sing for joy: for God shall judge the people righteously, and govern the nations upon earth (Psa. 67:4).

Summary

(i) Old Testament history is truly the history of the judgment of God over his people and the nations, but it was never lacking in "good

news" which was given in the form of "promise" and "hope."

(ii) This "good news" took different forms in different circumstances such as multiplication of family members, deliverance from enemy; but the core content became ever clearer as the time progressed, i.e., it was "Behold, your God," and references to the kingdom of God.

(iii) This was the news of "the last days," "in those days," i.e., the eschatological time.

(iv) It was the day of great judgment of God, and the result is the humiliation of man's part, and the peace of the world, established among all nations.

Evangelism in New Testament history

Old Testament history was the history of the proclamation of good news to Israel as well as to the nations. But it was only in the form of promise and hope. But New Testament history is nothing but a history of the Gospel. The New Testament history starts with the preaching of John the Baptist. All four Gospels introduce him as a forerunner of the Gospel history. The focus of his preaching was to urge people to repent and prepare the approaching Kingdom, "The Kingdom of God is near!" John was considered as the dividing point. Before him it was the age of law and prophets, but thereafter the kingdom of God was preached (Luke 16:16). He stands between the old age and the new age. In fact he was also an evangelist, because he functioned as an organ to introduce this new age. Before the new age was introduced, repentance must be preached. John was preparing the way of the Lord: the Lord of the Good News.

Jesus is the bearer of the good news of the new age. When Jesus heard that John was cast into prison, according to Matthew, he began to preach, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand" (Matt 4:12, 17). The content of Jesus' preaching was actually the same as that of John the Baptist. It could not be different. As long as history continues the kingdom can never be fully realized, but can only be at hand. The only difference between Jesus' preaching and John's was in their relationship to the kingdom. One was preparing the kingdom's coming, the other was to give the kingdom. Therefore he could say that the kingdom was at hand and at the same time that the kingdom was already there, as to the women at Sychar (John 4:23) or as in his Beelzebub discussion, "If I with the finger of God cast out devils, no doubt the kingdom of God is come upon you" (Luke 11:20). Therefore the coming kingdom of Jesus is already here and now, but the final coming which is at hand has yet to come. To the question of John the Baptist, he says, "The blind receive their sight, and the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, and the deaf hear, the dead are raised up, and the poor have the Gospel preached to them" (Matt. 11:5). Jesus declared that the kingdom of heaven belongs to the poor in spirit (Matt. 5:3). With the accompaniment of signs and wonders Jesus preached the kingdom of God. His entire life is characterized as the life of preaching the good news of the kingdom. "And he said unto them, I must preach the kingdom of God to other cities also: for therefore am I sent" (Luke 4:43). He was sent to preach the Gospel which John the Baptist predicted.

Luke 8:11 describes vividly the manner of his life, "He went throughout every city and village, preaching and showing the glad tidings of the kingdom of God; and the twelve were with him."

Jesus did not only himself preach the good news, but also he sent his disciples out to preach the kingdom of God, and to heal the sick (Luke 9:2). After Pentecost, the content of the disciples' preaching was concentrated upon Jesus Christ. According to Acts 5:42, the disciples did not cease to teach and preach Jesus Christ, daily in the temple and in every house.

When the persecution came on Jerusalem the Gospel was spread more widely outside Jerusalem. They were scattered abroad throughout the region of Judaea and Samaria. Philip was the first one who "went down to the city of Samaria, and preached Christ unto them" (Acts 8:5). It was even taken as far as to the Greeks (Acts 11:12). Then Paul became the evangelist to the Gentiles. Everywhere in the world he preached the Gospel (Acts 14:7, 15, 21, 16:10, 17:18; Rom. 15:20; I Cor. 15:1, 2; II Cor. 10:16, 11:7; Gal. 1:8, 11, 4:13). The Gospel is nothing but Jesus Christ himself. They preached "him" (Gal. 1:16), namely Jesus (Acts 8:15, 17:18), Christ Jesus (Acts 5:42), the Lord Jesus (Acts 11:20).

The ultimate source of the Gospel is God himself. In the New Testament two places refer to God himself as the proclaimer of the good news. In Acts 10:36, God is said to preach peace by Jesus Christ. In Rev. 10:7 God declares to his servants the prophets the fulfillment of the mystery of God, namely, the coming of Messiah, the kingdom of God.

Therefore, the same source of the good news in the Old Testament period, namely, to the people of Israel and to the nations, is the source of the New Testament Gospel. The only difference is that in the Old Testament period the good news was given in terms of promise and hope. The good news, namely the Lord's coming, as their God, establishing ultimate peace on earth, was in terms of eschatological hope. The day would come. Now, in the New Testament, was the fulfillment. Jesus had come, and his presence is the good news.

The Gospel of the New Testament is "power"

The Gospel of the New Testament is not simply words or news, it is *power*, a living power which introduces a new reality of life. Paul says, "I am not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ; for it is the power of God" (Rom. 1:16). To the Thessalonians he says, "Our Gospel came not unto you in word only, but also in power and in the Holy Ghost, and in much assurance" (I Thess. 1:8). Thus the Gospel could realize a new reality, in which man may find a new life. This is the power of salvation. In this new reality, man is born again, rendered righteous, becomes an obedient nation. The Gospel is the power of God which creates the ecclesiastical communion in faith.

Evangelism in the New Testament period is, therefore, the activity of calling both Jews and Gentiles into the communion of this new reality of life which was brought by Jesus and created by the Spirit among mankind, namely, the communion of saints. The apostles labored for the regeneration of new believers. The number must increase, until the

fullness of the number (I Cor. 4:15, I Pet. 1:23, I John 1:3; Acts 2:38).

The world historical scope of New Testament evangelism

Old Testament evangelism was of the world historical scale. It was not only related to the final salvation and blessing of the people of Israel, but also to all nations coming to Zion, to exalt and praise the name of God, saying, "Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob." Thus the peace of God shall be established on earth, "Nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more." This world historical scope of Old Testament evangelism is visible also in the New Testament evangelism. The Lord commands, "Go therefore and make disciples of all nations." Therefore all nations must become disciples of Jesus Christ. All nations must learn from Jesus: how to live and obey God. From our experience we may interpret this command to make disciples out of all nations as meaning that not each nation as a unit but individuals from each nation may become disciples of the Lord. But the literal meaning is not so, but to make disciples of all nations, namely make every nation his disciple. It is our ideal that each nation should become obedient to the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ. Already the walls of partition between Jews and Gentiles were broken open. According to Paul, both the Jews as well as the Gentiles were imprisoned or shut up in unbelief by God, that God might have mercy upon all (Rom. 11:32). This world historical scope of New Testament evangelism must not be neglected, because the doctrine of limited atonement does not conflict with the universal validity of Christ's atonement. Therefore we must take the words, "Make disciples of all nations" literally, with a good hope, because it is also the scope of Old Testament eschatological vision.

This world historical scope of both Old Testament and New Testament evangelism must not be confused with the mistaken idea of "universal salvation." The error in this latter case comes in obliterating the sharp distinction between obedience and disobedience. As we hold firm the world historical scope of our Lord's command, we must not lose sight of human haughtiness and disobedience against the Cross of Jesus Christ. As many as come into the new reality of life become the disciples of Jesus, and as many nations as learn from our Lord how to live harmoniously, taking care of each other with true brotherly love, become the disciple nations of our Lord Jesus. Therefore we must bring this good news, the news of our Lord Jesus Christ and his kingdom, which is already imminent, with good and urgent eschatological hope, boldly and with confidence to all nations!

Revivalism in biblical history

If we define Old Testament evangelism as the prophetic act of bringing the good news to the people of Israel as well as to the nations, Old Testament revivalism can be defined as the event of the renewed realization of the people of God, where they stand. It is the act of the people coming to themselves by returning to God from their fallen

state. Therefore, in their external forms, the two, evangelism and revivalism are different from each other. One is through the prophetic preaching of a good news, previously unheard, but the other is the equally prophetic preaching of the good news which had been preached to them in former times. This latter is through anamnesis of God's good news toward them, and through a new realization of their fallen state, so that they can also realize that they have had a promise of God's final salvation and thus recover the hope of the good news.

Though evangelism and revivalism are different from each other in their external forms, in the inner core both have the same aim, i.e., coming back to the promise and hope of the good news. It is through evangelists that men have continually received the good news of God and been brought into the communion of the people of God, but it is only through revivalism that the people of God come to the vivid realization of the good news and recover the courage and confidence in hope. Good examples of Old Testament revivalism are King Josiah's reform movement (II Kings 22:3, 23:25) and Ezra-Nehemiah's revival movement after the exile.

New Testament history is in toto revivalistic, especially in its Spirit filled character. In fact Old Testament history is also nothing but Spirit-led history. Indeed God is Spirit, and where God is concerned, the divine Spirit of truth is prominent. This Spirit-filled movement is most clearly seen in the new birth of the New Testament church at Pentecost. The disciples, scattered after the passover, were brought together one after another by the Risen Lord, and through the presence of the Spirit were now totally renewed and enlightened in spirit and thus arise as a new community: first of all as a preaching community. Since that time, the history of Acts is characterized as Spirit-led history. The Risen Lord himself is the Master of the mission works. Every action and every decision on the part of the disciples are motivated and commanded by the spirit of Jesus.

This gift of the Spirit is interpreted as the sign of the coming of the last days. The Apostle Peter claimed that the prophecy of Joel had been fulfilled. Therefore, spiritually speaking the last days have already come here on earth, but historically — especially eschatologically — speaking, this is the sign and pre-manifestation of the coming kingdom. Therefore the revivalism has an eschatological character. It is the phenomenon of the end-time. According to H. Bavinck, the New Testament foundation of missions is the invitation of Jesus Christ to the eschatological feast. The word of Jesus "everything is ready" is the real foundation of mission works. At the same time, according to him, the end is imminent. Therefore in this interim period the activity of invitation must be carried out all the more urgently. Therefore the mission of the apostles is nothing but the action of extending this invitation of the Lord Jesus to his kingdom, to all the world.

Evangelism in contemporary life

In comparison with evangelism in biblical history, evangelism in contemporary life is characterized in the following three points:

(i) lack of world historical perspective

(ii) lack of a sense of urgency

(iii) the basic philosophical presupposition of Western individualism.

All these basic defective characteristics of contemporary evangelism are rooted in one great and serious historical disease of the West: secularization. In the West, Christian religion has been always *cultus publicus* up to the time of Reformation. But after the Reformation, especially since the rise of modern industrial society, the Western world became gradually secularized, and religion was pushed out from essential social relationships, and became a matter of private life. On the other hand, the various spheres of human life have developed on the secularistic philosophical bases. The economic socio-political aspect became especially prominent. Particularly at the time of World War II, pagan forms of national integrity in the form of national socialism and communism, devastated the Western world. In spite of the post-war effort of the rehabilitation of Christian Europe, the deep-rooted secularism of Western civilization does not seem to have healed quickly.

It is against this kind of background that evangelism found itself deficient. Evangelistic programs calculate usually to arouse religious interest on the part of people who have been leading busy lives in a secularistic society. But the religion which is aroused in the mind of the people can hardly have any relationship to this world. The only possible concentration point of evangelism in the changing, multi-dimensional, even chaotic world is the concentric center of an individual ego, "I". Since the day of Kierkegaard, and during the two World War periods, this point has been the only possible area of identity in the identity crisis. Not only Rudolf Bultmann, but also Billy Graham have concentrated the whole attention upon the point of "decision" or "Entscheidung."

This individualistic tendency in contemporary Christian thinking has been all the more strengthened because of the biblical interest of man himself and the personhood of God. Though the biblical ideal of the kingdom of God aims at the total salvation of man and the cosmic palingenesis, at the same time the Bible is always concerned with the condition of an individual heart and therefore the individual salvation: election, calling, justification, sanctification, and glorification of the individual. At the same time God comes to man in personal encounter. Our Lord knocks at the door of each individual heart.

The contemporary dichotomous conflict between humanization and evangelization is also actually deep-rooted in the inner discrepancy between the biblical personalism and the sociological character of modern man's existence.

In order to solve the religious problems which come from the secularization of the West, a number of proposals have been made. Barth's transcendental realism, Bultmann's existentialist interpretation of the Gospel, Bonhoeffer's non-religious (secular) interpretation of the Gospel, the various radical theologies: the theology of revolution, the theologies of counter-culture movements, and finally Moltmann's reinterpretation of Christianity in terms of hope. All these approaches have a common methodology, though their contents are different from

each other: they each draw a certain hermeneutical principle from contemporary life which is basically drawn from the biblical source. The hermeneutical principles are prophetic to time in its historical movement, and therefore they speak to modern man's various problems.

The basic problem of these approaches is that they do not attempt to heal the basic disease of the modern time, namely, secularism; on the contrary, they try to conform to it. The result is the impoverishment of biblical content. The churches remain as they are. Only in historical Christianity can the Christian have true satisfaction in life. I do not say that those modern attempts to solve religious problems are useless. In fact they are very meaningful as Christian apologies to modern man. They speak very eloquently to modern man that Christianity is not meaningless even from modern man's perspectives. But, they are too abstract and theoretical to be of much practical value. Take the example of Dietrich Bonhoeffer. Indeed, he was a martyr. He had to fight against Hitler to be faithful to his Lord. In this sense, his theology and his Christianity were very meaningful. But what of many other Christians in Germany at that time? Were all of them who did not or could not fight against Hitler non-Christian? Should the Christianity of that time have been exhausted only in that political action? No, Christ was needed by the numerous Christians even during the time of war, in every moment of daily life, every family gathering, for the reconciliation of various broken human relationship, and for the final comfort of the dying — *ad infinitum*, apart from the matter of war. If any theological system is so arrogant that it tries to be the whole of Christianity, it is trying to limit God too much. We can say that biblical religion alone with its total religious content can give ultimate and full satisfaction to man.

The direction which the contemporary evangelism should take

I find no other solution but the following:

(a) In spite of the irrelevant form of personal evangelism in view of the sociological character of modern man's existence, the billion Christians of the world must engage in a total campaign to win the hearts of the rest of mankind. The irrelevance does not come from the fallacy of biblical religion, but from the secularism of the modern world.

(b). This evangelistic movement must recover the world historical perspective. It is nothing but the biblical kingdom ideal. As we have seen, the good news in the Bible was the prophetic vision of the last days in the history of Israel, and the coming kingdom in the message of Jesus. Jesus Christ our Lord has fulfilled Old Testament prophecy in his power and in his spirit, and therefore in the communion of the church. This communion is to be extended, our Lord commands, to all nations, to the end of the earth. Why should we from the first give up the evangelization of the world? It is the will of God. We pray every day, "Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done on earth!" While the love of God does not forsake the vilest sinner, why do we give up the present generation prematurely? The world historical perspective of the biblical kingdom ideal is nothing but the ideal of world evangelization. It is nothing but the obedience to the great commission, "Make disciples

of all nations." This commission itself contains the good news: the vision of the making disciples of all nations, i.e., the vision of the evangelization of the world.

All nations should become disciples of Jesus. It is obvious that a nation can only be happy by becoming a disciple nation of Jesus. Jesus only can fulfill democratic ideals, social justice ideals, and all kinds of cultural ideals. In fact, therefore, all nations are presently striving to become disciples of Jesus, but in wrong ways. We must therefore tell all nations to learn about Jesus our Lord in the right way for only in that way can nations really live.

c. *The sense of urgency* — The work of world evangelization must be accompanied by a sense of urgency. No nation can become happy without Christ. The happiness of mankind depends upon him. As much as he is preached and put into realization in the national life or whatever sphere of life, so much the nation or its people can become happier. Each individual, each group, each nation, indeed all the world, urgently need to learn from Jesus Christ, and to have him as the Lord. His personal presence only can give them true life and new values. At present all mankind is in agony and misery without him. Without him, there remains nothing but power struggles, economic injustice, enmity, wars, corruptions, dehumanizations: in toto, sin! Therefore all the world urgently needs to be saved from all these miseries into the fellowship of Jesus Christ.

The true urgency of world evangelization originates from God himself. God commands all mankind to be obedient to his Son: the Way, the Truth, and the Life! God created man for his own glory. Therefore all mankind is obliged to glorify God, by becoming obedient to him. The coming of the kingdom is nothing but God's recovery of his own sovereignty over his chosen people and all nations and all creatures. "I will sanctify my great name and the heathen shall know that I am the Lord," says God (Ezk. 36:22, 23). God has exalted his great name through the crucified Lord. The kingdom is nothing but the kingdom of the crucified and risen Christ. God urges all the nations of the earth to be obedient to this Christ. Any nation which does not obey this Christ shall be punished by God the Father of Jesus Christ. Therefore God urges the evangelization of the nations.

The Lord Jesus himself urges world evangelization. He is the coming Lord. When we, with uplifted head, look for only him, the coming Lord, to come back again for our perfect comfort, the time seems to be very short. The Lord is truly very near to us. The time of salvation seems to be at hand. In fact we shall see him before long because we shall be with him in heaven. Therefore the souls under the altar cried, "How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost thou not judge?" (Rev. 6:10). Since we look for him, he seems to be coming very soon, yet if we look at the works which are still going on in the earth, his coming seems to be delayed. Those who asked the question cited above are told that they "Shall rest yet for a little season, until their fellow servants also — that should be killed as they were, should be fulfilled." (Verse 11). While this number, namely the number of martyrs increases, they are told they should wait. This New Testament sense of delay of the Lord's

coming does not eliminate the sense of urgency of the New Testament evangelism; on the contrary, it enhances the sense of urgency. The clue is to have a clearer vision of the kingdom's coming and of the nearness of the Lord. Only the world historical perspective of the Gospel can provide us with the sense of the urgency of evangelization. This was indeed one of the essential characteristics of evangelism right from the time of Abraham through the prophetic movements and on to the New Testament evangelism.