

Korean way of life and places himself in the current of Korean culture.

Mr. A belongs to a well-financed mission board. Mr. B is poorly supported for his living. As for the success and effectiveness of the two kinds of missionaries, you do not have to ask me to answer further.

7. We have to realize another fact, that the Western mission is entering its fourth stage. I describe the first stage as the planting stage, the second as the cultivating stage, the third as the growing stage, and the fourth as the maturing stage.

8. Accordingly, the cross-cultural evangelism has entered the stage of East-West cross-cultural evangelism. Mission should not be used as an instrument for the denominational expansion or territorial expansion of colonialism. The mission today should be Gospel-centered and multi-nationally structured.

9. The world mission is a divine imperative and mandate. We cannot say more or less of the importance of it. We can only respond to his love and dedicate ourselves for the task.

10. The Tunisian Church in North Africa has vanished with her glory from the earth. The churches in Asia Minor disappeared. Wasn't it due to the exclusiveness on the cross-cultural matters and to the loss of missionary vision?

11. The secular world continues to engage in cross-cultural enterprises: international funds, international research organizations, international monetary circulations, etc. If mission and evangelism do not engage in cross-cultural enterprises, there will come a crisis for mission and evangelism.

## RESPONSE TO DR. RALPH D. WINTER'S PAPER

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Culture as a most vital factor in the effective communication of the Gospel of Jesus Christ can no longer be ignored or passed off lightly. In today's world when a new sense of self-awareness and pride has arisen in all quarters, when different peoples are asserting themselves with increased dignity, and when no apology needs to be made concerning one's particular heritage, the Church of Jesus Christ cannot afford to overlook the validity of these cultural distinctions.

And Dr. Ralph Winter has challenged us not only to accept the fact of, as he calls it, "cultural distance," but to enter into a frank and intelligent discussion and understanding of the implications related to it. Such statements as "the awesome problem is...that most non-Christians in the world today are not culturally near neighbors of any Christians," and that it will "take a special kind of cross-cultural evangelism to reach them," are rather compelling. No believer who is identified with his Master can dismiss it, nor should he fail to be moved to take the adequate steps to turn the tide. By the same token, no one can dare to stress a highly nationalistic spirit which bows to local pressures rather than gives way to the innermost desires of God's heart.

Also the very fact that there are distinct peoples within any given country in the world today who are isolated from a Christian witness — four out of every five people in the world — shows us both the immensity of the task and the grief our Savior must still be experiencing. Clearly, something drastic has to be done if his redeeming power is to be known and understood by those who are lost in their trespasses and sins.

For reasons of clarity Dr. Winter has grouped these differences under the three main headings which he has designated as E-1, E-2, and E-3. This is a handy formula in many respects, for it opens our eyes to the complexity of human cultures. However, I believe he would be the first one to admit that it is by far an over-simplification of the situation. This is evidenced by the complication posed simply by the different sub-groups that he mentioned.

Closely related to this is the need to establish a clear-cut distinction between the different items which constitute any given culture and those elements which cut across cultures and have now become a feature in several latitudes regardless of cultural backgrounds. Prejudice is but one of them, and they all seem to present a common front which results in a rather formidable barrier to effective evangelism. For instance, young people today are showing their distrust for their elders in many ways across the world; oppressed peoples, who have arbitrarily been classified as minorities, are discovering new means of rejecting the Gospel; intellectuals have not relented in their almost uniform appeal to science over

faith. These and many more have produced appealing arguments and somewhat predictable reactions which are not completely controlled by the culture of a particular locality. Call it guilt by association, differences of interpretation of the same basic truth — the case of the Samaritans in John 4, as mentioned by Dr. Winter — or call it any other way, these obstacles and features of our present civilization evidence supra-cultural characteristics which have to be confronted and dealt with adequately.

Along the same lines one can find that Dr. Winter's initial emphasis on evangelism as being effective communication is later expanded to mean the establishing of "strong, on-going, vigorously evangelizing denominations, and then for that national church to carry the work forward on the really high-powered E-1 level." While it is true that communication implies a follow-up process, and that any evangelistic effort cannot stop when a person becomes a new person in Christ and leave him there, the subject of a "national" church raises a different issue. In other words, whereas there is an urgent need to conduct E-2 and E-3 type evangelism to communicate initially the Gospel simply because there are not enough E-1 people to do the task in many areas, it does not follow that the churches into which these people will have to be incorporated must necessarily be made up exclusively of people of common background and/or likes or dislikes. This may be pragmatically defensible, and even temporarily tolerated, but it will also tend to perpetuate adverse existing conditions and prejudices simply because they can be labeled as culturally determined.

But this is neither the biblical pattern nor intention, particularly in the book of Acts. Even cursory reading of the first verses in chapter 13 will tell us that Simon called Niger, Lucius of Cyrene, and Manaen "who had been brought up with Herod the tetrarch" were a part of the church in Antioch not so much because that was where they "felt at home," but because this is where the Holy Spirit had appointed them to be. Social and cultural considerations must have played a key role, as will be pointed out later on, but there was another compelling force to gather them together in the same place at that time. Just the same, the church in Ephesus, both as it is introduced to us in its early stages in Acts 17 and as it was further maturing in the letter addressed to it — to say nothing about the apostolic guidelines given to Timothy in the first letter he received from Paul, and the divine observations found in Revelation 2:1-7 — exhibits a true and determined effort to bring both Jew and Asian together. It is stated not only that Paul preached indiscriminately to both Jews and Greeks in Asia for two years (Acts 19:10), but that Christ had brought down the wall of partition that separated Jew from Gentile, "for he himself is our peace" (Eph. 2:14), as a climax to his argument for the unity within the church of Jesus Christ. Thus we "are no longer strangers and aliens, but . . . fellow-citizens with the saints, and are of God's household" (Eph. 2:19). This Christ accomplished by his blood (v. 13), and is thus not to be taken lightly.

This does have a bearing today, especially in the Third World where social stratification is much more visible than in North America and where, I am convinced, this very feature has to be recognized and even

used initially for the communication of the Gospel, but should never be allowed to remain as a permanent distinctive of the church of Jesus Christ any place in the world.

This brings us to a consideration of the relationship between culture and Christianity, especially with respect to the stages of maturity which are beyond the initial communication. To say that for the church to work effectively in evangelization on the E-1 sphere may mean that a culture is to be accepted as it is, and a church to be established by its guidelines, poses new problems. For one thing, even the implied thought behind this reasoning will tend to absolutize culture and make the newly-established and maturing church so basically affected by its environment as to be somewhat unable to affect it. True, as Latourette constantly points out in his works, the world to which Christianity comes affects the church powerfully, but at the same time the church by its very presence, if nothing else, must definitely affect the world which surrounds it.

This means, as has already been mentioned, that cultural differences are not to be perpetuated in the churches, but also that the counter-cultural characteristic of Christianity cannot, again, be ignored. This is because for many centuries the church has been subjected to all kinds of modifications and adaptations with different degrees of syncretism which in many places has produced an almost unrecognizable type of Christianity, be it Christo-paganism or present-day Constantinianism. But the words of Jesus, "You are the salt of the earth," and those of a similar nature, were not simply nice-sounding figures of speech, much less pious platitudes, but serious injunctions to cause a veritable revolution in the world.

The observation made by the Thessalonian unbelieving Jews that "these men (meaning not only Paul and Silas, but Christians in general) who have upset the world have come here also," is no mild comment on the radical effect of the Gospel message. In other words, the Gospel is supposed to act as an agent of change both individually and corporately to improve existing cultures. This does not mean that one should envision or work for the establishment of a "Christian culture" which will then be the prototype for everyone else to copy, but that it should so transform the individuals in any given culture as to have them act as constant correctives of the unbiblical patterns of that culture. This is because churches are to be established in order to fulfill the purpose of God as revealed in his Word through human agents, who will remain in need of correction even though they are members of Christ's body, but not to serve the purposes of any given culture.

This leads us to the last observation, that is, of the relative place of culture in God's plan. While culture is a most important and vital factor of human life, it is not the determinant one. At best, it is a conditioning factor since it is in constant flux and at the mercy of many changing patterns and circumstances. Thus it should not be allowed to set down the rules, not even those within its own sphere of influence, which will eventually result in the configuration of the church in a local area. It is my conviction that the Holy Spirit is the determining factor in any strategy of evangelism at any stage of its implementation. It is he who compels both believer and unbeliever to obey the Word of God and to act upon its claims by meeting them where they are culturally, but imposing his guidelines within God's ultimate plan for man.

This is borne out in many passages of Scripture, but perhaps we should go to the believers in Samaria in order to keep within the example used by Dr. Winter. He pointed out that the woman at the well "reached others in her town by efficient E-1 communication," and that "hopefully Jesus' E-2 witness set in motion E-1 witnessing in that Samaritan town." In other words, that while they had needed to be reached by an E-2 intervention in the person of our Lord himself, another E-2 visit should have been unnecessary, if not altogether unlikely. However, we see in Acts 8 that Philip did go again — whether it was to Sychar or not the Scriptures do not tell us — and that there is every evidence that the E-1 type of evangelization started by the woman never did amount to much. Furthermore, it is to be noted that the apostles in Jerusalem, in what could be construed as in keeping with true paternalistic fashion, thought it wise to send Peter and John to Samaria to give some kind of sanction to what was going on there. To put it differently, there was not only a repetition of E-2 evangelistic effort, but of E-2 intervention in the internal affairs of that fellowship of faith.

But, is that what really took place? Should we not take a second look at the situation and see that whereas Samaria might have represented a cultural distance of sorts, cultural distance was no obstacle for the Holy Spirit to impose his strategy even though there had been a rather convincing E-1 type of evangelistic communication? What I am trying to say is that the Holy Spirit does want us to see and be sensitive to cultural differences, but that he neither wants us to be controlled by them to the extent that we do not step into places where there may be some kind of E-1 type evangelism and thus fail to accomplish the task that is still formidable, nor that he allows us to set guidelines for his church that are dictated exclusively by circumstances.

Thus while cross-cultural evangelism may be the highest priority — and I am convinced that it is — it does not exist for its own sake, nor is it based on cultural differences themselves as much as on the compulsion and guidelines determined by the Holy Spirit. We should not, therefore, commit ourselves to patterns of action or strategy which may make sense, humanly speaking, but rather let him work in us, through us, and even in spite of us, for his own purpose and the glory of God.

## THE HOLY SPIRIT IN WORLD EVANGELIZATION

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### *Introduction*

We all admit, as Christians, our need for divine help in the task of evangelizing the world. We also acknowledge that the help we need is available through the Holy Spirit, Christ's gift to his people for the fulfillment of their mission (Acts 1:8). However, considerable confusion exists among Christians today, both in thought and practice, concerning the nature of the Spirit's power and how it can be appropriated in evangelism.

### *1. His part and ours*

"You shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you . . ." (Acts 1:8)

a. *The Spirit came as Lord.* If you received a package of explosives you would have to decide what to do with it. But if you were favored with the visit of a dignitary, he more or less decides what to do with you! You are at his disposal. The Lord Jesus promises his people, not "parcels of power," but the powerful personage of the Holy Spirit to stay with them. The coming of the Holy Spirit was proof that God had exalted Jesus Christ to the position of highest authority, honor, and rule. God had thereby vindicated Jesus' claim to be the Son of God and the Savior of mankind (see Acts 2:33, 36). The supreme work of the Holy Spirit is to witness to this reality on earth; and he does so in and through Christians (John 15:26). For this end, we must consistently submit to him as our Teacher, our Master, and our Helper.

b. *The Spirit is our Teacher.* It is the work of the Holy Spirit to reveal truths previously hidden from human search and understanding, and to enlighten men's minds to know and understand them (I Cor. 2:9, 10). In this way, he led the apostles to fully understand our Lord Jesus Christ, and the work for salvation which God has done through him for all mankind. They saw in their Savior, raised to the position of honor by the Father, infinite riches and merits to meet the needs of all who trust in him. Life took on new meaning in the light of God's revelation. Creation, they understood, had a purpose and goal. Man's problems in life were understood in reference to his rebellion and estrangement from God. They knew, by personal experience, that God had provided in Jesus the basis for pardon and reconciliation for all mankind. And so they preached the Good News to people everywhere.

What the Holy Spirit taught the apostles is embodied in the Scriptures for us. When we come to the Bible with open minds and humble hearts, the same Spirit illumines the written Word and enlightens our minds to know and to obey the truth.

If the role of the Holy Spirit is to teach, ours is to be diligent