

Reflections

Rolf Scheffbuch

In 1974, when we participated in Lausanne I, some of us Germans were in the midst of preparing our first evangelical rally. It was going to be held some months later in the Stuttgart soccer stadium with an expected participation of about fifty thousand people. After Lausanne, we changed our plans drastically. Instead of just confessing our orthodox viewpoints, we tried to make a joyful, colorful program full of loving invitation to Jesus. The motto of that crowded event became: "Jesus—our refuge and strength!"

In the midst of the preparation, there were two heart-breaking incidents. One of the young volunteers became seriously injured in a tragic traffic accident. And another volunteer was diagnosed with cancer. The Christians in our congregation prayed diligently for both young people. Three weeks later the girl was released from the hospital. The young man died after weeks of suffering. Before he died he said,

It has been the highlight of my life that I could participate in that Stuttgart meeting. I am knowing and believing that Jesus is and will be my refuge and strength—even in the midst of death!

Wholehearted Thanks

I would like to thank all the Lausanne representatives for the tremendous work they have done to inspire Christians all over the world. In addition, we give thanks to our Lord Jesus Christ. He has blessed and guided the Lausanne movement. Through it he has blessed even us Germans, who so often have behaved as schoolmasters of the world and not as pupils who are anxious to learn their lesson.

Unity

The Lausanne movement has helped Europe to unite our efforts in the field of the new evangelization of Europe. The Lausanne movement made us aware of the common challenge: Get out of the narrow quarters of your churches and denominations; get out of the narrow barriers of your nation! Europe is about to become a "United Europe" as a political unit, as an economical unit, and as a social unit. Shouldn't we also have a unity of mission-minded evangelicals throughout Europe?

Europe is marked by terrible secularization, and also with old mainline churches and

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free churches, with the many parachurch agencies, and with all the competition between them. There is the rich European North. But there are also small Christian minorities in Southern Europe, surrounded by much poverty and by the strong Roman Catholic Church. There are also socialistic countries in Eastern Europe with special situations and unique experiences and gifts.

I tried hard to get a European Leaders Conference together. Two years ago, at Calloway Gardens, I understood what the Bible means when it speaks of "brokenhearted people." I was discouraged and exhausted from my efforts, which seemed to be totally in vain. I was discouraged about all European Lausanne work. But the Lord was there. He used brothers and sisters to encourage me. There were Viggo and Patrick, Tormod and Seikku, and others. In spite of their own heavy burdens, they were willing to share the responsibility. They accepted me, a weak, German Lutheran pastor with poor English, just as Christ accepted me.

As a result, we had a wonderful and inspiring European Leaders Conference on World Evangelization. We dedicated ourselves to the Lord Jesus and made a commitment to be obedient in re-evangelizing Europe. More than 140 leaders from all over Europe participated. They came from Iceland and from Greece, from Portugal and from the Scandinavian countries. They even came from the United Kingdom. The Lord gave us a deep understanding of the needs of European people and a vision of the many things which have to be done, and which can only be done with his blessing and presence and with the cooperation of European evangelicals.

Please pray for us as we try to organize a network in Europe between the European Evangelical Alliance and parachurch agencies, and between mainline churches and free churches. In his letter to the Romans, Paul says, "Join me in my struggle by praying to God for me" (Romans 15:30).

Servant Hearts

It is wonderful to have young people with us. I would like to offer a special thank you to those who are younger than forty. Sisters and brothers, you are the ones who will have to carry on the work, to keep the torch burning.

I am also thrilled to have so many sisters among us. It was unfortunate that up until now we had such a poor participation of sisters. Paul expresses my appreciation in his letter to the Romans:

I commend to you our sister. . . . I ask you to receive her in the Lord in a way worthy of the saints and to give her any help she may need from you, for *she has been a great help to many people*, including me (Romans 16:1–2, emphasis added).

Proclaiming the Gospel

Evangelization and world mission is the central issue of Christ's church. They are not merely tasks "number eleven or twelve" out of a number of other tasks. Evangelization and world mission are the axles for the wheels of all Christian activities; Jesus Christ is the motor. (Please excuse that illustration, but I come from an area in Germany where most people work in Mercedes-Benz plants!) Therefore, like Paul, let us not be ashamed of proclaiming the unique gospel, "because it is the power of God for the salvation of everyone who believes" (Romans 1:16).

The Letter to the Romans

Paul's letter to the Romans is unique. There is still more blessing in that letter than

we received during this Congress in the morning Bible studies. The Lord used that letter in the conversions of Augustine, Martin Luther, John Wesley, and many others. He also used that letter to bring real faith to my family.

My great-great-grandmother had heard of a spiritual awakening in the next village. She went there because she was interested in what was going on. Finally, she asked the pastor of that village, “What have I to do in order to get a deeper faith?”

He answered, “Madam, read the New Testament letter to the Romans!”

And she did. However, after she read the first chapters with all those terrible accounts of wickedness, she closed the Bible. She returned and told that pastor, “Maybe you will find all that wickedness in your village; but our situation is different!”

But the pastor didn’t give up. He advised, “Just read that letter again!” She was obedient, and the Lord blessed her obedience. She discovered Jesus, the Savior, who gave his life for her—a religious-pagan without Christ, a sinful and lost lady in a desperately poor German village.

The next time she saw the pastor, she confessed, “Pastor, that letter to the Romans has become God’s personal message to me!” And so it happened that true Christian faith came to her, to her village, and to our family.

I would also like to urge you, “Read that letter again and again!” We all need to rediscover that the Savior, Jesus, and God, the Father, who justifies the wicked. And the post-Christian, pagan-religious Europe needs to rediscover that faith is more than simply believing in a heavenly being and in some life after death. Faith means that lost people rejoice in God’s abundant and full provision of grace.

A major issue of our Congress has been the tension between non-charismatic and charismatic Christians. Just before I came to our Congress, I had finished my fourteenth year of wonderful service as a local pastor. I have witnessed many signs and wonders. Many members of my congregation have said, “It has helped so much when sisters and brothers have prayed with me and for me—that they have laid hands on me!” But my heart is trembling: Have they also accepted the *fullness of grace*, which according to Paul, is the gift of God’s righteousness?

It is my conviction that we all need to discover and experience this grace that is the true “full gospel.” And we need to see that through this grace, God delivers us from our sin! May the Lord bless us all.

“Fear Not”

Luis Palau

Our brother Ed Dayton asked me to speak on the subject “Fear Not as You Face the Future.” But I say to myself, *Who am I to get up here and talk about fear not?* I remember meeting a brother from Nepal who was thrown in jail three times because he’s a Christian. He should be here and tell us how to fear not when you’re in jail. The closest I’ve come to suffering for Christ was a bunch of letters telling me I was going to die like a dog in Peru. Though I’m not sure how dogs die, I didn’t like the idea. But I’m still alive. Now my brother in Nepal hasn’t died like a dog, but he’s been penned up like one sometimes, and he should talk. Nevertheless, because the Lord placed me in a position to speak to you on this subject, I will gladly do it.

I’d like to read two passages from the Bible, the first one in the Old Testament, 2 Kings 6:15–17:

When the servant of the man of God got up and went out early the next morning, an army with horses and chariots had surrounded the city. “Oh, my lord, what shall we do?” the servant asked. “Don’t be afraid,” the prophet answered. “Those who are with us are more than those who are with them.” And Elisha prayed, “O Lord, open his eyes so he may see.” Then the Lord opened the servant’s eyes, and he looked and saw the hills full of horses and chariots of fire all around Elisha.

What a beautiful passage that is, isn’t it?

But now I want to read another passage. John 14 is a favorite. These are beautiful words, and I feel the Lord would have us combine the Old with the New Testament. In John 14:12–14, the Savior is speaking and he says,

I tell you the truth, anyone who has faith in me will do what I have been doing. He will do even greater things than these, because I am going to the Father. And I will do whatever you ask in my name, so that the Son may bring glory to the Father. You may ask me for anything in my name, and I will do it.

And verse 15, “If you love me, you will obey what I command.”

Three of the points I always make in this passage have been hit in this Congress, two of them very much. The first one is obvious: The Lord says to us today, “Fear not, dream

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