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**An examination of the historical development of the ministry of
the evangelist within the Christian church**

Harber, Frank H., Ph.D.

Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, 1994

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AN EXAMINATION OF THE HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT
OF THE MINISTRY OF THE EVANGELIST
WITHIN THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH

A Dissertation

Presented to

the Faculty of the School of Theology
Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary
Fort Worth, Texas

In Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree
Doctor of Philosophy

Department of Evangelism

by

Frank H. Harber

December 1994

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ABSTRACT

The thesis of this study is that the ministry of the contemporary evangelist is an authentic expression of the New Testament evangelist. This study is therefore an analysis of the role of the evangelist throughout the history of Christianity.

Chapter 1 introduces the study by examining the role of the primitive evangelist. The background and etymology of *εὐαγγελιστής* is examined in light of its appearances in Scripture and the context of its occurrence.

Chapter 2 examines the historic development of the evangelist from the period of the early church to the eighteenth century. The chapter discusses the decline of itinerate ministries in the early church and traces the rise of itineracy up to the eighteenth century.

Chapter 3 focuses on contemporary understandings of the vocational evangelist. The functions, criticisms, and theology of evangelists are discussed in light of the major preaching and music evangelists of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.

Chapter 4 examines the etymological and biblical relationship of the ministry of the contemporary evangelist to the ministry of the primitive evangelist. A synthesis is

achieved by comparing and contrasting the role of the evangelist from these two historic eras.

The conclusion of this study discusses the future outlook of the contemporary evangelist as well as the productivity of evangelistic crusades in the church today. Implications and conclusions drawn from the lives of successful evangelists are also presented.

This study concludes that the ministry of the contemporary evangelist is the most valid expression of the New Testament evangelist in church history. The conclusion supports the assertion that the office of evangelist remains, and will continue to be, an important factor in the task of world evangelization.

Dedicated to my mother, Kaye;
my brother, Danny; and my wife, Becky
--the ones who believed in me first

PREFACE

The motivation for this study originated in God's call upon my life to serve as an evangelist. Throughout much of my master's work and all of my doctoral work, I have served the Lord in this capacity. Knowing from subjective experience that God still calls evangelists, I wished to do an objective study to verify that such a call is still valid today.

Most of my heroes have been evangelists. From the time that I accepted Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior, I felt God calling me to be an evangelist. It is hoped that this dissertation will serve to edify and to encourage others who have been called to serve Christ as evangelists.

Many people deserve thanks for their assistance during this study. I acknowledge my deepest appreciation to my godly professors at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary who helped to shape my Christian life. Dr. Malcolm McDow, professor of evangelism at Southwestern Seminary, provided much needed advice and encouragement as my dissertation supervisor. I owe a great debt to Dr. McDow, who is to me a second father, for teaching and discipling me through his Christ-like example and personal instruction. I also wish to thank Dr. Roy Fish, professor of evangelism, who has taught me much about spirituality and godliness from his set apart life. Because I can

never repay the debt I owe to them, I trust that their reward will come from the Lord.

Special gratitude is due to the First Baptist Church of Liberty City, Kilgore, Texas, where I have served as Staff Evangelist. I am truly thankful for my pastor, Bruce Wells, who led me to faith in Jesus Christ and taught me what it meant to live a holy life for Christ. I also love and appreciate my dear friend, Todd Roper, who taught me how to witness, to read the Bible, and to share my faith with others early in my Christian life.

More than anyone else, my wife, Becky, deserves my deepest love and gratitude. Becky has worked tirelessly in the typing and editing of this project. Her love, friendship, and encouragement gave me the motivation for completing my seminary work.

Matters of style in this dissertation conform to the fifth edition of Kate L. Turabian, A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses, and Dissertations. Items not specified in that guide are treated according to the thirteenth edition, revised, of A Manual of Style, published by the University of Chicago Press. This dissertation was produced with the utilization of an IBM personal computer, a Hewlett Packard Laserjet II laser printer, and WordPerfect 5.1 software.

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INTRODUCTION

Statement of the Problem

During the eighteenth century, a mighty movement of God was birthed in North America and Europe. This movement in America, known as the "Great Awakening," was the catalyst for thousands coming to saving faith in Jesus Christ. The major personalities of this time of revival were George Whitefield in North America, John Wesley in England, and Nicolaus von Zinzendorf on the European continent. Their dynamic preaching attracted some of the largest crowds ever to hear the gospel.

Whitefield developed the practice of preaching in the open fields in England when he was not allowed to preach in many of the English pulpits. From this practice an itinerant ministry surfaced which would take Whitefield across the nation of England and up the Atlantic coast in America. A process was begun in which masses of people would gather to hear the Bible preached and seek spiritual renewal. This process of planned revivalism became a major evangelistic tool for reaching the lost.

The First Great Awakening set the stage for the planned revivalism of the nineteenth century. During the Second Great Awakening, frontier camp meetings were held in which thousands of people, of many different denominations, would come and hear gospel preaching. The major participants

were the Presbyterians, Methodists, and Baptists. The camp meetings came to be held annually and took the form of protracted meetings. A starting date was planned but no conclusion was placed upon the meeting.

Many notable itinerants arose during the nineteenth century. The first itinerant of significance was Charles Grandison Finney. Finney, along with many other itinerant ministers, came to refer to themselves as evangelists. Flowing from the influence of Finney, a steady stream of itinerant evangelists have served the church primarily in the area of harvesting souls for Christ. The theology of these evangelists has its roots in the "new measures" of Finney, which reflected a balance between Calvinism and Armenianism. The main feature was that persons under conviction were encouraged to come forward and seek salvation.

The impact of the evangelist soon waned among the Presbyterians and Methodists. However, Baptists found a major evangelistic methodology in the evangelist and revivalism. Revival meetings found their greatest support among Southern Baptists. The revival meeting occupied center stage during the great periods of growth in the Southern Baptist Convention. During the rapid growth of Southern Baptists in the twentieth century, the revival meeting was the primary method of evangelism from 1907 through the fifties. Most churches held two revivals per year which generally lasted about two weeks each. The revival meeting still holds considerable

influence today, as a majority of Southern Baptist churches hold at least one revival per year.¹

In spite of the prominence of the contemporary evangelist, the validity of the gift has been challenged. The following issues have been raised: "Is the contemporary evangelist an authentic representation of the evangelist of the primitive church?" "Should modern itinerant ministers call themselves evangelists?" "Is there a biblical and historical justification for the existence of the modern evangelist?"

In light of the significance of the evangelist to evangelism in the modern era, a complete biblical and historical examination is therefore worthy of study. The objective of this dissertation is to provide such a study.

Title

An appropriate title is: "An Examination of the Historical Development of the Ministry of the Evangelist Within the Christian Church." This title indicates the historical nature of the work. It begins in the New Testament period and concludes with the modern era. The title indicates that the nature of the study is evaluative. Its scope is limited to the context of the Christian church. The title is inclusive of data pertaining to the historic development of the concept of the evangelist.

¹Charles S. Kelley, Jr., How Did They Do It? The Story of Southern Baptist Evangelism (New Orleans: Insight Press, 1993), 110.

Research Procedure

The topic is to be studied by beginning with an analysis of the biblical data. An effort is made to establish the original concepts of an evangelist. The Scriptures, biblical commentaries, and lexicons provide the needed information. The topic also covers the historical periods from the early church to the present. The nature of such an endeavor necessitates extensive work in the Apostolic Fathers, the historical accounts of the early church period, and the written records of relevant literature dealing with the concept of the evangelist up to the present. This study focuses only on those who were particularly viewed as evangelists in their own time period. Those who generally participated in evangelism, but were not deemed as evangelists, will not be given consideration.

Statement of Thesis

The thesis of the dissertation is that the contemporary evangelist is a valid expression of the primitive evangelist with modifications. The contemporary evangelist developed new methodologies such as protracted meetings and crusades in order to reach souls for Christ. These modifications grew out of the changing nature of society and culture. While it is true that the early evangelists did not hold revival meetings in each city to which they traveled, it is evident that the primary task of the primitive evangelist was to preach the gospel in various regions with the intention of

reaching people for Christ. Thus, both the primitive and contemporary evangelists have at their core the purpose of gospel proclamation to the masses with the intention of harvesting souls.

The validity of the contemporary evangelist in today's church brings to light four related subtheses. The first is that the evangelist of the primitive church was etymologically and functionally a preacher of the gospel. The second is that the historical conception of the evangelist was given little attention from the time of the early church through the eighteenth century. The term was more popularly used as a designation of a writer of one of the gospels. The third is that the return of the concept of the evangelist reemerged out of the milieu of the revivalism tradition of the nineteenth century. The fourth is that the contemporary evangelist, though modified in methodology, is the most valid expression of the primitive evangelist in church history.

Chapter 1 introduces the study by examining the role of the primitive evangelist. Of particular concern is the background and etymology of the occurrence of εὐαγγελιστής. Εὐαγγελιστής is examined in light of its appearances in Scripture and the context of its occurrence.

Chapter 2 examines the historical development of the evangelist from the period of the early church to the eighteenth century. The concept of the evangelist during the patristic period evolved first into a reader of the gospel.

The concept of evangelist eventually became the designation of a writer of one of the four canonical gospels. The term "gospel," in addition to referring to the message of salvation, began to be used in reference to the canonical books of Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John. It was also more broadly associated with the entire New Testament. These concepts prevailed until the time of the late eighteenth century. The First Great Awakening provided the impetus for the emergence of a new type of itinerant minister.

Chapter 3 focuses on the contemporary understandings of the vocational evangelist. The evangelist began to be perceived as a person particularly associated with evangelism in the nineteenth century. An evangelist preached the gospel to groups of people in protracted meetings. The evangelist was considered clergy and worthy of compensation. The theology of the evangelist of this period was a mixture of Calvinism and Arminianism. The practices of the new measures were utilized as the evangelist called for public profession of faith during the invitation at the conclusion of the sermon. These practices were popularized by Charles Finney. Other notable evangelists who helped shape the popular conception of the evangelist were D. L. Moody, Sam Jones, R. A. Torrey, Wilbur Chapman, and music evangelists Ira Sankey, and Charles Alexander.

In the twentieth century there was an increase in the use of evangelists. The term "vocational evangelist" referred

to professional itinerate ministers who made their livelihood from preaching the gospel from place to place. Evangelists formed associations in order to help provide support and encouragement to the evangelist. Evangelists which have popularized the office in the twentieth century include Mordecai Ham, Billy Sunday, Billy Graham, Luis Palau, and music evangelists Homer Rodeheaver and Cliff Barrows. These evangelists, along with others, enjoyed great success during this time period. Southern Baptists enjoyed excellent results from the ministry of the vocational evangelist during the twentieth century.

Although the vocational evangelist remains a vital part of the evangelistic outreach of the church, a major shift occurred in the 1970s as Southern Baptists emphasized personal evangelism as their major methodology of evangelism. The "Church Growth Movement" took the emphasis a step further, teaching that an evangelist is one who has the spiritual gift of personal evangelism in the church.

Chapter 4 examines the etymological and biblical relationship of the contemporary evangelist to the primitive evangelist. A synthesis is achieved by comparing and contrasting the role of the evangelist from these two historical eras.

The conclusion makes applications based upon positive affirmation of the validity of the thesis. The future outlook

of the contemporary evangelist is treated based upon modern trends in evangelism.

Significance of the Research

This study is important for several reasons. First, the impact of the modern evangelist is too great to be ignored. This office has been utilized by most major denominations for the harvest of souls for Christ.

Second, the office of evangelist finds its roots in the New Testament. The concept of evangelist is not merely a creatio ex nihilo of modern itinerate ministers. The relationship of the biblical evangelist to the modern evangelist is of paramount importance to this study.

Third, limited scholarly writings exist on the subject. Only one doctoral dissertation has been written on the evangelist. Cary G. Kimbrell's thesis, "An Investigation into the Changing Concepts of an Evangelist in Christian Thought and Practice," was done at New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary as part of the work required to obtain a Doctor of Philosophy degree. The work is limited in that the author concludes that the primitive evangelist was an apostolic assistant. Kimbrell, thus, holds that the office of evangelist ceased with the apostolic age. This initial assumption led Kimbrell to deny the validity of the modern itinerant's right to be designated as an evangelist. Two master's theses have been produced which relate to the evangelist. Thomas M. Bennardo produced "The Role of the Evangelist Today" at Grace

Theological Seminary as part of the work required to obtain a Master of Divinity degree. Dominick M. Greco's thesis, "A Manual Describing the Need, Role, and Function of the Evangelist in a Local Church," was done at Dallas Theological Seminary as part of the work required for a Master of Theology degree.

Lastly, this research will serve as an apologetic which gives treatment to the entire historic period. This work will serve as a resource for those who labor under the banner of evangelist. The impact of the modern evangelist has been far too great not to have this type of apologetical resource in existence. The research will provide justification, edification, and encouragement to those chosen servants who labor as evangelists in the harvest of souls.

CHAPTER ONE
THE UNDERSTANDING OF THE MINISTRY OF THE
EVANGELIST IN THE NEW TESTAMENT

Etymology

Εὐαγγελίζω

Εὐαγγελιστής is formed from the verb εὐαγγελίζω. Εὐαγγελίζω, which means "to preach the good news," forms the basis of a word group whose cognates consist of εὐαγγελίζομαι, εὐαγγέλιον, and εὐαγγελιστής. To understand fully the etymological significance of εὐαγγελιστής, it is necessary to examine the meaning of each of the cognates and its relationship to εὐαγγελιστής.

Εὐαγγελίζομαι

The English verb "to evangelize" comes from a transliteration of the Greek verb εὐαγγελίζομαι.¹ The Septuagint uses εὐαγγελίζομαι to translate the Hebrew word נָשַׂא which means to "proclaim the good news" and is also used to signify "bringing news of victory."² The participle נֹשֵׂא is used by

¹Herschel H. Hobbs, New Testament Evangelism (Nashville: Convention Press, 1960), 1.

²Gerhard Kittell, ed., Theological Dictionary of the New Testament, trans. Geoffrey W. Bromiley (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1964), s.v. "εὐαγγελίζομαι, εὐαγγέλιον, προεραγγίζομαι, εὐαγγελιστής," by Gerhard Friedrich.

Isaiah to designate the messenger who announces the victory of God in the glad tidings of God's kingly rule.³

The New Testament εὐαγγελίζομαι captures this meaning with the coming of the kingly Jesus to earth. He proclaimed the imminence of the βασιλεία τοῦ θεοῦ. The coming of Jesus signaled the initiation of the eschatological salvation. Jesus' coming and preaching are thus described in terms of εὐαγγελίζομαι.⁴

Εὐαγγέλιον

Εὐαγγέλιον means "good news" or "gospel." The prefix εὐ means "good." Ἀγγελίον means "message." Hence, the gospel is the "good news."⁵ The term occurs seventy-two times in the New Testament. The term appears fifty-four times in the Pauline epistles.⁶ The four gospel writers used the term to

³Merrill C. Tenney, ed., The Zondervan Pictorial Encyclopedia of the Bible (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1975), s.v. "Gospel" by D. R. Jackson. Friedrich, 708, notes "that he is the herald who precedes the people on its [sic] return from Babylon to Sion. All Jerusalem stands on the towers and walls expecting the train of returning exiles. He proclaims the victory of Yahweh over the whole world. Yahweh is now returning to Sion to rule. The messenger publishes it, and the new age begins. He does not declare that the rule of God will soon commence; he proclaims it, he publishes it, and it comes into effect. Salvation comes with the word of proclamation."

⁴Friedrich, "εὐαγγελίζομαι."

⁵Roy J. Fish, "Speaking the Gospel" in The Art of Sharing Your Faith, ed. Joel D. Heck (Tarrytown, NY: Fleming H. Revell Co., 1991), 93-94.

⁶Gerald Cowen, Salvation: Word Studies from the Greek New Testament (Nashville: Broadman Press, 1990), 46.

describe the entire teaching-preaching ministry of Jesus.⁷ The gospel not only bears witness to a historical event but transcends history as a living power.⁸ Hence, the gospel does not merely testify of salvation history; it is salvation history.⁹ God's revelation which is recorded in the Bible does not contain the gospel; it is the gospel. Throughout the Bible, God communicates the good news. Thus, all Scripture preaches the gospel as God evangelizes through it.¹⁰ This concept was not missed by the early church which began to refer to the first four books of the New Testament as Gospels. The authors of these Gospels came to be known as the four "evangelists."¹¹ This development will be given more treatment in the following chapter. In conclusion, Drummond notes:

The whole point of the four Gospels, written from different perspectives and to different audiences, is to convince readers that Jesus of Nazareth is the Messiah, that He lived, died, and rose again to purchase eternal redemption for all who will repent and believe. Evangelization is their message and goal. The Lord's last recorded words were the Commission to world evangelization. The four Gospels are essentially books on God's worldwide redemptive plan.¹²

⁷Lewis A. Drummond, The Word of the Cross: A Contemporary Theology of Evangelism (Nashville: Broadman Press, 1992), 205.

⁸Friedrich, s.v. "εὐαγγελίζομαι."

⁹Ibid.

¹⁰John R. W. Stott, "Scripture: The Light and Heat for Evangelism," Christianity Today, 25 February 1981, 28.

¹¹Drummond, 71.

¹²Ibid.

Though there are many ways to present the gospel, the basic facts do not change. From Paul's account of the gospel in 1 Corinthians 15 and the apostolic preaching in Acts, Cowen notes four truths: (1) the central fact of the gospel is the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ; (2) all of these events surrounding Jesus' death, burial, and resurrection took place according to the Scripture; (3) the apostles were eye-witnesses to the facts of the gospel, which are the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus for our sins, as well as the promise of his return; and (4) the presentation of the "gospel" includes an offer of forgiveness through repentance and faith in Jesus.¹³

Furthermore, the New Testament uses εὐαγγέλιον as the preached word. This is implicit in Rom. 10:15, "πὼς δὲ κηρύξωσιν ἐὰν μὴ ἀποσταλώσιν; καθὼς γέγραπται, Ὡς ὡραῖοι οἱ πόδες τῶν εὐαγγελιζομένων ἀγαθά."¹⁴ The implication is that εὐαγγελιζεσθαι and κηρύσσειν are used to describe this same

¹³Cowen, 48-50. Cowen also offers the following way the gospel relates to humankind: the gospel is for everyone; the gospel is not a human discovery; the gospel is something that must be believed and received; the gospel is such that if you know it you must proclaim it; though the gospel is God's, he entrusts it to human beings; Jesus said that people must be willing to give up everything for the sake of the gospel (Mark 10:29); the gospel may be served; the gospel can be defended; it is possible to hinder the gospel; the gospel can be rejected; and a person can pervert the gospel.

¹⁴All citations of Greek are from Kurt Aland and others, eds., The Greek New Testament, 3d ed. (New York: Societas Biblicas Unidas, 1975). The translation is, "And how shall they preach, except they be sent? As it is written, how beautiful are the feet of them that preach the Gospel of peace and bring glad tidings of good things!"

activity of preaching the gospel to the lost. The verb κηρύσσω occurs fifty-nine times in the New Testament, referencing the proclamation of the kingdom of God.¹⁵ The proclamation of κηρύσσω is described by its nominative cognate κήρυγμα which occurs six times, each referencing the proclamation of the gospel.¹⁶ The term κήρυξ is found three times and references a herald of divine truth, particularly the gospel.¹⁷

A definite relationship is seen between κηρύσσειν and εὐαγγελίζεσθαι as well as κήρυγμα to εὐαγγέλιον. All of these terms find equivalents in classical Greek. But, what word from the root εὐαγγελίζω corresponded to the term κήρυξ? No such cognate of εὐαγγελίζω existed in classical Greek previous to the New Testament period. The answer to this question yields a term which is found to be indigenous to the vocabulary of New Testament Christianity.

Εὐαγγελιστής

Εὐαγγελιστής, which is derived from the term εὐαγγελίζω, corresponded to the term κήρυξ. The term εὐαγγελιστής is the substantive of εὐαγγελίζομαι and refers to a preacher of

¹⁵Craig A. Evans, "Preacher and Preaching: Some Lexical Observations," Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society 24 (1981): 316.

¹⁶Ibid. For an in-depth analysis of this concept, see C. H. Dodd, Apostolic Preaching and Its Developments (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1944).

¹⁷Ibid. Κήρυξ twice refers to Paul and once to Noah.

the good news.¹⁸ The etymology of εὐαγγελιστής directly relates it to εὐαγγέλιον which is the good news.¹⁹ This relationship is closely related to the correlation of κήρυξ to κήρυγμα as shown in the table below:

TABLE 1
CORRELATION OF EVANGELIST AND PREACHER

Verb	Nomitive Cognate	Substantive
κηρύσσω	κήρυγμα	κήρυξ
εὐαγγελίζομαι	εὐαγγέλιον	εὐαγγελιστής

Εὐαγγελιστής occurs only three times in the New Testament (Acts 21:8, Eph. 4:11; 2 Tim. 4:5).²⁰ Acts 21:8 refers to Philip as the evangelist. Eph. 4:11 refers to the evangelist

¹⁸James Hastings, ed., Dictionary of the Bible (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1900), s.v. "Evangelist," by J. Massie.

¹⁹William H. Gentry, ed., The Dictionary of Bible and Religion (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1986), s.v. "Evangelist," by Ralph Martin. W. Patrick, in Dictionary of Christ and the Gospels (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1908), s.v. "Evangelist," notes that the "force of the word suggested by its etymology is, therefore, the meaning attaching to it in the three passages of the New Testament where it is found." He notes that the work of Timothy was to preach the gospel. Patrick strongly asserts that this etymological relationship of evangelist to evangel is "the view of all modern scholars of any note."

²⁰Paul J. Achtemeier, ed., Harper's Bible Dictionary (San Francisco: Harper and Row Publishers, 1971), s.v. "Evangelist," by J. Cheryl Exum. These three appearances reference the person, work, and calling of an evangelist. See Merrill C. Tenney, ed., The Zondervan Pictorial Encyclopedia of the Bible (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1975), s.v. "Evangelist," by G. B. Funderburk.

as a gift or office of the church. Second Tim. 4:5 notes that Timothy, the pastor of Ephesus, was exhorted to do the work of an evangelist.²¹

The only use of εὐαγγελιστής in a non-Christian context is found in an inscription at Rhodes which refers to a "proclaimer of oracles."²² The term is not found in classical Greek, the LXX, or any papyri.²³

The New Testament references "are therefore to be understood of those who are divinely gifted specialists in the work to which the entire church is called."²⁴ As the church government developed, the evangelist was considered an office as were apostles, prophets, pastors, and teachers (Eph. 4: 11).²⁵ J. M. Gray notes that while "all may possess the gift

²¹Everett F. Harrison, ed., Baker's Dictionary of Theology (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1960), s.v. "Evangelist," by F. Carlton Booth.

²²Watson E. Mills, ed., Mercer Dictionary of the Bible (Macon, GA: Mercer University Press, 1990), s.v. "Evangelist," by Scott Nash.

²³Patrick, s.v. "Evangelist." Patrick adds, "So far as our present knowledge goes, it belongs only to the New Testament and Ecclesiastical Greek."

²⁴J. D. Douglas, ed., The New International Dictionary of the Christian Church. (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1974) s.v. "Evangelist," by G. W. Grogan. Funderburk, s.v. "Evangelist," states that "the evangelist is endowed with appropriate spiritual gifts to unlock pagan, heathen, and sinful doors and admit the saving Christ."

²⁵The Eerdmans Bible Dictionary, s.v. "Evangelist."

of an evangelist in a measure and be obligated to exercise its privilege and duty, but some are specially endued with it."²⁶

The evangelist appears in Eph. 4:11 after apostles and prophets and before pastors and teachers. This could lead one to "think of them standing between the two other groups--sent forth as missionary preachers of the Gospel by the first, and as such, preparing the way for the labors of the second."²⁷

The evangelist was to focus on preaching to the lost while the pastor-teacher would provide pastoral care to the converted.

Gray writes:

It will be seen that as an order in the ministry, the evangelist's work precedes that of the pastor and teacher, a fact that harmonizes with the character of the work each is still recognized as doing. The evangelist has no fixed place of residence, but moves about in different localities, preaching the gospel to those previously ignorant of it. As those are converted and united to Jesus Christ by faith, the work of the pastor and teacher begins, to instruct them further in the way of Christ and build them up in the faith.²⁸

Similarly, there is a vital connection between the apostle and the evangelist. The evangelist seems to be placed

²⁶Geoffrey W. Bromiley, ed., The International Standard Bible Encyclopedia (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1982), s.v. "Evangelist," by J. M. Gray.

²⁷Elias B. Sanford, A Concise Cyclopedia of Religious Knowledge (Hartford, CT: S. S. Scranton, 1902). The reader should note the office of the evangelist is omitted in 1 Cor. 12:28 as well as the pastor. Adolf Harnack believed that the term evangelist was inserted in Eph. 4:11 because this circular epistle was addressed to churches which had been founded by missionaries who were not apostles.

²⁸Gray, 204. Booth similarly writes, "Hence in early church an evangelist was one who brought the first good news of the gospel message, paving the way for the more systematic work of settled church officers."

more adequately with the first two designations of apostles and prophets. The first three "were itinerant ministers, preaching wherever they found a door open to them, while pastors and teachers were attached to some congregation or locality."²⁹

The gift of the evangelist in the New Testament embraces the person, work, and calling. These must be looked at in depth to grasp better the New Testament conception of the evangelist.

Scriptural Usage

Acts 21:8: Philip: The Itinerant Evangelist

"εὐαγγελιστής occurs first in Acts 21:8: 'τῇ δὲ ἐπαύριον ἐξελθόντες ἤλγομεν εἰς Καισάρειαν καὶ εἰσελθόντες εἰς τὸν οἶκον φιλίππου τοῦ εὐαγγελιστοῦ, ὄντος ἐκ τῶν ἐπτὰ, ἐμείναμεν παρ' αὐτοῦ.'"³⁰ Philip is the only person officially designated as an evangelist in the New Testament. He is referred to in Acts 21:8 as "the evangelist." Thus, Philip represents the best case study as to what exactly an evangelist is.

²⁹James Hastings, ed., Dictionary of the Apostolic Church (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1916), s.v. "Evangelist," by A. Plummer. Grogan, s.v. "Evangelist," writes that "the New Testament roles of evangelist and pastor seem to be distinct but related, one being a 'fisher of men', the other a 'shepherd of Christ's flock.'"

³⁰The translation of this verse is, "And the next day we that were of Paul's company departed, and came unto Caesarea; and we entered into the house of Philip the evangelist, which was one of the seven and abode with him."

Philip is thought to have been a Hellenist³¹ who was one of the seven chosen to help with the poor and widows. The New Testament provides the picture of Philip "going forth and engaging in meetings in different places, for the purpose of promoting revivals of religion."³² Philip was most assuredly among the first to preach the gospel outside of Jerusalem. As an εὐαγγελιστής, Philip was entrusted with a special commission to preach to the lost which went far beyond the office of deacon.³³ Philip is seen going to the city of Samaria to preach Christ to the people of this city. His preaching produced great results which caused Peter and John to be sent from Jerusalem to assist in the work.

Philip, under the leadership of the Holy Spirit, left Samaria and pressed on toward Gaza. He encountered an Ethiopian official along the way and exercised his skill in personal evangelism. Philip successfully led this man to Christ, baptized him, and sent him back home with the gospel.

From Gaza, Philip was appointed by God to do other evangelistic work. He was seen at Azotus laboring for Christ.

³¹E. Basil Redlich, S. Paul and His Companions (London: Macmillan and Co., 1913), 261. Redlich notes that the "intimate connection which Philip had with Caesarea, which was half Greek, and contained a large Gentile population, coupled with the circumstances of his appointment, favor the view that Philip was a Hellenist and not a Hebrew."

³²G. B. F. Hallock, The Evangelistic Cyclopedia (New York: George H. Doran Co., 1922), 285.

³³Albert Barnes, Acts, ed. Robert Frew (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1983), 303.

He then proceeded to evangelize the cities which were situated between Azotus and Caesarea. It has been speculated that Philip's efforts formed "the foundation of the communities of Christians at Lydda, Joppa, and Caesarea."³⁴ Ultimately, it was at Caesarea where Philip made his home. Later, Paul and his companions, returning from the third missionary journey, stayed at the home of Philip to rest for several days. Philip's home was also occupied by his four virgin daughters who prophesied. The final years of Philip's life were spent at Hierapolis.³⁵

What is striking about the ministry of Philip was that he was a "man at large" rather than being "in charge of any church."³⁶ Philip's ministry was inclusive of itineracy.³⁷ He is seen in the New Testament moving from place to place preaching the gospel.³⁸ Since he preached an evangelistic message, he perpetually traveled in order to expose new listeners to the gospel message.³⁹ From this information, the

³⁴Redlich, 262.

³⁵Ibid.

³⁶G. Campbell Morgan, Evangelism (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1976), 53.

³⁷Samuel Marinus Zwemer, Evangelism Today (New York: Fleming H. Revell Co., 1945). On page 81, Zwemer defines itinerant evangelism as meaning "to go everywhere with the Gospel message."

³⁸Acts 8:12 states, "He preached the good news about the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ."

³⁹Joseph R. Drummelow, A Commentary on the Holy Bible (New York: Macmillan Co., 1947), 847. Drummelow comments, "Evangelists were itinerant officers whose duty it was to

conclusion could be made that Philip concentrated on reaching the lost in contrast to the pastor who sought to focus on discipling the saved. The first order of business for the New Testament evangelist was to preach the good news to people who had not heard. Εὐαγγελίζω is the primary verb used to describe this activity (εὐαγγελίζομενο, Acts 8:12; εὐηγγελίσατο, Acts 8:36; εὐηγγελίζετο, Acts 8:40). In Philip, the New Testament reveals a divinely gifted specialist whose primary concern was proclaiming the gospel for the salvation of souls.

Second Tim. 4:5: The Work of an Evangelist

Paul charges Timothy in 2 Tim. 4:5 to "σὺ δέ νῆφε ἐν πᾶσιν, κακοπόθησον, ἔργον ποίησον εὐαγγελιστοῦ, τὴν διακονίαν σου πληροφόρησον."⁴⁰ Some have assumed from this verse that Timothy was an evangelist. He probably was not. Timothy was the pastor of the flock at Ephesus. Ευαγγελιστής is not preceded by the definite article. Thus, it proceeds that Paul was referring to a "work" rather than an "order."⁴¹ This work referred to the preaching of the gospel to the unsaved. This charge simply recalled the imperative charge in verse two to "preach the Word." Thus, the absence of the article before

break new ground and establish new churches."

⁴⁰The translation of this verse is, "But watch thou in all things, endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist, make full proof of thy ministry."

⁴¹H. B. Hackett, ed., Smith's Dictionary of the Bible (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1971), s.v. "Evangelist," by Edward Hayes Plumtree.

evangelist indicates Paul was calling Timothy to incorporate the tasks of the evangelist into his own pastoral ministry, rather than indicating that Timothy held the official position of an evangelist.⁴²

Paul was not calling Timothy to a second ministry. Rather, he wished to emphasize the evangelistic character of the pastorate. Paul was calling Timothy to do evangelism in every aspect of his ministry. Paul was not asking Timothy to wear a "second hat" but to incorporate an evangelistic thrust into the fabric of the "one hat" which he wore at all times.⁴³ Paul was not asking Timothy to forsake his pastoral responsibilities and itinerate from place to place as an evangelist. Timothy was distinguishable as a pastor, which was to be distinguished from the particular office of evangelist in Eph. 4:11.

Paul was not calling Timothy to hold the office of evangelist but to be a pastor-evangelist. This meant that Timothy was to "be evangelistic in his message and methods."⁴⁴ In the course of his pastoral duties, Timothy was to saturate his pastoral program of ministry with evangelism. His

⁴²Homer A. Kent, Jr., The Pastoral Epistles: Studies in I and II Timothy and Titus (Chicago: Moody Press, 1958), 295.

⁴³Roger S. Greenway, ed., The Pastor-Evangelist (Phillipsburg, NJ: Presbyterian & Reformed Publishing Co., 1987), 7.

⁴⁴Ibid.

preaching was not only discipleship oriented but also evangelistic.

The purpose of Paul's statement to Timothy to "do the work of an evangelist" is seen best in the form of an admonition. Paul felt Timothy needed direct encouragement in the pastorate to perform evangelism. Paul used the word ἔργον which refers to a hard kind of work. Paul knew that the labor of evangelism was "arduous, often frustrating and the timid and halfhearted might easily abandon it."⁴⁵ Timothy needed direct encouragement to engage himself in evangelism.⁴⁶ Paul knew that the evangelistic role of the pastor was highly determinative of the success that a pastor could achieve. Paul felt Timothy must realize this aspect of his ministry was not subsidiary but primary.

Thus, 2 Tim. 4:5 instructs Timothy not to be an evangelist but to perform the evangelistic task. Greenway writes, "When Paul adds, 'Do the work of an evangelist', he is saying, 'Timothy, your pastoral work should be evangelistic in

⁴⁵Ibid., 6. Greenway speculates that perhaps Timothy was a rather timid individual and was perhaps reluctant to proclaim the gospel in public. Note what Paul wrote to Timothy in 2 Tim. 1:7-8: "God did not give us a spirit of timidity, but a spirit of power, of love and self-discipline. So do not be ashamed to testify about our Lord."

⁴⁶Roger S. Greenway, "Pastor-Evangelists: Need of the Hour Everywhere," The Pastor Evangelist, ed. Roger S. Greenway (Phillipsburg, NJ: Presbyterian & Reformed Publishing Co., 1987), 183.

character throughout'.⁴⁷ In this sense, Christians of all generations are called to do this evangelistic work.⁴⁸

Eph. 4:11-12: The Office of Evangelist

Paul writes in Eph. 4:11-12, "καὶ αὐτὸς ἔδωκεν τοὺς μὲν ἀποστόλους, τοὺς δὲ προφῆτας, τοὺς δὲ εὐαγγελιστάς, τοὺς δὲ ποιμένας καὶ διδασκάλους, πρὸς τὸν καταρτισμὸν τῶν ἁγίων εἰς ἔργον διακονίας, εἰς οἰκοδομὴν τοῦ σώματος τοῦ Χριστοῦ."⁴⁹ To understand the true nature of the evangelist, one must make the important distinction between being an evangelist by calling and doing the work of an evangelist as a nonspecialist.⁵⁰ One must consider the gift as distinct from the task.⁵¹ Eph. 4:11 lists "the gift of the evangelist as one of God's great gifts to his Church."⁵² The evangelist is not

⁴⁷Ibid.

⁴⁸Richard S. Taylor, ed., Beacon Dictionary of Theology (Kansas City: Beacon Hill Press, 1983), s.v. "Evangelist," by Richard S. Taylor. Taylor writes that the "work" of an evangelist "would be repeated proclamation of the essential message and a systematic seeking out of those who had not yet heard or at least were not yet won."

⁴⁹The translation of this verse is, "And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ."

⁵⁰Lewis Sperry Chafer, True Evangelism (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1919), 7.

⁵¹Stephen F. Olford, "The Evangelist Today," One Race, One Gospel, One Task, ed. Carl F. H. Henry and W. Stanley Mooneyham (Minneapolis: World Wide Publications, 1967), 456.

⁵²Billy Graham, The Calling of an Evangelist, ed. J. D. Douglas (Minneapolis: World Wide Publications, 1987), 16.

only a recognized, gifted person in the New Testament church but also is mentioned in the list of principal offices that Christ has given to the church for edification and equipping.⁵³ This is a specially endowed office in contrast to the obligation to carry out the exercise of evangelism.

Specialists

Eph. 4:11 lists the offices of the early church which were in place. This list does not represent descriptions of tasks but rather signifies solidified offices of the New Testament church. God, in his providence, called different men to different offices so that there might be a division of labor. God created divinely gifted specialists for the church in order for some to excel in particular areas. Thus, it is evident

that the work was not to be done through one department of Christian labor, nor were different offices to be merged in one and placed in one man; but there were to be several distinct offices of ministerial labor, each calling for special qualifications, and each filled by its own special workmen, yet all working in perfect harmony, and for the same end--the perfecting of the kingdom of Christ.⁵⁴

Calling

The offices were based primarily upon calling. One did not suddenly decide that one would be an apostle. God "gave" some to be apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors,

⁵³Massie, s.v. "Evangelist."

⁵⁴Hallock, 284.

and teachers. Each office was distinct and particular to its own calling and giftedness.

Order

The five specific offices listed are most peculiar in that they omit any mention of bishops, presbyters, or deacons. The answer seems to lie in the purpose of Ephesians which is preparing a church, built on the apostolic foundation of apostles and prophets, to remain apostolic without the apostle.⁵⁵ Thus, the foundational apostles and prophets now include evangelists, pastors, and teachers.⁵⁶

This is consistent with the postapostolic period where evangelists carried out the activities of the apostles, pastors, teachers, and exercised the leadership roles once held by prophets.⁵⁷ This is most plausible in that the pastor appeared to be the equivalent to bishops or elders.⁵⁸ Paul, in 2 Tim. 4:5, further delineated the work of the evangelist as a part of Timothy's responsibility as a church leader.

⁵⁵Andrew T. Lincoln, Word Biblical Commentary: Ephesians (Dallas: Word Books, 1990), 223. This is consistent with Eph. 2:20 which speaks of the church being "built upon the foundation of apostles and prophets," and Eph. 3:5 which references initial revelation coming through the "holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit."

⁵⁶Ibid.

⁵⁷Ibid., 250.

⁵⁸Ibid., 233.

Lincoln comments:

Rather than taking his (Paul) discussion of ministers as designed to combat episcopal developments, it should probably be seen as an exposition produced independently of such developments. Any structure of ministry it presupposes is somewhat more developed than that reflected in the Pauline homologoumena [sic] but not as regulated as that of Luke and the Pastorals with their elder/bishops (cf. Acts 14:23; 20:17, 28; I Tim. 3:1, 2, 5; 4:14; 5:17, 19; Titus 1:5, 7), which led eventually to the monoepiscopacy and the threefold order of bishop, presbyters, and deacons, first mentioned in the letters of Ignatius of Antioch.⁵⁹

Apostle

The ἀπόστολος was the first messenger, one who proclaimed first the truth and "then in the committal to sacred writings of the truth."⁶⁰ The disciples were said to have "continued steadfastly in the apostle's teaching."⁶¹ These official commissioners were for the most part limited to Paul and the Twelve. Hence, the word "apostle"

continued to have occasional use in its wide meaning, including reference to those who were associates of the apostles. However, its overwhelming usage was limited to the Twelve (including Paul)--e.g., in Clement, Ignatius, Justin, and Irenaeus. The second century confirms what was found in the New Testament. The Apostolate died with the Twelve and Paul. Some of their functions were regarded by the early church as having been perpetuated in others, but to what was distinctive about them--the gift of authoritative teaching and the special call by Jesus--no one could succeed. No one called a contemporary, not

⁵⁹Ibid., 233-34.

⁶⁰Morgan, 49.

⁶¹Acts 2:42.

even the bishops who were regarded as successors of the Apostles, by the title "Apostle."⁶²

Prophet

The *προφήτης* was an inspired speaker or foreteller. They denoted persons who foretold "the truth from God without any reference to the pleasure or anger of the people."⁶³ The *προφήτης* gift was primarily exercised to the church.⁶⁴ Such persons were leaders in Christian worship unfolding the meaning of the oracles of God and were able to distinguish the Word of God from the word of men.⁶⁵

Pastor

The *ποιμήν* was a shepherd and overseer of the flock. The term *ποιμήν* was used of Christ in John 10:11,14; Hebrews 13:20; 1 Pet. 2:25, and was used for church leaders in this

⁶²Everett Ferguson, "The Ministry of the Word in the First Two Centuries," Restoration Quarterly 1 (Winter 1957): 24.

⁶³Morgan, 50.

⁶⁴Ferguson, 24, tells us that "the prophetic order was at its peak in the Didache, which on the whole gives a picture of the ministry not unlike that found in the New Testament. The prophet presided at the Lord's table and was entitled to have his words obeyed and was the only person privileged to abide within the community without earning his support by his own labor. Since their gift was for the whole church, they might travel or settle as they chose. Ignatius and perhaps Hermas claimed to have the prophetic gift. But shortly after this time prophesy is recognized by the church as a thing of the past."

⁶⁵Ibid.

passage.⁶⁶ He was to care for and feed the flock of God. This same concept of shepherding is closely associated with that of the bishop overseer (Acts 20:28; 1 Pet. 2:25; 5:2; Phil. 2:1).⁶⁷ Thus, it is easily seen how the term ποιμήν could become interchangeable with πρεσβύτερος. These ministers held office in the local church.⁶⁸ The pastor provides a continual follow-up ministry that helps develop the maturity of the believer.⁶⁹

Teacher

The δίδασκαλος carried on the work of systematic instruction.⁷⁰ Teachers held an important place in the assemblies of the New Testament church--Acts 2:42; 1 Cor. 14; Acts 20:7; and Acts 13:1.⁷¹ This instruction took "the form of a single discourse or several shorter messages."⁷² Their function "appears to have been preserving, transmitting, expounding, interpreting, and applying the apostolic gospel and tradition along with the Jewish Scripture."⁷³

⁶⁶Lincoln, 251.

⁶⁷Ibid.

⁶⁸Ferguson, 22.

⁶⁹Baker Encyclopedia of the Bible, s.v. "Evangelist."

⁷⁰Plumtree, 786.

⁷¹Ferguson, 22.

⁷²Ibid.

⁷³Lincoln, 251.

Function

It should be noted that those who held these offices were not confined merely to the work of that office. The title merely denotes the primary emphasis of the person holding the office. It was not uncommon for a person to do the work of all the offices listed above. The apostles, for example, did a little of everything. There was considerable overlap in the gifts, but the primacy was of the offices clearly distinguishable. The giftedness and calling of an individual often meant holding more than one office. The five offices delineated the particular specialty which characterized the possessor. The mere fact that a single person could hold more than one office does not constitute an amalgamation resulting in the breakdown of distinctions. These distinctions most certainly existed. Several individuals often held only one of these offices. The table on the next page illustrates this concept.

Each "office" was characterized by a particular "function." Because one held a particular office does not necessarily mean that one did not perform other functions. Thus, whereas the office cannot be separated from the task, the task may be separated from the office.

TABLE 2

APOSTOLIC FUNCTIONS

Office	Primary Characteristic	Apostolic Calling	Prophetic Gift	Evangelistic Work Office	Pastoral Calling	Teaching Gift
απόστολος	Official Commissioner (eyewitness of the Lord)	Yes	Yes	Yes Yes	No	Yes
προφήτης	Inspired Speaker Foreteller	Possible	Yes	Yes Poss.	No	Yes
εὐαγγελιστής	Preacher of the Gospel	Possible	Possible	Yes Yes	No	Yes
ποιμήν	Shepherd	No	Possible	Yes No	Yes	Yes
διδάκαλος	Instructor	Possible	Possible	Yes Poss.	Possible	Yes

Summary

Some have inferred that the evangelist was inseparably linked to the apostolic age. Thus, when the apostles vanished, so did the evangelist. This theory will be disproved in the next chapter, as it will be demonstrated that the office of evangelist far outlasted the office of apostle. Evangelists would become in many ways the heirs of the apostolic work.

In conclusion, εὐαγγελιστής is related etymologically to εὐαγγελίζομαι and εὐαγγέλιον to mean a proclaimer of the good news. This etymological meaning was found to be consistent with the functional use of the εὐαγγελιστής whose primary characteristic is proclamation of the gospel to the unsaved. It was an office in the New Testament church held by persons who itinerated to preach to non-Christian peoples. Although

there are divinely gifted specialists given to the church, pastors are encouraged to do the work of an evangelist to have a fruitful ministry. However, the specialist, while working with the church, best finds his extension outside the walls of the church. Εὐαγγελιστής serves as a title which may be justifiably retained by one who is called and sees his task as primarily preaching the gospel to the lost. The εὐαγγελιστής originated with the New Testament church and is best defined by its form and function as an indigenous concept within this tradition. The remaining chapters will trace the developments of the ministry of the evangelist until the present day.

CHAPTER TWO
THE HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT OF THE MINISTRY
OF THE EVANGELIST FROM THE EARLY CHURCH
THROUGH THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY

Early Church
Characteristics

Itineracy

During the second century, evidence indicates that there were great numbers of Christians who became full-time wandering evangelists.¹ They set out on long journeys endeavoring to preach the gospel to those who had never heard.² Eusebius, the major source on evangelists during this period, cites Thaddeus as a notable evangelist.

Thaddeus

Eusebius mentions Thaddeus as an evangelist who was sent by the Apostle Thomas to Edessa.³ He is described as a mighty herald who brought the inhabitants of Edessa to a

¹Michael Green, Evangelism in the Early Church (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1970), 169.

²Ibid.

³Eusebius, The Ecclesiastical History, vol. 1, trans. J. E. L. Culton (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1942), 2:1.

reverence of the power of Christ. Many were converted to disciples. Eusebius notes that the impact of Thaddeus was so great that from that day the whole city of the Edessenes was dedicated to the name of Christ.⁴

"Didache"

In the Didache, the main characteristics of an itinerate ministry were that the itinerates were not to stay long in any one place and be devoted to poverty.⁵ They were supported by the gifts of the churches they visited and were not to accept contributions from pagans.⁶ The Didache specifies:

And he shall stay one day, and, if need be, the next also, but if he stay three, he is a false prophet. And when the apostle goeth forth, let him take nothing save bread, till he reach his lodging, but if he asks for money, he is a false prophet. . . . But whosoever shall say in the spirit: Give me money, or any other thing, ye shall not hearken to him: but if he bid you give for others that are in need, let no man judge him.⁷

These careful instructions helped safeguard churches against itinerants who sought financial advantage from their position.

Apostolic Work

The evangelist in many ways parallels the apostle. The apostle is described in the Didache as a wandering missionary. Such a close association has led scholars, such as

⁴Ibid.

⁵Green, 168.

⁶Ibid.

⁷Didache, trans. and ed. T. W. Crafer (London: Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, 1948), 5-6, 12.

Adolf Harnack, to conclude that there was little primitive distinction between apostles and evangelists.⁸ Because the apostles were known as "those who preach the gospel (Gal. 1:8; I Clem. 42.1; Polycarp, Ep. 6:3; Barn. 8:3), the evangelists were closely associated with them."⁹ Thus, the activity of the evangelists was not rigidly distinguished from that of apostles.¹⁰ A frequently quoted dictum said, "Every apostle is an evangelist but not every evangelist is an apostle."¹¹ Eusebius recognized the similarity of the evangelists to the apostles noting "many evangelists of the word who had forethought to use inspired zeal on the apostolic model for the increase and the building up of the divine word."¹²

Apologists

Influential theologians and philosophers were among the evangelists in the early church.¹³ These

⁸Massie, s.v. "Evangelist."

⁹Everett Ferguson, ed., Encyclopedia of Early Christianity (New York: Garland Publishing, 1990), s.v. "Evangelist," by Everett Ferguson.

¹⁰George A. Buttrick, ed., The Interpreters Dictionary of the Bible (London: Abingdon Press, 1962), s.v. "Evangelist," by M. H. Shepherd, Jr.

¹¹Plummer, s.v. "Evangelist."

¹²Eusebius, 5:10.

¹³Green, 171.

philosopher-evangelists preached the gospel and engaged in public discussions with able pagans.¹⁴

Quadratus

Quadratus has been thought by many to be the earliest Christian apologist.¹⁵ According to Eusebius, Quadratus was an evangelist and a disciple of the apostles.¹⁶ Quadratus wrote a defense against the false charges of the heathen in order to defend his fellow Christians. He addressed his defense of Christianity to Hadrian. The entire apology was being circulated in Eusebius' time, but only Eusebius recorded fragment remains.¹⁷

Quadratus, Pantaenus, and the other philosopher-evangelists used their intellectual abilities to bring men into contact with the truth of God. Green cautions that "it would be a mistake to think that the apologists and theologians were anything less than evangelists."¹⁸

¹⁴Ibid.

¹⁵Samuel M. Jackson, ed., The New Schaff-Herzog Encyclopedia of Religious Knowledge (New York: Funk & Wagnalls Co., 1909), s.v. "Quadratus," by Franz Gorres.

¹⁶Eusebius 4:3.

¹⁷Ibid. The fragment reads, "But the works of our Saviour were always present, for they were true, those who were cured, those who rose from the dead, who not merely appeared as cured and risen, but were constantly present, not only while the Saviour was living, but even for some time after he had gone, so that some of them survived until our own time."

¹⁸Green, 172.

Pantaenus

Eusebius describes Pantaenus as an evangelist who took the gospel as far east as India.¹⁹ Pantaenus was the founder and first teacher of the catechetical school of Alexandria around A.D. 180.²⁰ He had been trained under the philosophic system of the Stoics.²¹ He had also studied under Commodus.²² Clement of Alexandria, in his Hypotyposes, credits Pantaenus as being his teacher.²³

Pantaenus was primarily a missionary theologian. When Pantaenus arrived in India, he discovered that many people had a copy of the Gospel of Matthew. Eusebius notes that these had been left by the Apostle Bartholomew during a preaching tour through India.²⁴ Pantaenus is described as an "evangelist of the word" and one whose task was the "building up of the divine word."²⁵ As a preacher, apologist, and

¹⁹Eusebius, 5:10.

²⁰Samuel M. Jackson, ed., The New Schaff-Herzog Encyclopedia of Religious Knowledge (New York: Funk and Wagnalls Co., 1909), s.v. "Pantaenus," by G. Kroger. Eusebius, 5:10, notes that "this school has lasted on to our time, and we have heard that it is managed by men powerful in their learning and zeal for divine things, but tradition says that at that time, Pantaenus was especially eminent."

²¹Eusebius, 5:10,

²²Kroger, s.v. "Pantaenus."

²³Ibid.

²⁴Eusebius, 5:10.

²⁵Ibid.

theologian, Pantaenus spread the gospel throughout the East bearing the title of evangelist.

Writers

Eusebius, commenting on the work of Pantaenus, notes that the evangelist "orally and in writing expounded the treasures of the divine doctrine."²⁶ Writing also played an important role in the evangelistic ministry of Quadratus.

Teachers

Without exception, teaching was prominent in the ministries of all the early evangelists. Thaddeus is described as an "evangelist of the teaching concerning Christ."²⁷ His conversions are described by Eusebius as making his converts "disciples of the saving teaching."²⁸ The teaching of the evangelists was the gospel story of Jesus Christ. These evangelists made special use of the facts of the life of Jesus, and their teaching or preaching did not differ from that of the apostles.²⁹

The evangelist emerged in the second-century church as a διδάσκαλος abroad. The evangelist is demi-apostolic, lacking the credentials of an apostle or apostolic

²⁶Eusebius, 5:10.

²⁷Ibid., 2:1.

²⁸Ibid.

²⁹Massie, s.v. "Evangelist."

authority.³⁰ The evangelist also lacked the charisma of the prophets.

The evangelist is seen as a specially inspired teacher.³¹ Everett Ferguson notes that "many of those so-called teachers also sound like evangelists, to that it is possible that there was a progressive convergence of these terms in the second century."³² This is most tenable if Eph. 4:11 references *εὐαγγελιστής* as a teacher abroad and the *διδάσκαλος* as an instructor at home.³³ This interpretation is quite consistent with the other two references to *εὐαγγελιστής* in the New Testament. A significant stress on teaching is found in Paul's letters to Timothy.³⁴ Philip, the evangelist, engaged the eunuch in an explanation of the prophet Isaiah. In reference to apostles and prophets, the Didache uses the phrase "whoever then shall come and teach you."³⁵

The early evangelists were "depositories of the facts of the Gospel as it gradually crystallized; dealing with these facts orally and in writing."³⁶ Thus, it seems natural that

³⁰Ibid.

³¹Ibid.

³²Ferguson, "The Ministry of the Word in the First Two Centuries," 25.

³³Massie, s.v. "Evangelist."

³⁴Ibid.

³⁵Didache, 11:1.

³⁶Massie, s.v. "Evangelist."

the founder of the first catechetical school at Alexandria could make the natural transition to an evangelist. The ministry of the evangelist necessarily includes an ability to be a teacher of the Scriptures.

Carriers of Scripture

It is significant that evangelists brought the Scriptures into the regions they were evangelizing. This apostolic practice is mentioned in Eusebius both in connection with the apostle Bartholomew and the evangelist Pantaenus.³⁷ The close association of these oral and writing evangelists with the Scriptures would contribute to the development of the usage of the term εὐαγγελιστής after the second century.

Developments

Gospel as a Book

The New Testament uses εὐαγγέλιον as the message of oral preaching.³⁸ The New Testament never uses εὐαγγέλιον to refer to something fixed in writing such as a book or a letter.³⁹

An alteration began to occur in the second century as εὐαγγέλιον also came to mean "the written gospels (cf. Iren.

³⁷Eusebius, 5:10.

³⁸Friedrich, s.v. "εὐαγγέλιον."

³⁹Colin Brown, ed., The New International Dictionary of New Testament Theology (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1967), s.v. "εὐαγγέλιον," by U. Becker.

Haer. 3, 11, 8; cf. 3, 1, 1; Clem. Alex., Strom, 1, 136, 1)."⁴⁰ This development may find its roots in Mark's gospel. Mark associated the gospel with the stories about Jesus which he had recorded but did not explicitly identify the two.⁴¹

The progression seems most natural in that preaching bears witness to the life and ministry of Christ. It is this very content which constitutes the gospel. Thus, the writings which contain the life and words of Jesus are given the designation of "gospel."⁴² Friedrich points out that in "most cases in the second century there was no great difference between the written and the spoken Gospel for those who receive it since the written Gospel is read out to them."⁴³

Reader

Because the gospels were frequently read, the practice developed that ecclesiastical readers of the Scriptures were associated with evangelists. The Apostolic Canons declares that the ἀναγώστης (the reader) ruled in the place of the εὐαγγελιστής:

For reader, one should be appointed, after he has been carefully proved; no babbler nor drunkard, nor jester; of good morals, submissive of benevolent intentions, first in the assembly at the meetings on the Lord's day, of a plain utterance, and capable of clearly expounding, mindful that

⁴⁰Ibid.

⁴¹Ibid. Mark begins his gospel with the introductory phrase, "The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ."

⁴²Friedrich, s.v. "εὐαγγέλιον."

⁴³Ibid.

he rules in the place of an evangelist: for whoever fills the ear of the ignorant will be accounted as having his name written with God.⁴⁴

The reader had to be able to explain the Scriptures just as an evangelist would.

Writer

Because εὐαγγέλιον was used as a designation for the written gospels, εὐαγγελιστής was also adopted as the term of choice for those who wrote those gospels.⁴⁵ A progression occurs in that εὐαγγελιστής is "first referred to as a proclaimer of the gospel, then a reader of the gospel, and finally a writer of the gospel."⁴⁶

Hippolytus used the term εὐαγγελιστής in the sense of a writer of the gospel.⁴⁷ Hippolytus referred to Luke as "the apostle and evangelist."⁴⁸ Eusebius used the term εὐαγγελιστής to refer to both an itinerate preacher and a writer of the gospel. Eusebius quotes Dionysius of Alexandria who

⁴⁴Adolf Harnack, ed., Sources of the Apostolic Canons, with a Treatise on "The Origin of the Readership and Other Lower Orders" by Adolf Harnack (London: F. Norgate & Co., 1895), 15-16.

⁴⁵Becker, s.v. "εὐαγγέλιον," comments that it is of no surprise that εὐαγγελιστής as a term for an author of a gospel is not found before the period εὐαγγέλιον is used to designate the written gospels.

⁴⁶Ferguson, Encyclopedia of Early Christianity, s.v. "Evangelist."

⁴⁷Patrick, 549

⁴⁸Hippolytus, Demonstratio de Christo et Antichristo, 56.

called the apostle John an evangelist.⁴⁹ Many other writers, such as Justin Martyr, Irenaeus, and John Chrysostom, used evangelist to refer to a writer of the gospel. This view would prevail until the nineteenth century.

The two concepts of evangelist flourished side by side for a time.⁵⁰ Tertullian used both senses of the word in his writings. In his Adv. Prax, which dates about 213-218, he spoke of John the Evangelist.⁵¹ In De Corona, Tertullian referred to the evangelist in the New Testament sense.⁵² This reference, along with Eusebius' reference, was the last reference to the evangelist in the New Testament sense in the early church. If a convergence of the evangelist and teacher occurred in the early church, it would be understandable how the title apostle became increasingly exclusive, and "how the title evangelist gradually confined itself to the writers of the four gospels."⁵³

Decline of Itineracy

After the writings of Tertullian and Eusebius, there was a complete black-out of the term evangelist for itinerate

⁴⁹Eusebius, 3:24.

⁵⁰Patrick, 550.

⁵¹Ibid.

⁵²Tertullian, De Corona, 9.

⁵³Massie, 797.

preachers.⁵⁴ The reason may be seen in the progressive convergence of the terms evangelist and teacher in the second century.⁵⁵ Many of the teachers in the early church fit the characteristics of an evangelist.⁵⁶

Major problems faced the early church in the form of false teachers. Large numbers of false teachers were itinerating as they spread their doctrines under the titles of apostles, prophets, and evangelists.⁵⁷ Tertullian complained of this problem when he wrote, "Who are false apostles, unless falsifying evangelists."⁵⁸ The problem is evident as early as the Didache which gives elaborate tests to identify false prophets and teachers. These false teachers caused the itinerant ministry to fall into disrepute.⁵⁹ Every inducement was given to encourage itinerates to settle down.⁶⁰ Ferguson speculates that the silence of literature suggests that evangelists and teachers had joined the trend to minister locally.⁶¹ The Didache is significant "for the future in

⁵⁴Ferguson, "The Ministry of the Word," 25.

⁵⁵Ibid.

⁵⁶Ibid.

⁵⁷Ibid.

⁵⁸Tertullian, De praescriptione haereticorum, 4.

⁵⁹Ferguson, "The Ministry of the Word," 26.

⁶⁰See Didache, 8.

⁶¹Ferguson, "The Ministry of the Word," 26.

representing the honor of the ministry of the Word being transferred to the local officers."⁶²

This same period witnessed a move to insist on obedience to the local ministry. This is the thrust of Clement's epistle.⁶³ This served as a catalyst for the rise of the monarchical bishop. Ignatius held that the monarchical episcopacy was necessary to protect the church against the false teachers. Ignatius believed the bishop necessary to the unity of the church and the foundation of her existence.⁶⁴

The monarchical episcopacy was perhaps the greatest single factor in the decline of the evangelist. These bishops assumed the duties of the apostolic offices. When the evangelists and prophets began to be viewed with suspicion, it was likely that many of their responsibilities were transferred over to the new local bishops. Thus, the bishops assumed the responsibilities of public teaching. Ferguson cites this main factor as to why evangelists declined:

Putting the evidence together mon-episcopacy may be connected with the virtual disappearance of evangelists as separate workers in established churches in that wherever the Ignation type of presbytery prevailed, the local presbytery had itself produced a personal organ with which the evangelist's functions could be combined. . . . A local man was a better guarantee of correct teaching than the wandering ministers with no certain credentials. By its

⁶²Ibid.

⁶³Ibid.

⁶⁴The Westminster Dictionary of Church History, 1971 ed., s.v. "Ignatius."

adapting to the situation it is understandable that mon-episcopacy should have carried the day.⁶⁵

Gnosticism was also influential in causing this far-reaching change in the church.⁶⁶ The gnostic teachers claimed to have been given their revelations of true Christianity through a succession of private teachers.⁶⁷ Irenaeus responded with the claim of apostolic succession to protect the unity of the church.⁶⁸ Interpretations could only be given by the bishops of such churches.⁶⁹ As early as ca. 150, it was widely accepted that "bishops were the direct successors of the apostles and the chief guardians of the teaching of the church."⁷⁰ Irenaeus' emphasis on apostolic succession was chiefly concerned with the bishop's qualifications to serve as an authoritative teacher.⁷¹ Teaching was removed from the responsibilities of the presbyters and transferred to the bishops.⁷²

⁶⁵Ibid.

⁶⁶Harry R. Boer, A Short History of the Early Church, (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans Publishing, 1975), 60.

⁶⁷Ferguson, "The Ministry of the Word," 27.

⁶⁸The Westminster Dictionary of Church History, 1971 ed., s.v. "Irenaeus."

⁶⁹Ibid.

⁷⁰Walter A. Elwell, ed., Evangelical Dictionary of Theology (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1984), s.v. "Bishop" by Peter Toon.

⁷¹Ferguson, "The Ministry of the Word," 28.

⁷²Ibid.

The rise of the bishop marks the end of the widespread ministry of evangelists. Many itinerate preachers of the gospel arose after this period, but they did not use the term evangelist with frequency until the nineteenth century.

Precursors to the Middle Ages

Missionary Itinerates

Ulfilas

In the fourth century, a Christian slave named Ulfilas was taken captive by the barbarian Visigoths. Ulfilas set out to win the Goths to Christ. As a missionary, Ulfilas preached the gospel of Christ. He was ordained as bishop of the Goths in 348.⁷³

The greatest achievement of Ulfilas was his translation of the Bible into Gothic. Ulfilas reduced the language to a written alphabet and then produced his translation of the Bible.⁷⁴ Ulfilas' missionary ministry helped to bring the gospel to people who were unfamiliar with Christianity. The spread of Christianity was indebted to the work of such itinerates.

Patrick

Patrick (ca. 390-460) was a missionary to Ireland in the fifth century. As a native of Scotland, Patrick was

⁷³H. F. Massmann, Ulfilas, trans. Henry McCracken (New York: F. M. Barton Co., n.d.), 73.

⁷⁴Mendell Taylor, Exploring Evangelism (Kansas City, MO: Beacon Hill Press, 1964), 92.

kidnapped by pirates and sold as a slave in Ireland. Patrick escaped after six years. He later decided to return as a missionary.⁷⁵

Patrick returned in 432 during the spring Druid festival. All fires were to be extinguished the day before the festival. Any violation of this ordinance was punishable by death. Patrick started a fire on the highest hill in the area. This fire, which could be seen for a great distance, infuriated the king. Patrick was arrested but was able to convince the king that he was sent by the true God and that his words should be heeded.⁷⁶ Patrick won the king and was able to evangelize Ireland. No less than 120,000 converts were won and over three hundred churches were started as a result of this itinerate missionary.⁷⁷

Columba

Columba (ca. 521-597) evangelized Scotland during the sixth century. He left Ireland in 563 to found a monastery on Iona which became a center of missionary activity.⁷⁸ Columba converted the king in northern Scotland which led to the conversion of the masses. The missionaries traveled into northern Scotland, the islands of Oreades and Hebrides to

⁷⁵Ibid., 94.

⁷⁶Ibid.

⁷⁷Ibid., 95.

⁷⁸The Westminster Dictionary of Church History, 1971 ed., s.v. "Columba."

preach the gospel.⁷⁹ This practice of itineracy was effective in yielding numerous conversions to Christ. These itinerates paved the way for future Christian communities in every region they evangelized.

Augustine of Canterbury

At the end of the sixth century, Augustine (d. 604) carried the gospel to England. Pope Gregory I sent him, along with forty companions, to preach the gospel in Britain.⁸⁰ The conversion of King Ethelbert led to mass conversions among the people.⁸¹ Augustine was provided with a residence in Canterbury and was made the first archbishop of Canterbury.⁸² By the first of the seventh century, a large populace of England had been converted as a result of the ministry of the itinerates.⁸³

Boniface

In the eighth century, Boniface of England (680-754) brought the gospel to Germany. Boniface began his work in Germany by planting Benedictine monasteries. These monasteries were used as evangelistic centers for converting

⁷⁹Taylor, 97.

⁸⁰The Westminster Dictionary of Church History, 1971 ed., s.v. "Augustine of Canterbury."

⁸¹Ibid.

⁸²Ibid.

⁸³See Ray C. Petry, A History of Christianity (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall, 1962), 165-67.

the people. Thousands were converted as a result of these efforts.⁸⁴

Ansgar

Ansgar (801-865), a native of France, evangelized in Scandinavia in the ninth century. He felt called as a youth to preach the gospel to those who had never heard.⁸⁵ Ansgar began an itinerate ministry and soon won many converts to Christianity. The results of Ansgar's itinerate work was the establishment of numerous churches throughout Denmark and Sweden.

Waldenses

In the twelfth century, an evangelistic parachurch movement called the Waldensians came into being. Founded by Peter Waldo, these itinerant preachers renounced the world and preached the gospel in the streets. They rejected the medieval doctrines of purgatory, transubstantiation, priesthood, and the veneration of saints.⁸⁶ With a strong commitment to

⁸⁴Willibald, "The Life of St. Boniface." In The Anglo-Saxon Missionaries in Germany, trans. and ed. C. H. Talbot (New York: Sheed & Ward, 1954), 42.

⁸⁵C. H. Robinson, The Conversion of Europe (London: Longman's, Green, & Co., 1917), 438.

⁸⁶William Cannon, History of Christianity in the Middle Ages (New York: Abingdon Press, 1960), 222.

the scriptures, they preached the gospel in the vernacular of the people.⁸⁷

They were referred to as the "Poor Men of Lyons."⁸⁸ They boldly declared themselves to be successors and imitators to the apostles by renouncing all their worldly wealth.⁸⁹ This vow of poverty was in sharp contrast to the wealth of the Roman Church. Pope Alexander II initially approved of Waldo's activities at the Third Lateran Council in 1179.⁹⁰ But, the conditional approval required that they first must obtain the permission of the local authorities before they could preach.⁹¹

The gospel message of the Waldensians called for personal response. The Roman Church began to view the group as a threat to her ecclesiastical structure. The Roman Church carefully studied the beliefs of the Waldensians and found them similar to the Petrobrussians.⁹² The Waldensians

⁸⁷Justo Gonzalez, The Story of Christianity, vol. 1 (New York: Harper & Row, 1985), 316.

⁸⁸Taylor, 82.

⁸⁹Giorgio Tourn, The Waldensians, trans. Camillo P. Merlino (New York: American Waldensian Aid Society, 1980), 4.

⁹⁰Kurt Aland, A History of Christianity, vol. 1 (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1980), 389.

⁹¹Emilio Comba, History of the Waldenses of Italy (London: Truslove & Shirly: St. Paul's Churchyard, 1889), 20.

⁹²Robert A. Baker, A Summary of Christian History (Nashville: Broadman Press, 1959), 179. This movement was founded by the radical reformer Peter DeBruys. DeBruys preached against the corruptions in the Roman church. The Petrobrussians denied transubstantiation, infant baptism,

affirmed the sole authority of the Scriptures and the necessity of believers' baptism.⁹³ They denied transubstantiation, purgatory, praying to saints, and the authority of the Roman Church.⁹⁴

The Catholic Church began a widespread persecution of the Waldensians. The Waldensians boldly preached without permission asserting that they must "obey God rather than men; since God had commanded the Apostles to preach the Gospel to every creature."⁹⁵ They translated the Scripture into the vernacular and sent out lay preachers to preach the gospel.⁹⁶ They proclaimed that the Roman Church was the "Whore of Babylon."⁹⁷ By the end of the thirteenth century, these itinerates had successfully extended into most of Europe.⁹⁸ They endured rigorous travels in order to spread their convictions. Through itineracy, their revolutionary message was spread in a way it otherwise could not have been done.

prayers for the dead, celibacy, crosses in worship, the authority of the early Fathers, and tradition over the Scriptures. They were evangelistic in methodology.

⁹³Ibid., 179-80.

⁹⁴Ibid.

⁹⁵Tourn, 4.

⁹⁶Kenneth Scott Latourette, A History of the Expansion of Christianity, vol. 2 (New York: Harper & Bros., 1938), 433.

⁹⁷Ibid.

⁹⁸Ibid.

Lollards

The Lollards emerged in the fourteenth century in response to the corrupt papacy and Roman Church. The chief spokesman for this movement was John Wycliffe (ca. 1330-1384).⁹⁹ He denied the teachings of the Roman Church and developed his followers into itinerant preachers.¹⁰⁰ The itinerate ministry was found to be the greatest vehicle for reform. The term "Lollards" was first applied to Wycliff's followers in 1382.¹⁰¹ The term comes from lollium which literally means "a tare."¹⁰² The Lollards were Oxford scholars who sought to spread their cause among the common classes.¹⁰³

Wycliff's efforts were heightened as he was able to translate the New Testament into English. The Scriptures became a powerful tool in this quest for reform. The Lollards, now armed with the Scriptures, preached the apostolic gospel in a language understood by the people.¹⁰⁴ Great numbers of itinerant preachers, also referred to as "Bible

⁹⁹Taylor, 86.

¹⁰⁰Ibid.

¹⁰¹W. H. Summers, Our Lollard Ancestors (London: Thomas Law, Memorial Hall, 1904), 36.

¹⁰²Taylor, 86.

¹⁰³J. D. Douglas, ed., The New International Dictionary of the Christian Church (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1978), s.v. "Lollards" by Robert G. Clouse.

¹⁰⁴Taylor, 87.

Men," proclaimed the message of liberation to the people.¹⁰⁵ The combination of the Scriptures in the people's vernacular and the ministry of itineracy proved to be a powerful combination in disseminating the truth.

Monastic Itinerates

Bernard

Bernard (1090-1153), a native of Fontaines, France, exercised a strong evangelistic impact in the twelfth century. Bernard was assigned to start a spiritual community at the "Valley of Wormwood" which was termed such because it was a known hide-out for robbers.¹⁰⁶ Because Bernard transformed it into a valley of light, he was given the name Bernard of Clairvaux.¹⁰⁷

Bernard summoned men to convert to Christ. He believed salvation was personal. Salvation was based on the redemptive work of Christ and a union with him.¹⁰⁸ Bernard held to salvation within the Roman Church but did believe salvation was personally appropriated.¹⁰⁹

¹⁰⁵Ibid., 86-87.

¹⁰⁶Ibid., 113.

¹⁰⁷Ibid.

¹⁰⁸Bernard of Clairvaux, Sermons on Conversion, trans. Marie-Bernard Said, (Kalamazoo: Cistercian Publications, 1981), 2.

¹⁰⁹Daniel Akin, "Bernard of Clairvaux: Evangelical of the 12th Century," Criswell Theological Review 4 (Spring 1990): 327.

Bernard was commissioned by the Pope to preach the second crusade.¹¹⁰ He was able to recruit many for the crusade.¹¹¹ He was also successful in recruiting many for monasticism as he exhorted the people to live pietistically in their relationship with Christ.

Dominic

Dominic (1170-1221) was commissioned in 1203 by Innocent III to convert the Cathari of Southern France.¹¹² Dominic adopted an ascetic lifestyle and adopted the apostolic model of preaching in poverty.¹¹³

Dominic founded a monastic order which was approved in 1216. They based themselves on the existing Augustine rule. The order was instituted for the preaching of the gospel and for the salvation of souls.¹¹⁴ The conversion of unbelievers was the supreme missionary preaching.¹¹⁵

¹¹⁰G. R. Evans, The Mind of St. Bernard of Clairvaux (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1983), 121.

¹¹¹Latourette, 425.

¹¹²The Westminster Dictionary of Church History, 1971 ed., s.v. "Dominic."

¹¹³William A. Hinnebusch, The History of the Dominican Order vol. 2, Origins and Growth to 1500 (Staten Island: Alba House, 1966).

¹¹⁴Pierre Mandonnet, St. Dominic and His Work, trans. Mary Benedicta Larkin (St. Louis: Herder Book Co., 1945), 63.

¹¹⁵Humbert of Romans, "Treatise on the Formation of Preachers," in Early Dominicans Selected Writings, ed. Simon Tugwell (New York: Paulist Press, 1982), 275.

Francis of Assisi

Francis (1181-1226) preached evangelistic Christianity in the thirteenth century. He felt the call to preach and live in poverty, and therefore, attracted a great number of followers to his new lifestyle of poverty and preaching.

The earliest followers of Francis lived as itinerant preachers, having no permanent dwelling.¹¹⁶ When Francis' followers reached the New Testament number of seventy, he sent them off to preach two-by-two.¹¹⁷ He commissioned them, saying:

Go, proclaim peace to men; preach repentance for the remission of sins. Be patient in tribulation, watchful in prayer, strong in labour, moderate in speech, grave in conversation, thankful for benefits. . . . It has been shown to me by God that you shall increase to a great multitude, and shall go on increasing to the end of the world. I see a multitude of men coming from every quarter; French, Spaniards, Germans, and English, each in their different tongues, encouraging the other.¹¹⁸

From the start, the burden of the message of these preachers was, "Be converted, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand."¹¹⁹ This revolutionary thought was no less than a revitalized gospel calling people not to a conversion to the church but to Christ. This glorious message resounded with

¹¹⁶Paul Kevin, ed., Encyclopedic Dictionary of Religion (Philadelphia: Corpus Publications, 1979), s.v. "Francis of Assisi," by C. J. Lynch.

¹¹⁷Taylor, 118.

¹¹⁸Quoted in Taylor, 118. Also see René Fulop-Miller, The Saints That Moved the World (New York: Thomas Y. Crowell Co., 1945).

¹¹⁹Lynch, 1392.

reverberating echoes of joy compared to the spiritual bondage of the molded medieval church. Francis returned Christianity to the simplicity of the gospel.

Francis preached repentance as a prerequisite to the conversion to God's kingdom. Francis clearly grasped the concept of repentance from the acts of penance. Francis thus viewed repentance not just in "the narrow sense of penance for sins through an assorted array of corporal and spiritual mortifications, but rather in the scriptural sense of meta-noia, the reorientation or conversion of one's whole life from the selfishness to the Christian unselfishness, from wickedness to holiness, from the 'I' to the 'you', from the human to the divine."¹²⁰ Francis preached repentance as a call to follow Christ and enter into his kingdom.¹²¹ The preaching of Francis was simple and direct. His message was a call to repentance and conversion. Francis instructed his followers:

All my brothers may, with God's blessing, announce whenever they please and to any sort of person the following exhortation and praise:

Fear and honour, praise and bless, thank and adore the Lord God omnipotent, three in one, Father and Son and Holy Ghost, creator of all things. Repent ye and bring forth fruits, meet for repentance, for you must know that we die quickly. Give, and it shall be given to you. Forgive, and it will be forgiven, but if you do not forgive, the Lord will not forgive your sins either. Confess all your sins. Blessed are those who die repentant for they will be admitted into the kingdom of heaven. Woe unto those

¹²⁰Chrysostomus Dukker, The Changing Heart: The Penance-Concept of St. Francis of Assisi (Chicago: Franciscan Herald Press, 1959), 8.

¹²¹Ibid.

who die unrepentant, for they will be children of the devil whose works they imitate, and will be thrown into the everlasting fire. Watch therefore and abstain from all evil, and persevere in doing good unto the end.¹²²

The preaching of Francis attracted many listeners. These powerful sermons exerted tremendous influence upon the crowds. Francis and his followers had been engaged in home missionary activity in Italy. However, the literalness of Francis, as seen in his interpretation of a personal call in Matt. 10:7-19, was also realized in his application of the great commission. He thus sought to take the gospel to all the nations. Francis made three major missionary journeys to evangelize the Muslims and went to Syria (1212), Morocco (1213-14), and Egypt (1219).¹²³

The message of Francis inspired multitudes to a deeper walk with Christ. Times of refreshing had arrived as Christ was brought near. All of Italy began to be stirred with a new enthusiasm for spiritual things.¹²⁴ Taylor notes that

through the influence of Francis, a new enthusiasm for spiritual things invaded Italy. Multitudes were awakened to live higher and better lives. Many of them wanted to forsake their homes and jobs to join the ranks of traveling preachers. Francis discouraged those who had home responsibilities from such excessive action by encouraging them to form themselves into laymen's groups and find ways of serving the Lord in their neighborhoods. This action

¹²²Quoted in Otto Karrer, St. Francis of Assisi: The Legends and Lands (London: Sheed & Ward, 1947), 269.

¹²³Sinclair Ferguson, ed., New Dictionary of Theology (Downers Grove, IL: Intervarsity Press, 1988), s.v. "Francis and the Franciscan Tradition," by R. G. Clouse.

¹²⁴James Burns, Revivals: Their Laws and Leaders (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1960), 101.

multiplied the influence of vital Christianity in awakened areas. Many were brought back to the simplicity and sanguine thrust of the first-century Church through the evangelical fervor of an artesian overflow of divine love. The old message of redeeming grace was proclaimed to all classes and the evangelical gospel of good tidings of great joy was articulated anew.¹²⁵

Francis' message of liberty started a freedom which was to never subsist within the heart of Italy. This would only be the start of a gathering force which would not be satisfied until total emancipation from every form of tyranny.¹²⁶ It signaled the start of redemption from dogmatism and authority giving way to individualism and inspiration.¹²⁷ It was the start of a

movement which thrilled Italy, which brought forth the greatest splendors of art and literature . . . the sermon to the birds closed the reign of Byzantine out, and of the thought of which it was the image. . . . From this time the stiff, conventional forms of Christ, seen in the mosaics of the basilicas, give place to new efforts after naturalness and truth . . . but the first note of the Renaissance was heard on the hills around Assisi when Francis sang the "Canticle of the Sun."¹²⁸

The evangelistic ministry of Francis was the catalyst for not only an awakening in his own time but also for the Renaissance and ultimately the Reformation.

¹²⁵Taylor, 119.

¹²⁶Burns, 109.

¹²⁷Ibid.

¹²⁸Ibid.

Reformation

Martin Luther

The earlier reform initiatives of the Waldensians, Lollards, and Monastics found a much fuller expression in the character of the Reformation. The "brightest star" among the reformers was Martin Luther (1483-1546). Significant in the thought of Luther is the fact that he thought of himself as an evangelist.¹²⁹ Most of his letters carried the phrase "by the grace of God, Evangelist at Wittenberg."¹³⁰ But, Luther was not an itinerate preacher of the gospel.

Anabaptists

The major itinerate preachers during the sixteenth century were the Anabaptists. They preached an evangelical gospel throughout Switzerland, South Germany, Moravia, and the Netherlands. The Anabaptists were greatly persecuted for their doctrine of believers' baptism. Amidst this persecution, great itinerate preachers of the gospel arose.

Conrad Grebel

Grebel (148?-1526) originally studied under Ulrich Zwingli at Zurich, but separated from Zwingli because of divergent views in regards to the mass. Grebel became the spokesperson for a small group which sought greater reform than Zwingli would allow. These Swiss Brethren, led by

¹²⁹Taylor, 155.

¹³⁰Ibid.

Grebel, began witnessing house-to-house.¹³¹ Grebel soon began to itinerate, preach, and baptize large groups of people.¹³² In 1526 Grebel's life was cut short by the plague.¹³³

Balthasar Hubmaier

Hubmaier (1485-1528) was a powerful preacher as well as the most significant theologian among the Anabaptists, producing many significant works. Hubmaier was greatly used in Moravia, where over six thousand people were baptized as a result of his efforts.¹³⁴ In 1528 Hubmaier lost his life at the stake.

George Blaurock

Blaurock (ca. 1492-1529) was a courageous preacher who was called "the second Paul" and "sturdy George."¹³⁵ Blaurock's persuasive preaching yielded over 150 converts on one occasion in Zollikon.¹³⁶ He was known to enter churches

¹³¹William Estep, The Anabaptist Story (Nashville: Broadman Press, 1963), 25.

¹³²Ibid., 26.

¹³³Ibid., 28.

¹³⁴Ibid., 59.

¹³⁵Franklin Hamlin Littell, The Anabaptist View of the Church: A Study in the Origins of Sectarian Protestantism (Beacon Hill: Starr King Press, 1958), 121.

¹³⁶Ibid.

uninvited and boldly preach the gospel. Blaurock frequently preached to large crowds before his martyrdom in 1529. Anabaptists, such as Blaurock, utilized the ministry of itineracy to enhance the impact of their evangelistic reform.

Pietism

Foundation

Following the Reformation, the Lutheran clergy became preoccupied with doctrinal formulations and creedal statements.¹³⁷ The church of Germany had drifted away from the teaching of Luther that the Bible is the sole authority for life and faith.¹³⁸ A generation of church members emerged who knew nothing of a personal religious experience.¹³⁹ A growing concern about revitalizing the spiritual life of the church came from within the leadership of the church.¹⁴⁰

The Pietistic revival traces its roots back to 1670, when Philip Jacob Spener (1635-1705) began to hold private meetings in his home.¹⁴¹ Within these religious cells, they promoted piety, Bible study, prayer, and spiritual

¹³⁷Taylor, 222.

¹³⁸W. L. Muncy, Jr., History of Evangelism in the United States (Kansas City, KS: Central Seminary Press, 1945), ix.

¹³⁹Ibid.

¹⁴⁰Taylor, 222.

¹⁴¹Muncy, ix. The roots of Pietism are traceable to William Perkins in England. Perkins is usually referred to as the "Father of Pietism."

devotion.¹⁴² The group began to be called colloquia pietatis from which came the designation Pietists.¹⁴³

In 1675 Spener published Pia Desideria which helped bring about the Pietistic revival.¹⁴⁴ In this work Spener advocated:

1. furtherance of thorough Bible study and knowledge;
2. establishment and zealous use of the spiritual priesthood, co-operation between pastors and laity for the edification of others, but especially those of the household of faith;
3. earnest prompting to practice and to apply the principles of the Christian faith toward the brethren and toward mankind in general;
4. proper behavior toward unbelievers and toward those in error; instead of religious disputation, heartfelt love that not only disarms but also wins an opponent;
5. a changed approach to the training of ministers in schools and universities, one which emphasizes that holy living is as vital as faithful studying; and
6. a different method of preaching which stresses the inwardness of Christian belief in the new man, a belief which bears fruit in faith and works.¹⁴⁵

The work was greatly received among the laity.

Itinerates

August Hermann Francke

Scharpff refers to Francke (1663-1727) as the father of German evangelism and the first German evangelist.¹⁴⁶

Through the influences of Spener, Francke was appointed to a

¹⁴²Ibid.

¹⁴³Taylor, 224.

¹⁴⁴Paulus Scharpff, History of Evangelism: Three Hundred Years of Evangelism in Germany, Great Britain, and the United States of America trans. by Helga Bender Henry (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1964), 28.

¹⁴⁵Ibid.

¹⁴⁶Ibid.

professorship at the University of Halle.¹⁴⁷ Francke developed Halle University into the nerve center of Pietism.¹⁴⁸ Students were sent out as evangelists and missionaries to preach an evangelistic message of personal conversion. Francke was in practical terms the first Professor of Evangelism.¹⁴⁹

Francke itinerated the country, preaching the gospel as much as his schedule would allow. In 1717 he took a seven-month leave of absence in order to engage in an evangelistic tour. Francke preached the gospel "across Germany to Finland and Sweden, to Silesia, Poland, Bohemia, Moravia, to Austria and Hungary, to the Balkans, and to the Near East."¹⁵⁰

In 1705 students were sent as missionaries to India from Halle.¹⁵¹ It was a joint effort in which the Danish government furnished the funding and Halle the missionaries.¹⁵² Thus, it has been referred to as the Danish-Halle Mission.¹⁵³

¹⁴⁷Taylor, 226.

¹⁴⁸Ibid., 230.

¹⁴⁹See A. Thouluck, August Herman Francke (New York: F. M. Barton, n.d.), 462.

¹⁵⁰Scharpff, 30-31.

¹⁵¹Ibid.

¹⁵²Taylor, 234.

¹⁵³Ibid.

Jean De Labadie

Labadie (1610-1674) conducted special evangelistic meetings centering on repentance and genuine conversion.¹⁵⁴ Labadie organized planned simultaneous preaching at specific times and places. Scharpff refers to this practice as probably "the first call to systematic evangelism, something that actually did come about, only much later."¹⁵⁵

Christoph Hochenau

Hochenau (1660-1721) was converted under the preaching of Francke. Shortly after his conversion, he felt a call to itinerate evangelism. Hochenau preached repentance with immediate results. He preached and held evangelistic campaigns for over twenty-two years.¹⁵⁶ Jung-Stilling commented on his itinerant ministry:

He had a special gift from God; he was a Spirit-filled man and a genius of eloquence. People thronged to hear him. It often seemed that fire flamed from his mouth. The revivals were so mighty, they are beyond description. An old priest once told me [J. ST.] that in a large field near Elberfeld von Hochenau had preached with such power that hundreds believed the end of the world had come. Some cried, "Almighty God, what shall we do to be saved?"¹⁵⁷

¹⁵⁴Scharpff, 25.

¹⁵⁵Ibid.

¹⁵⁶Ibid., 36. Scharpff records that there is a "detailed report of an evangelistic campaign from April 8-25, 1700, held in the castle and church of Berleburg in the earldom of Wittgenstein, (which) tells of hundreds from every walk of life who attended meetings, and among whom God granted a great revival."

¹⁵⁷Quoted in Scharpff, 36-37.

Hochenau was arrested over thirty times and spent many of his years in prison.¹⁵⁸ For his labors, Hochenau must certainly be numbered among the great itinerants of early Pietism.

Nicolaus Zinzendorf

Zinzendorf (1700-1760) was the central figure in the evangelistic Moravian Brethren.¹⁵⁹ Zinzendorf founded the Pietistic Moravian Brotherhood as an evangelistic and missionary organization.¹⁶⁰ Zinzendorf conducted evangelistic tours with the assistance of his "Pilgergemeine" (pilgrims) who traveled throughout Europe and America for twenty-four years.¹⁶¹ He often held services first for women and then for men. Often staying for months and taking up to fifteen pilgrims, Zinzendorf led one of the greatest evangelistic enterprises of his time.¹⁶²

Wesleyan Revival

The results of Pietism were far reaching. Their line of spiritual succession passed through the Moravians, "from the Moravians to the Methodist, and from the Methodists to the wide, wide world."¹⁶³

¹⁵⁸Ibid.

¹⁵⁹Taylor, 237.

¹⁶⁰Ibid.

¹⁶¹Scharpff, 44.

¹⁶²Ibid.

¹⁶³Taylor, 239.

John Wesley

Wesley was educated at Oxford, where he was a member of a small group of students who met for theological study. The group was nicknamed "The Bible Moths and The Holy Club." But, despite great religious devotion, Wesley remained unconverted. Wesley was converted as a result of Moravian influences.

Wesley traveled to the colony of Georgia in America in 1735 as an Anglican missionary. His chief motive was the hope of salvation of his own soul.¹⁶⁴ Wesley was impressed by a group of Moravian missionaries who displayed a calm peace in the midst of a life threatening storm.¹⁶⁵ Upon returning to England, Wesley was influenced by another Moravian, Peter Boehler, a former student of Zinzendorf. This meeting, along with reading Luther's preface to the book of Romans, occasioned Wesley's conversion on May 24, 1738, at Aldersgate, London.¹⁶⁶

Field Preaching

Howell Harris (1714-1773) was among the first to begin the practice of preaching to crowds in the open-air in

¹⁶⁴E. B. Chappell, Studies in the Life of John Wesley (Nashville: Cokesbury Press, 1929), 48.

¹⁶⁵Ibid.

¹⁶⁶Clyde E. Fant, Jr., and William M. Pinson, Twenty Centuries of Great Preaching, vol. 3 (Waco: World Books, 1971), 6.

England.¹⁶⁷ Harris preached to thousands at fairs, races, and church gatherings.¹⁶⁸ George Whitefield, a former member of "The Holy Club," was also engaged in open-air preaching at the time of Wesley's conversion at Aldersgate.¹⁶⁹

Whitefield, having been turned out of the churches, preached his first open-air sermon to a group of two hundred. Under Whitefield's preaching, crowds quickly grew into the thousands.¹⁷⁰

As Whitefield set out for his first trip to America, he sent an urgent summons to Wesley to come and to assume the work of field preaching at Kingswood.¹⁷¹ Wesley was at first opposed to the idea. But Wesley reconsidered and on April 2, 1739, recorded, "I submitted to be more vile and proclaimed in the highways the glad tidings of salvation, speaking from a little eminence in a ground adjoining to the city to about three thousand people."¹⁷²

Wesley's preaching met with great success. Crowds of over thirty thousand flocked to hear Wesley preach.¹⁷³

¹⁶⁷Scharpff, 69.

¹⁶⁸Ibid.

¹⁶⁹Fant and Pinson, vol. 3, 6.

¹⁷⁰Taylor, 259.

¹⁷¹Ibid.

¹⁷²John Wesley, The Journal of John Wesley, vol. 2 (London: Epworth Press, 1938), 172-73.

¹⁷³A. Skevington Wood, The Burning Heart--John Wesley: Evangelist (Minneapolis: Bethany Fellowship, 1978), 138-39.

Wesley considered this evangelistic method the most effective means of reaching his generation for Christ.¹⁷⁴ Wesley received great opposition from the clergy, but he responded with the declaration that the world was his parish. He declared that he had the right to speak anywhere that people were willing to listen.¹⁷⁵ Wesley, during his lifetime, carried his message over 250,000 miles on horseback and carriage, a distance of ten cycles around the globe along the equator.¹⁷⁶ Wesley preached over 40,000 sermons averaging three a day, the first message beginning at five a.m.¹⁷⁷

In 1740 Wesley broke with the Moravians and Whitefield and began to take an independent course.¹⁷⁸ Wesley became firm in Armenian theology and opposed the Calvinism of Whitefield.¹⁷⁹ Wesley began to organize his converts into societies.¹⁸⁰

The true significance of Wesley lies in his gift as an organizer. Wesley had been deeply impacted by the Moravians,

¹⁷⁴Taylor, 260.

¹⁷⁵Michael R. Watts, The Dissenters: From the Reformation to the French Revolution (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1978), 404.

¹⁷⁶Wilson Engel, ed. "Did You Know? . . .," Christian History 2 (1983): 4.

¹⁷⁷Ibid.

¹⁷⁸Fant and Pinson, 6.

¹⁷⁹Ibid.

¹⁸⁰Ibid.

and in 1738 traveled to Hernhut to observe their practices. Their community served as a model for his "classes, Bands[,] and Societies."¹⁸¹ In 1790 Methodist societies were located in 117 areas, numbered 77,000 members, and boasted 313 preachers.¹⁸² Whitefield commented on the significance of Wesley's labors:

My brother Wesley acted wisely, the souls that were awakened under his ministry he joined in class, and thus preserved the fruit of his labour. This I neglected, and my people are a rope of sand.¹⁸³

Wesley provided organization for his evangelistic ministry; whereas, most itinerates left the conservation of results to the local churches. The remainder of Wesley's life was spent itinerating and developing these Methodist societies.¹⁸⁴

Circuit Preachers

As the demand for preaching grew, Wesley began to appoint laymen to preach. Wesley was reluctant at first but became convinced that it was the will of God.¹⁸⁵ Wesley

¹⁸¹John W. Drakeford, ed., John Wesley: Christian Classics Library (Nashville: Broadman Press, 1979), 16.

¹⁸²Scharpff, 76.

¹⁸³Quoted in Watts, 197.

¹⁸⁴Fant and Pinson, 6. For a thorough discussion of the Methodist Societies, see John W. Drakeford, "The Life Cycle of the Small Group in Church Life: A Study of Wesleyan Groups and Their Application to 20th Century Church Life" (Ph.D. diss., Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, 1970).

¹⁸⁵John Fletcher Hurst, The History of Methodism (New York: Eaton & Mains, 1902), vol. 1, 419. Scharpff notes, 99, that the first preachers conference in 1773 revealed statis-

charged his preachers that the primary business of each was to save souls.¹⁸⁶ Wesley developed an itinerant system of moving these preachers from place to place.¹⁸⁷

Wesley charged these circuit preachers to do the work of evangelists but never explicitly stated that neither he nor they should be referred to as evangelists.¹⁸⁸ The practice of referring to itinerants as evangelists was not yet common in Wesley's time.

First Great Awakening

Influences

Pietism, the Moravians, and the Wesleyan revival made significant contributions to the Great Awakening which

tics of ten ministers and 1,160 members. By 1880 membership grew to 287 preachers with 65,000 members.

¹⁸⁶Wood, 148. Using the motto "Saved to Save," these traveling preachers preached in log cabins, barns, school houses, court houses, and open fields. Most of Wesley's preachers had no formal training.

¹⁸⁷Robert E. Coleman, Nothing to Do but Save Souls: John Wesley's Charge to His Preachers (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1990), 33. These Methodist evangelists labored tirelessly to win souls for Christ. They gave up many of the earthly comforts of this world to sacrifice their lives for the gospel. Scharpff, 100, comments: "Many died as martyrs--unknown, nameless men who were murdered by the Indians, lost their lives in the storms and floods, or gave their lives in some other untoward way. . . . Of the eighty-two circuit riders active in 1782, seventy-one were unmarried. Of the 737 Methodist ministers serving between 1784 and 1844, almost half died before they were thirty years of age; two-thirds before they had served twelve years, so arduous was their work."

¹⁸⁸John Wesley, The Works of John Wesley: Complete and Unabridged, vol. 7 (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers, 1986), 277.

occurred in Colonial America.¹⁸⁹ The strategies of field preaching and itinerate ministry were brought to the colonies with incredible results. During the awakening, there were many ministers who devoted their ministries to itinerant evangelism.¹⁹⁰ Even many pastors were often away from their pulpits as opportunities to conduct evangelistic meetings arose. Jonathan Edwards engaged in many such meetings.¹⁹¹

Others devoted all their time to itinerant evangelism. As the revival spread, opposition arose against the new spiritual fervency and the practice of itineracy. Notable opposition came from Charles Chauncy. He published Seasonable Thoughts on the State of Religion in New England, which challenged that ministers should not preach in another's parish.

The itinerants of the First Great Awakening did not refer to themselves as evangelists. There is an absence of this term during this period. The itinerant ministry was

¹⁸⁹Muncy, ix.

¹⁹⁰Ibid., 35.

¹⁹¹Ibid. It was in one of these meetings that he preached the message "Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God" from the text "Their foot shall slide in due time" (Deut. 32:35). Muncy relates that "before he had finished his sermon, 'The assembly appeared deeply impressed and bowed down with an awful conviction of their sin and danger. There was such a breathing of distress and weeping, that the preacher was obliged to speak to the people and desire silence, that he might be heard.' A contemporary describes Edwards' work as a travelling evangelist in these words: 'Whithersoever he turned himself, he seems to have prospered.' Other pastors, in all parts of New England, began to give part of their time to evangelistic meetings beyond the borders of their own local fields of labor."

being challenged on every side. An itinerant who added the designation of "evangelist" would have only fueled the fires of the critics. A careful reading of the writings of the itinerants and their critics reveals that the term of choice was "itinerant."

Itinerants

Theodor J. Frelinghuysen

In 1720 the German Pietist, Frelinghuysen (1691-1748), came to America in order to serve as pastor of four Dutch Reform congregations in the Raritan Valley of New Jersey.¹⁹² He stressed the necessity of having a personal religious experience.¹⁹³ This emphasis incurred the opposition of several leading Dutch clergymen.¹⁹⁴

Frelinghuysen heightened opposition by implementing strict church discipline. He "fenced the table" by restricting communion to only those whose testimony gave proof of a regenerant life.¹⁹⁵ He also instituted "the ban" in which he utilized the use of excommunication.

¹⁹²William Warren Sweet, Religion in Colonial America (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1942), 274. Frelinghuysen's original spelling of his name was Freylinghausen. Frelinghuysen's father later altered the spelling to its present form.

¹⁹³Taylor, 378.

¹⁹⁴Scharpff, 57.

¹⁹⁵Richard F. Lovelace, Dynamics of Spiritual Life: An Evangelical Theology of Renewal (Downers Grove, IL: Inter-
 varsity Press, 1979), 36.

The implementation of strict church discipline became the source of both revival and controversy. Several members of Frelinghuysen's four churches drafted a Klagte (or complaint) which was published in 1725.¹⁹⁶

At the height of the controversy, revival began to break out. One by one all the leaders of his church made professions of faith.¹⁹⁷ A copy of the Klagte had been sent to the classis which was the administrative body of the Dutch Reformed church in Amsterdam. They called upon Frelinghuysen to either cease his practices or else make a defense. In 1726 he chose to defend himself. The success of his ministry became the most compelling argument for his defense.¹⁹⁸ The revival spread such that he was eventually supported by a majority of the Dutch clergy.¹⁹⁹

Frelinghuysen is often thought of as the forerunner of the Great Awakening.²⁰⁰ Whitefield referred to Frelinghuysen as the "beginner of the great work."²⁰¹ Whitefield on one

¹⁹⁶James Tanis, Dutch Calvinistic Pietism in the Middle Colonies: A Study in the Life and Theology of Theodorus Jacobus Frelinghuysen (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1967), 57.

¹⁹⁷Muncy, 39-40.

¹⁹⁸Sweet, 275.

¹⁹⁹Ibid.

²⁰⁰Herman Harmelink III, Ecumenism and the Reformed Church (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1968), 10.

²⁰¹George Whitefield, George Whitefield's Journals: A New Edition Containing Fuller Material Than Any Hitherto Published (London: Banner of Truth Trust, 1965), 351.

occasion heard Frelinghuysen preach and commented that he found his sermon to be the most searching sermon that he had ever heard.²⁰²

As Frelinghuysen gained success and notoriety, he began to itinerate outside of his own congregations. His preaching was successful in other communities as well, but he again drew criticism. One critic commented, "Why does he not stay with those congregations whose minister he is and first seek out the unconverted souls that are there, instead of depriving them of spiritual food by going so often to other places?"²⁰³

Opposition was also voiced against Frelinghuysen's formation of small groups who met for prayer and Bible study.²⁰⁴ He was also criticized for using lay preachers which he referred to as assistants.²⁰⁵

Gilbert Tennent

In 1725 at the peak of the Dutch Reformed revival in Raritan, Gilbert Tennent was called to serve a Presbyterian church in New Brunswick, New Jersey.²⁰⁶ Tennent was deeply impacted by his personal contact with Frelinghuysen. The

²⁰²Tanis, 80.

²⁰³Quoted in C. H. Maxom, The Great Awakening (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1920), 16.

²⁰⁴Muncy, 40.

²⁰⁵Ibid.

²⁰⁶Taylor, 379.

two became friends and often held joint services in which Frelinghuysen would preach in Dutch and Tennent in English.²⁰⁷ A great revival broke out in Tennent's church accompanied by a harvest of conversions.²⁰⁸

Like Frelinghuysen, Tennent began to expand his evangelistic ministry in other districts. Tennent focused on causing the listener to recognize the differences between being Christian and non-Christian.²⁰⁹ He then called upon the hearer to accept or reject Christ based upon this evidence. George Whitefield commented upon one such sermon of Tennent:

He convinced me more and more that we can preach the Gospel of Christ no further than we have experienced the power of it in our own hearts. Being deeply convicted of sin by God's Holy spirit, . . . he has learned experimentally to dissect the heart of a natural man. Hypocrites must either soon be converted or enraged by his preaching. He is a son of thunder, and does not fear the faces of men.²¹⁰

Tennent's preaching aroused the anger of the anti-revival clergy. Tennent fueled the smoldering fires by preaching a sermon at Nottingham on "The Dangers of an Unconverted Ministry."

Tennent enjoyed great evangelistic success comparable with Whitefield. William Warren Sweet writes that the

²⁰⁷Muncy, 40.

²⁰⁸Taylor, 380.

²⁰⁹Ibid.

²¹⁰George Whitefield, Journals (London: Billing & Sons, 1960), 347-48.

influence of Tennent's preaching "was even greater than that of Whitefield."²¹¹ He traveled from "church to church, community to community, preaching three or four times daily and receiving inquirers for personal conferences."²¹² Tennent held successful meetings in such locations as Boston, Charlestown, Harvard, and New Haven.²¹³

George Whitefield

The greatest itinerant of the awakening was the Englishman, George Whitefield. Whitefield made seven trips to the colonies. Newspapers in the colonies carried the reports of the great success of Whitefield in England.²¹⁴ At Whitefield's arrival, the level of interest was so high, large crowds forced Whitefield to preach in the open-air which had become his practice in England.²¹⁵

The appeal of the powerful Whitefield was to be found in his dramatic delivery.²¹⁶ Whitefield poured himself into every sermon, and "he rarely finished a sermon without weeping, would sometimes pause to weep, the people meanwhile

²¹¹Sweet, 91.

²¹²Muncy, 32.

²¹³Taylor, 381.

²¹⁴Scharpff, 59.

²¹⁵Ibid.

²¹⁶See Harry S. Stout, The Divine Dramatist: George Whitefield and the Rise of Modern Evangelicalism (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1991).

sobbing aloud."²¹⁷ London actor David Garrick noted that Whitefield could move his audience to tears of joy by simply pronouncing "Mesopotamia" and said that he would give one hundred guineas if he could pronounce "oh" like Whitefield.²¹⁸ David Hume records his experience of hearing Whitefield's dramatic preaching:

Once Whitefield addressed his audience thus: "The attendant angel is about to leave us, and ascend to heaven. Shall he ascend and not bear with him the news of one sinner reclaimed from the error of his way?" And, then, stamping with his foot, and lifting up his hands and eyes to heaven, he cried aloud, "Stop, Gabriel, stop ere you enter the sacred portals, and yet carry with you the tidings of one sinner being saved." This address surpassed anything I ever saw or heard in any other preacher.²¹⁹

Whitefield often preached first person dramatic monologues. He would impersonate characters of the Bible in a theatrical form. This innovative type of preaching was perhaps the "most distinctive contribution to his times."²²⁰

Whitefield's second major innovation was the use of the press for the expansion of his ministry. Whitefield flooded the colonies with his journals, sermons and letters

²¹⁷William V. Kelley, "The Real George Whitefield," The Methodist Review 96 (September 1914): 779.

²¹⁸Ibid.

²¹⁹Ruth Gordon Short, George Whitefield: The Trumpet of the Lord (Washington, D.C.: Review & Herald Publishing Asc., 1979), 65.

²²⁰Stout, xvi.

and used the network of colonial newspapers to give up-to-date accounts of his revival services.²²¹

Whitefield, on the basis of his conversion, made salvation by faith the central focus of his evangelistic message.²²² Whitefield, like Tennent, questioned whether or not the ministers had experienced conversion.²²³ But many ministers were converted under his convicting preaching.²²⁴

Whitefield did not gain decisions for Christ by use of an evangelistic invitation at the time of his message. Whitefield would invite seekers to come to his abode and receive guidance in their spiritual needs.²²⁵ Thus, Whitefield's public sermons were normally followed by private consultations to gain decisions for Christ.²²⁶

Whitefield spent his life in itinerant evangelism. He traveled England, Scotland, Wales, Ireland, and North America preaching the message of the new birth. Through his efforts,

²²¹Frank Lambert, "The Great Awakening as Artifact: George Whitefield and the Construction of Intercolonial Revival, 1739-1745," Christian History 60 (January 1991): 224. Lambert theorizes that Whitefield's use of the press "represents a necessary if not sufficient explanation of the Great Awakening."

²²²Scharpff, 73.

²²³Muncy, 31.

²²⁴Ibid.

²²⁵Taylor, 397.

²²⁶Ibid.

"he roused untold numbers to repentance and to a holy faith in Christ."²²⁷

Francis Asbury

Asbury (1745-1816) had various appointments in England as a Methodist itinerant minister before accepting an appeal by John Wesley to serve in America. Asbury distanced himself from Wesley during the American Revolution by identifying himself with the revolutionaries. Asbury became the first bishop of the Methodist Church.²²⁸

Asbury traveled on horseback nearly 300,000 miles preaching the gospel and shaping the emerging denomination.²²⁹ Under his leadership, membership expanded from a few hundred to more than 200,000.²³⁰ Asbury utilized forest revivals and camp meetings to reach people for Christ.²³¹ Under Asbury, camp meetings became very popular. Over one

²²⁷Scharpff, 75.

²²⁸J. D. Douglas, ed., The New International Dictionary of the Christian Church (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1974), s.v. "Asbury, Francis" by Donald W. Dayton. Asbury is included in the eighteenth century because of his association with Wesley and his involvement in the latter part of the First Great Awakening.

²²⁹Ibid.

²³⁰Ibid.

²³¹Taylor, 417.

thousand camp meetings were held in 1820.²³² By 1825 the camp meeting had become primarily a Methodist institution.²³³

Summary

In the early church, the evangelists continued the apostolic ministry long after the apostles had left the scene. Their work was very similar in that they itinerated and preached the gospel to people who were in need of conversion.

Evangelists were looked upon as traveling teachers. They were particularly skilled in relating the facts of the gospels. Many of the evangelists in the early church were apologists and highly skilled teachers. The first catechetical school in Alexandria was founded by an evangelist.

The evangelist, along with other early itinerants, was driven out of the ministry by traveling false teachers. The church responded to these false teachers by implementing the monarchical bishop as a defense mechanism. Apostolic succession was stressed in response to the gnostic false teachers among others. The bishop became the primary teacher in the church. Traveling ministries were discouraged.

The early evangelists were associated with the Scriptures. They carried the Scriptures into regions they were evangelizing. Because a vast majority of the Greek-speaking world was illiterate, the evangelist would often read the

²³²Ibid.

²³³Ibid.

Scriptures to the hearers. As the itinerant evangelist declined, the term evangelist began to be used of ecclesiastical readers of the Scriptures.

Because the term gospel, εὐαγγέλιον, began to be used of the written gospel, evangelist became the term of choice for those who wrote those gospels. This usage became the most frequent meaning of evangelist until the nineteenth century.

Although not called evangelists, many evangelical itinerants emerged to preach the gospel to the unconverted. Missionary itinerates from within the Catholic church sought to preach a personalized gospel to the lost. Monastics emphasized the salvific role of Jesus Christ as well as the need for faith and repentance. More radical groups proclaimed the gospel outside of the Catholic church at the expense of great persecution.

The Reformation emphasized the concept of "faith alone" against a theology of works. A return to the Scriptures yielded fresh insights into experiential Christianity.

However, the fruits of the Lutheran Reformation yielded a cold, stale orthodoxy. The Pietistic movement revived the principles of the Reformation and took them to fuller expression. They emphasized the need of a conversion experience for every person. Pietistic itinerates and missionaries were sent out with the message of conversion.

The Pietistic flames were fanned through the Moravians and Methodists. Great itinerant ministries were birthed

during the First Great Awakening which preached the evangelical message of the Pietists which was a return to biblical standards.

These itinerates found a hunger among the multitudes to hear their message of conversion. The practice of open-air preaching was adapted in order to facilitate the demand for evangelical preaching.

The organizational genius of Wesley surfaced as he fulfilled the preaching demand with a core of Methodist circuit preachers. Mostly laymen, these itinerants spread the gospel throughout the new world. But, neither they nor the major itinerant figures referred to themselves as evangelists. This practice would be adopted within the parameters of the Second Great Awakening.

CHAPTER THREE
CONTEMPORARY UNDERSTANDINGS OF THE MINISTRY
OF THE VOCATIONAL EVANGELIST

Nineteenth Century

The term evangelist was rarely used during the First Great Awakening. During the Second Great Awakening, a large number of itinerant ministers adopted the practice of referring to themselves as evangelists.

Opposition immediately surfaced which challenged the itinerates' right to use the title of evangelist. Several works appeared which produced apologetical material contending for the scriptural basis of the modern evangelist.¹ Many in the pastoral sphere of ministry viewed evangelists as threats to their ministers. However, the popularity of the evangelist grew as gifted men won multitudes to Christ in innovative ways.

The evangelists of the nineteenth century began to evolve into something distinctly different from the itinerants

¹One of the strongest works is P. C. Headley, Evangelists in the Church from Philip, A.D. 35, to Moody and Sankey, A.D. 1875 (Boston: Henry Hoyt, 1875). Headley recognized that the office of evangelist ceased shortly after apostolic times. But, Headley contends that there is no scriptural grounds for maintaining a permanent cessation. In his opinion, the office of evangelist should have never passed away.

of the First Great Awakening. New methods were adopted which initiated sudden and dramatic results. The preparationalistic theology of the Calvinistic tradition was modified to accept a punctilliar salvation process. As the status of evangelists grew, powerful personalities were able to popularize their new methods and innovations for reaching people for Christ.

Functions

Itineracy

The evangelist was viewed as one who did not hold a pastoral position² and was deemed as an office of the church.³ Whereas the work of the pastor included doing the work of an evangelist, the evangelist was not expected to minister as a pastor.⁴ The evangelist was not expected to minister long in the same community.⁵ Finney described evangelists as "itinerating ministers of the gospel, and distinguished from pastors particularly in this--that they had no stated charge or particular church or congregation over which they presided."⁶

²Headley, 9.

³David C. Marquis, "The Evangelist and His Work," The Catholic Presbyterian 4 (July-December 1880): 126.

⁴Ibid.

⁵Ibid.

⁶Charles G. Finney, Reflections on Revival, ed. Donald Dayton (Minneapolis: Bethany House Publishers, 1979), 3.

The evangelist came to churches at the invitation of pastors to win souls to Christ.⁷

Many pastors complained about the disruptive effects certain evangelists had upon their churches. Many pastors resented evangelists who came into their communities without an invitation.⁸ But, the criticisms did not diminish the growing respectability of the evangelist. The evangelist became a permanent office of the church held by an itinerant minister.

Compensation

The monetary compensation of the evangelist was derived from each local congregation to which he ministered. It was not unusual for the salary of an evangelist to be more than triple that of the pastor. This produced jealousy among many of the pastors.⁹

Clergy

The evangelist briefly struggled to be recognized as an office within the church. The evangelist grew in respectability during the Second Great Awakening. He was viewed as a different kind of minister, but a minister nonetheless.

⁷William Mitchell, "An Inquiry into the Utility of Modern Evangelists, and Their Measures," Literary and Theological Review 2 (September 1835), 494-507.

⁸Heman Humphrey, Revival Sketches and Manual (New York: American Tract Society, 1859), 265.

⁹Mitchell, 502.

Webster's 1828 dictionary described an evangelist as one "licensed to preach, but not having charge of a particular church."¹⁰ The term "professional evangelist" also began to be used to distinguish those who were full time itinerants.¹¹

Preaching

Webster further described the evangelist as a "preacher or publisher of the gospel of Jesus Christ."¹² The primary responsibility of the evangelist was to reach the unconverted.¹³ The work of discipleship was left to the pastor after the evangelist had departed.¹⁴

Protracted Meetings

The protracted meeting was utilized by the evangelist to maximize his effectiveness. The length of these meetings ranged from four days to four months. Finney noted that the purpose of the protracted meeting was "to devote a series of days to religious services, in order to make a more powerful

¹⁰Noah Webster, ed., An American Dictionary of the English Language (New York: S. Converse, 1828), s.v. "Evangelist," by Noah Webster.

¹¹Marquis, 126. Evangelists, such as Wilbur Chapman, Present Day Evangelism (New York: Baker & Taylor Co., 1903), complained of using the adjective "professional" in connection with the office of evangelist.

¹²Webster, s.v. "Evangelist."

¹³Marquis, 126.

¹⁴Ibid.

impression of Divine things on the minds of the people."¹⁵

Finney gave the following principles in regards to protracted meeting:

- (a) In appointing them, regard should be had to the circumstances of the people; whether the Church is able to give attention and devote time to carrying on the meeting.
- (b) Ordinarily, a protracted meeting should be conducted throughout, and the labour chiefly performed, by the same minister, if possible.
- (c) There should not be so many public meetings as to interfere with the duties of private prayer and of the family.
- (d) Families should not put themselves out so much, in entertaining strangers, as to neglect prayer and other duties.
- (e) By all means guard against unnecessarily keeping late hours.
- (f) All sectarianism should be carefully avoided.
- (g) Be watchful against placing dependence on a protracted meeting, as if that of itself would produce a revival.
- (h) Avoid adopting the idea that a revival cannot be enjoyed without a protracted meeting.¹⁶

These services were held in the morning, afternoon, and evening. During the services, the business routines of the town came to a halt. All other activities were put on hold.

Personal Evangelism

The evangelist was expected to visit "house to house, arousing the careless, guiding the ignorant, and directing the anxious sinner."¹⁷ The work of the evangelist was connected

¹⁵Charles G. Finney, Lectures on Revivals of Religion (New York: Leavitt Lord & Co., 1835), 242.

¹⁶Ibid., 243-46.

¹⁷Mitchell, 498.

with soul-winning, both mass and personal.¹⁸ Evangelists were deemed as being skilled in personal work and were expected to equip laymen to be personal soul winners.

Theology

The theology of the itinerant evangelist took a decisive shift from the Calvinism of the First Great Awakening. Finney boldly ignored the high Calvinism of the Westminster Confession of Faith and adopted the "New Haven Theology" of Nathaniel William Taylor.¹⁹ Finney had been greatly impacted by his background in New England Calvinism. However, Finney leaned toward the New Divinity which was opposed by conventional Calvinists.²⁰ Finney's democratization of Calvinism led to his promotion of New Measures in revivals.²¹

¹⁸William Newell, Revivals: How and When? (New York: A. C. Armstrong, 1882), 224.

¹⁹Allen C. Guelzo, "The Making of a Revivalist: Finney and the Heritage of Edwards," Christian History 20 (1988): 28-30.

²⁰Ibid. The New Divinity movement was looked upon by many Calvinists as a deviation from orthodoxy. Princeton Theological Seminary was founded to help protect Presbyterianism from the influence of the New Divinity.

²¹James E. Johnson, "Charles Grandison Finney: Father of American Revivalism," Christian History 20 (1988): 7.

Punctilliar Conversion

Finney held that unbelief was a "will not" not a "cannot."²² Finney rejected the traditional view of Calvinism that a person could only believe if they were elected to salvation.²³ Unlike many other ministers of his day, Finney did not rebuke his listeners for the sin of Adam but exhorted them to respond to their own sin.²⁴ Finney held the doctrine of original sin to be unworthy of God.²⁵ He rather opted for a governmental theory of atonement by which the death of Christ provides forgiveness to those who respond in faith.²⁶

The influence of Finney was powerful upon other evangelists of his time. Many others began to adopt an Arminianized-Calvinism. By doing this, they were able to call individuals to make a choice. The choice of one's eternal

²²Ibid. Finney objected to the views of his pastor (George Gale) who preached repentance while declaring inability to repent. Finney and Gale had no small disagreement. Gale's congregation was disrupted by a universalist. Ill and unable to respond, Gale sent Finney. The universalist, arguing from Gale's contention that the atonement was a payment of mankind's debt, contended that God could not punish man because his debt was paid. Finney, by his views on the atonement, refuted the universalist and later won Gale over to his position. Many other Calvinist ministers would follow.

²³Ibid.

²⁴Ibid., 9.

²⁵Guelzo, 29.

²⁶Ibid., 28.

destiny, be it heaven or hell, was put in the hands of the individual.²⁷

Invitation

The public invitation was widely used by Separate Baptists during their revival services.

At the close of the sermon, the minister would come down from the pulpit and while singing a suitable hymn would go around the brethren shaking hands. The hymn being sung, he would then, extend an invitation to such person as felt themselves to be poor guilty sinners, and were anxiously inquiring the way of salvation, to come forward and kneel near the stand, or if they preferred to do so, they could kneel at their seats, proffering to unite with them in prayer for their conversion. After prayer, singing and exhortation, prolonged according to circumstances, the congregation would be dismissed to meet again at night . . . either for preaching or in the capacity of a prayer meeting.²⁸

Similarly, Finney believed a person could decide for Christ. Finney referred to Hell as the consequence of refusing to believe the gospel.²⁹ Many accused Finney of scaring people into becoming Christians.³⁰ In order to aid people in deciding for Christ, Finney implemented his New Measures.

New Measures

Finney's New Measures included anxious benches, informal public praying, protracted meetings, allowing women to

²⁷Johnson, 8.

²⁸Robert I. Devin, A History of the Grassy Creek Baptist Church (Raleigh: Edwards, Broughton & Co., 1880).

²⁹Johnson, 7.

³⁰Ibid.

pray, and anxious meetings. These measures were in no way original with Finney. Finney's new revival techniques were evangelistic practices which stemmed from a theology which emphasized human decision in salvation. Most of the practices of Finney were already being practiced by others, particularly the Methodists.³¹

Anxious Meeting

Finney wrote that the first time he saw the anxious meeting was in New England.³² He describes the function of this practice as being "for the purpose of holding personal conversation with anxious sinners, and to adapt instruction to the cases of individuals, so as to lead them immediately to Christ."³³ Persons who were seeking spiritual fulfillment were first spoken to individually to get them "to promise to give up their hearts to God."³⁴ Then the whole group was addressed based upon each's error or difficulty.³⁵ Inquiry

³¹Richard Cawardine, "The Second Great Awakening in the Urban Centers: An Examination of Methodism and the 'New Measures,'" The Journal of American History 5 (September 1972): 332.

³²Finney, Lectures, 242.

³³Ibid.

³⁴Ibid.

³⁵Ibid.

meetings under Finney were attended by as many as three hundred.³⁶

Anxious Seat

The anxious seat, also known as the mourner's bench, was defined by Finney as "the particular place of meeting where the anxious may come and be addressed particularly, and be made subjects of prayer and sometimes conversed with individually."³⁷ Finney exhorted those who were under conviction to come and to be seated in this reserved section. Finney cited the practice as being important in pointing sinners toward their conversion.³⁸ It further helped to rid people of their pride.³⁹ When the such persons submitted to Christ, they were immediately saved and eligible for church membership.

Finney probably first used this practice in 1824 in a revival at Ruttand.⁴⁰ Finney was likely influenced by the

³⁶Presbytery of Oneida, A Narrative of the Revival of Religion in the County of Oneida, Particularly in the Bounds of the Presbytery of Oneida in the Year 1826 (Utica, NY: Hastings & Tracy, 1826), 10.

³⁷Finney, Lectures, 247.

³⁸Ibid.

³⁹Ibid.

⁴⁰Charles G. Finney, The Memoirs of Charles G. Finney: The Complete Restored Text, ed. Garth M. Rosell and Richard A. G. Dupuis (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1989), 306, n.33.

Methodist practice of calling people to the altar.⁴¹ Finney held that the use of a "test" to reveal the desire to become a Christian had been used since the early church.⁴²

Opposition

The Old School Calvinists objected to such practices. They were unwilling to ascribe power to the human will to make a decision for Christ. They would never think of asking someone to repent until the heart was changed by God. In their theology, regeneration preceded conversion.

Finney's leading critic was a New England evangelist named Asahel Nettleton. Nettleton challenged the innovative measures of Finney. Nettleton and Lymon Beecher sought to destroy Finney's influence at a meeting held in 1827 at New Lebanon, New York.⁴³ Finney's revivals had not yet reached the major eastern cities, and Beecher and Nettleton felt Finney must be halted.

Each side was allowed to invite twelve participants.⁴⁴ Finney's major supporter was Nathaniel Beman. It soon became obvious that Finney and the New Measures were not being condemned. Many of the charges were false and exaggerated.

⁴¹See Cowardine, 338-39.

⁴²Finney, Memoirs, 282.

⁴³Johnson, 7.

⁴⁴Keith J. Hardman, Charles G. Finney 1792-1875: Revivalist and Reformer (New York: Syracuse University, 1987), 131.

Because of the loss of momentum, Nettleton quit attending the meetings, due to "nervousness."⁴⁵

Nettleton returned the last day and read a long letter denouncing Finney and his measures. Because much of the information was distorted, Finney asked Nettleton to name the source of the letter.⁴⁶ The source was William R. Weeks who was present, but Nettleton refused to name his source. Weeks also refused to speak up. A great blow was thus dealt to Finney's opponents. Finney later commented on the impact of the reading of the letter:

No one there pretended to justify a single sentence in Mr. Nettleton's historical letter, that related to myself. This of course was astounding to Mr. Nettleton and Dr. Beecher. If any of their supposed facts had been received from Mr. Weeks, no doubt they expected him to speak out, and justify what he had written. But he said nothing intimating that he had any knowledge of any of the facts that Mr. Nettleton had presented in his letter. The reading of this letter, and what immediately followed, prepared the way for closing up the convention.⁴⁷

Beecher was greatly impressed by the defense of Finney and would later reconcile with him. Nettleton fell out of favor with the more progressive ministers because he kept emphasizing original sin. Beecher revised some of his harsher Calvinistic tendencies and united with Finney, believing nothing would be gained by further opposition.⁴⁸

⁴⁵Ibid., 138.

⁴⁶Ibid., 142-43.

⁴⁷Finney, Memoirs, 216.

⁴⁸Hardman, 148.

A few years later, the controversy escalated again with the publication of Finney's Lectures on Revivals of Religion. The book added to the fame of Finney and magnified the controversy.⁴⁹ Finney stated in the book that revival was not a miracle but could be brought about by the use of proper means.⁵⁰ The book was condemned by Charles Hodge, a professor at Princeton Seminary.⁵¹ Shortly after this rejection, Finney left the denomination.⁵²

Popularization

The evangelists of the nineteenth century can be best understood by examining the major evangelists of this time. Men like Finney shaped the thoughts and practices of the lesser lights of his era. A brief survey of the major evangelists will provide the reader with significant insights which were to be found among the multitude of evangelists who patterned their ministries after these great evangelists.

Preaching Evangelists

Asahel Nettleton

Nettleton (1783-1844) has been described as "next to George Whitefield the most effective evangelist in the history

⁴⁹Johnson, 8.

⁵⁰Ibid.

⁵¹Ibid.

⁵²Ibid.

of the United States."⁵³ Many in the Reformed tradition think of him as the last great evangelist because he practiced his evangelistic ministry within the Calvinistic framework of Whitefield.

Nettleton was converted after hearing a sermon on the need of regeneration.⁵⁴ Nettleton's struggle for conversion lasted for ten months,⁵⁵ and he struggled the rest of his life with having assurance of his salvation because of his strong Calvinistic beliefs.⁵⁶

Nettleton enrolled at Yale and made a strong impression on Timothy Dwight. Dwight said that Nettleton would "make one of the most useful men this country has ever

⁵³John F. Thornbury, God Sent Revival: The Story of Asahel Nettleton and the Second Great Awakening (Grand Rapids: Evangelical Press, 1977), 233.

⁵⁴Bennet Tyler, The Life and Labours of Asahel Nettleton, The Memoir of Dr. Asahel Nettleton (Carlisle, PA: The Banner of Truth Trust, 1854), 18. Tyler, Nettleton's chief biographer, was a personal friend of Nettleton. Tyler was involved in a controversy with Nathaniel Taylor over original sin. Rejecting the New Haven theology, Tyler and Nettleton began their own school. The Theological Institute of Connecticut was founded in 1833. Its name was later changed to Hartford Theological Seminary.

⁵⁵George Hugh Birney, "The Life and Letters of Asahel Nettleton 1783-1844" (Ph.D. diss., Hartford Theological Seminary, 1943), 18.

⁵⁶*Ibid.*, 21-25. Nettleton never felt he deserved what God had done for him. Whether or not he was truly elect was something he believed would have to wait until the judgement to find out. Nettleton believed in the perseverance of the saints, but believed that people could never be sure that they were one of the saints.

seen."⁵⁷ Nettleton met Samuel Mills during this time and pledged his life to missionary service.⁵⁸ Nettleton was never able to go because of financial problems and illness.⁵⁹

Nettleton began to preach in small churches in eastern Connecticut. These churches were "small in membership, spiritually inert, and often unable to afford a full-time minister."⁶⁰ Revivals began to break out everywhere that Nettleton went to preach.⁶¹

Many of the places Nettleton preached had been visited by James Davenport. Nettleton conversed with some of the elderly members who spoke of the excesses of the First Great Awakening. Nettleton became suspicious of any new innovations which were taking place lest the same kind of abuses halt the current movement of God.

Nettleton did not give public invitations. He used personal follow-up and inquiry rooms to establish conversions. Nettleton spoke of these new Christians as "hopeful conversions," never presuming that all could be of the elect.⁶² Nettleton also avoided protracted meetings. He normally would

⁵⁷Quoted in Thornbury, 37.

⁵⁸Ibid., 41.

⁵⁹Tyler, 53-54.

⁶⁰Thornbury, 48.

⁶¹J. B. Waterbury, Sketches of Eloquent Preachers (New York: American Tract Society, 1864), 43.

⁶²J. Edwin Orr, The Eager Feet: Evangelical Revivals, 1790-1830 (Chicago: Moody Press, 1975), 118.

preach two or three times on Sunday and twice during the week.⁶³

Nettleton's Calvinistic evangelism was able to awaken no less than thirty thousand souls.⁶⁴ From 1812 to 1822, he held great revivals in Connecticut, Massachusetts, and New York resulting in thousands of conversions.⁶⁵

Nettleton felt a strong need to preach the doctrines of grace.⁶⁶ It was at this point that Nettleton disagreed with the theology of Finney. Nettleton met with Finney twice in 1826 but was unable to persuade Finney over to his viewpoint.⁶⁷

The conflict culminated at the New Lebanon Conference in 1827. As a result of New Lebanon, Finney "gained a new notoriety and larger fields were opened to him."⁶⁸ As Finney increased, Nettleton decreased. As more and more ministers shifted over to the New measures, there was no longer a demand for the Calvinistic evangelist. Thus, Nettleton was the last great evangelist of his kind. History seems to have forgotten this great evangelist. History has buried Nettleton in the

⁶³Robert Swanson, "Asahel Nettleton-The Voice of Revival," Fundamentalist Journal 5 (May 1986): 51.

⁶⁴Tyler, 17.

⁶⁵Ibid., 83-85.

⁶⁶Ibid., 301.

⁶⁷Ibid., 342.

⁶⁸Thornbury, 178-79.

graveyard of forgotten warriors as Finney has come to be remembered as the "Father of Modern Evangelism."⁶⁹

Charles Grandison Finney

Finney (1792-1875) was a converted lawyer who had left his practice to serve the Lord. Finney left his practice the day after he was converted. He told his client he was withdrawing from his case, saying, "I have a retainer from the Lord Jesus Christ to plead his cause. I cannot plead yours."⁷⁰

Finney began at once to win souls for Christ. He studied under his pastor George Gale and was licensed to preach. Finney began his evangelistic work for the Female Missionary Society of the Western District of the State of New York.⁷¹ God began to bless Finney's meetings and send revival.⁷² Calls for revivals came in rapid succession as Finney was thrust into full-time evangelism.⁷³

Within a year of Finney's success in revivals, he began to receive invitations to the major cities such as Utica, Auburn, and New York.⁷⁴ At Philadelphia, Finney

⁶⁹Ibid., 19.

⁷⁰Finney, Memoirs, 24.

⁷¹Hardman, 50.

⁷²Taylor, 440.

⁷³Ibid., 441.

⁷⁴Ibid., 443.

invited all denominations to participate in the crusade.

Taylor comments on the significance of this action:

This dramatic move had many reverberations . . . at this juncture a new day had dawned for evangelism. The pattern was set for members of all denominations to pool their spiritual resources to promote a united campaign. This type of evangelism has been a crucial influence in the church world until the present. Finney has the distinction of launching something that puts Christendom forever in debt to him. Christians were made aware of the fact that the mission of winning souls takes priority over all the considerations in the life of the Church. Though there may be differences between denominations in some areas, there is one common denominator that ties all Christians in an inseparable bond of cooperative fellowship; that is, the fellowship of rescuing the perishing.⁷⁵

Finney's greatest campaign was in 1830 at Rochester, New York.⁷⁶ This revival affected every dimension of society. A great host of judges, physicians, lawyers, bankers, merchants, and skilled tradesmen were won to Christ.⁷⁷ Over 50,000 were converted within five months of the start of the revival.⁷⁸ Finney emerged from this revival "an evangelist with national stature."⁷⁹

Finney was often misunderstood because of his innovative methods. Finney believed that true revival and reformation never comes outside of new measures.⁸⁰ Finney

⁷⁵Ibid.

⁷⁶Johnson, 7.

⁷⁷Thomas William Miller, "Legacy of the Rochester Revivals," Christianity Today, 25 October 1981, 24.

⁷⁸Ibid., 24-25.

⁷⁹Taylor, 445.

⁸⁰Finney, Lectures, 249.

noted when many modes of the church become forms, God brings in some new measure which will wake up the slumbering church.⁸¹

Finney's preaching was criticized for being too direct. He was accused of preaching like a lawyer which resulted in the loss of the dignity of the pulpit.⁸² But Finney held that "revival preaching must be vehement and perhaps even vituperative in order to rouse his hearers out of their complacency."⁸³ In his pointed preaching he often told his listeners that he was not talking about others

but I mean you, and you, and you. . . . Now you resent this, and you will go away and say that you will not come again; but you will. Your own convictions are on my side. You know that what I tell you is true; and that I tell it for your own good; and that you cannot continue to resent it.⁸⁴

Finney declared that "the Gospel should be preached to men and not about them."⁸⁵

Finney accepted a teaching position with Oberlin College in 1835. Finney equally divided his time between teaching and conducting revivals.⁸⁶ Finney succeeded Asa

⁸¹Ibid.

⁸²Finney, Memoirs, 83.

⁸³Quoted in J. Edwin Orr, The Second Evangelical Awakening in Britain (London: Marshall, Morgan, & Scott, 1949), 36.

⁸⁴Finney, Memoirs, 92-93.

⁸⁵Finney, Lectures, 190.

⁸⁶Taylor, 450.

Mahan when he retired from the presidency at Oberlin in 1851.⁸⁷ As president, Finney continued to conduct evangelistic campaigns. Finney continued to serve as president until 1866.

The impact of Finney's measures were widespread. His practices would change the face of vocational evangelism until the present day. Finney was the first evangelist to utilize a minister of music, Thomas Hastings, in revivals. Finney also was the first to make use of invitation hymns. Modern evangelists owe a great debt to the innovative genius of Finney. Other great evangelists impacted by Finney arose during the Second Great Awakening. The year 1875 marks the last year of Finney's ministry and the first major American evangelistic campaign of D. L. Moody.⁸⁸

Dwight Lyman Moody

D. L. Moody (1835-1899) was born on February 5, 1835, in Northfield, Massachusetts.⁸⁹ Moody never received more than the equivalent of a fifth grade education.⁹⁰ He went to work for his uncle in Boston when he was seventeen. His uncle

⁸⁷Ibid.

⁸⁸Scharpff, 174.

⁸⁹James F. Findlay, Jr., Dwight L. Moody: American Evangelist, 1837-1899 (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1969), 25.

⁹⁰Stanley N. Gundry, Love Them In: The Proclamation Theology of D. L. Moody (Chicago: Moody Press, 1976), 9.

hired him on the condition that he would attend Sunday school and Sunday services.⁹¹

Moody's Sunday school teacher, Edward Kimbell, took an immediate interest in Moody. Kimbell felt Moody lacked a personal relationship with Christ and went to the shoe store where Moody worked in order to share Christ with him.⁹²

Kimbell hesitated at first but then decided to make the visit. Kimbell spoke to Moody about Christ's love, and Moody at that moment gave his life to Christ.⁹³ Moody describes his conversion:

I remember the morning on which I came out of my room after I had first trusted Christ. I thought the old sun shone a good deal brighter than it ever had before--I thought that it was just smiling upon me; and as I walked out upon Boston Common and heard the birds singing in the trees, I thought they were all singing a song to me. Do you know, I fell in love with the birds. I had never cared for them before. It seemed to me that I was in love with all creation. I had not a bitter feeling against any man, and I was ready to take all men to my heart.⁹⁴

⁹¹Taylor, 500.

⁹²Richard K. Curtis, They Called Him Mr. Moody (New York: Doubleday & Co., 1962), 53.

⁹³W. R. Moody, The Life of Dwight L. Moody, (London: Morgan & Scott, 1900), 39. Kimbell recalls: "I found Moody in the back part of the building wrapping up shoes. I went up to him at once, and putting my hand on his shoulder, I made what I afterwards felt was a very weak plea for Christ. I don't know just what words I used, nor could Mr. Moody tell. I simply told him of Christ's love for him, and the love Christ wanted in return. That was all there was. It seemed the young man was just ready for the light that then broke upon him, and there, in the back of that store in Boston, he gave himself and his life to Christ."

⁹⁴Moody, 40.

After his conversion, Moody was denied membership at Mount Vernon because the church leaders stated that Moody lacked sufficient knowledge in Christian doctrine.⁹⁵ They made him wait almost a year, to their later embarrassment.⁹⁶

Moody moved to Chicago and became a tireless worker in the area of personal evangelism. Moody dedicated his life to soul winning, pledging not to let a day go by without sharing Christ with one stranger.⁹⁷ His zeal for personal evangelism earned him the nickname "Crazy Moody."⁹⁸ Moody began a non-denominational Sunday school class near the North Side Market. His class grew into one of the largest Sunday school classes in the nation, with over one thousand students attending.⁹⁹

In 1863 Moody established Illinois Street Independent Church from the converts of his Sunday school.¹⁰⁰ In 1871 Moody preached to a large crowd but declined to give an invitation. That night the Chicago Fire destroyed his church and

⁹⁵Arthur Percy Fitt, The Shorter Life of D. L. Moody (Chicago: Moody Press, 1900), 22.

⁹⁶Taylor, 502.

⁹⁷William G. McLoughlin, Jr., Modern Revivalism: Charles Grandison Finney to Billy Graham (New York: Ronald Press Co., 1959), 175.

⁹⁸Taylor, 506.

⁹⁹Myron Raymond Chartier, The Social Views of Dwight L. Moody and Their Relation to the Workingman of 1860-1900 (Hays, KS: Fort Hays Kansas State College, 1969), 37.

¹⁰⁰Taylor, 505. The church was later renamed Moody Memorial Church.

a large part of his congregation.¹⁰¹ Moody pledged to never fail to give an invitation the rest of his life.

After 1871 Moody and his musician, Ira Sankey, launched into full-time evangelism. Moody and Sankey traveled to England to hold evangelistic campaigns, which were highly successful. During the 1873-75 campaign, an estimated 2,530,000 people sat under the preaching of Moody.¹⁰² Moody and Sankey returned to America as celebrities.

Moody conducted large evangelistic campaigns in the United States from 1875-79. He concentrated his activities in the cities, for he believed if he could reach the cities, he could better impact the entire country.¹⁰³ Because of Moody's fame, he was able to secure greater cooperation from the churches.¹⁰⁴

Moody's method of invitation was to ask those who desired salvation to stand. He would then come down from the platform and extend an invitation to them to join him in the inquirer's room.¹⁰⁵ Moody loved to deal with inquirers in

¹⁰¹See D. L. Moody, Moody's Stories (New York: Fleming H. Revell Co., 1899), 10-11.

¹⁰²A. T. Rowe, D. L. Moody, The Soul Winner (Anderson, IN: Warner Press, 1927), 61.

¹⁰³Fitt, 79.

¹⁰⁴Findlay, 195-96. Moody required emitted support from the evangelical denominations, suitable facilities, no rival church activities, and the guarantee of proper financing for the crusade.

¹⁰⁵Alan R. Streett, The Effective Invitation (Old Tappan, NJ: Fleming H. Revell Co., 1984), 98.

the inquiry room and believed this type of personal work to be of vital importance.¹⁰⁶ Extensive training was required to qualify workers to counsel in the inquiry room.¹⁰⁷ The use of trained lay counselors stands as one of the greatest contributions of Moody to mass evangelism. Roy Fish describes Moody's technique as "the most effective combination of public response and private counsel of any invitation in the history of mass evangelism."¹⁰⁸

Moody repeatedly filled the largest auditoriums in many of the American cities.¹⁰⁹ Moody preached to crowds of up to 15,000.¹¹⁰ However, Moody spent the last twenty years of his life focusing on education.¹¹¹ By 1879 Moody was well worn from the stress of his numerous meetings.

D. L. Moody greatly popularized the office of evangelist in his own time. Moody traveled over one million miles and spoke to over one hundred million people.¹¹² He personally dealt with seven hundred fifty thousand

¹⁰⁶W. R. Moody, 488.

¹⁰⁷Ibid.

¹⁰⁸Roy J. Fish, Giving a Good Invitation (Nashville: Broadman Press, 1974), 16.

¹⁰⁹Taylor, 512.

¹¹⁰Ibid.

¹¹¹Moody established the Northfield colleges for young women in 1879 and for young men in 1881. In 1886 Moody began the Chicago Bible Institute for training laymen. This school is now known as Moody Bible Institute.

¹¹²Fant and Pinson, 281.

individuals.¹¹³ Moody far surpassed the lesser lights of his day. The most notable of Moody's contemporaries was, by far, Sam Jones.

Samuel Porter Jones

Sam Jones (1847-1906) was the grandson of Methodist circuit preacher, Samuel G. Jones.¹¹⁴ Jones displayed unusual rhetorical skills as a youth.¹¹⁵ Because of his oratory skills, Jones chose to study law. He became a sought after trial lawyer who had a reputation for being able to sway juries.

His success in law was halted by a chronic alcoholism. His indulgence in liquor forced him to give up his profession as a lawyer after six years in the legal profession. However, in 1872, he was summoned to the bedside of his dying father. His father said he was assured of seeing all of his six children in heaven except one. He then addressed Jones: "My poor, wicked, wayward, reckless boy. You have broken the heart of your sweet wife and brought me in sorrow to my grave; promise me my boy, to meet me in heaven."¹¹⁶ Jones replied, "Father,

¹¹³Ibid.

¹¹⁴Billy Vick Bartlett, "Sam Jones Brought Revival to a Nation," Fundamentalist Journal 4 (March 1985): 42. Jones was a direct descendant of Jonathan Edwards.

¹¹⁵Walt Holcomb, Sam Jones (Nashville: Methodist Publishing House, 1947), 41.

¹¹⁶Laura M. Jones, The Life and Sayings of Sam P. Jones (Atlanta: Franklin-Turner Co., 1907), 49.

I'll make you the promise, I'll quit! I'll quit! I'll quit!"¹¹⁷

Jones was immediately converted under the revival preaching of his grandfather.¹¹⁸ Upon his conversion he walked the aisle to join the church at the meeting at Feltons' chapel. Jones commented that "I was a reformed and changed man from that hour."¹¹⁹ Jones at that time also accepted the call to preach. One week after his conversion, he preached his first sermon. Many were converted at the close of the sermon.¹²⁰

In that same year, Jones was appointed a Methodist circuit preacher by the North Georgia Conference.¹²¹ Jones' first assignment was to the Van Wert Circuit which consisted of five churches. Jones held revivals, visited, and was responsible for many conversions.¹²² Jones served for five years as each church grew numerically and financially.

Jones' second assignment was the Desoto Circuit. He labored for a year and then was called to the Newbenne Circuit. It was during this time that Jones began to receive

¹¹⁷Ibid.

¹¹⁸Taylor, 518.

¹¹⁹L. Jones, 58.

¹²⁰George R. Stuart, "Sam P. Jones, The Preacher," Methodist Review 69 (1920): 433.

¹²¹Holcomb, 52.

¹²²Bartlett, 43.

invitations to conduct revivals outside of his own circuit. Jones' final responsibility of this nature was the Monticello Circuit. Jones spent a total of eight years in circuit riding, preached an estimated eight thousand sermons, and witnessed over five thousand conversions.¹²³

In 1880 Jones accepted a position as a fund raiser for the Methodist Orphan Home in Decatur, Georgia. He was given permission to preach anywhere in the United States in order to help retire the Orphanage's debt. He conducted revivals across the country. In 1884 he conducted his first large-scale meeting in Memphis, Tennessee which was sponsored by thirteen churches of five different denominations. The meeting resulted in four hundred conversions, and one hundred were added to the various churches.¹²⁴ As a result of the success of the revival, Jones received invitations to other major cities.

His most important revival occurred in 1885 in Nashville, Tennessee. He held services in a five-thousand seat tent. The tent could not hold the crowds which gathered four times daily to hear him preach. Thousands were converted as over ten thousand additions to churches were made within a one hundred mile radius of Nashville.¹²⁵ He considered this the greatest revival that he ever had. Holcomb comments that the

¹²³L. Jones, 83.

¹²⁴McLoughlin, Modern Revivalism, 286.

¹²⁵L. Jones, 133.

Nashville revival "will go down in history as one of the most marvelous works of grace of any age."¹²⁶ From Jones' new prominence, he conducted revivals across the country for the next twenty years with great success. Jones notes that he preached in twenty different states with significant revivals in Brooklyn, St. Louis, Cincinnati, Chicago, Baltimore, Washington, D.C., Indianapolis, Waco, Mobile, Nashville, Knoxville, and in many other cities.¹²⁷

Jones sought the support of the evangelical ministers before he would agree to hold a crusade. He preferred to hold his meetings outside of the church, opting for tents, skating rinks, public auditoriums, and armories.¹²⁸ Following Nashville in 1885, he hired E. O. Excell as his soloist.¹²⁹ He led choirs of up to four hundred during the crusades.¹³⁰ Excell published hymnbooks which were used for their city-wide revivals.¹³¹

Jones also maintained a close connection between conversion and moral issues. He preached against dancing, card-playing, gambling, circuses, swearing, theater-going,

¹²⁶Holcomb, 63.

¹²⁷Sam Jones, Sam Jones' Own Book (Cincinnati: Cranston & Stowe, 1886), 47.

¹²⁸McLoughlin, Modern Revivalism, 301.

¹²⁹Taylor, 518.

¹³⁰Ibid.

¹³¹Ibid.

billiards, baseball, society balls, novel reading, low-cut dresses, social climbing, and most of all, alcohol.¹³²

Jones' primary purpose was to "draw the line on the various moral issues of the day and then to demand that all who claimed to be Christians take a stand and get on the right side of the warfare."¹³³

He actively targeted the active church member who did not live the Christian life during the week.¹³⁴ His hard-hitting attacks often irritated local churchmen.¹³⁵ In St. Louis, they complained that they had brought Jones in to reach the lost. He replied, "Never mind, I will get to the sinners. I never scald hogs until the water is hot."¹³⁶

He used a crudeness in his speech which appealed to the common people. He attacked corruption inside and outside the church, such that his "fiery denunciations and colorful descriptions make even Billy Sunday look pale in comparison."¹³⁷ Jones described the purpose of his ministry

as a preacher, to make sin hideous and righteousness attractive, and I have but shown sin up in all its deformity, that I might better show righteousness up in all its

¹³²McLoughlin, Modern Revivalism, 289.

¹³³Ibid.

¹³⁴Fant and Pinson, 325.

¹³⁵Ibid.

¹³⁶Sam Jones, Great Pulpit Masters, vol. 4 (New York: Fleming H. Revell Co., 1950), 8.

¹³⁷Fant and Pinson, 327.

beauty, and drive men from the former and attract them unto the heights and beauties of the latter.¹³⁸

He often cautioned his audience, "If any thinks he can't stand the truth rubbed in a little thicker and faster than he ever had it before, he'd better get out of here."¹³⁹ He was hardest on those who consumed alcoholic beverages and seldom ever preached without "pungent thrusts at the liquor traffic."¹⁴⁰ He was unquestionably committed to moral reform. Holcomb comments that "Moody specialized on regeneration, while Jones added reformation to regeneration."¹⁴¹ This theme is evidenced in the sermons of Jones.

The ministry of Jones has been overshadowed in history due to the significant attention given to Moody at this time. But, the impact of Jones is one of the greatest in history. He averaged nearly two thousand conversions per crusade.¹⁴² He preached to over twenty-five million people, recording over five hundred thousand professions of faith.¹⁴³ Jones utilized the anxious seat, inquiry room, and promoted immediate commitment by giving the right hand as an external form of

¹³⁸Sam Jones, Sam Jones' Own Book, 53.

¹³⁹McLoughlin, Modern Revivalism, 288.

¹⁴⁰L. Jones, 302.

¹⁴¹Holcomb, 144.

¹⁴²Taylor, 520.

¹⁴³Ibid.

public confession.¹⁴⁴ Only Moody could claim more converts, but he did not have the social impact of Jones.¹⁴⁵ Bartlett concludes that Jones "won more souls (Moody excepted), closed down more saloons, stomped on more toes, and ruled more editors, socialites, politicians, and educators than any man to that point in American history."¹⁴⁶

Music Evangelists

The roots of music evangelists of the nineteenth century were firmly planted in the soil of Charles Wesley. Wesley wrote over 6,500 hymns which dealt with the Christian experience. The Wesleys conceived of singing as something that "binds folks together in a congregation, provides an atmosphere which both prepares for and reinforces a message."¹⁴⁷ The hymns of Charles must certainly be considered the progenitors of the modern gospel song.¹⁴⁸

Thomas Hastings

Thomas Hastings (1784-1872) began serving with Charles Finney in 1832 as his musical assistant as he led the congregational singing and directed the choirs. His pioneer

¹⁴⁴Stuart, 436.

¹⁴⁵Bartlett, 44.

¹⁴⁶Ibid., 42.

¹⁴⁷Charles Wesley Flint, Charles Wesley and His Colleagues (Washington, D.C.: Public Affairs Press, 1957), 191.

¹⁴⁸Donald P. Hustad, "Music and the Church's Outreach," Review and Expositor 69 (Spring 1972): 177.

labors began a precedent for future singers as musical evangelists.¹⁴⁹

Ira Sankey

Ira Sankey (1840-1908) joined D. L. Moody in 1870 in the ministry of evangelism and was associated with Moody for nearly thirty years.¹⁵⁰ Sankey accompanied Moody to England in 1873. Billboards read, "D. L. Moody of Chicago will preach the gospel, and Ira D. Sankey of Chicago will sing the gospel."¹⁵¹ The phrase "sing the gospel" originated from this advertisement.¹⁵²

Sankey was regarded as an equal to Moody and referred to as an evangelist.¹⁵³ He led the congregational singing and choirs but was an exceptional soloist. He introduced every solo with a brief talk concerning the origin and message of the song and would then join the congregation in praying that the song might bring salvation to the lost.¹⁵⁴ It was

¹⁴⁹McLoughlin, Modern Revivalism, 99.

¹⁵⁰Ira Sankey, My Life and the Story of the Gospel Hymns (New York: Harper & Bros., 1907), 19.

¹⁵¹Ibid., 46.

¹⁵²Ibid.

¹⁵³McLoughlin, Modern Revivalism, 234.

¹⁵⁴Robert Murrell Stevenson, Patterns of Protestant Church Music (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1953), 156.

not uncommon for a revival convert to share how he was converted as a result of hearing Sankey sing a certain hymn.¹⁵⁵

At the end of each service, Sankey led the congregation in singing invitation hymns which were designed to persuade the hearer to leave the seat and head for the inquiry room. Sankey's trademark invitation song was "The Ninety and Nine," which was the favorite of Moody and many others.¹⁵⁶

Sankey's ministry marks the beginning of an era in which the revival singer would be a distinctive part of mass evangelism in America.¹⁵⁷ Sankey's impact elevated gospel music to a major form of evangelism. George Stebbins comments of Sankey's impact:

It is quite beyond question that he brought the service of song in evangelistic movements to the front in so striking a manner, demonstrating its importance as an aid in enforcing the claims of the gospel upon the world, that to him belongs the honor of securing for its rightful place as a divinely appointed agency in proclaiming the Gospel of the Son of God, and establishing the custom of evangelists going about two by two, preacher and singer, preaching the word in sermon and song.¹⁵⁸

Sankey composed more than eighty hymns, and his song book Sacred Songs and Solos had a distribution of over fifty

¹⁵⁵E. J. Goodspeed, A Full History of the Wonderful Career of Moody and Sankey, in Great Britain and America (St. John, NB: W. E. Erskine & Co., 1876), 54-55.

¹⁵⁶See Charles Ludwig, Sankey Still Sings (Andersin, IN: Warner Press, 1947), 12-14.

¹⁵⁷Hustad, 181.

¹⁵⁸George C. Stebbins, Reminiscences and Gospel Hymn Stories (New York: George H. Doran, 1924), 207.

million copies.¹⁵⁹ Sankey's hymnbook royalties totaled well over one million dollars.¹⁶⁰ Sankey is largely responsible for developing the section of popular hymnody which became known as the gospel hymn or gospel song.¹⁶¹

E. O. Excell

In the tradition of Hastings and Sankey, E. O. Excell (1851-1921) joined Sam Jones as a permanent part of his evangelistic team.¹⁶² Excell led the congregational singing, directed large choirs, and enjoyed the privilege of a choir leader who assisted in the crusades.¹⁶³

Criticisms

The designation of "evangelist" for itinerant ministers in the nineteenth century did not come about without opposition. Just as itinerant ministries were opposed in the First Great Awakening, the evangelist encountered many challenges in the nineteenth century.

¹⁵⁹Sankey, 69.

¹⁶⁰Bernard DeRemer, "When Sankey Sang," Christianity Today, 8 October 1965, 13.

¹⁶¹For a discussion of the gospel song, see Harry Eskew and Hugh T. McElrath, Sing with Understanding: An Introduction to Christian Hymnology (Nashville: Broadman Press, 1980); Erik Routley, The Music of Christian Hymns (Chicago: GIA Publications, 1981); and Melvin Ross Wilhoit, "A Guide to the Principle Authors and Composers of Gospel Songs in the Nineteenth Century" (Ph.D. diss., Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, 1982).

¹⁶²Taylor, 519.

¹⁶³McLoughlin, Modern Revivalism, 303.

There were many who challenged the biblical basis of the evangelist, holding that the evangelist ceased during the apostolic age.¹⁶⁴ Critics challenged the biblical nature of the itinerant ministry.¹⁶⁵

Critics charged that evangelists were disruptive to the local church. Greenwald complained that

the modern so-called evangelists, have been on the whole, a curse rather than a blessing to the churches that have employed them . . . spiritual death has followed at their heels; in short wherever they have appeared, "they have unsettled everything and settled nothing."¹⁶⁶

Heman Humphrey complained of evangelists disrupting churches by going to places they were not invited.¹⁶⁷ William Mitchell wrote that it was the conviction of many in his day that "the labours of modern Evangelists are among the disturbing forces which threaten the ultimate prosperity of the churches."¹⁶⁸

Mitchell accused evangelists of a "bold and reckless strain of preaching" which resulted in "the urging of

¹⁶⁴Mitchell, 496.

¹⁶⁵For a nineteenth century defense of the itinerant system, see James Porter, The True Evangelist: Or an Itinerant Ministry, Particularly That of the Episcopal Church, Explained, Guarded, and Defended (Boston: Binney & Otheman, 1847).

¹⁶⁶E. Greenwald, "The Work of an Evangelist," The Evangelical Review 2 (July 1850): 85.

¹⁶⁷Humphrey, 265.

¹⁶⁸Mitchell, 496.

immediate choice."¹⁶⁹ Greenwald charged evangelists with corrupting "the church with false doctrine."¹⁷⁰ The evangelist's message was richly salvific and called listeners to reject or accept Christ at the end of each service. This type of evangelistic preaching met with strong opposition.

Summary

The itinerant of the eighteenth century found the title of evangelist to be most suitable within the parameters of the Second Great Awakening. Out of this revivalist milieu, Charles Finney emerged as the most significant itinerant evangelist. Finney was both praised and criticized for his innovative New Measures in the field of mass evangelism. Finney helped to popularize New Haven theology which espoused an Arminianized-Calvinism. The critics of Finney were neutralized by the numerical success of Finney. The new breed of evangelists now sought to pattern their ministry from the successful Finney.

Evangelists began to preach strong evangelistic messages followed by forceful invitations. These invitations, accompanied by persuasive invitation hymns, called for immediate decisions from the auditors.

Finney was succeeded by the popular Moody and Jones. The former majored on the love of God and made use of personal

¹⁶⁹Ibid., 502.

¹⁷⁰Greenwald, 85.

workers in the inquiry room. Moody forever wed the office of evangelist with the importance of personal evangelism.

Moody's soul-winning legacy continues to the present, such that it would be inconceivable to think of a major evangelist who is not a major proponent of personal evangelism. In Moody, the evangelist is found to be forever one of Christianity's major supporters of intentional, one-to-one evangelism.

Jones' legacy lies in his contribution as a moral reformer. He preached against social ills, immorality, and various vices he perceived to be plaguing the church. His confrontational approach was adopted by many evangelists of the succeeding generation. A reflection of Jones is seen in the ministry of Billy Sunday, whose sayings and crusade against alcohol resemble the ministry of Jones.

The ministries of Finney, Moody, and Jones greatly influenced the succeeding evangelists of the twentieth century. Their contributions in theology, music, invitations, personal evangelism, moral reform, scriptural authority, and evangelistic preaching were crystallized in the ministries of the vocational evangelists of the twentieth century.

Twentieth Century

Popularization

Preaching Evangelists

Rueben Archer Torrey

R. A. Torrey (1856-1928) and his music assistant Charles Alexander were welcomed as "Moody's and Sankey's

successors."¹⁷¹ Torrey was educated at Yale where he was converted in 1874. He also graduated from Leipzig and Erlangen.

In 1889 Torrey was called to be the superintendent of the Moody Bible Institute of Chicago. He was closely associated with the ministry of Moody and carried out Moody's final campaign to a successful close. Following Moody's death in December 1899, he began to consider the ministry of an evangelist. Torrey believed he was the divinely appointed successor to Moody. He prayed that God would send him around the world with the message of salvation.¹⁷²

His opportunity came in the form of an invitation to Australia.¹⁷³ In preparation for his ministry as an evangelist, he selected Charles Alexander as his music leader. In their six-month tour of Australia, over twenty thousand people were converted to Christ.¹⁷⁴ As news of the success of the revival spread, invitations came from around the world to hold similar crusades.¹⁷⁵ Torrey and Alexander went to England after spending six weeks in India. They labored in Britain

¹⁷¹McLoughlin, Modern Revivalism, 369.

¹⁷²R. A. Torrey, The Power of Prayer and the Prayer of Power (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1955), 94.

¹⁷³Basil Miller, Ten Famous Evangelists (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1949), 85.

¹⁷⁴McLoughlin, Modern Revivalism, 367.

¹⁷⁵George Davis, Torrey and Alexander: The Story of a World Wide Revival (New York: Fleming H. Revell, 1905), 88.

for four years, claiming over one hundred thousand converts.¹⁷⁶ They returned to the United States to hold denominational-wide crusades and were welcomed as the successors of Moody and Sankey.¹⁷⁷

Torrey's message centered around the inerrancy of the Bible and the necessity of personal conversion. He believed that the question of inerrancy constituted "the most important question in religious thought."¹⁷⁸ Torrey became the great champion of orthodoxy and edited the twelve volume The Fundamentals which promoted the fundamentalist cause.¹⁷⁹ Torrey made frequent attacks on the liberal trends of modern theology such that:

Those who were confused by the abstruseness of the new theology's doctrine of "immanence" and who distrusted the radicalism of the social gospel were thrilled and reassured when a "learned" and "educated" man like the distinguished-looking Dr. Torrey denounced the Darwinians, the liberals, and the higher critics.¹⁸⁰

Torrey adapted the slogans "Get Right with God" and "Pray Through" in much of his work. The former was used in almost every piece of literature and on millions of small white cards bearing the slogan in small white letters to be distributed during the campaigns.

¹⁷⁶McLoughlin, Modern Revivalism, 367.

¹⁷⁷Ibid., 369.

¹⁷⁸R. A. Torrey, Soul Winning Sermons (Westwood, NJ: Fleming H. Revell Co., 1951), 28.

¹⁷⁹Muncy, 148.

¹⁸⁰McLoughlin, Modern Revivalism, 373.

Torrey's meetings also included numerous prayer meetings. He was convinced that every true revival from Pentecost until the present had its earthly origin in the realm of prayer.¹⁸¹ He made certain that great movements of prayer preceded his arrival. An average of three hundred thousand around the world joined in prayer to pray for the work of Torrey.¹⁸²

Torrey made distinctive contributions in the area of personal work. Former president of Moody Bible Institute, James M. Gray, commented that Torrey was

a personal soul winner, and to him, almost more than D. L. Moody, does the Institute still owe its reputation for turning out men and women stimulated and equipped to deal face to face and heart to heart with human souls about salvation. Mr. Moody furnished enthusiasm for that work, but Dr. Torrey taught us how to do it.¹⁸³

He published How to Bring Men to Christ to give instructions in personal work. Like Moody, Torrey championed the Christian soul winner as the highest ideal.

Torrey's critics were primarily those who challenged his views on redemption. He often included question and answer sessions in his crusades in order to refute heresy. He

¹⁸¹R. A. Torrey, ed., How to Promote and Conduct a Successful Revival (New York: Fleming H. Revell Co., 1901), 19.

¹⁸²Harold Arthur Fisher, Reviving Revivals: 32 Inspiring Revivals and a Promise for Today! (Sheboygan, WI: Gospel Print Shop, 1943), 116.

¹⁸³Quoted in an introduction by William Culbertson in R. A. Torrey, R. A. Torrey (Westwood, NJ: Fleming H. Revell Co., 1950; reprint, Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1972), 9 (page reference is to reprint edition).

was particularly skilled in challenging atheism and was successful in refuting prominent Universalists and Unitarians.¹⁸⁴

Torrey later served as Dean of the Bible Institute of Los Angeles (BIOLA). He spent the last years of his life in evangelistic meetings and managed to write forty-five books during his life. The legacy of Torrey is summed up in his being one of the founders of contemporary fundamentalism and as a world-wide evangelist.

J. Wilbur Chapman

D. L. Moody referred to Wilbur Chapman (1859-1918) as the greatest evangelist in the country.¹⁸⁵ Chapman had attended Oberlin and was saturated with the teachings of Finney and also had personal contact with D. L. Moody who led Chapman to the full assurance of his salvation.¹⁸⁶ Moody advised the young Chapman how to have revival in his pastorate. Chapman experienced immediate success by implementing gospel songs and using inquiry meetings.¹⁸⁷

¹⁸⁴See Robert Harkness, Reuben Archer Torrey: The Man, His Message (Chicago: The Bible Institute Colportage Asc., 1929), 37-9.

¹⁸⁵McLoughlin, Modern Revivalism, 377.

¹⁸⁶Wilbur Chapman, Revivals and Missions (New York: Lentihon & Co., 1900), 40. Chapman referred to Finney as the "Prince of Modern Revivalists."

¹⁸⁷Ford C. Ottman, J. Wilbur Chapman: A Biography (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, Page & Co., 1920), 84.

Chapman's success in pastoral evangelism soon brought appeals for him to devote his efforts to full-time evangelism.¹⁸⁸ In 1908 Charles Alexander terminated work with Torrey and agreed to work for Chapman.¹⁸⁹ This combination soon overshadowed Torrey's ministry as Chapman and Alexander became the "leaders of the profession and held the limelight until William A. Sunday took it from them."¹⁹⁰

The year 1904 also marked Chapman's innovative use of simultaneous campaigns which came to be known as the Chapman-Alexander Simultaneous Mission.¹⁹¹ Chapman took seventeen evangelists to Pittsburgh and divided the city into nine districts in which smaller meetings were held the week before the start of the mass meeting. The effectiveness was seen in the results as seven thousand professed conversion.¹⁹² Chapman began to use the method in other major cities. The Boston campaign of 1909 is perhaps the most outstanding of Chapman's simultaneous campaigns.¹⁹³

¹⁸⁸Muncy, 147.

¹⁸⁹See McLoughlin, Modern Revivalism, 371-77. McLoughlin contends that much of Torrey's success was dependent upon Alexander.

¹⁹⁰Ibid., 377.

¹⁹¹Frank Beardsley, A History of American Revivals (New York: American Tract Society, 1904), 321.

¹⁹²See George Wheaton Taft, "The Pittsburgh Revival, 1904," The Watchman 31 (March 1904): 14.

¹⁹³Bernard DeRemer, "J. Wilbur Chapman: Evangelist to the World," Fundamentalist Journal 7 (January 1988): 48.

Twenty-seven districts with twenty-seven evangelists and a thousand personal workers were organized in an area thirty miles in diameter.¹⁹⁴ One hundred sixty-six churches combined to help coordinate the well-organized campaign. Committees covering finance, visitation, music, ushering, publicity, devotions, and prayer ensured maximum effectiveness. Revival swept the city as Chapman preached five times a day.

The press spread the news of the Boston revival around the world. Chapman and Alexander felt the time was right to launch a world-wide campaign. They first traveled to Australia where they enjoyed great success. Crusades were held world-wide in England, Scotland, Ireland, Japan, China, Korea, Ceylon, Hawaii, Manila, Wales, New Zealand, and Tasmania.¹⁹⁵

Chapman conducted crusades in over fifty cities and became the master of the city-wide simultaneous crusade.¹⁹⁶ This technique represented a fundamental shift in revivalism methodology.¹⁹⁷ Chapman's system was praised because it was

¹⁹⁴Ottman, 127. For a complete description, see Arcturus Z. Conrad, Boston's Awakening: A Complete Account of the Great Boston Revival (Boston: King's Business Publishing Co., 1909).

¹⁹⁵Scharpff, 181.

¹⁹⁶J. Edwin Orr, The Light of the Nations: Evangelical Renewal and Advance in the Nineteenth Century (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1965), 327.

¹⁹⁷McLoughlin, Modern Revivalism, 379.

planned and operated on business principles.¹⁹⁸ The campaign slogan adapted for many campaigns was "The King's Business" which appeared on all the publicity materials.¹⁹⁹

The hallmark of all Chapman's crusades was thorough preparation. The Boston campaign was described as "the biggest and 'thoroughest' revival job ever taken."²⁰⁰ Chapman believed the amount of revival blessing was based upon the thoroughness of the preparation.²⁰¹ Chapman wrote:

More meetings have been unfruitful because of poor preparation than any other reason. Many an evangelist has been censured for failure when the responsibility should rather have been placed at the door of those who were leaders of the local churches.²⁰²

Chapman was also innovative in using specialists to evangelize. Chapman thought that the principle of specialization was a major key to urban revivalism.²⁰³ Just as the business sector developed the use of specialists in increasing efficiency, Chapman felt this approach could be adapted in mass evangelism. Chapman utilized various individuals he felt would appeal to specific groups. His specialists included

¹⁹⁸Ibid.

¹⁹⁹Ibid.

²⁰⁰Grover C. Loud, Evangelized America (New York: Dial Press, 1928), 270.

²⁰¹Chapman, Present-Day Evangelism, 207.

²⁰²Ibid.

²⁰³Dale E. Sodem, "Anatomy of a Presbyterian Urban Revival: J. Wilbur Chapman in the Pacific Northwest," American Presbyterians: Journal of Presbyterian History 1 (Summer 1986): 51.

social activists, athletes, representatives of the various denominations, children's specialists, and reformed alcoholics and gamblers.²⁰⁴

Chapman made effective use of the press. Daily newspapers gave extensive coverage to his campaigns which fueled his reputation and helped increase his effectiveness in his highly visible work.

Chapman was a spiritual man who possessed "Moody's genial spirit."²⁰⁵ Like Torrey, he was committed to the integrity and authority of the Bible such that he challenged a person's ability as a soul winner if they had doubts about the Bible.²⁰⁶ Chapman's dignity, education, powerful preaching, and tact set him apart from many of his contemporaries. A Boston minister, A. Z. Conrad, describes the evangelist:

The Rev. Dr. J. Wilbur Chapman is endowed with rare personal qualities. His appearance is impressive. His facial expression striking and telling. His manner is courteous, dignified, and commanding. He is sympathetic, and his vibrant sympathies touch the hearts of his hearers. His voice is musical, appealing, persuasive, enjoyable. He shows marvelous tact in dealing with individuals and an almost phenomenal power of adaptation. Simplicity, directness, earnestness, assurance, and fervency characterize all Doctor Chapman's utterances. His preaching is thoroughly constructive. It is commanding, powerful. He wastes no time in attacking "isms", but graphically portrays sin and its consequences, and with passionate devotion to divine ideals reveals the glory of the life in Christ. He holds his audiences spell-bound. He is always interesting. You never have a moment of anxiety for fear he may say something for which you would

²⁰⁴Ibid.

²⁰⁵Scharpff, 180.

²⁰⁶Ottman, 203-4.

wish to apologize. There is such a wholesomeness about the man and his message that people are irresistibly bound to both. No evangelist ever so fully won the cultivated classes. He is one of God's noblemen. To know him is to trust and love him.²⁰⁷

Chapman and Alexander would dominate the international scene of evangelism until the rise of Billy Sunday.

Rodney (Gipsy) Smith

A native of England, Gipsy Smith (1860-1947) conducted crusades throughout the world as an evangelist. Smith preached during the ministries of the widely known Moody, Chapman, Torrey, and Sunday.²⁰⁸ As a boy, Smith had attended the meetings of Moody and Sankey in Epping Forest. Sankey once put his hand on Smith's head and said, "The Lord make you a preacher, my boy."²⁰⁹

Smith later surrendered to the ministry and impressed William Booth enough to ask him to be an evangelist in the Salvation Army.²¹⁰ Smith preached successful meetings from 1883 to 1889 which marks his first trip to the United States. A cotton manufacturer, B. F. Byrom, sponsored the trip to America in which Smith recorded over four hundred conversions

²⁰⁷Scharpff, 182.

²⁰⁸Ibid.

²⁰⁹Muncy, 149-50.

²¹⁰Frank Beardsley, Heralds of Salvation: Biographical Sketches of Outstanding Soul Winners (New York: American Tract Society, 1939), 209-10.

in his first campaign.²¹¹ Smith's fame spread as did his speaking engagements as he crossed the Atlantic close to seventy times.²¹²

Smith attempted innovations in the invitation, seeking to simplify methods of making a decision for Christ. Smith, instead of asking people to go to the inquiry room, asked them to stand.²¹³ He later used the technique of hand raising to indicate decisions for Christ.²¹⁴ Smith's invitation methods brought much criticism particularly his business-like approach to religion.²¹⁵

Smith was committed to the authority of the Bible and the fundamentals of the faith. Smith was reminiscent of Sam Jones in that he openly attacked the liquor traffic and lacked

²¹¹Muncy, 150.

²¹²Harold Murray, Sixty Years an Evangelist: An Intimate Study of Gipsy Smith (London: Marshall, Morgan & Scott, 1936), 85. J. Edwin Orr, The Flaming Tongue: The Impact of Twentieth Century Revivals (Chicago: Moody Press, 1973), 27, notes that Smith ministered as a well known evangelist during the Welsh Revival with Evan Roberts. Orr contends that English churches prospered in the world-wide awakening of 1904-1908 largely as a result of the efforts of Smith.

²¹³David Lazell, From the Forest I Came (London: Concordia Press, 1970), 134. In one meeting, Smith remarked to another minister on the platform, "You see that? Just think of all the converts we know nothing about!"

²¹⁴Murray, 83. Smith would ask audiences to bow their heads and close their eyes. He gave careful instructions that no one was to be looking around. He then pled for sinners to decide for Christ by raising their hand, exhorting them that Christ had put up two hands for them.

²¹⁵Sydney E. Ahlstrom, A Religious History of the American People (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1972), 747.

the polish and education of Torrey and Chapman. However, the closest incarnation of the spirit of Jones was undoubtedly to be found in Billy Sunday.

William Ashley Sunday

Billy Sunday (1862-1935) was converted at the Pacific Garden Mission in Chicago while a professional baseball player for the Chicago White Stockings.²¹⁶ He immediately gave up drinking, betting, the theater, and playing baseball on Sunday.²¹⁷ Sunday began to give talks at local YMCAs on "Earnestness in the Christian Life" and accepted an offer from the Chicago YMCA to become assistant secretary.²¹⁸

In 1894 Sunday accepted an offer to become an advance man for evangelist Wilbur Chapman. Sunday became acquainted with all the details of mass evangelistic campaigns.²¹⁹ Between Chapman crusades, Sunday also served as advance man for Milan B. Williams. Unlike Chapman, Williams used

²¹⁶Bruce D. Lockerbie, Billy Sunday (Waco: Word Books, 1965), 3. See Billy Sunday, Burning Truths from Billy's Bat (Philadelphia: Diamond Publishing Co., 1914), 9-10. Sunday was the first man to round the bases from a standing start in fourteen seconds and he established a major league record for eighty-four stolen bases that was broken by Ty Cobb in 1915.

²¹⁷McLoughlin, Modern Revivalism, 404.

²¹⁸Lockerbie, 7.

²¹⁹Glyn W. Evans, Profiles of Religious Leaders (Nashville: Broadman Press, 1976), 80.

denunciation, slang, humor, acrobatics, and theatrics in his sermon delivery.²²⁰

In December 1895 Chapman accepted the pastorate of Bethany Presbyterian Church in Philadelphia. On Chapman's recommendation, Sunday was contracted to hold a campaign in Garner, Iowa.²²¹ Two hundred and sixty-eight persons were converted in the eight-day crusade.²²² From this initial success, Sunday was able to generate other invitations in other small Midwestern towns known as the "Kerosene circuit." His itinerary seemed to follow the course of the railroad as he conducted sixty-six revivals between 1896 and 1907.²²³ Almost one-half of the campaigns were conducted in the state of Iowa and were in towns with populations of less than twenty-five hundred.²²⁴

At first, Sunday attempted to preach like Chapman and even borrowed his sermons. Sunday abandoned this style for the sensational style of Milan Williams.²²⁵ He became more denunciatory as he condemned the social ills of his day. He

²²⁰Roger A. Burns, Preacher: Billy Sunday and Big-Time American Evangelism (New York: W. W. Norton, 1992), 83.

²²¹Taylor, 529.

²²²Lockerbie, 5.

²²³William McLoughlin, Billy Sunday Was His Real Name (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1955), 16.

²²⁴Ibid.

²²⁵Betty Everett, Sawdust Trail Preacher: The Story of Billy Sunday (Fort Washington, PA: Christian Literature Crusade, 1987), 40.

changed his delivery to incorporate more slang and humor into his preaching.²²⁶ Sunday's flamboyant style included acrobatics and theatrics:

Some of the platform activities make spectators gasp. He races to and fro across the platform. Like a jack knife he fairly doubles up in emphasis. One hand smite the other. His foot stamps the floor as if to destroy it. Once I saw him bring his clinched fist down so hard on the seat of a chair that I feared the blood would flow and the bones would be broken. No posture is too extreme for this restless gymnast. Yet it all seems natural. Like his speech, it is an integral part of the man. Every muscle of his body preaches in accord with his voice.²²⁷

Sunday took every opportunity to declare the absolute authority of Scripture and fell within the theological ideology of fundamentalism. He concentrated on salvific messages and avoided deep, theological preaching.

Sunday became well known as a critic of the liquor industry and had a major influence in the prohibition amendment in 1919.²²⁸ He promoted patriotism and demonstrated loyalty to the national administration by encouraging the

²²⁶Milton Wright, Giant for God (Boyce, VA: Carr Publishing Co., 1951), 105.

²²⁷William T. Ellis, Billy Sunday (Philadelphia: John C. Winston Co., 1914), 138.

²²⁸See William D. Halsey and Bernard Johnson, eds., Colliers Encyclopedia (New York: MacMillan Educational Co., 1987), s.v. "Sunday, Billy (1862-1935)," by William Warren Sweet.

public to buy war bonds.²²⁹ He was allowed to visit President Wilson at the White House and preach to the Congress.²³⁰

Sunday began to lengthen his crusades from ten days to two to three weeks, then to one month by the turn of the century.²³¹ He began to use large circus tents as the crowds began to increase. After his tent was destroyed, Sunday began constructing wooden tabernacles to accommodate the crowds.²³² The giant wooden tabernacle became the trademark of the Sunday campaigns.²³³ Sunday could be heard by twenty-five thousand persons by the aid of a large sounding board which hung like "an inverted sugar scoop over the evangelist's platform."²³⁴

As Sunday's success increased, so did his staff. His staff increased from three in 1900 to twenty-three in 1918.²³⁵ His first full-time song leader was Fred Fisher who was replaced by Homer Rodeheaver in 1910. "Ma" Sunday served

²²⁹See David T. Morgan, "The Revivalist as Patriot: Billy Sunday and World War I," Journal of Presbyterian History 51 (Summer 1971): 205.

²³⁰Evans, 84.

²³¹Ibid., 81.

²³²Ibid.

²³³Theodore Thomas Frankenberg, Billy Sunday: His Tabernacles and Sawdust Trails (Columbus, OH: F. J. Heer, 1917), 79. Sunday adopted the tabernacle idea from his mentor Williams, who was the first evangelist to build wooden tabernacles for evangelistic campaigns.

²³⁴Taylor, 530.

²³⁵Homer Rodeheaver, Twenty Years with Billy Sunday (Nashville: Cokesbury Press, 1936), 119.

as the bookkeeper and advisor to Sunday. Together, they adopted a big-business approach to mass evangelism. Organization, cooperation, and efficiency became the primary characteristics of the crusades.²³⁶

Sunday usually preached a week before offering an invitation. Sunday's key phrase of appeal was "Hit the Sawdust Trail":

When Sunday used the phrase, he had in mind a procedure in which the convicted sinner walked down the aisle of the tabernacle to show publicly that he was making a move toward Christ. The spiritual move was climaxed when the seeker shook the hand of Sunday to demonstrate that he was also putting his hand in Christ's hand to be directed by him.²³⁷

Those who responded were called "trail-hitters."²³⁸ Sunday did away with the anxious seat and inquiry room. Follow-up was done by daily mailings of decision cards to pastors which indicated the church preference of the convert.²³⁹

Sunday's greatest years of ministry were from 1910 to 1920 as Sunday ministered in the largest cities in the United States.²⁴⁰ His greatest crusade was held in 1917 in

²³⁶Taylor, 531. For a detailed examination of Sunday's organizational structure, see Preston Lamont Nix, "A Critical Analysis of the Organizational Methodology in Selected Evangelistic Campaigns of William Ashley 'Billy' Sunday" (Ph.D. diss., Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, 1992).

²³⁷Taylor, 534.

²³⁸Ibid.

²³⁹Ibid.

²⁴⁰Rodeheaver, 141.

Philadelphia as over one hundred thousand "trail hitters" were registered. In all, Sunday preached to over one hundred million people and led over a million to faith in Christ.²⁴¹ The last years of Sunday were marked by the decline of revivals and crusades. His crusades were marked by smaller audiences. Sunday, who saw the trend of decline, predicted that some day the same kind of evangelism would reemerge in strength and popularity.²⁴² Sunday's prophesy would soon be fulfilled in evangelist Billy Graham via Mordecai Ham.

Mordecai Fowler Ham

Mordecai Ham (1877-1961) began his preaching ministry at the age of nine. His first revival resulted in great success and helped propel him toward full-time evangelism.²⁴³ Ham utilized many of Billy Sunday's methods in his evangelistic campaigns.²⁴⁴

Ham aroused opposition throughout his career from the liquor industry.²⁴⁵ On several occasions, Ham was threatened with bodily harm.²⁴⁶ Ham fiercely attacked complacent church

²⁴¹Ibid., 145-46.

²⁴²Scharpff, 182.

²⁴³Edward E. Ham, Fifty Years on the Battle Front with Christ (Nashville: Hermitage Press, 1950), 25.

²⁴⁴Taylor, 536.

²⁴⁵Ham, 165.

²⁴⁶Ibid., 160.

members believing carnal Christians impeded the salvation of the lost.²⁴⁷

Ham labored for fifty years in evangelism, thirty-three of which were spent with his music evangelist, W. J. Ramsay.²⁴⁸ Taylor notes that this evangelistic team bridges "the gap between Billy Sunday (who personifies team evangelism) and Billy Graham (who personifies the new dimension in crusading activities)."²⁴⁹ Perhaps Ham is best remembered for being the catalyst in the conversion of the sixteen-year-old Billy Graham in his Charlotte crusade.

William Franklin Graham

William Franklin Graham was born in a frame farmhouse on November 17, 1918.²⁵⁰ The Graham home was located near the outskirts of Charlotte, North Carolina. As a boy, Billy was described by his family as being rowdy and mischievous, but a kind and lovable boy.²⁵¹ Billy's boyhood dream was to play professional baseball.²⁵²

²⁴⁷Ibid., 87.

²⁴⁸Taylor, 535.

²⁴⁹Ibid.

²⁵⁰John Pollock, To All the Nations: The Billy Graham Story (San Francisco: Harper and Row, 1985), 11.

²⁵¹Marshall Frady, Billy Graham: A Parable of American Righteousness (Boston: Brown & Co., 1979), 30-31.

²⁵²Pollock, 4. At the age of ten, Billy's father secured for him a handshake with Babe Ruth.

The Grahams were nominally religious until a near fatal accident almost took Billy's life. The crisis produced a new religious fervor, but Billy believed "it was all hog-wash."²⁵³

The Grahams were faithful participants and supporters of revivals in their area. Often, the traveling evangelists stayed with the Grahams.²⁵⁴

In May 1934, Frank Graham joined several community leaders in an attempt to bring revival to Charlotte. Significantly, one of the prayers that day was that "out of Charlotte the Lord would raise up someone to preach the Gospel to the ends of the earth."²⁵⁵ Evangelist Mordecai Ham was invited to preach a meeting which would last eleven weeks. Ham preached from a tabernacle made of raw pine on a steel frame.²⁵⁶ He preached strongly against sin and charges of fornication against the youth of the local high school.²⁵⁷

²⁵³John Pollock, Billy Graham: The Authorized Biography (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1966), 4.

²⁵⁴Larry Joe Davis, "Interpretation of Scripture in the Evangelistic Preaching of William Franklin Graham" (Ph.D. dissertation, Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, 1955), 21. Davis notes that, "Young Billy's relationship with these preachers was on a first name basis, and his mother often used these relationships to influence deliberately her son toward the ministry."

²⁵⁵Pollock, To All the Nations, 14.

²⁵⁶Ibid.

²⁵⁷Pollock, Billy Graham, 21.

Out of curiosity Billy decided to attend. Billy was amazed to see a great choir and over a thousand in attendance. Ham opened his message by saying, "There is a great sinner in this place tonight"--to which Billy thought, "Mother has been telling him about me."²⁵⁸ Billy felt as if the evangelist were speaking directly to him and felt the need to come forward at the altar call. Graham recalls:

Suddenly I could stand it no longer and simply went forward. Two or three hundred other persons were gathered at the pulpit, so I didn't feel conspicuous. I remember that I felt very little emotion. I had a deep sense of peace and joy, but I shed no tears and I was not at all certain what was happening.²⁵⁹

Billy's father came forward to hug him and praise God for his decision.²⁶⁰

As Presbyterians, Graham's parents had prayed that Billy would go into the ministry. They had hoped he could attend Wheaton but because of expenses, Bob Jones College in Cleveland, Tennessee, was chosen.²⁶¹ It was during this time Billy first suspected he was called to preach. Writing home, he said: "Mother, I think the Lord is calling me to the ministry, and if He does it will be to the field of evangelism."²⁶²

²⁵⁸Davis, 23.

²⁵⁹Ibid.

²⁶⁰Stanley High, Billy Graham: The Personal Story of the Man, His Message, and His Mission (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1956), 33-38.

²⁶¹Davis, 27.

²⁶²Davis, 28.

Graham next attended Florida Bible Institute which was not as strict as Bob Jones College. It was during these days that Graham became certain of his call. Graham recalls:

God was speaking to me, but as yet I had not made my decision to go into the ministry. That certain day Dean John R. Minder made a compelling appeal to us during chapel hour. He challenged us to go out and spread the Word of God, to give our lives to Christ. After that sermon I knew I had to make a decision. That night I took a walk to the Temple Golf Course and talked it out with God. . . . That personal battle went on for hours. Somewhere around midnight, it was decision time, I knelt alongside the 18th green, bowing my knees and my heart and said, "All right Lord, if you want me, you have got me."²⁶³

Days of spiritual ecstasy followed and Graham began to have visions of mighty crowds being present during his preaching. Graham said, "I think I saw myself as participating in some way in what Billy Sunday and D. L. Moody had witnessed--big stadiums, big meetings."²⁶⁴

Following his decision to go into the ministry, opportunities began to arise for Graham to preach. Graham received invitations to preach revivals at churches. Eighty-one persons were converted at one of those early meetings.²⁶⁵ From the inception Graham noticed God's anointing powerfully upon him during the invitations.

²⁶³Davis, 31.

²⁶⁴Ibid., 29-30.

²⁶⁵James E. Kilgore, Billy Graham the Preacher (New York: Exposition Press, 1968), 14. It was this meeting in Florida where Graham became a Southern Baptist. It was discovered that he had not been baptized. He was baptized with the new converts and received membership in a Southern Baptist church.

Others began to notice a certain magnetism about Graham. A fellow student recounted:

"He would walk into a crowd and within a few seconds it seemed that every eye would be upon him." Hollywood calls it "charm" and "box office appeal"; today's students call it "charisma"; still others call it "winsomeness" or "drive." However labeled, Billy has an enormous share of it. Dedicated to God's glory it has become a powerful weapon in God's kingdom.²⁶⁶

At Florida, Billy was influenced by men such as Homer Rodeheaver, William Evans, and Gipsy Smith who spoke at the school's Bible conferences.²⁶⁷ Billy listened to his class valedictorian, Vera Rescue, as she pleaded, "The time is ripe for another Luther, Wesley, Moody. There is room for another name on this list."²⁶⁸ Beneath Graham's picture in the school annual, he indicated his vocational aim--Evangelist.²⁶⁹

After graduation, Graham became pastor of First Baptist Church, Western Springs, Illinois. Graham accepted the pastorate and surprised Ruth by accepting the position without consulting her first. Under Graham's leadership the church grew quickly and subsequently the name was changed to The Village Church, hoping to reach people other than Baptists.²⁷⁰

²⁶⁶Evans, 104.

²⁶⁷Ibid., 103.

²⁶⁸Ibid., 104.

²⁶⁹Aubrey Leon Morris, "A Study of Psychological Factors in the Evangelistic Preaching of Billy Graham" (Ph.D. diss., Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, 1966), 79.

²⁷⁰Ibid., 38.

Billy was offered a Sunday evening radio program called "Songs in the Night." Torrey M. Johnson, a Chicago pastor, asked Graham to take over due to his increasing involvement with a newly formed national group called Youth for Christ.²⁷¹ Graham accepted and hired local radio announcer and singer, George Beverly Shea, to help him. The program combined relaxing gospel music with decision times led by Graham. Because the program was on a 50,000 watt station, much of the country could receive the broadcast.²⁷² The fame of Graham spread and requests for Graham to preach came in from across the nation.²⁷³

Torrey Johnson then offered Graham the opportunity to join him as an evangelist for Youth for Christ. Mass evangelistic rallies were held around the country. These well-publicized meetings, due to William Randolph Hurst, labeled the loud and fiery Graham as "God's Machine Gun."²⁷⁴ Graham traveled the country working with most of the key leaders in evangelical Christianity. Graham developed a team composed of Cliff Barrows, George Beverly Shea, Grady Wilson, and T. W. Wilson. Graham also started doing independent revivals not sponsored by Youth for Christ. The team appeared

²⁷¹Evans, 105.

²⁷²Davis, 39.

²⁷³Ibid.

²⁷⁴Nancy Gibbs and R. N. Ostling, "God's Billy Pulpit," Time Magazine, 20 October 1993, 75.

in cities such as Grand Rapids, Michigan; Charlotte, North Carolina; Augusta, Georgia, and many others.²⁷⁵

For a short time, Graham was president of Northwestern Bible Training Institute. He did not have much time to devote to the school as he continued to do his evangelistic work. He eventually left the position to fulfill his present calling as a national and eventually world-wide evangelist.

While Graham was already a major evangelist, the Los Angeles Crusade in 1949 would sky rocket Graham to a place few have ever been in revival history. In Los Angeles, 350,000 people heard him preach and over four thousand decisions were made.²⁷⁶ Many celebrities were saved. William Randolph Hurst sent word to his newspapers around the country to "puff Graham."²⁷⁷ Time magazine and other major publications began to give Graham vast publicity. Many trusted evangelical leaders offered support and testimonies on behalf of Graham. While Los Angeles was technically not the creatio ex nihilo of Graham, it nevertheless was the catalyst for a ministry which henceforth would be counted in the company of Charles G. Finney, George Whitfield, D. L. Moody, and Billy Sunday.²⁷⁸

²⁷⁵Davis, 42. At twenty-nine years of age Graham was the most well-known evangelist in America.

²⁷⁶Kilgore, 15.

²⁷⁷High, 148.

²⁷⁸Kilgore, 16.

The large expansion necessitated some sort of organization. Graham made revival history by abolishing love offerings and honorariums and put himself and his team on salaries.²⁷⁹ The Billy Graham Evangelistic Association was formed. The budget eventually climbed to well over fifty million dollars as the BGEA expanded. Graham wrote many books, began Decision Magazine, and helped start Christianity Today. Graham's ministry became worldwide and took him to England, Australia, China, Eastern Europe, and the Soviet Union.²⁸⁰

Graham purposefully did not limit his ministry to a single denomination. Graham sought to develop a broad theological base for his ministry in order to gain the cooperation of more denominations. Graham learned that he could not avoid controversy altogether, but attempted to refrain from unnecessary theological controversies:

Graham will not allow himself to be turned aside from his commission in order to side with faction. He is a Baptist, but not a bigoted denominationalist. He is immovable in regards to the essentials, but is charitable in matters of non-essentials, when it comes to cooperation.²⁸¹

Graham felt his primary calling was to be an evangelist. To become a promoter for a special interest would have detracted from his own particular calling to preach the gospel to all

²⁷⁹Davis, 50.

²⁸⁰Ibid.

²⁸¹David Lockard, The Unheard Billy Graham (Waco: Word Books, 1971), 32-33.

who would listen. Those who cooperated with Graham knew of his conservative theology but cooperated based upon trust that Graham's purpose was singularly to preach Jesus Christ.

Early in Graham's ministry, he struggled with the issue of the Bible's authority. He wrestled with this problem prior to the Los Angeles Crusade. Graham had been having serious doubts. Walking alone one night, Graham said, "I accept this Book by faith as the Word of God."²⁸²

Graham became known for his often repeated phrase, "The Bible says." In an average sermon Graham quoted fifteen to twenty biblical references.²⁸³ It was Graham's conviction that the Scripture has the power to compel decisions to its hearers.²⁸⁴ Graham held

that if evangelism is not based upon the Scriptures and does not speak with authority, it will have little relevance for the present situation. The Bible with its discerning, piercing message must become the basis of our preaching. I am not advocating bibliolatry. I am not suggesting that we should worship the Bible any more than a soldier worships his sword or a surgeon worships his scalpel. I am, however, fervently urging a movement toward a Bible-centered evangelism, toward a gospel presentation without apology and without ambiguity, toward a gospel presentation with finality and conclusiveness. Our generation has wearied of our theological floundering and uncertainty.²⁸⁵

²⁸²Evans, 106.

²⁸³Kilgore, 19.

²⁸⁴Ibid.

²⁸⁵Lockard, 36-37.

Graham stated, "I have never given an invitation in my whole life when no one came."²⁸⁶ Many who have been critical of Graham are nevertheless impressed by the tremendous results of Graham's preaching. W. E. Sangster writes, "In the wake of this 'poor' preaching, I have seen things which I doubt any man has seen since the day of Pentecost."²⁸⁷ Early critics proposed that the invitation hymn "Just As I Am" had a hypnotic effect and created the results. Graham dropped the hymn and the results continued. Then others theorized that it was his pleading and coaxing. Graham stopped talking, and people still came.²⁸⁸

Graham originally used a progressive invitation but discontinued the practice. He originally would ask people to raise their hands and then come forward. This practice was changed in 1957 to ask persons, while all heads were bowed, for those needing salvation to come quickly.²⁸⁹

No preacher has ever preached the gospel face-to-face to more people in the history of Christianity than Billy Graham. Nor has any other person been responsible for persons confessing Jesus Christ than Graham. His sermons are

²⁸⁶Martin, 583.

²⁸⁷Evans, 115.

²⁸⁸Ibid., 117. Evans comments: "Sober men are awed as they see fifty thousand people sit quietly and then break up like an anthill to come forward and make their decision for Christ."

²⁸⁹Streett, 115.

broadcast weekly and heard by over twenty-five million people. The popular impact of Billy Graham surpasses any other preacher in history.²⁹⁰ By seventy-five years of age, Graham had preached to over one hundred million people, registering nearly three million professions of faith.²⁹¹

Luis Palau

Luis Palau came to the United States in 1962 from Argentina. The Argentine-born evangelist has spoken to over ten million persons in sixty nations and another two hundred million through radio and television.²⁹² More than one-half million have made professions of faith under the ministry of Palau. Palau has been referred to as "the Billy Graham of Latin America."²⁹³ Prior to 1989, Palau concentrated his ministry to America, Europe, and Asia. Due to the decreased activity of Billy Graham, Palau has increased his crusade activities in the United States.

Music Evangelists

Charles Alexander

Charles Alexander (1867-1920), a graduate of Moody Bible Institute, made valuable contributions in the field of

²⁹⁰Fant and Pinson, vol. 12.

²⁹¹Gibbs and Ostling, 70-71.

²⁹²Luis Palau and Jerry B. Jenkins, Luis Palau: Calling the Nations to Christ (Chicago: Moody Press, 1980), 210.

²⁹³Ibid.

mass evangelism. Alexander served as music associate to Iowa evangelist Milan Williams. In 1902 Alexander began to work with evangelist R. A. Torrey. Alexander brought instant success to Torrey's ministry and was soon being praised as "the twentieth century Ira D. Sankey."²⁹⁴

Alexander avoided formalism and sought to be referred to as "Charlie." He told jokes and stories in attempts to remove formality from the spirit of the meetings.²⁹⁵ He substituted a piano or a horn accompaniment in place of the church organ and was the first to "combine the personality of a master of ceremonies with the vivaciousness of the leader of a community songfest."²⁹⁶ Alexander used the piano in the ragtime²⁹⁷ style of his day with a greater rhythmic drive for use in praise songs and choruses.²⁹⁸

Alexander specialized in leading mass choirs and congregations. His part of the service lasted about one-half hour as he challenged the congregation to see if they could sing louder than the choir. With the domination of a cheer-

²⁹⁴McLoughlin, Modern Revivalism, 367-72.

²⁹⁵Ibid., 375.

²⁹⁶Marvin McKissick, "The Function of Music in American Revivals Since 1875," The Hymn 9 (October 1958): 112.

²⁹⁷See James C. Downey, "Revivalism, the Gospel Song and Social Reform," Ethnomusicology 4 (May 1965): 120.

²⁹⁸James Sallee, A History of Evangelical Hymnody (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1978), 67.

leader, Alexander would put the men against the women or the people on the floor against those in the balcony.²⁹⁹

Alexander joined with Torrey in two world-wide evangelistic tours, but broke with Torrey in 1908 to work with Wilbur Chapman.³⁰⁰ The work of Chapman and Alexander soon overshadowed the ministry of Torrey.³⁰¹ As with Torrey, Alexander made two world-wide tours with Chapman.

Homer Rodeheaver

Homer Rodeheaver (1880-1955), called "Rody," began his evangelistic work in 1904. For five years Rodeheaver worked with well known evangelist W. E. Biederwolf. Rodeheaver was a gifted trombonist who had a talent for encouraging participation in the song service. He attracted the attention of Billy Sunday and joined his team in 1909.³⁰² Sunday was seeking a lift for his campaigns and found in Rodeheaver

a soothing baritone voice, an ingratiating personality, a vaguely handsome face, dark wavy hair, and the stage presence of a veteran trouper. He also had considerable skill as a trombonist, was able to give evangelistic talks, had a knowledge of magic which helped him conduct children's meetings, knew how to direct a large choir, and above all, had developed the smiling, affable sociability of the

²⁹⁹McLoughlin, Modern Revivalism, 375-76.

³⁰⁰Ibid., 377. Torrey was critical of Alexander's marketing of hymnbooks which were accompanied by charges of plagiarism. Some of the copyrights had never been purchased.

³⁰¹Ibid.

³⁰²Lyle W. Dorsett, Billy Sunday and the Redemption of Urban America (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1991), 101.

professional chorister as Charles Alexander had established the role.³⁰³

Rodeheaver designed his music services for unbelievers and the unchurched. He chose lively, upbeat music which would "challenge the attention of people on the outside who have not been interested in any form of church work or worship."³⁰⁴

The music would also serve to preach the gospel to those in need of salvation. Rodeheaver, who loved the classics, felt the popularity of the gospel songs were evidence of their value in affecting the lives of individuals.³⁰⁵

Cliff Barrows

Cliff Barrows met Billy Graham at a Youth for Christ rally in North Carolina in 1945. Barrows was invited to join the Graham team as choir leader, trombonist, and master of ceremonies.³⁰⁶ He conducted choirs in excess of five thousand voices.³⁰⁷ Barrows was noted for his ability to turn a sluggish song service into a joyful song fest. Barrows was

³⁰³McLoughlin, Billy Sunday, 82.

³⁰⁴John Tasker Howard, Our American Music: Three Hundred Years of It (New York: Thomas Y. Crowell, 1931), 366.

³⁰⁵Ibid.

³⁰⁶McLoughlin, Modern Revivalism, 487.

³⁰⁷See Melton Wright, "How Cliff Barrows Does It" Christian Herald (November 1955), 25-64.

assisted by George Beverly Shea who sang the message of Christ in song.³⁰⁸

Pentecostals

The majority of Pentecostal evangelists have centered their ministries around the doctrine of divine healing. Healing campaigns were popularized by Charles Cullis in the middle of the twentieth century.³⁰⁹ Cullis and others connected healing with the doctrine of sanctification.³¹⁰

Cullis was followed in the early part of the twentieth century by Alexander Dowie, Smith Wigglesworth, F. F. Bosworth, and Aimee Semple McPherson.³¹¹ During the second half of the twentieth century, a proliferation of Pentecostal evangelists appeared. The most significant of these were William Branham and Oral Roberts.

³⁰⁸See George Beverly Shea, Then Sings My Soul (Old Tappan, NJ: Fleming H. Revell Co., 1968). Shea became acquainted with Graham during his broadcasting days in Chicago as a soloist for "Songs in the Night." Shea was added to Graham's team in 1947 when Graham began holding city-wide evangelistic campaigns.

³⁰⁹See W. H. Daniels, ed., Dr. Cullis and His Works (New York: Garland Publishing, 1985).

³¹⁰Donald W. Dayton, Theological Roots of Pentecostalism (Metuchen, NJ: Scarecrow Press, 1987), 122-26.

³¹¹David Edwin Harrell, All Things Are Possible: The Healing and Charismatic Revivals in Modern America (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1975), 13-15.

Branham began his ministry in 1946 and by the end of that year claimed to have witnessed 36,000 people healed.³¹² Branham's ministry was promoted by Gordon Lindsay and the magazine "The Voice of Healing." Branham died in 1965 and was succeeded in popularity by Oral Roberts.

Following a personal experience of divine healing in a local tent revival, Oral Roberts launched his itinerant ministry based on divine healing. Roberts conducted large tent revivals and achieved success through tireless work and organization.³¹³ Roberts' financial base was enhanced by sophisticated methods of mass mailing to his following. Roberts skillfully moved his ministry within the realm of television as healing revivalism declined. Through his efforts in television, radio, and his own magazine, "Healing Waters," Roberts became one of the best known leaders of Pentecostalism in the twentieth century.

Southern Baptists

In the early twentieth century many denominations were appointing evangelists to conduct evangelistic campaigns.³¹⁴ Southern Baptists began to consider mobilizing denominational evangelists for the purpose of conducting revivals. In 1906

³¹²C. Douglas Weaver, The Healer-Prophet, William Marion Branham: A Study of the Prophetic in American Pentecostalism (Macon, GA: Mercer University Press, 1987), 47.

³¹³David Edwin Harrell, Oral Roberts: An American Life (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1985), 111.

³¹⁴Kelley, 12.

W. W. Hamilton became the first secretary of evangelism for Southern Baptists. Hamilton recruited a staff of preaching and music evangelists for what he called "denominational evangelism."

It is composed of white and Negro evangelists and singers, who are paid a regular salary, and who go to mission fields, to weak and strong churches in country town and city. They hold individual or group meetings, and as occasion offers the staff of workers is brought together for an associational or city or state campaign, conducting meetings as far as possible in every Baptist church at the same time, and having a great central service daily in which instruction in personal work is given and where special music, definite prayer, reports of meetings, and inspirational preaching are features.³¹⁵

A staff of fifty evangelists received salaries from the Home Mission Board, to which all the love offerings were given.³¹⁶

The department of evangelism was deleted from the Home Mission Board in the late twenties due to financial problems resulting from an internal embezzlement by Treasurer Clinton S. Carnes and an economic depression in the United States.³¹⁷ The department was resumed in 1937 under Roland Q. Leavell, but the staff of evangelists was discontinued due to lack of financial resources.³¹⁸ Leavell transformed the secretary role from an overseer of evangelists to a role of strategist

³¹⁵William Wistar Hamilton, Bible Evangelism (Atlanta: Home Mission Board, 1921), 37-38.

³¹⁶Kelley, 20.

³¹⁷J. B. Lawrence, History of the Home Mission Board (Nashville: Broadman Press, 1941), 110.

³¹⁸Kelley, 25.

and mobilizer for the denomination.³¹⁹ This role was solidified in the efforts of later Secretary, C. E. Matthews, who implemented a major program of evangelism among Southern Baptists.³²⁰

The Home Mission Board has continued to play a vital role in the advancement of the ministry of the vocational evangelist in producing materials and training in the area of crusade evangelism.³²¹ The Directory of Southern Baptist Vocational Evangelists includes the names of many exemplary Southern Baptist evangelists, such as Billy Graham, Freddie

³¹⁹Ibid., 26.

³²⁰Ibid., 32. Kelley, 35, notes that Matthews' program included "a department of evangelism in every state convention, the election of two officers for evangelism in every association, and the appointment of an evangelism church council in every church. A person or persons had the specific responsibility to plan and promote evangelistic events at every level of the SBC: national, state, regional, and local." See C. E. Matthews, Every Christian's Job (Nashville: Convention Press, 1951) and C. E. Matthews, The Southern Baptist Program of Evangelism, rev. ed. (Nashville: Convention Press, 1956).

³²¹The Home Mission Board promotes the use of evangelists through the publication of a national directory. Tom McEachin, comp., Directory of Southern Baptist Vocational Evangelists (Atlanta: Home Mission Board, 1992), 1, defines a vocational evangelist as "one who has been called into evangelistic ministry as a profession. Vocational evangelists usually are not staff members of churches. They receive no guaranteed salary from churches. They are a faith ministry supported by love offerings. . . . Some of the varied ministries of vocational evangelists include: area-wide crusades, revival meetings, Bible conferences, music evangelism, and drama."

Gage,³²² Jay Strack, Bailey Smith, Kelly Green, and Jerry Johnston.

Conferences

The International Conference for Itinerant Evangelists was held July 12-21, 1983, in Amsterdam.³²³ Over four thousand evangelists from 133 countries gathered to learn from evangelist Billy Graham and other prominent evangelistic leaders. The event was sponsored by the Billy Graham Evangelistic Association. More than 70 percent of the participants came from third world countries.³²⁴ Applications were screened to ensure that only itinerant evangelists were allowed to participate.³²⁵ Major presentations were made by internationally famous people exhorting the evangelists in various aspects of their ministries.³²⁶ The speakers strongly emphasized the evangelist's relationship

³²²Over one million made professions of faith under the ministry of Freddie Gage. See "Freddie Gage: Still Going and Telling" Fundamentalist Journal 4 (February 1985): 53.

³²³Forrest Boyd, "Conference for Evangelists Brings 4,000 to Amsterdam," Fundamentalist Journal 9 (October 1983): 53.

³²⁴Tom Minnery, "How to Be an Evangelist: A New Generation Learns the Lessons of a Lifetime in Amsterdam," Christianity Today, 2 September 1983, 42.

³²⁵"A Worldwide Conference of Evangelists," Christianity Today, 17 June 1983, 47.

³²⁶Nine major areas were covered: (1) A Biblical Example in His Personal Life; (2) A Biblical Message; (3) A Biblical Ministry; (4) Testimonies; (5) Womens Meetings; (6) Crusades; (7) Special Interest Groups; (8) Personal Life; and (9) Media and Methods.

with the local church.³²⁷ The Second International Congress for Itinerant Evangelists was held in Amsterdam in 1986. This conference also sought to affirm the gift and office of the evangelist.³²⁸ In 1994 the North American Conference for Itinerant Evangelists was held and covered much of the content of the previous two conferences for evangelists.

Evolution

Methodological Shift

All mainline denominations except Baptists began to move away from revivalism and the use of evangelists during the first part of the twentieth century.³²⁹ Southern Baptists were the only denomination which used revivalism as a major methodology after 1944.³³⁰ However, in the seventies, Kenneth Chafin, evangelism director of the Home Mission Board, promoted personal evangelism as the major strategy of the

³²⁷The content of the conference is found in J. D. Douglas, ed., The Work of the Evangelist (Minneapolis: World Wide Publications, 1984).

³²⁸The content of the conference is found in J. D. Douglas, ed., The Calling of an Evangelist (Minneapolis: World Wide Publications, 1987).

³²⁹See Charles S. Kelley, Jr., "An Investigation of the Changing Role of the Revival Meeting in the Southern Baptist Program of Evangelism, 1947-1980," Th.D. diss., New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary, 1983, 1-2.

³³⁰*Ibid.*, 1.

department.³³¹ Chafin had little confidence in the ability of revival meetings to reach modern Americans.³³²

Kelley concludes that while the day of revivalism has not passed, there has been a permanent methodological change:

No other method of evangelism had greater popularity, and the majority of churches continue to hold at least one revival a year. Yet there are questions about the relevance and effectiveness of revivalism in a Baby Boomer world. . . . In terms of domination, the day of revivalism has passed. In an earlier day, revival meetings were more than a method of evangelism. They were THE method of reaching people for Christ. Southern Baptists rarely ignore any method of reaching lost people, but the revival meeting received almost exclusive attention in the heyday of the denomination's growth during the forties and fifties. It occupied center stage alone. That day is gone. It is difficult to imagine any one method of evangelism having that much dominance among the churches again.³³³

Though revivalism may never again enjoy the kind of dominance it once had, it still remains one of the greatest tools of harvest for any denomination. Recent studies have indicated that revival meetings continue to be effective and popular among Southern Baptist churches.³³⁴

Church Growth Movement

Following the shift in emphasis to personal evangelism, proponents in the church growth movement have emphasized the spiritual gift of the evangelist. The gift of the

³³¹Kelley, How Did They Do It? 45.

³³²Ibid.

³³³Ibid., 110.

³³⁴See Ronald Wayne Johnson, "An Evaluation of the Home Mission Board Programs of Evangelism in Local Churches." D.Min. diss., Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, 1988.

evangelist is also referred to as the gift of evangelism. This references not an itinerate preacher, but someone who is skilled in personal evangelism. Leading proponents of the church growth movement define the gift of the evangelist as

the special ability that God gives to certain members of the body of Christ to share the Gospel with unbelievers in such a way that men and women became Jesus' disciples and responsible members of the body of Christ.³³⁵

Hence, any layman with the gift of evangelism is an evangelist. While it is important to emphasize the importance of personal evangelism, the term evangelist is probably not the best term to describe those with an unusual ability in evangelism. The New Testament does not list evangelism as a gift but as a command. The danger of teaching that evangelism is a gift might lead some to conclude that evangelism is optional. This is not to say that there are not those existing in the church who are more effective than others in evangelism. Referring to these effective people as evangelists confuses them with vocational evangelists who function within the office of evangelist.

The church growth movement has given little attention to the viability of the vocational evangelist in terms of church growth. While not being openly hostile to vocational evangelists, this movement in essence ignored the itinerate evangelist.

³³⁵Charles Arn, Donald McGavran, and Win Arn, Growth: A New Vision for the Sunday School (Pasadena, CA: Church Growth Press, 1980), 129.

The Pastor-Evangelist

With a shift in emphasis to evangelist as a gift, emphasis has been given to the role of the pastor as evangelist. Many works have appeared which deal with this emphasis.³³⁶

This is a much needed emphasis in that the Scriptures delineate a special relationship between the pastor and the work of an evangelist. Paul instructed Timothy that this was an important part of his work as pastor. Pastors are called in 2 Tim. 4:5 to be evangelistic in their ministries. The evangelistic role of the pastor is highly determinative of the success that the pastor will achieve. This is no small part of the pastor's work but is to be a consuming passion. Churches will not function properly until they realize the importance of evangelism. George Peters describes the sad situations of many churches:

I've seen a thousand small, stagnant churches that aren't going anywhere. I told the mission executives they had better stop emphasizing church planting until they've learned to make churches grow. The pastors don't know how

³³⁶Roy Allan Anderson, The Shepherd-Evangelist (Washington, D.C.: Review & Herald Publishing Asc., 1950); Edgar Whitaker Work, Every Minister His Own Evangelist (New York: Fleming H. Revell, 1927); Richard Stoll Armstrong, The Pastor as Evangelist (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1984); Richard Stoll Armstrong, The Pastor-Evangelist in the Parish (Louisville, KY: John Knox Press, 1990); and Charles L. Goodell, The Pastor His Own Evangelist (Cleveland: F. M. Barton Co., 1910).

to evangelize and the churches just hang on with a handful of members.³³⁷

The Lord has called pastors to be evangelistic because he wants his people to be evangelistic. The pastor serves as motivator, equipper, and example for his people in evangelism. Thus, the exhortation of Paul to "do the work of an evangelist" is of utmost importance to the pastor.

Summary

In the twentieth century many evangelists emerged who patterned their ministries after D. L. Moody and Sam Jones. R. A. Torrey and Wilbur Chapman were molded in the image of Moody. Torrey and Chapman both had been influenced earlier in their Christian lives by Moody. Gipsy Smith, Billy Sunday, and Mordecai Ham found themselves best suited to the denunciatory style of Sam Jones. Billy Graham, though saved under the ministry of Ham and initially trained at the highly fundamentalist Bob Jones Bible College and Florida Bible Institute, patterned his ministry in the cooperative spirit of D. L. Moody. Moody and Graham represent the major evangelists of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries respectively.

During the twentieth century the decline of the use of the evangelist was experienced in several mainline denominations. The evangelist found Southern Baptists to be his

³³⁷Roger S. Greenway, "Pastor-Evangelists: Need of the Hour Everywhere," The Pastor Evangelist, ed. Roger S. Greenway (Phillipsburg, NJ: Presbyterian & Reformed Publishing Co., 1987), 183.

strongest ally. Certainly, the receptivity on the part of Southern Baptists and the widespread use of the evangelist in revival crusades within the local Baptist churches have made significant contributions to the growth of the Southern Baptist Convention, to the point that it is the largest Protestant denomination in America. Whereas, most of the other older Protestant conventions have declined in membership, the Southern Baptist Convention has maintained a steady growth, partly due to the work of the evangelist. The evangelist and revivalism was used as a major methodology among Southern Baptists until the seventies to win the lost to Christ. Southern Baptists have in recent years focused upon personal evangelism. Southern Baptists still maintain a healthy balance between personal evangelism and mass evangelism through the vocational evangelist.

CHAPTER FOUR
THE ETYMOLOGICAL AND BIBLICAL RELATIONSHIP
OF THE MINISTRY OF THE CONTEMPORARY
EVANGELIST TO THE MINISTRY OF THE
PRIMITIVE EVANGELIST: A SYNTHESIS

The thesis of this dissertation maintains that the contemporary evangelist is a valid expression of the primitive evangelist with modifications. The following points of comparison will demonstrate that the contemporary evangelist, though modified in methodology, is the most valid expression of the primitive evangelist in church history.

Comparison

Itineracy

The earliest evangelists were itinerates.¹ It is for this reason that the evangelists were closely associated with the apostles.² Had evangelists been localized during the second century, it is doubtful that their office would have declined.³

¹Morgan, 53.

²Plummer, s.v. "Evangelist."

³Ferguson, "The Ministry of the Word," 25.

Charges that the contemporary evangelist's practice of itineracy is unscriptural is unfounded. It has already been demonstrated that one of the primary characteristics of Philip's ministry was itineracy. This was also found to hold true in the ministries of the evangelists in the early church. Hence, the contemporary evangelist shares a well-established practice of ministering abroad outside of his own local church.

It is of no little curiosity how few evangelists existed in the New Testament and early church periods. It would seem that the number of called evangelists was quite small. With many churches and few gifted specialists in the harvest of souls, it seems quite natural that evangelists would travel abroad to share their gifts with other localities. In this way local churches could benefit from the skills of someone who possessed harvest skills without having such a person be a member of their own local church.

In comparison with pastors, teachers, and other local church servants, contemporary evangelists are relatively few. Thus, there is ample cause to merit itinerate ministries within the church. Such evangelists function both within local churches and in larger cooperative mass evangelistic efforts. In light of New Testament, historical, and functional evidence, the role of the contemporary evangelist is of necessity inclusive of an itinerate ministry.

Gospel Proclamation

The etymology of the New Testament term evangelist reveals that preaching the gospel is the primary activity of the evangelist.⁴ It is improper to attempt to separate an evangelist from evangelistic activity.⁵ Perennial evangelism was the thrust of Philip's itinerate ministry.⁶ Evangelization is also the primary activity of the early church evangelists.

The concept of the contemporary evangelist also entails the understanding that he is primarily a preacher of the gospel.⁷ A minister who does not have an evangelistic message is not an evangelist in the New Testament sense.

Out of the contemporary office of evangelist has arisen the office of revivalist. The revivalist views his purpose as renewing existing members of the local church. This renewal consists of a deeper spiritual life as well as a renewal to reach the lost for Christ. While revivalists often win many lost people to Christ, their primary purpose is seen in the equipping aspect of the office of the evangelist. Most revivalists minister under the title and authority of office

⁴Massie, s.v. "Evangelist."

⁵Patrick, s.v. "Evangelist."

⁶Barnes, 303.

⁷Billy Graham, "The Evangelist and a Torn World," in The Work of an Evangelist, ed. J. D. Douglas (Minneapolis: World Wide Publications, 1984), 4. Graham describes an evangelist as "a person with a special gift from the Holy Spirit to announce the good news of the gospel."

of evangelist in order to give identification and credibility to their itinerate ministries. The revivalist in many ways is an expression of the first-century traveling teachers. Such ministries are needed and are valuable in the contemporary culture.

Calling

The New Testament evangelist was an evangelist by calling.⁸ The evangelist proclaimed the gospel from authority derived from Christ. The call was a specialized call which did not apply to every member of the body of Christ.

There is ample evidence to support the thesis that God still calls evangelists today. Thousands of people have responded to this distinct calling in the present century. Some have contended that the evangelist ceased to exist along with apostles at the end of the apostolic age.⁹ This explanation is untenable in light of the fact that evangelists outlasted and replaced apostles.¹⁰ The fact that itineracy was halted for a time to protect the unity of the church does not mean that God discontinued the office of evangelist. There are no New Testament or early church records to indicate that evangelists ceased with the apostles. Hence, the call of

⁸Eph. 4:11-12.

⁹Mitchell, 496.

¹⁰Ferguson, Encyclopedia of Early Christianity, s.v. "Evangelist."

God remains as valid today as it did in the New Testament period.

Harvest

The New Testament describes Philip as a man with a singular objective of winning souls to Christ.¹¹ His focused interviews and exploits reveal a successful pattern in securing conversions. Philip was a specialist in reaping. The evangelist fulfills a reaping ministry that reaps where others have sowed.¹²

The evangelist is aided in the harvest by virtue of his itineracy. Jesus said that "a prophet is not without honor, save in his own country, and in his own house."¹³ Hence, a successful harvest ministry would necessarily be abroad. Ministers from distant places often bring a curiosity that helps attract larger congregations of people.

The mobility of contemporary society has helped to diversify once homogeneous population centers. This diversity has created the need for various types of ministries to reach different homogeneous people groups. The contemporary evangelist helps to meet the spiritual needs of the changing society by specializing in reaching such people for Christ. Contemporary evangelists such as Moody, Sunday, and Graham

¹¹Drummelow, 847.

¹²John 4:36-38.

¹³Matt. 13:57.

were highly effective in the evangelization of diverse urban centers.

Gift

The New Testament evangelist was a gift given to the church.¹⁴ Both the church and the lost benefited from the work of the evangelist. But, the results of the evangelist were to enhance the effectiveness of the church's expansion. The early evangelists ministered to churches at large rather than exclusively to any one local church.¹⁵ By doing such, they were able to expand their impact to multiple churches as a blessing from God.

The contemporary evangelist also serves in this type of parachurch endeavor. The evangelist stands both within and outside of the local community of faith. Like the early evangelists, the task of modern itinerates is to build up the local churches. Their purpose is not to build their own kingdom or ecclesiastical denomination. Such evangelists stand outside the biblical heritage and are of little value to the local church.

The ministry of the evangelist is ultimately accountable to the local church. Philip began his ministry in the Jerusalem church and remained under the direction of the

¹⁴Eph. 4:11-12.

¹⁵Alfredo C. Smith, "The Evangelist's Commitment to the Local Church," in The Work of an Evangelist, ed. by J. D. Douglas (Minneapolis: World Wide Publications, 1984), 151.

church while evangelizing in Samaria. Acts 8:12-14 further reveals that Philip was under the supervision of Peter and John.¹⁶ Hence, the evangelist belongs to the church rather than to his own independent goals and ambitions.¹⁷

Clergy

The evangelist is listed in the New Testament as a distinct office in the church.¹⁸ Philip, who was among the first deacons chosen, was designated with the title in his evangelistic ministry.¹⁹ Philip's ministry of preaching the gospel seems to have been his sole vocation. The early church supported many full-time wandering evangelists.²⁰ These evangelists ministered under authority derived from Christ.²¹ They were esteemed in a manner comparable to apostles, and their work was similar in nature.²² The office of evangelist was viewed as a position of authority held by called and capable persons.

The contemporary evangelist also ministers as one who has been set apart from within the local church. Some modern

¹⁶Ibid.

¹⁷Ibid., 155.

¹⁸Eph. 4:11-12.

¹⁹Acts 21:8.

²⁰Green, 169.

²¹Ferguson, Encyclopedia of Early Christianity, s.v. "Evangelist."

²²Shepherd, 181.

evangelists serve in the capacity of laymen, others as licensed and ordained clergy. Many of today's evangelists are equipped with theological educations in order to help them better teach and preach in the church.²³

Compensation

The earliest evangelists were supported by offerings. In 3 John 5-8, John gives instructions to Gaius, a leading member in a local congregation, regarding the treatment of traveling ministers.

Dear friend, you are faithful in what you are doing for the brothers, even though they are strangers to you. They have told the church about your love. You will do well to send them on their way in a manner worthy of God. It was for the sake of the Name that they went out, receiving no help from the pagans. We ought to show hospitality to such men so that we may work together for the truth.²⁴

²³A general criticism of contemporary evangelists has been their lack of theological education. For an excellent treatment of this problem, see Haddon W. Robinson, "The Theologian and the Evangelist" Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society 28 (1985): 3-8. Robinson notes that many evangelists distrust scholarship, and the scholarly community suspects evangelists. Robinson writes, "The separation of theology and evangelism proved a tragic divorce. The evangelist and the theologian are both needed today. Evangelism without sound doctrine decays into ignorant fanaticism. Theology without the goal of making converts degenerates into cold intellectualism. The result of this separation is a faith that is neither intellectually or biblically sound nor spiritually satisfying. The people of God need to appreciate both the theologian and the evangelist."

²⁴Translation by Simon J. Kistemaker, New Testament Commentary: Exposition of the Epistle of James and the Epistles of John (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1986), 392-94.

Gaius received the traveling preachers and provided for them food and lodging.²⁵ These traveling missionaries were dependent on the support of their hosts. John instructs Gaius to send them on their way in a manner worthy of the Lord. This meant that after providing lodging, Gaius was "to supply the brothers with food, money, and possibly travel companions for their journey (see Tit. 3:13)."²⁶

The primary purpose for this support is that the traveling preachers do not receive help from pagans. Though the evangelist sought primarily to reach the unbeliever, his major means of support was to be from within the church.

Kistemaker comments:

The missionaries did not want to hinder the work of the gospel of Christ. They knew if they accepted help from unbelievers, that they would leave themselves open to the charge that they preached for financial gains (1 Cor. 9:12). Therefore, John teaches that missionaries should receive help from the church (v.8). . . . Gentiles have no obligation to help the missionaries, but according to Jesus (Luke 10:7; 1 Cor. 9:14; 1 Tim. 5:18), believers do. Thus, John emphatically states that we ought to show hospitality to the messengers of the Word of God.²⁷

As the church supports the evangelist, they work together for the truth (v.8). By supporting these evangelists, Christians are spreading the truth. It is a relationship of cooperation and mutual benefit.

²⁵Ibid., 392. The term strangers refers to the fact that the missionaries came from other regions and were previously unknown to Gaius. It was through the reports of these travelling preachers that John had heard of the hospitality of Gaius.

²⁶Ibid., 393.

²⁷Ibid., 394-95.

The contemporary evangelist also labors under this type of reciprocal relationship. Modern evangelists derive the majority of their support through offerings and gifts from members of local churches.²⁸ This relationship is biblical and is an effective method of spreading truth to the secular world.

Contrast

Conditions

An exact comparison of the primitive evangelist to the contemporary evangelist is complicated by the vast difference in the two different eras. The former functioned under the unduplicatable conditions of an apostolic age. The nature of the church, in form and function, differed in several aspects in her infant stages.

The church, from the time of her inception, adapted and changed with her culture. Some of the changes were for the better, some for the worse. In certain periods the church was stagnant and unable to respond to her evolving environment. Thus, to expect the modern evangelist to conform in every respect to the primitive evangelist is unrealistic. The methods of all areas of service within the church change with varying needs of the surrounding culture. It is the message of the gospel which remains the same.

²⁸For an informative guide to the local church's responsibility to the evangelist, see Malcolm McDow, "Caring for the Evangelist," Church Administration, March 1982, 18-19.

Crusade Preparation

The contemporary evangelist has implemented many innovations which have enhanced the proclamation of the gospel. Modern evangelists make use of protracted meetings scheduled on specific dates. Such planning allows the evangelist to schedule crusades well in advance in numerous locations. The evangelist, by working according to a schedule, is able to maximize time and ensure efficient communication with the churches.

Evangelistic Associations

Some evangelists serve under the auspices of evangelistic organizations in order to help them meet their pressing administrative needs. It is not likely such large support systems were used in the first few centuries. The contemporary evangelist has utilized such organizational methodology in order to be effective in mass evangelism in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.

Summary

The ministries of the primitive and contemporary evangelists have much in common. Both are built upon the evangelistic mandates of the New Testament. The primary responsibility of each rests in reaching unbelievers for Christ. The major differences are in methodology which is shaped by the particular time and culture.

No evidence exists in the Scriptures to suggest that the dispensation of the evangelist has past. In the last two centuries, large numbers have responded to this ancient calling. In light of etymological and scriptural evidence, it is to be concluded that contemporary itinerate gospel preachers are evangelists. Why the evangelist did not reemerge with much strength before the nineteenth century may transcend human logic. The explanation is perhaps best found within the framework of the sovereignty of God.

CONCLUSION

The purpose of this study was to examine the ministry of the evangelist within the context of the Christian church. This study examined the etymological and functional meanings of the primitive evangelist for the purpose of comparison with the contemporary evangelist. The conclusions uphold the thesis which asserts that the ministry of the contemporary evangelist is a valid expression of the New Testament concept of evangelist. The role of the contemporary evangelist was also found to be a major factor in the scope of world evangelization.

The ministry of the contemporary evangelist has proven to be highly profitable among churches today. Toby Druin cites a Southern Baptist Home Mission Board survey that records "most pastors feel full-time evangelists draw larger crowds and get more response than pastors filling an evangelistic role."¹ This Home Mission Board survey also revealed that professions of faith resulting in baptisms ranged from 12-256 in evangelist-led revivals, while those led by others ranged from 6-35.² The use of the evangelist continues to be

¹Toby Druin, "The Evangelist Today" Home Missions 46 (September 1975), 7.

²Ibid.

beneficial as more evangelists are conducting revivals than at any time in history.³ However, many feel that non-Christians will no longer attend revival meetings. Earlier this century revivals enjoyed greater prominence. Most of these revivals did not last any less than two weeks.⁴ But new forms of technology brought the advent of radio and television entertainment. This eventually began to compete with the free evening time of people who might have normally gone to a revival simply for something to do.

Many churches have abandoned the local church crusade in favor of family life seminars and other emphases which minister to the whole body of the church. Many have given up on the idea that the crusade can have a growing impact upon the saved as well as reach the lost. Bill Cathey comments:

Some pastors and churches have become disillusioned with revival meetings and have abandoned them. Others have cut back on revival meetings. Some have gone to four-day mini-revivals and weekend revivals. Still others have substituted deeper life conferences, Bible conferences, family life conferences and such. Though all of these are good, when they take the place of revival meetings, the end result is fewer professions of faith. The answer to the dilemma is not to forsake revival meetings but to alter our approach in preparing for them.⁵

³Ibid.

⁴Matthews, A Church Revival, 73. This guide, written in 1955, very strenuously insists that every revival should last at least two weeks. Matthews also notes that at this time, this was the recommendation of the Department of Evangelism of the Home Mission Board.

⁵Bill V. Cathey, A New Day in Church Revivals (Nashville: Broadman Press, 1984), 5.

The problem lies not in the crusade itself but what is done within the crusade.

It is true that people will not simply come just to come to revivals for their entertainment value, but if churches prepare, they can attract people. Roy Fish notes that the main reason that many revival meetings have been unsuccessful is due to inadequate preparation.⁶ When done correctly, crusades have been among of the greatest catalysts for professions of faith Southern Baptists have ever known. Cathey notes that Southern Baptists "used to depend on revival meetings for about half of our professions of faith and baptisms."⁷ Cathey cites the decrease in reliance in revivals as one of the main reasons Baptists are not reaching more people for Christ.⁸

⁶Roy J. Fish, forward to A New Day in Church Revivals.

⁷Cathey writes that "in revival preparation workshops, I ask, 'How many of you were saved either during a revival meeting or as a result of a revival meeting?' Usually 50 percent of the people raise their hands." Presnall Wood, "Revival Meeting Evangelism Is Still Needed," Baptist Standard, 24 March 1982, 6, similarly reported, "In the March meeting of the Texas Baptist Executive Board, the chairman asked for a show of hands of those who had made their professions of faith in Christ as Savior in a revival meeting. Almost seventy-five [sic] percent raised their hands. A similar high percentage would no doubt be the response if the same question was put to most Baptist churches."

⁸Cathey, 13. Revivals may account for more growth and conversions than many realize. An interesting fact is that in the years Southern Baptists did nationwide simultaneous revivals, baptisms increased. These years were 1950, 1951, 1955, and 1964. The exception was 1969 in which it remained the same. However, in 1969, planning and promotion was not adequately carried out. If revivals were to suddenly cease, the

However, crusades are still one of the most effective ways of growing the church. Most growing churches schedule an annual local church crusade.⁹ At the present time, 75 percent of evangelistic churches schedule one or more crusades per year.¹⁰ Southern Baptist church growth consultant Kirk Hada-way contends that revivals are related to church growth and coincide with high baptismal rates.

Crusades still have much to offer in the area of church growth. There are four obvious benefits.¹¹ First, local church crusades add new believers. When local church crusades are done correctly, a great harvest can occur. This results in higher baptisms and is effectual church growth.

Second, local church crusades powerfully expose people to the gospel. The crusade has no hidden agenda. It allows

results would be a dramatic recession in the number of professions of faith and baptisms.

⁹Roland Q. Leavell, Evangelism: Christ's Imperative Commission, rev. Landrum P. Leavell II and Harold T. Bryson (Nashville: Broadman Press, 1979), 146. Hadaway similarly contends that revivals are related to church growth and coincide with high baptismal rates. See Kirk Hadaway, "Do Evangelism and Outreach Activities Lead to Church Growth?" Growing Churches (October, November, December, 1990): 36-39.

¹⁰Cathey, 5.

¹¹Richard Harris and Tom McEachin, "Planning for Crusades in Single Churches" in The Calling of an Evangelist, ed. J. D. Douglas (Minneapolis: World Wide Publications, 1987), 283-84 list six benefits of single church crusades: (1) It reminds us to keep our priorities in order; (2) It is a retreat from the ordinary; (3) It is the unified voice of the church declaring to a community Christ's concern for the lost; (4) It focuses on the spiritual needs of a church; (5) It intensifies and develops prayer life; and (6) It sets a spiritual atmosphere that ripens the harvest.

many people to hear who otherwise might not come. If these people do not respond, at least seeds have been planted for a later harvest.

Third, it involves people in a common cause which serves as a catalyst toward renewal. The crusade can serve to strengthen the church by getting people involved in ministry and witnessing. Billy Graham uses this very principle. He asks for the amount of pre-crusade workers to be equal to the number of seats in the stadium. The average Billy Graham crusade utilizes anywhere from thirty thousand to fifty thousand people before the actual crusade.¹² A major church, after a Billy Graham crusade, reported:

Involving people in our crusade turned our church around. We have a whole new direction and focus on witness. . . . If you get your people involved in a crusade, be prepared after it is over to catch up with them. That's a lot more fun than pushing them.¹³

Fourth, local church crusades allow relationships to be built with non-believers. The key to any crusade is the witness of Christians. It has been proven true

time and time again that the success of reaching the community depends upon relationships. Few people will wander into a crusade from the street. The majority of

¹²Walter H. Smyth, "Crusades: Evangelism in Expanding Dimensions," Decision, February 1977, 8. Sterling W. Huston, Crusade Evangelism in the Local Church (Minneapolis: World Wide Publications, 1984), 110-11, lists three primary factors which influence crusade attendance: (1) Publicity and Advertising; (2) Involvement; and (3) Personal Invitation.

¹³Ibid.

non-Christians coming will be brought by Christian friends.¹⁴

To accomplish this, Billy Graham and others have used programs such as "Operation Andrew." This encourages Christians to pray for the lost and develop relationships with them before the crusade begins.¹⁵ For any crusade to work, Christians must involve themselves in people's lives.

An analysis of the ministry of the evangelist yields discernible characteristics among the successful evangelists of history. All or most of the following characteristics were found in significant measure in the ministries of the major evangelists.

First, the role of personal evangelism plays a significant part in the ministry of the evangelist. The commitment was expressed in the major evangelists lives. They also were faithful to train others to do the same. Finney's practice of using laity to do personal work has been utilized by every major evangelist since. These major evangelists have served to help keep one-to-one, intentional evangelism before the Christian community.

Second, the belief in the authority of the Scriptures has been a hallmark of the contemporary evangelist. Conferences such as Amsterdam affirmed the belief in the inerrancy

¹⁴John McWilliam, "Mass Evangelism," Urban Mission 3 (September 1985): 9.

¹⁵Ibid.

of the Scriptures. Without exception, all the major modern evangelists have championed the authority of the Scriptures.

Third, the evangelist has stood in the tradition of conservative theology. Evangelists have been associated within the framework of evangelical Christianity. Many of the major evangelists identified with the tenets of fundamentalism. It is of no small significance that the major critics of the evangelist have been closely aligned with liberalism. The major itinerates often experienced severe opposition from the Unitarian and Universalist parties.

Fourth, the modern evangelist has been closely aligned with the principles of revivalism. The new measures of Finney serve as a watershed for the methods of the modern evangelist. Finney helped to wed the relationship of the evangelist forever to the revivalism tradition. Evangelists have closely aligned themselves with groups which seek spiritual awakening. Many classical works on the principles of revival have come from the pens of evangelists.

Fifth, evangelists have been committed to preparation in revivals and crusades. Drawing from Finney's measures, successful revivals and crusades have been realized through extensive preparation. Strong organizational methodology was utilized by the major evangelists to increase attendance and ultimately conversions. Such preparation is seen as the necessary sowing which must occur before the evangelist can utilize his reaping abilities.

Sixth, evangelists have utilized methods of publicity to increase their effectiveness. Whitefield was instrumental in using the press to help increase his popularity. Other major evangelists achieved celebrity status through publicity which helped draw large crowds. The media continues to play a prominent role in the ministry of the evangelist in the late twentieth century.

Last, the major evangelists involved in large city-wide evangelism have cooperated with multiple denominations. Although the major evangelists of the last two centuries represent several different denominations, all cooperated with other denominations to increase their impact. Such evangelists have rallied various denominations to put aside their differences in order to cooperate in concentrated, evangelistic efforts.

The early evangelists disappeared in a time when the gospel was being corrupted. When the apostolic gospel disappeared, the evangelist faded off the scene. The evangelist reemerged at the end of the First Great Awakening at a time when the gospel was preached with an invitation to respond. The revival of this apostolic method was accompanied by the calling of gifted specialists to assist in the work. Hence, the churches which have been proponents of an evangelical gospel have been those who have been favorably disposed to the office of evangelist.

The reemergence of the evangelist has been the catalyst for millions of conversions to Christianity. The impact of the modern itinerates continues to be a force in this secularized society. As new strategies are utilized to reach the world for Christ, the evangelist will remain a part of the global harvest until the return of Christ.

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