

TOWARDS A PARTNER RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN WCC AND LAUSANNE

J. Y. Lee & B. Y. Cho*

INTRODUCTION

The year 2010 is set to be a landmark year in the history of Christian missions. As the centenary of the 1910 Edinburgh World Missionary Conference (WMC) it will be a time when the World Council of the Churches (WCC) meets in Edinburgh, Scotland and the Lausanne Congress on World Evangelization (LCWE) meets in Cape Town, South Africa to hold their respective mission conferences. The significance of both meetings is not simply in the chronological sum of one hundred years that have passed from Edinburgh to Edinburgh or Cape Town. Rather, its significance lies in the fact that there is an urgent need for us to reformulate the paradigm, strategy, program, and even the 'slogan' of mission in order to proactively and effectively respond to the changes in today's world.

During the past one hundred years the worldwide Protestant Church has, on the one hand, focused too excessively on 'social ethics' and "human liberation" as a consequence of its traumatic experiences of the First and Second World Wars and the ideological division of East and West which were the consequences of imperialistic ambitions. On the other hand, the worldwide Protestant Church has neglected "humanism" and "preservation of life" while narrowly focusing on "evangelization for the growth of my own church." However, the "evangelization" of the world and "human liberation," which is the liberation of the marginal peoples who suffer due to the evil powers are like the two inseparable pillars of mission (John 3:16; 2 Cor. 5:19).

However, with the advent of the Twenty-First Century anti-Christ elements have weeded their way into the "openness or universality of the Gospel" found in the love of God for the world. These elements are "the secularization of the Gospel and religious syncretism." These trends are not new to our age. Throughout the history of Christianity the anti-Christ elements have frequently sought to tempt many Christians wearing different masks and disguises in order to dilute "the Gospel of Jesus Christ." In this post-modern era, we have seen the rise of "peace movements" that have not been sufficiently thought through and which give up one's "Christian identity" in order to avoid the "clash of cultures" and "clash of religions." Such movements have arisen both within and outside of Christian circles. Nevertheless, we Christians still hold the task of spreading the Christian Gospel throughout the world.

I will attempt to analyze the mission theology of the WCC from the perspective of the Lausanne Covenant, thereby suggesting how the mission theologies of both can be mutually synthesized to promote cooperation and unity. This is because in the first instance, no one can replace the prominence of the "*missio Dei*," and secondly, "*missio Dei*" can only be fully exercised when we first become "the true witnesses of Christ."

THE FOUNDING OF THE WCC: THE CHURCH UNITY MOVEMENT AS A DEFENSE OF THE EVANGELIUM

It is nearly impossible to ignore the significance of the WMC in Edinburgh in 1910 when one attempts to conduct a survey of mission conventions and conferences.¹ The Edinburgh WMC became the

* Paul B. Y. Cho completed his Ph. D. from ACTS Seminary in Korea specializing in Indian Christian Theology. He is presently serving on the mission faculty of Union Biblical Seminary. He is indebted to Dr. Lee Jong Yun (the Chair Person of Asian Lausanne) concerning basic theological thinking and Lausanne Movement concepts. This paper is written on the basis of Dr. Lee's lecture Note on 13th May 2009.

catalyst and it resulted in the formation of a permanent institution, the International Missionary Council (IMC) in 1921. Thereafter, the first Edinburgh conference developed into the first Global Conference on Faith & Order held in Lausanne in 1927. The IMC worked for forty years for “cooperation in mission activities,” “mission through the promotion of Christian literature,” and “the development of mission theologies.” It finally merged with fully the WCC in December 1961 in New Delhi under the theme of Mission in Six Continents after changing having changed overseas mission in its history.² The IMC today has become the Commission on World Mission and Evangelism [CWME] within the WCC.

The formation of the WCC as a permanent body occurred, according to John Mackay, as a result of the World Conference on Church, Community and state held in Oxford in 1937. The world at that time was tense with the winds of war just prior to World War II. Joseph H. Oldham (1874-1969), who had been the Secretary for the 1910 Edinburgh WMC, suggested that the churches take up the missionary task of the church in Christian thought and the central responsibilities of the church within history.³ This suggestion was made because the German church was suffering from severe persecution under the Nazi regime. Only the Confessional Church was struggling to fight against the authoritarian regime of Hitler. In the midst of its struggle the Barmen Confession of Faith was proclaimed in 1934.⁴

According to Mackay, the 1937 Oxford conference declared, “No matter what secular government we live under the Christians and the Christian community that serves Jesus Christ as its Lord has the authority of faith.”⁵ The Nazis, under the regime of Hitler, were trying to subordinate the church under the authority of the government and deprive the church of its freedom of faith and conscience, glorifying Hitler and focusing the people to worship him as well as God. The German Church succumbed to this pressure without any struggle. Under this background, the theme for the Oxford conference was “Let the Church be the Church!” This theme contains the desire of the church “to faithfully fulfill the role of the church in the event of war breaking out. Although the countries in which the different churches exist should fight each other, the believers of Jesus come together and consciously pray that the name of God be glorified and the Kingdom of God come on earth in the warring countries, as well as all the other countries.”⁶

Within the historical background and purpose stated above the 1937 Oxford Conference decided to establish the WCC as a permanent institution for promoting church unity and cooperation. However, with the start of the Second World War there was little progress and it was only in 1948 that the WCC was formed in Amsterdam with the goal of global church unity, formulating a common response to those who would attempt to deprive the church of her unity and faith under the political ideologies of nationalism and aggressive imperialism.

When we consider the historical background in which the WCC was founded we can safely evaluate its genesis as the worldwide ecumenical movement for the establishment of the identity of the Church in defense of the *evangelium*. In addition to this, we should be faithful in observing the theme and slogan that was put forward when the WCC was first founded, “Let the Church be the Church!” In other words, all the churches must work together for world peace, and if a church of Christ anywhere in the world is persecuted

¹ There are scholars who view the globalization of mission and the movement for church unity within Protestantism as having already begun on the mission field, for example India 1855, Japan in 1872, and China in 1877. There are those who also view the beginning of international conferences on mission as having begun with the Union Missionary Convention that was held in N.Y. in 1854 under guidance of Alexander Duff (1806-1876), a missionary from Scotland. Already in 1900 an ecumenical mission conference had already been held in N.Y. (Andrew F. Walls, 'Mission VI', *TRE*, 23, 53.).

² Andrew F. Walls, 'Mission VI', *TRE*, 23, 54.

³ John A. Mackay, *Ecumenics, The Science of the Church Universal*, translated by Min Gyeong Bae, *Ecumenics* (Seoul: Korean Christian Literature, 1982), 13.

⁴ The Barmen Declaration was the Church Confession of Faith pronounced by the German Evangelical Church in response to the German Christian Faith movement that was colluding/conspiring with the ideologies of the national sociologists.

⁵ John A. Mackay, *Ecumenics*, 14.

⁶ This theme was suggested by William Temple during the report of Section 5 in the Universal Church & the World of Nations (J. H. Oldham, *The Oxford Conference - Official Report*, Chicago 1937, 45-52. Quoted from John A. Mackay. *Ecumenics*, 15).

and prevented from proclaiming the Gospel because of their country's oppressive religious policy or the ideologies of nationalism and imperialism then the local church, as a member of the universal church must come together to protect their sister church. This is because the evangelization of the world cannot be attained if the local church loses its identity.

Even today the Christian faith communities in countries such as N. Korea, India, Myanmar, Turkey and other Arab countries and countries in Africa are being persecuted by authoritarian governments or political ideologies. As a consequence, the Gospel they are proclaiming is being threatened.

WORLD EVANGELIZATION AS THE SPIRITUAL WARFARE BETWEEN HUMAN LIBERATION AND HUMAN SALVATION

The Lausanne Committee on World Mission and Evangelization asks Christians whether they have been faithful to the Lausanne Covenant (LC) of 1974. This is because the LC makes it specifically clear that our fight is against the evil powers and principalities of this world. Just as it was Satan who first recognized Jesus Christ as the Son of God (Mark 1:24), the greatest obstacle to the proclamation of the gospel today is evil, the evil powers of this world. Therefore the LC defines the proclamation of the gospel as spiritual warfare against evil (Ephesians 6:12).⁷

Engaging in spiritual warfare with the principalities and powers of evil means that we refuse to accommodate all evil forces and elements of this world that hinder the propagation of the gospel. Therefore, when the evangelist is faced with a situation in which the evil government prohibits evangelism or persecutes the evangelists we must fight against it.⁸ Additionally, the LC stipulates that we must fight against those who do not proclaim the whole gospel. This is because as the end of times draws nearer there will be many who come proclaiming the false gospel (Mark 13:21-23). Therefore we Christians have a duty to hasten the return of Christ by fighting against the principalities and powers of evil in this world.⁹ The above brief overview of the LC shows that the theology of missions when the WCC was formed on the basis of "Let the Church be Church" is not all that different from that of the LC on the basis of fighting against evils. Therefore, the LCWE must continue to engage in spiritual warfare against those powers that hinder and prohibit the fulfillment of the task of world evangelization in cooperation with WCC. We must further join together in a global prayer movement to support such actions.

The Call to Reclaim the *Missio Dei* as the *Missio Trinitatis Dei*

When the first WMC was held in Edinburgh 1910 there was no tension between the evangelical theology of mission and the modern liberal theology of mission. Although a large number of Protestant missionary movements that were rapidly growing cooperated within the IMR (International Missionsrat) many chose to withdraw for ideological reasons and formed the Interdenominational Foreign Missions Association which later became the Evangelical Missions Association in 1945. However, these mission associations did not have specific, independent theologies of mission. That is why when the WCC was formed in Amsterdam in 1948 all of the mission associations adopted the theology of missions that was espoused during the Edinburgh WMC in 1910.¹⁰

⁷ LC Article 12.

⁸ LC Article 13.

⁹ LC Article 15.

¹⁰ Jong Yun Lee, "Can Lausanne Cooperate with WCC as Partner in Mission?," *Centenary of 1910 Edinburgh World Missionary Conference: Retrospect and Prospect of Mission and Ecumenism* (Seoul: PCTS, 2009), 72-73. Assumption and watchword of the Edinburgh conference: "The Evangelisation of the world in this Generation" carried by Pierson in 1880's and adopted by Student Volunteer Movement in 1889. Edinburgh represented the all time high-water mark in western missionary enthusiasm, the zenith of the optimistic and pragmatist approach to missions (D. Bosch, 336-337). Amsterdam said clearly that the churches had decided to come together in accordance with the will of the Lord of the church. Where this common way would lead them could not been foreseen. "We acknowledge," the report of section 1 emphasized, "that he is powerfully at work amongst us to lead us further to

The theme for the founding assembly of the WCC in Amsterdam was “Man’s Disorder and God’s Design.”¹¹ It is undeniable that the ecumenical movement inspired by the WCC gave new hope to the West, which was experiencing rapid secularization after World War II, the East, which was being communized, and the oppressed churches in Asia and Africa. However, in this context the WCC rather than being an instrument of cooperation for church unity came to rule over the churches. This is why one of the theologians who had been involved in the WCC stated, “what we need first and foremost is not new organization but the renewal and reform of existing churches.”¹² The reason such a statement was made was because the WCC began to adopt the social ethical concepts for unity as its mission framework. The WCC sought not only to apply this framework to the social activities of the church or its socio-political realm but also to the whole of secular society from a Christian perspective. The WCC synthesized this framework and referred to it as the “responsible society.” Within the WCC the themes of human rights, personal liberty, justice, public order and rights began to be discussed from a missions perspective.¹³

When the IMC, which was formed in 1921, met for their first IMC in Willingen, Germany in 1952, Karl Hartenstein suggested a new mission theological concept, *Missio Dei*.¹⁴ However, when Hartenstein passed away on Oct. 1st 1952 it was not clear what he had originally intended the concept of *Missio Dei* to convey and there has been much research regarding the term. One of the reasons for the different interpretations is due to the fact that the *Dei* in *Missio Dei* can be interpreted two ways according to Latin Grammar, first in the second subjective, and second in the second objective. If we interpret *Dei* as the second genitive subjective God, *Dei* becomes the subject of mission but if we interpret *Dei* as the second genitive objective it means evangelization, because God is object of mission, i.e. the human proclamation and witness of God. The majority of scholars interpret *Missio Dei* as the second genitive subjective and emphasize that God is the subject of mission and that this is the central meaning of the term *Missio Dei*.

However, John A. Mackay, who also gave a keynote speech during the Willingen conference entitled “The Great Commission and the Church Today” and used Matthew 28:16-20 to emphasize that the rediscovery of the Christ’s missionary command is the most important task for the church today. He went on to say, “What is needed of us is to obey the authority of this command. In Matthew 28:18-20 and John 13:1-20 Jesus declares “I have been given all authority in heaven and on earth” and calls his disciples as witnesses with all inclusive power and authority.”¹⁵ If we consider that fact that Hartenstein developed the

goals which we but dimly discern.” (<http://archives.oikoumene.org> accessed 1st March 2010). Although there was time gap between two conferences, there was consensus point about mission zeal for world evangelization.

¹¹ *TRE*, 25, 59.

¹² *TRE*, 25, 59.

¹³ The task of WCC was first defined briefly in the Rules that came out in 1948 and were later developed into seven areas during the Assembly in Nairobi in 1975. These are: (1) to call the churches to the goal of visible unity in one faith and in one eucharistic fellowship expressed in worship in common life in Christ, and to advance towards that unity in order that the world may believe. (2) to facilitate the common witness of the churches in each place and in all places. (3) to support the churches in their world-wide missionary and evangelistic task. (4) to express the common concern of the churches in the service of human need, the breaking down of barriers between people, and the promotion of one human family in justice and peace. (5) to foster the renewal of the churches in unity, worship, mission, and service. (6) to establish and maintain relations with national councils and regional conferences of churches, world confessional bodies, and other ecumenical organizations. (7) to carry on the work of the world movements of Faith & Order and Life & Work and of the International Missionary Council and the World Council on Christian Education (Reinhart Frieling, *Der Weg des Ökum. Gedanken. Eine Ökumenekunde*, Goettingen 1992, Offizielle Berichte und Dokumente der Welt-Kirchenkonferenzen zu der Studienkonferenzen des ÖRK, 327. Quoted from Jong Yun Lee, 73).

¹⁴ There are conflicting perspectives from different Korean scholars. Kim Eun Soo argues that the mission term *Missio Dei* was first used by Dutch theologian H. H. Rosin of Leiden University in his thesis entitled, *Missio Dei* which was written in 1972. According to Kim there is no official record of the term *Missio Dei* being used anywhere in the official report of the Willingen conference, *Mission under the Cross* (Kim Eun Soo, “A Critical Review of the Origin and Understanding of *Missio Dei*,” *Shinhaksasang* (Theological Theories), 94 (Winter 1996), 144-145). However, the majority of other scholars claim that Hartenstein was the first to use the term during the 1952 Willingen conference of the IMC and it was during this conference that the mission term *Missio Dei* was officially adopted (Jun Ho Jin, “*Missio Deo* and the Mission of the Church,” Korean Evangelical Association Theological Committee ed., *Seonggyeongwa Shinhak* 2, 1984, 224).

¹⁵ Norman Goodall (ed.), *Mission under the Cross, Addresses Delivered at the Enlarged Meeting of the Committee of the IMC at*

term *Missio Dei* as a culmination of this keynote and the proceedings of the conference, the *Missio Dei* is none other than “participating in the sending of the Son with the comprehensive goal of establishing the reign of Christ over all creation that has been redeemed.”¹⁶ This is why Hartenstein declares that the *Missio Ecclesiae* comes from *Missio Dei*.¹⁷

George F. Vicedom who developed the concept of *Missio Dei* in his book of the same title emphasized the Christological-Salvific dimension of *Missio Dei* as follows: “Mission is the work of the Lord between the ascension and the *parousia* of Christ. Therefore the church has simply been given the task of proclaiming the perfect one to people and continuing his work of salvation by pronouncing his kingdom until the day he comes.”¹⁸ Further developing his argument he explains *Missio Dei* from a more enlarged dimension of the Trinity. He points out that the missionary movement in which we are participants is placed within the work of salvation conducted by God himself. Because of this great love for us the Father sent his beloved Son to reconcile all of creation to himself so that we and all people can be made one with the Father through the Holy Spirit in the perfect love in his Son.¹⁹

Roland Allen challenged us to restore to the Holy Spirit his rightful role “primarily as the dictator and inspirer of missionary work.”²⁰ He referred to the Spirit which impelled the missionary work of the early church as “a missionary spirit.”²¹ Harry Boer also pointed out that it is Pentecost, the event of the outpouring of the Spirit on the church, that appears as the conscious ingredient in the mission of the early church in mission.²² Taking Vicedom, Allen and Boer’s explanation into consideration then, mission is none other than our participation in the salvation history of Trinitarian God. Although the *Missio Dei* particularly emphasizes the authority of Christ and the theology of incarnation if the original theological meaning of the *Missio Dei* is emphasizing the saving history of the Trinitarian God’s missionary work, then there is no reason to refuse the mission concept of *Missio Dei*.²³

Absolute Refusal of the Distorted Understanding of *Missio Dei*

However, the problem lies in the fact that the concept of *Missio Dei* began to be distorted after the merger of IMC and WCC in 1961. In other words, the mission of the church (*Missio Ecclesiae*) within the concept of *Missio Dei* - more subjective and proactive mission activity of the church, the act of choosing the mission field, sending out missionaries, training mission workers, establishing mission strategy, the raising of funds for mission, and the entire process of mission - has been excluded. As a matter of fact this distortion of the *Missio Dei* had been argued for by the staff person who was first appointed to head up the WCC’s Evangelism Department, Jan C. Hoekendijk, who served from 1949 to 1952. After the WCC had been established he had constantly argued for *Missio Dei* without *Missio Ecclesiae*. For instance, in a lecture to the Continental Missions Association in 1951 he argued that there was something wrong with the mission theories that put the church at its center.²⁴ He stressed the fact that the Church itself is not the active agent of mission but should rather become the instrument held in the hand of the living God and itself be the object of mission. Hoekendijk demands that the term “world” should no longer be defined from the perspective of the church. In a radical manner he wanted to overcome any kind of ecclesio-centrism. The

Willingen, in Germany, 1952; with Statement issued by the Meeting (London: Edinburgh House Press, 1953), 129-141. Quoted from Kim Eun Soo, 147.

¹⁶ Quoted from Kim Eun Soo, 147.

¹⁷ Karl Hartenstein, “Theologische Besinnung,” Walter Freytag (ed.), *Mission zwischen Gestern und Morgen, Evang* (Stuttgart: Missionsverlag, 1952), 54. Quoted from Kim Eun Soo, 148.

¹⁸ George F. Vicedom, *MSSIO DEI* (München: Chr. Kaiser Verlag, 1958), 37.

¹⁹ Goodall, 89. Quoted from Jeon Ho Jin, 232.

²⁰ David M. Paton (ed.), *The Ministry of the Spirit, Selected Writings of Rolland Allen* (World Dominion Press, 1960), 20.

²¹ Paton, *The Ministry*, 17.

²² Harry R. Boer, *Pentecost & Mission* (Michigan: Eerdmans Publishing Co.).

²³ Jeon Ho Jin regards the authority of Christ and the Incarnational theology of *Missio Dei* to be problematic (Jeon Ho Jin, 233-234).

²⁴ Jan C. Hoekendijk, *Die Zukunft der Kirche und die Kirche der Zukunft* (Stuttgart/Berlin, 1964).

world is not to be regarded as the front yard of the church, as not-yet-church. He opposes the thesis of the church as the only means of God's salvific activity in the world. He emphasizes that God is also working directly in the world without mediation.²⁵

He regarded mission as establishing the Biblical Shalom on earth, a peace which is more than personal and individual salvation and includes the establishment of peace, community, justice, salvation, forgiveness and joy on earth.²⁶ He argues that the God of Exodus and the God who acts hidden in history is one and the same. This is why the true church of God and Christians cannot be free from the social responsibility towards those who are suffering. From this theological background the WCC enthusiastically supported the social participation of the church and expanded the social responsibility of the church to all areas of politics, economy, society and culture.²⁷

Under the influence of H. Hoekendijk in particular, many were encouraged to bypass the church as an agent of mission. Instead they looked for signs of God's activity in movements of history and sought to participate in these. In Hoekendijk's view, mission became a movement of humanization - or "shalom" as Hoekendijk preferred and which he understood as development/ modernization. The aim of mission was thus to unite humanity in a modern, secular society, "the great society" which he identified with the kingdom.²⁸

During the mission conference in Mexico a serious debate occurred between the evangelical theology that emphasized God at work through the church and liberal theological perspective stressing the work of God independent of mission of church. To put it simply, this argument was about the role of the church in the *Missio Dei* that had been argued for by Hoekendijk. While in the Uppsala Assembly the word "revolution" replaced renewal as mission began to be understood as a political theology in response to the secular theologies of the 1960s and their theology of revolution. The majority of the political theologians considered mission as humanization, making humans more humane instead of the Christianization through the proclamation of the Gospel. Through this argument and the work of the liberal theologians the church merely became an element of the forthcoming global society.

Particularly, after the Roman Catholic Church held its Second Vatican Council from 1962 to 1966, Roman representatives participated in WCC as observers which only served to aggravate the different understandings of church unity that already existed between member churches. The Roman Catholic Church recognized that the work of the Holy Spirit exists within the movement for church unity as it is understood in their principle for church unity and participated in dialogue with the WCC. In response the WCC received the mission theories of the Second Vatican Council and espoused a true (single) and universal council for church unity as a common life and witness of the Christians. As a result the unity of the church for mission for the purpose of spreading the Gospel became distorted and became a Council or a Synod that would exert decision powers and control over issues of important matters of faith for the church. J. Aagaard stated that "the mission concept of the *Missio Dei* as it is understood by the WCC has committed the fallacy of recognizing all secular activities by humans as being unconditionally holy."²⁹

²⁵ Henning Wrogemann, "Paradigm Shifts in Mission Theology of the 20th C. and the Quest for Basic Elements of a Mission Theology for Today," *Centenary of 1910 Edinburgh World Missionary Conference: Retrospect and Prospect of Mission and Ecumenism - The 9th International Symposium* (Seoul: PCTS, 2009), 29-43. Quoted from J. C. Hoekendijk, *Kirche und Volk in der deutschen Missionswissenschaft* (München, 1967), 320.

²⁶ Those who agreed with Hoekendijk's concept of *Missio Dei* are Freytag, M.A.C. Warren, and Leslie Newbigin.

²⁷ As a result of that, there were main issues of mission of WCC: Uppsala (1968) – Responsible Society, Montreux (1968) – the Struggle of the poor for liberation from oppression, Nairobi (1975) – the Spirit of Struggle, and Vancouver (1983) – the Struggle for Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation.

²⁸ Sebastian C. H. Kim and Kirsteen Kim, "Ecumenical Endeavour and Mission - Creative Tension," *Mission Trend Today - FOIM V*, ed., by Joseph Mattam & Sebastian Kim (Bangalore: St. Paul Press, 1997), 99-116. Hoekendijk pushed the concept of *Missio Dei* to the point where mission became almost entirely secular, a process detailed by D. Bosch in *Transforming Mission* (New York: Orbis Books, 1991), 391.

²⁹ Johann Aagaard, "Mission After Uppsala 1968," *Mission Trends No. 1*. Gerald Anderson, ed. (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1974),

On that background, the seed for the birth of the Lausanne Committee for World Evangelization (LCWE) in 1974 were sown. This is because the LC declares, “We therefore reject as a proud, self-confident dream the notion that man can ever build a utopia on earth.”³⁰ After World War II many churches from Asia and Africa and mission agencies from the Third World came into the WCC in large numbers. Consequently, the WCC could not ignore the status of the churches and mission agencies from the Third World. Until that time, the churches from the Third World were dissatisfied with the subject-object relationship of mission centered on the churches of the First World. Not only that, but the realistic problems were not occurring in the First World but the Third. Therefore, the *Missio Dei* became the mission movement of the Third World which wanted to break away from the mission policy centered around Western Europe and North America, in other words the imperialistic mission strategy that has a subject-object structure or mission imperialism. At the same time it was an attempt to strengthen the task and the role of the mission of the Third World churches. As a result the task of every Christian in which in which all churches must participate together and work together. This is why the 1963 mission conference in Mexico gathered under the theme, “Mission in Six Continents” to break down the barriers between mission field and “homebases” of mission and to emphasize the fact that all the continents of world are mission fields. Visser’t Hooft defines the identity of the WCC as follows: “The WCC confesses Jesus Christ as the Messiah of God in accordance with the witness of the Bible, and it must be regarded as a community of fellowship that must be built together to witness to the Glory of God, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit.”³¹

Therefore he believed that the command to be witnesses of Christ was given to all members. He said that the responsibility of proclaiming the Gospel to the whole world was the responsibility of the whole church.³² In response to the trends of times the Christian organizations from the First World sought to give an account or repent of their aggressive or imperialistic attitude in mission to the churches of the Third World. So long as the *Missio Dei* discussed above is attempting to break away from the subject-object paradigm of mission then the LC is also against cultural imperialism: “The Gospel does not presuppose the superiority of any culture to another, but evaluates all cultures according to its own criteria of truth and righteousness and insists on moral absolutes in very culture.”³³ At the same time the LC emphasizes the importance of Christianity in transforming culture: “Churches must seek to transform and enrich culture, all for the glory of God.”³⁴

A Call to the Biblical Witness of Mission³⁵

³⁰ 17.
³⁰ LC. 15. From an Evangelical perspective the critique against radical WCC position was summarized with the following selection of arguments: (a) The kingdom of God is not to be merged with the understanding of human efforts to humanize the world. (b) The understanding of the church as a church-for-others harbors the danger to undervalue and to functionalize the church. R. Catholic observer said that is a kind of ecclesiological suicide. (c) The theological topic of God's reconciliation with humankind through the passion of Christ is indispensable for the missionary message. (d) The proclamation of the gospel is not to be substituted by either interreligious dialogue or social service (Henning Wrogemann, 29-43).

³¹ Williem A. Visser't Hooft, *Die Welt was meine Gemeinde – Autobiographie* (München:1972), 372-373. Quoted from Lee Jong Yun, 78.

³² Williem A. Visser't Hooft (ed.), *The New Delhi Report: The Third Assembly of the WCC, 1961* (New York: Association, 1962), 42.

³³ LC. 10.

³⁴ LC. 10.

³⁵ My stance is almost identical to Donald A. McGavran's evangelical stance on missiology. According to McGavran, evangelical missiology confesses and systematizes the following important doctrines: (1) the absolute inspiration and authority of Scripture, (2) immortality of soul and eternal life, (3) fall of humanity and eternal salvation, (4) Jesus Christ the one and only intercessor, (5) the church as the body of Christ, (6) evangelization and the end time, (7) the most important task of the church, (8) the Holy Spirit and his mission. Among these points, McGavran puts strong emphasis on four aspects: (1) the authority of scriptural revelation, (2) the spiritual wretchedness of those who do not know Christ, (3) the uniqueness of Christ's redemptive death, (4) the Old and New Testament's exclusivism against “other gods”. Arthur F. Glasser & Donald A. McGavran, *Contemporary Theologies of Mission* (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1983), 101-107. McGavran adds that these 8 points may be called either doctrines or axioms. In other words, he sees these as the basic premise of evangelical missiology.

We are facing with threat of secularization of the Gospel and religious syncretism. Therefore, on the basis of the overview of the history of the ecumenical movement conducted above, I would like to end this presentation by proposing several issues that the leaders must consider so that the WCC consultation in Edinburgh and the Lausanne gathering in Cape Town in 2010 can become mutual partners in mission.

Firstly, the WCC and CWME should return to the mission theology that is witnessed to in the Bible. Although human rights, social justice, peace and the reform of political, economic and cultural institutions are important in mission, there is nothing more important than witnessing to Christ. This is because it is based on the earthly ministry of our Lord Jesus Christ, and at the same time it is the Great Commission given to us by Jesus Christ. In other words no church, Christian or mission organization is exempt from the Words of Jesus (Matthew 28:18-20; Acts 1:8). The responsibility of mission that Jesus gave his disciples, the command to be witnesses of Jesus Christ, the promise to be with them (Immanuel), and the practice of mission through the Spirit are also given to us. To be more specific the command for mission given by Jesus is effective until the end of time and his promise is effective to the ends of the earth and the subject of mission, the Holy Spirit is here and now with us. Everyone who wishes to be a disciple of Christ must become a mission-witness. No Christian can be exempt from this missionary task.

Secondly, every church must put aside the doctrinal differences that are inessential and first cooperate in Christ for the sake of mission practice (Gal. 3:28; Phil. 1:18; I Cor. 3:7). For instance, the WCC, the Lausanne Committee, the WEA and even the Pentecostal must cooperate with each other, without any conditions. All churches in the world must work together unconditionally in simple obedience to the subjective and providential missionary work of God in the power of Holy Spirit in order to fight against the powers of evil in this spiritual warfare.

Thirdly, we must emphasize the uniqueness and the universality or openness of the Christian Gospel in our mission. The uniqueness of the gospel is in the fact that Jesus Christ is the only mediator and reconciler who can stand on our behalf before God (Acts 2:12; 4:12; I Timothy 2:5). However, this does not mean that the Christian Gospel is closed or exclusive but rather implies its uniqueness and identity. When we remain in the uniqueness of the Christian Gospel we can overcome the crisis of the secularization of the gospel and religious syncretism in an age of religious pluralism. At the same time mission presupposes the openness of the Christian Gospel. If the Christian Gospel is not open to “all nations” (Matt. 28:19; Luke 24:47), mission loses its primary meaning. Therefore, the power of the Gospel of Christ does not exclude transforming all political, economic, social and cultural barriers of this world. This is because the openness of the Gospel of Christ presupposes the universality of human sinfulness (Romans 3:23). However, the transformation of politics, society and culture is not achieved through the reformation of social structures or organizations but by Christianizing individuals with the Gospel of Christ.

Fourthly, the most important priority is for us to remain in the God breathed Word of God, the infallible Bible (2 Timothy 3:16). This is because if the Canon of faith crumbles then all Christian doctrine and faith begin to crumble as well. Finally, we must pass on the traditional confession of Christian faith on the Trinitarian God. The theological meaning of *oikoumene* implies the “unity and communion” of Christianity within the Roman Empire as it developed from Nicea in 325 to Constantinople in 381, Ephesus in 431 and Calcedon in 451.³⁶ At the same time *oikoumene* came to signify the united conclusions of the church Councils and the universal declarations that they promulgated, such as the Ecumenical Creeds, Apostles Creed, Creed of Athanasius and the Calcedon Creed. These Ecumenical Creeds confessed Christ as truly God and truly human (*vere Deus, vere Homo*), and at the same time confessed the Trinitarian God, the

³⁶ Reinhart Fireling, “Ökumene”, *TRE* 25, 46. “*Oikoumene* is a word that means ‘to live in’ or ‘to reside in’ and is the passive participle of the Greek word *oikein*. From the fifth century BC it was used to refer to ‘a region one inhabits’. In the NT it referred to the regions ruled by Rome (Luke 2:1). Later, with the fall of the Byzantine Empire it lost its political meaning and during the fourth century AD it was adopted by the church. As such, *Oikoumene* came to refer to the universal Church.

Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. They also confessed the one community of faith, which is the one body of Christ in the Eucharist. In conformity with such traditions the LC also affirms “our belief in one eternal God, Creator and Lord of the World, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, who governs all things according to the purpose of his will.”³⁷

If the WCC and the Lausanne Committee can return to the Bible as the starting point of unifying agreement, then the two institutions can work together as mission partners to attain identical goals.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Anderson, Gerald. ed. *Mission Trends No. 1*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1974.
- Boer, Harry R. *Pentecost & Mission*. Michigan: Eerdmans Publishing Co.
- Bosch, D. *Transforming Mission*. New York: Orbis Books, 1991.
- Freytag, Walter. ed. *Mission zwischen Gestern und Morgen, Evang.* Stuttgart: Missionsverlag, 1952.
- Frieling, Reinhart. *Der Weg des Ökum. Gedanken. Eine Ökumenekunde*, Goettingen 1992. Offizielle Berichte und Dokumente der Welt-Kirchenkonferenzen zu der Studienkonferenzen des ÖRK.
- Glasser, Arthur F. & Donald A. McGavran, *Contemporary Theologies of Mission*. Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1983.
- Hedlund, Roger E. *Root of the great Debate in Mission – Revised & Enlarged*. Bangalore: Theological Book Trust, 1993.
- Goodall, Norman ed. *Mission under the Cross, Addresses Delivered at the Enlarged Meeting of the Committee of the IMC at Willingen in Germany, 1952* ; with Statement issued by the Meeting. London: Edinburgh House Press, 1953.
- Mackay, John A. *Ecumenics. The Science of the Church Universal*. Translated by Min Gyeong Bae, *Ecumenics*. Seoul: Korean Christian Literature, 1982.
- Mattam, Joseph & Sebastian Kim. *Mission Trend Today - FOIM V*, ed. Bangalore: St. Paul Press, 1997.
- Oldham, J. H. *The Oxford Conference - Official Report*. Chicago, 1937.
- Paton, David M. ed., *The Ministry of the Spirit, Selected Writings of Rolland Allen*. World Dominion Press, 1960.
- Vicedom, George F. *MISSIO DEI*. München: Chr. Kaiser Verlag, 1958.
- Visser't Hooft Williem A. *Die Welt was meine Gemeinde – Autobiographie*. München:1972.
- _____. ed., *The New Delhi Report: The Third Assembly of the WCC, 1961*. New York: Association, 1962.
- Fireling, Reinhart. “Ökumene”, *TRE*.
- Walls, Andrew F. “Mission VI”, *TRE*.
- Centenary of 1910 Edinburgh World Missionary Conference: Retrospect and Prospect of Mission and Ecumenism I, II*. Seoul: PCTS, 2009.
- Korean Evangelical Association Theological Committee. ed. *Seonggyeonggwa Shinhak 2*, 1984
- Korean Lausanne Committee For World Evangelization. *Lausanne Movement for World Evangelization*. Seoul: Pilgrim Press, 2009.
- Lausanne Covenant Article.

³⁷ LC. 1.