

**UNIVERSITY OF THE WESTERN CAPE**

**Thesis for PhD. Degree**

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**What does Athens 2005 have to do with Cape Town 2010? A critical comparison of mission theologies of the Commission for World Mission and Evangelism and of the Lausanne Movement on social responsibility.**

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## Key Words

Comprehensive

Evangelism

Ecumenical

Evangelical

Gospel

Holistic

Integral

Mission

Society

Transformation

Theology



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**Declaration**

**I declare that, “ What does Athens 2005 have to do with Cape Town 2010? A critical comparison of mission theologies of the Commission for World Mission and Evangelism and of the Lausanne Movement on social responsibility” is my work, that it has not been submitted before to any other university, and that all resources used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by complete reference.**

**Mavuto Jambulosi**

**December 2020**

**Signed.....**

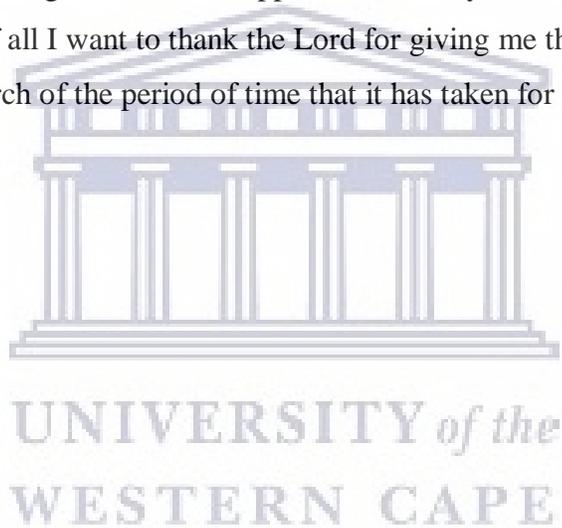


## ABSTRACT

This research compares the similarities and differences in the official documents and proceedings of the Commission for World Mission and Evangelism (CWME) in Athens 2005 and the Lausanne Movement held in Cape Town in 2010. The former has always exhibited a missiology strong in issues of social justice while the latter has for a long time been consistent in identifying mission as evangelism. The close of the 19<sup>th</sup> century and the early part of the 20<sup>th</sup> saw the emergence of the social gospel, which came about as a result of the historical critical approach to biblical texts. Fundamentalists, arose as a reactionary phenomenon to the social gospel, while emphasizing fundamentals of the Christian doctrines and a strict premillennial eschatology which resisted social involvement in favour of salvation of souls. Following the World Missionary Conference in Edinburgh in 1910, the International Missionary Society was formed in 1921 and most of the conservative evangelicals operated within the IMC but later began to move out due to several factors including the merger between the IMC and the WCC in 1961 where the IMC became the CWME. The missiology of this commission, was developed through periodic conferences held up to Athens 2005. The decade of the sixties, known as the “secular sixties”, saw the increase of secularism in ecumenical mission theology through the configuration of mission under the secularized Trinitarian concept of the *mission Dei*, a development that further divided the fragile relationship between conservative and conciliar missions. Thus beginning in 1966 in Wheaton and Berlin, evangelicals began to regain their social consciousness and organized themselves on a global level, leading eventually to the inauguration of the Lausanne Movement in Lausanne in 1974. Evangelical missiology developed through two more congresses in Manila, 1989 and in Cape Town, 2010 as well as other forums in between these congresses. A comparison of Athens and Cape Town should show some shifts from previous divergences between the two organisations to a narrowing of the divide, hence the quest to discover what Athens have to do with Cape Town.

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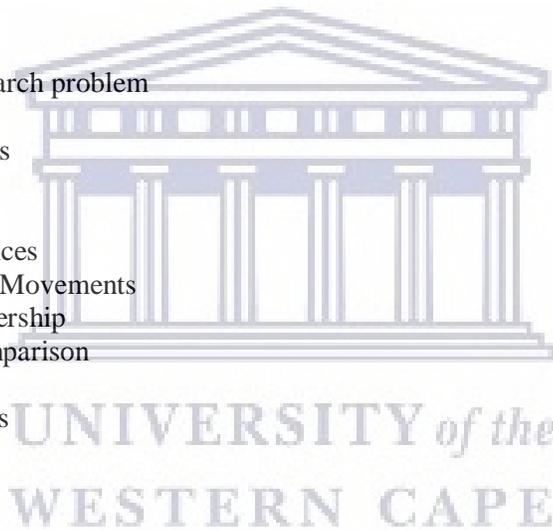


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## ABBREVIATIONS

ACCC	American Council of Christian Churches
COWE	Consultation on World Evangelization
CRESR	Consultation on the Relationship between Evangelism and Social Responsibility
CTC	Cape Town Commitment
CWME	Commission for World Mission and Evangelism
DOV	Decade to Overcome Violence
DWME	Division on World Mission and Evangelism
EA	Ecumenical Affirmation
EFMA	Evangelical Foreign Missions Association
EN	Evangelii Nuntiandi
FCC	Federal Council of Churches
FTL	Fraternidad Teologica Latinoamericana
IVF	InterVarsity Fellowship
IFMA	Interdenominational Foreign Mission
IMC	International Missionary Council
ISAL	Iglesia Sociedad en América Latina
LCWE	Lausanne Committee for World Evangelization
LC	Lausanne Covenant
LM	Lausanne Movement
LOP	Lausanne Occasional Paper
LTEG	Lausanne Theology and Education Group
LWF	Lutheran World Federation
MARC	Mission Advanced Research Center
MM	Manila Manifesto
NAE	National Association of Evangelicals
SCM	Student Christian Movement
SLC	Simple Lifestyle Consultation (Consultation on simple lifestyle)
SVM	Student Volunteer Movement
SWG	Strategy Working Group
TWG	Theology Working Group
WCC	World Council of Churches
WCSF	World's Student Christian Federation
WD	Wheaton Declaration
WEF	World Evangelical Forum
WMC	World Missionary Conference
WWI	World War I
WWII	World War II

## Chapter One

### Background and Context

#### 1.1 Introduction

This thesis is a critical comparative appraisal of mission theologies in the Commission for World Mission and Evangelism (CWME, Athens 2005) of the World Council of Churches (WCC) and the Lausanne Congress for World Evangelisation (LCWE/Lausanne Movement, Cape Town 2010) with a view to establishing the implications of such theologies on evangelism and social responsibility as well as investigate the possibility of a convergence of mission theology on the same between the CWME and LCWE. In this regard the research aims to relate the mission theology of Athens to that of Cape Town to establish similarities and differences.

#### 1.2 Context

The CWME and the Lausanne Movement are two branches of world Christianity which both associate their history with the 1910 World Missionary Conference which took place in Edinburgh. Prior to 1910 and before the rise of the Social Gospel movement in the 1920s, most theologically conservative evangelicals carried out various types of social services and practiced a mission approach that encompassed both revivalist oriented evangelism, as well as a pragmatic social activism (Marsden 1980:81). While the salvation of souls was held to be ultimate in this revivalist tradition, social work was nevertheless emphasized as an inevitable corollary of the evangelistic task. The latter was carried out within the framework of evangelism even though it was not necessarily delineated as secondary. To evangelicals, Christianity was considered “the only basis for a healthy civilization...as essential as the belief that souls must be saved for the life to come.” (Marsden 1980:12). To put it in the words of James L Barton (1915:6): “while the missionaries were promoting great, sweeping social movements, international in character and fundamental in reach, they did not recognize them as such, but continued there as we

did here to put supreme emphasis upon individual conversion.” As such social work and the evangelistic task were somewhat subsumed into each other and carried out by Christians “unselfconsciously without feeling the need to define what they were doing and why” (John Stott 1984:19).

During the time of the Evangelical Revival in the 18<sup>th</sup> century the type of mission that was carried out addressed both spiritual and philanthropic dimensions. The revivalistic fires in England and America are taken to account of the origins of the Christian social movements (Robert E. Webber 1979:169). John Wesley, stands out as one, among many, of the striking examples of Christians who not only were pietistic and evangelistic in practice but also inspired people to take up social causes as part of mission (Stott 1984:20). According to Stott (1984:20), historians credit Wesley with the influence that helped Britain avert the possibility of a bloody revolution as that which was experienced in France. He is referred to as “the preacher of the gospel and a prophet of social righteousness”. The rationale behind this is that, for Britain, while the phenomenon of social transformation was a result of more than one progenitor, “it nonetheless was mothered and nurtured by the Evangelical Revival of vital practical Christianity...The Evangelical Revival ‘did more to transfigure the moral character of the general populace, than any other movement British history can record.’” (Stott 1984:21). Webber describes Wesley as having been on the forefront of social change. Some of his socially oriented works include, opening a free medical facility for the poor in Bristol England in 1746, and in 1785, he organised a Friends Society to help the needy and strangers and many others things that he was involved in for the benefit of society. Other notable evangelicals who made an impact on the social arena include the Clapham Sect, under their guiding icon, William Wilberforce whose actions in parliament were directed by their evangelical faith. These were evangelicals who were committed to social action and they “gave large portions of their income for the support of social change (Webber 1979:170). They were associated with a number significant accomplishments in social work.” Some of the accomplishments of the Clapham sect include: 1) the first settlement of the freed slaves in Sierra Leon in 1787, the abolition of the trade in 1807, the registration of the slaves in the colonies in 1820, and finally their emancipation in 1833. (Stott 1984:21). Stott discusses several influential names during this period some of whom

include: Anthony Cooper a British parliamentarian (1826) who concerned himself with the plight of lunatics, child workers in factories and mills, boys who swept chimneys, women and children in mines and so forth.

In America, Charles G Finney is also credited with not only his evangelistic work but, little known to many, he was also concerned with reforms. According to Donald W. Dayton, in his book, *Discovering an Evangelical Heritage* (In Stott 1984:23), Finney was convinced that the gospel “‘releases a mighty impulse toward social reform’ and that the church’s neglect of social reform grieved the Holy Spirit and hindered revival.” Finney believed that “‘the great business of the church is to reform the world... The very profession of Christianity implies the profession and virtually an oath to do all that can be done for the universal reformation of the world.’” Most of the anti-slavery forces are said to have been drawn up from Finney’s young converts, Theodore Weld is a case in point. Theodore Weld worked for a while as Finney’s assistant and was not a parliamentarian like Wilberforce but his role, according to Stott, serves to show that the anti-slavery in America was accomplished not so much by heroes such as Wilberforce but “by very numerous obscure persons prompted by an impulse religious in character and evangelical in spirit which began in the Great Revival of 1830” (1984:23). Jonathan Blanchard, the founder of Wheaton College is also an important figure in the struggle towards social responsibility in the evangelical circles. Blanchard is said to have held the belief that, “Society is perfect where what is right in theory exists in fact; where practice coincides with principle and the Law of God is the Law of the Land” (In Webber 1979:173). According to Webber Blanchard did not separate his theology from practice. Rather than emphasizing right doctrine and private ethics, he was concerned with “right doctrine and a *public* ethic.” This was evident in his view on the doctrine human beings as made in the image of God, which to him was basic to his convictions against slavery. As a result Blanchard engaged with society to fight against the evil institution of slavery. In his motto, “For Christ and for His Kingdom” which he left for use at Wheaton college, he envisaged “the rule of God in the life of society, which brought about a gradual transformation of culture” (:173).

Mission, during this period, operated through laity and voluntarism which saw the formation of several voluntary mission societies starting the late 1700s through the 1800s. The laity and societies played significant roles in addressing some social issues of the time which encompassed such issues as education, alleviation of poverty, moral reforms, home missions and so forth (Mark Hutchinson and J Wolffe 2012:70-74). With time these efforts were put in place to establish new forms of cooperation through the concept of ‘comity’ or interdenominational cooperation. The comity approach saw evangelicals uniting and cooperating to better pursue evangelism (in Bevens 2004:208) and to also engage the society by committing huge financial resources to the development of schools, hospitals and other such social institutions (Scott W. Sunquist 2013:108). Such mission cooperation and voluntarism can be attributed to the ideology of the Enlightenment and the French Revolution, hence the banding together of individuals for a common cause, the optimistic view of humanity coupled with the motivation to make a difference in the world and the ideology of social and political egalitarianism seen in the emerging democracies (Bosch 1991:328). By and large it was an evangelical mission enterprise shaped by the optimistic spirit of the Enlightenment, the revivalist element of the Great Awakening as well as the foundations of earlier Pietistic movement (Bevens 2004:212; Bosch 1991:328). Thus, the evangelicalism stemming from this socio-religious milieu naturally incorporated social engagement as part and parcel of its practice of faith (Al Tizon 2010:62).

One is bound to inquire as to what changed after 1910 that led to the diminution of the evangelical/ecumenical missionary cooperation of the 1800s to a decisive split in missionary outlook between what would be two mutually exclusive (more or less) bodies termed evangelical and ecumenical, one of which would focus mainly on evangelism while the other on issues of social justice. Two observations could be made to account for this phenomenon.

### 1.2.1 Social Gospel and the Fundamentalism

The story behind the evangelical’s aversion of social responsibility cannot be discussed without exploring the impact of the fundamentalist – modernist controversy on the

evangelical missional conscience. During the period from 1870 to 1890 it was not disputed whether Christians should be involved in social work as was evidenced by the social dimensions of the holiness movement (Marsden 1980:81-82). Holiness Christians and leaders were involved in both evangelism and social work. Social gospel protagonists began to slowly gain ground in the 1890s so much so that by 1900 it became strong enough to elicit a strong reaction from the conservative evangelicals who felt that the Christian faith and hence mission was being threatened.

The problem of the evangelical disembarkation from social work, especially in America, seemed to have been located in the hermeneutical departure point, with regards to the kingdom of God or the *millennium* which is recorded in Revelation 20:1-6. The major problem had to do with whether this scriptural passage and other related apocalyptic passages in the Bible needed to be taken as the basis for promulgating either a theology of social justice or a theology of strong revivalism? The said pericope talks about the thousand year rule of Christ on earth, and it is the passage from which the Latin term millennium was coined as a theological construct with eschatological orientation. While the term is not an easy one to define, some theologians use it as a synonym for ‘eschatology’ or ‘apocalypticism’ but it cannot be limited to these (Bosch 1991:313). The term millennium points to “a distinct end-historical category of certain duration and marked by a special form of Christocracy” (Kuzmic 1985:138). Simply defined it can be taken as “the biblical vision of a final golden age within history” (James Moorhead in Bosch 1991:313), under the reign of Christ. The definition of this term, entails the type of missiology that issues from it because “one’s view of the purpose and goal of history as pointing to the eschaton definitely modifies one’s attitude toward the this-worldly historical realities” (Kuzmic 1985:136). The main contention surrounding the millennial kingdom has to do with the precise stage at which the golden age would be established. In other words, does the golden age of peace, tranquillity and prosperity precede or succeed the second coming of Christ? Furthermore, by what means would the millennium period come into effect? Will God intervene cataclysmically at the eschaton or will human efforts bring about the kingdom of peace and prosperity on earth? While further discussion will follow below, a brief differentiation of the two concepts at this stage will be in order. Pre-millennialism refers to

the belief that “Christ will return to reign on earth for a thousand years before history is brought to a close” (William Dyrness and Veli-Matti Kärkkäinen (eds) 2008:281). This view was very common during the first three centuries when the church was undergoing persecution (Dyrness and Kärkkäinen 2008:281). So the early church was pretty much premillennial in its eschatology until after the fourth century when Constantine became emperor and favored the church. After his ascendance, premillennialism was often held by radical groups which opposed the state support religion. The postmillennial view of the rule of Christ through human history was articulated by Augustine (354-430) who equated the time of the church under Constantine as a time of Christ’s rule with his saints. This view had been held in the Roman Catholic Church, Reformed and the others church with social orientation (Trent C. Butler (ed) 1991:433). Postmillennialism holds that Jesus will return “after (“post”) an earthly kingdom is established” (Trent C Butler (ed) 1991:433). While historic premillennialists hold to Christ’s return before establishing the millennium, postmillennialists hold that “the millennium will be simultaneous with an era of ordinary human history” (1991:433).

When it comes to postmillennialism there is need to take note of two types of this view, namely, evangelical postmillennialism and liberal postmillennialism which is the subject of discussion in this thesis. In the eighteenth and nineteenth century, evangelical postmillennial eschatology was the predominant view (1985:138) both in England, and in America. Kuzmic (:138) says, “the rise of evangelical post-millennialism is usually associated with the Great Awakening (1740-1743) and with Puritan and Pietistic thinking and practice. This millennial hope was linked to the fulfilment of the Great Commission hence the active involvement in mission and evangelization. In this view the kingdom would be set up through the effective preaching of the gospel in the world and Christianization of the world in the process of doing so. This is why some of the most prominent evangelical leaders in this period were associated with postmillennial theology. Some of the leaders that Kuzmic (1985:138) identifies as postmillennialists include: Philipp Spener, Daniel Whitby, John Own, Samuel Rutherford, John and Charles Wesley, Jonathan Edwards, Charles Hodge, Benjamin Warfield, A.H. Strong and James Orr. Jonathan Edwards, father of the Great Awakening was a postmillennial advocate who

believed that “revival and mission were signs of the progressive development by which the millennium would arrive” (:138). This entails why the evangelical mission of the eighteenth century was strong in issues of social responsibility. Their view of the kingdom was quite optimistic in outlook and they believed in the gradual improvement and redemption of the world and that the golden age of prosperity, justice and peace as the rule of Christ would occur prior to the coming of Christ. In the meantime the evangelical postmillennialist put emphasis on the teachings of Christ that required “social justice, and the elimination of poverty, exploitation, and disease...[the postmillennialist] ‘takes more seriously or at least more literally, the socio-political aspects of the biblical prophecies’ and ‘expects the rule of Christ, exercised by the Holy Spirit and mediated by the word of the gospel, ultimately to transform dramatically men’s social, political, and international relations’” (Kuzmic 1985:139). So here we have Biblicist form of postmillennialism which has as its basis, the proclamation of the world of God and intertwines it with social activism in the process of carrying out mission. Since proclamation was central to mission endeavours, this entails why pre- and postmillennialists had no clear dividing lines during that time and as Bosch puts it (1991:315), “the accent fell, rather on the responsibility of all believers in the present and on united action.” It was not until the 1840s that the terms were coined and began to surface since by that time competition among churches in North America had become stiff and it became necessary to delineate and differentiate what one believed in relation to what others believed. When differences were emphasized more than similarities, divergences among evangelicals began to occur with the resultant need to differentiate between pre- and postmillennialist (1991:315).

The postmillennial postulate ended up taking liberal overtones due to a number of factors, one of which was the influence of the historical critical method in biblical studies which had emanated from German theological schools. Such a theology, also termed liberal theology was seen as undermining cardinal Christian doctrines (Kuzmic 1985:143). Having successfully cast doubt on the dates of the books of Daniel and Revelation, the mainstays of millennial speculation, earlier expectations of millennialism ebbed away and Christians had little interest in their anticipation of the second coming of Christ (Bosch 1991:320-321). This gave room to the rise of idea that the kingdom of God could be

established in the world through human effort. Drawing from the theology of such liberal theologians as Albrecht Ritschl, the theology of social action was based on postmillennial understanding of the kingdom of God which emphasised not so much the supernatural return of Christ but the gradual betterment of the world as the primary role of mission. The kingdom was taken to be a present ethical reality in the world “which would be introduced step by step through successful labors in missionary endeavor abroad and through creating an egalitarian society at home” (Bosch 1991:321). Walter Rauschenbusch an influential exponent of the social gospel and author of *Christianity and the Social Order* (1919) and *A Theology for the Social Gospel* (1917), boldly declared that “the doctrine of the kingdom of God was ‘itself the social gospel’” (in Bosch 1991:321). This enunciation entailed that all supernatural features of the gospel were discarded and mission was taken to be “inner-worldly, anthropocentric and naturalistic...The supernatural was eliminated and superseded by professionalism, efficiency and scientific planning” (1991:321). According to the social gospel, the intention was to move over time “toward a Christian society in which social life would be a reflection of true Christian values...contrasted with the old gospel of saving souls” (Oddvar Sten Ronsen 2016:13). Some of the key ideas of social gospel advocates included the idea of natural continuity and social progress coupled with an air of optimism. There was no need for discontinuities nor crises before the dawn of a new epoch since the kingdom of God did not need to involve both “death and resurrection, both crises and promise, but only the completion of tendencies now established” (Niebuhr 1959:183 in Bosch 1991). Progressivism became the primary concern of mission.

The jettisoning of the transcendent also had an effect on how God was to be understood in this social outlook. God was postulated only as a loving and benevolent being who embodied all ideal human attributes. This led to the doctrine of the *fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of all people*, a teaching that had negative effects on the traditional soteriological perception of Jesus who from that time was taken simply as the benevolent wise teacher (Bosch 1991:322).

It is worthwhile to briefly highlight here that Bosch discusses three other factors that he saw as contributing to a liberal postmillennial outlook. He asserts that; 1) People became suspect of some of the bizarre apocalypticism promulgated by some premillennial groups such as the Quakers and the Millerites who were considered as ‘crackpots or fools’ in

‘respectable’ circles. 2) The Civil War in America did not usher in the expected utopia but instead bred malaise due to increased social problems. 3) Unprecedented technological development brought changes to society which had negative repercussions on the theological certainties which did not seem to adequately address this new milieu (Bosch 1991:320).

Gerald Anderson (1988:105), identified four areas in which changes in missionary thinking had taken place due to the influence of liberal theology around 1915. He based his observations on articles by James L Barton (1915) and J.P. Jones (1915). The general conclusion in these articles indicates that missionaries had begun to change their perception on how mission work was to be understood. Firstly non-Christian religions were no longer seen as entirely false but were instead viewed as containing elements of truth. Barton’s statement (1915:4) encapsulates the thinking of the day when he pointed out that “the modern missionary goes out with the purpose of conserving all true values in the religious thought, life and practices of the people whom he approaches.” Rather than being judgemental and attacking the religions of others, “the modern missionary proclaims a sympathetic constructive gospel.” This meant that liberals of this persuasion, “not only abhorred revivalism but also lacked enthusiasm for direct evangelism” and opted for a permeative form of Christian influence (Bosch 1991:322).

Secondly, missions changed their emphasis *from the individual to society*(my emphasis). Due to the influence of secular sciences, it was premised that since individuals are profoundly influenced and shaped by their environments it would follow that changing an individual’s context would be more plausible than changing only the individual while leaving their context untouched (Bosch 1991:323). Missionaries, according to Barton (1915:7), were said to “have reached the point where they plan for the development of Christian institutions that shall reshape public sentiment, instil their ideals and lofty purposes into every phase of society...”. Commenting on this shift from the individual to society, J.P. Jones quotes Rev. Bernard Lucas, the author of *The Empire of Christ*, as saying, “We now seek not to save the soul of the Hindu but the soul of India.” Using a shipwreck illustration to describe the missionary task of saving the lost, Lucas came to the

conclusion that while the church was in the past concerned with rescuing individual passengers (as D.L. Moody had defined his task), the modern church “thinks not so much of rescuing individuals as it does of saving the ship itself” (1915:21). The end result of the purpose of mission work in any land becomes not so much the numerical growth of the Christian church but the “advancement of the Kingdom of God in that land.” The church diminishes in its importance but retains the role of “instrumentality in the furtherance of the Kingdom of Christ” (:23). Thus the shift from the individual to the society was built on the concept of the kingdom of God which had a postmillennial departure point.

Thirdly, Christian mission work was reoriented to focus less on preaching and assumed a broader range of transformational activities. Primacy was laid on social involvement rather than evangelism (Bosch 1991:322-323). This shift was markedly seen, for instance, in the gradual change of missional focus in the Student Volunteer Movement which, at its inception in 1886 had coined the motto, “Evangelization of this world in this generation”, no doubt referring to the leading of lost souls to Christ. Bosch (1991:323), notes that this watchword began to lose its significance by the second decade of the twentieth century as people raised questions about a broader approach to Christian missions and internationalism. At a student conference held by SVM in Northfield in 1917 participants raised the question “Does Christ offer an adequate solution for the burning social and international questions of the day?” (Anderson 1988:106). Such an enquiry was indicative of the radical reorientation that had begun to take place in the thinking and methodology of the SVM as was later witnessed in the student conventions of 1919 and 1923 when the students called for “a radical change in assumptions and methods underlying the SVM activity and conventions,” to accommodate the students’ new found interest in issues of race, war, and the social order” (Anderson 1988:107).

Lastly, there was a change of emphasis on the missionary message from one that stressed salvation to one that laid more stress on salvation for life in the present world. Salvation was viewed as having implications not just for the individual but as “salvation to oneself and for himself, and to society and for society – salvation for the sake of the world in which he lives” (Barton 1915:15). There was little emphasis placed on the redemption of a person

so as to inherit eternal life, rather people were to be saved “in order that they may give to their fellowmen and to the world a life that was intended for the world”. This, according to Barton, led to the decrease of emphasis upon creeds and mere forms of belief and missionaries were as a result “writing creeds less than they were in the earlier days” (:16). This thought is echoed in Jones’ analysis of mission work in India when he says (1915:32):

Anything that appertains to *human betterment* (my emphasis) finds place today in the scheme of missions. It is no longer the picture of the missionary of the early part of the nineteenth century, standing in the shade of a tree preaching to a few undressed savages. He is rather the leader and inspirer of a mighty organized enterprise, whose many departments of effort touch the life of the people at all points and seek to ameliorate the condition of man in all spheres of his life and activity.

The foregoing assertions by Barton and Jones correspond with Walter Rauschenbusch’s notion of “religious morality” which he defined as “the only thing God cares about” (In Marsden 1980:90-91). This thinking implies that “theological doctrine and affirmation of faith in Christ and his deeds were irrelevant, except as an inspiration to moral action, specifically social action” (:91). This is to say, the social gospel did not discard all belief but chose to be pragmatic about its operation by asserting that nothing can be known about the validity of beliefs unless they are seen in action (:91) or as Bosch (1991:321) puts it, the social gospel worshiped “the cult of efficiency and pragmatism”.

If postmillennialists were on one end of the continuum, conservative evangelicals positioned themselves at the other extreme end and promulgated a premillennialist understanding of the kingdom of God. This approach underscored that Jesus will return before the millennium and he will establish the kingdom of God thereupon (Butler 1991:433). The Parousia is a common theme in this tradition. It was emphasised as a motive for mission to the point where Christ’s return was “being understood as being dependent upon the successful completion of the missionary task”, so much so that Christ’s return was conditioned upon the successful completion of the preaching of the gospel (Bosch 1991:316). As a result of his understanding, the main mission of the church was to evangelise the world in preparation for the coming of Christ or even to hasten his coming.

Coupled with this expectation of the second coming, was the preparation for the judgement that would come with it. In order to escape the coming judgment, the individual's personal choice to accept Christ was crucial. D. L. Moody, considered the principal progenitor of fundamentalism, "rose to fame in the heyday of American individualism" and this milieu had a lot of influence on his missiological assumptions (Marsden 2006:36). In his preaching, Moody emphasised "personal sins, not involving victims besides oneself and members of one's family." As a result, he taught premillennialism together with "a new version of holiness doctrine which emphasized 'victory' over sin." Thus he not only stressed the need for personal holiness but also personal decision to accept Christ since the individual was pictured as standing alone before God. This individualistic view was also premised on dispensational premillennialism which emphasised that after the Pentecost, a new dispensation of the Spirit had begun whereupon the Holy Spirit now worked in the hearts of individuals as evidenced primarily through personal experience (Marsden 1980:86-87). This further precipitated the call for private or individualistic form of Christian life.

It needs to be qualified here that the sense in which Moody was a progenitor of fundamentalism was mainly through his belief in Biblical infallibility and premillennialism and that he taught and promoted a Christian ethos that was consistent with American fundamentalism. He however was not a typical fundamentalist (as his close associates were) in that he lacked one trait essential to a fundamentalist...he was opposed to controversy. Though he disapproved liberalism in the abstract he cultivated friendships with influential liberals. Moody's close associates however, had all traits of fundamentalism and later participated in organising the fundamentalist movement in the twentieth century (Marsden 2006:33).

This emphasis on a dispensational premillennial eschatology also influenced fundamentalists in developing a pessimistic view of society and fostering a life of separatism and non-engagement with socio-political structures. The understanding of dispensationalists was that, the world was on a rapid course downward and was "expected to grow worse and worse as part of God's programme for the last days, it makes no sense to try to improve society. It would be a waste of time and energy" (Peter Kuzmic 1985:144-

145). After all the world was considered to be under the heavy influence of Satan a fact which made it impossible for social reform to take place before Jesus came back to destroy Satan and set up the perfect kingdom (Timothy Weber in Kuzmic 1985:144). The coming of Christ is thus necessary because the world will be ruled by forces that are hostile to God and thus “Christ must conquer them before he establishes the kingdom (Butler 1991:433). Given this premise, focus should rather be placed on evangelism which was considered to be an urgent matter than social transformation. This is one of the reasons why Moody was attracted to the doctrine of premillennialism, since it not only gave shape to the new evangelism he was promoting but through “its pessimistic view of culture” it reinforced “a strong impetus to evangelism” (Marsden 2006:37). This pessimism led Moody to teach about the irredeemable depravity of society and to depict the society as a sinking boat which would only be saved through evangelism. Speaking of his evangelism mission in the world, Moody is reported to have said, “I look upon this world as a wrecked vessel, God has given me a lifeboat and said to me, ‘Moody, save all you can’” (Marsden 1980:37). In the words of Carl F. H. Henry (1947:158) there “is something in the very nature of Fundamentalism which makes a world ethical view impossible.” This led to the conviction that “Fundamentalism takes too pessimistic a view of human nature to make a social program practicable.”

Prior to this period of time, 1865 – 1900, American evangelicalism, and society at large “was dominated by a Calvinistic vision of a Christian culture” (Marsden 1980:85). This view was postmillennial as it sought to introduce God’s kingdom “by means of civil laws that would both restrain evil and comprehensively transform culture according to God’s will” (:86). This later gradually changed as holiness teaching from pietistic Methodist tradition crept into American evangelicalism while at the same time introducing the concept of dispensationalism around the 1870s which set the stage for a sectarian outlook on social issues. Moody is believed to have intentionally led the trend to move from the nineteenth century emphasis on social dimensions of sin and holiness in favour of charity and evangelism but later dropped direct social involvement saying it was a distraction from the primary concern of evangelism. For Moody, evangelism was the best way to meet social needs since he believed that conversion inevitably led to personal responsibility and

moral uplift (1980:36). So at this stage the premillennialists did not necessarily “abandon politics or become entirely ‘private’ in their outlook.” Their doctrines however acted as contributory factors towards social aversion because there are times when their views “augmented trends toward more private Christianity” and there are also times when their doctrines provided “rationales for rejecting social reform”(1980:89).

Marsden points out that among other things it is mainly this emergence of the social gospel between 1900 and 1930 that caused the Great Reversal when the fundamentalists reacted to the liberal social gospel (1980:90, 91). He seems to suggest (:90) that dispensational and pre-millennial views may not have been entirely responsible for the rise in fundamentalism, but rather acted as contributing factors of the Great Reversal. He agrees however that the dispensationalist and holiness theology was used in some cases to argue for withdrawal and private life. Marsden points out that up to 1920 a correlation could be drawn between the rise of the social gospel as well as the decline of revivalist social concerns. It was perceived that this type of gospel was beginning to eclipse evangelism and jeopardize the evangelistic task as it seemed to jettison completely the idea of the transcendence (Bosch 1991:402). Because of this, most evangelicals particularly in America steered away from social concern (Tizon 2010:62). Moody withdrew from the pursuance of social work in pursuit of evangelism, citing that focusing on social issues was getting in the way of what he considered the most important task of saving souls. He is reported to have said (In Marsden 2006:36-37):

When I was at work for the City Relief Society before the fire I used to go to a poor sinner with the Bible in one hand and a loaf of bread in the other.... My idea was that I could open a poor man’s heart by giving him a load of wood or a ton of coal when the winter was coming on, but I soon found out that he wasn’t any more interested in the Gospel on that account. Instead of thinking how he could come to Christ, he was thinking how long it would be before he got the load of wood. If I had the Bible in one hand and a loaf in the other the people always looked first at the loaf; and that was just the contrary of the order laid down in the Gospel.

Fundamentalists did not espouse a clear social theology, rather they held that spiritual conversion of individuals was primary and would logically lead to the transformation of

society. According to Marsden, Moody “was convinced that the most compassionate possible care was for a person’s eternal soul. Furthermore, evangelism was, according to his theology, the best way to meet social needs” (2006:36). It is from this theological hermeneutic that the fundamentalists launched an attack on the liberals and their social gospel at the same time. Fundamentalists, almost unawares, “became increasingly absorbed in resistance to non-evangelical humanism as a deceptive competitor for the commitment of multitudes...” (Henry 1947:210). In the process of doing this they ended up hurting their own social conscience and took up a form of biblical apologetics that would later lead them into an extreme fundamentalist outlook leading to withdrawal from all forms of social engagement. Carl F. H. Henry argues that Fundamentalism ended up narrowing the redemptive world changing gospel message to a “world resisting message” as a way of protesting non-evangelical ideologies. He points out that in the process of trying to steer clear of the social gospel, Fundamentalism came to react also not only against the social programs of the modern reformers but against the Christian moral imperative (:210, 232). He goes on to note that though this Fundamentalism was an “heir-apparent to the supernaturalist gospel of the Biblical and Reformation minds”, the movement had become a stranger to the “predominant spirit”, “the vigorous social interest of its ideological forebears”. Instead of keeping with the true ethos of its forebears, Henry asserted (1947:338):

Modern Fundamentalism does not explicitly sketch the social implications of its message for the non-Christian world; it does not challenge the injustices of the totalitarianisms, the secularisms of modern education, the evils of racial hatred, the wrongs of current labor-management relations, the inadequate bases of international dealings. It has ceased to challenge Caesar and Rome, as though in futile resignation and submission to the triumphant Renaissance mood. The apostolic Gospel stands divorced from a passion to right the world. The Christian social imperative is today in the hands of those who understand it in sub-Christian terms.

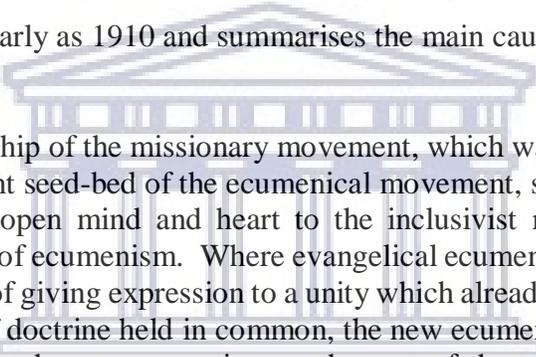
From this time on, most evangelical fundamentalists took a combative stance and began to espouse a theology of personal and micro-ethics that focused mainly on the individual sin than social evil. As noted above, “By late 1920s, to be evangelical meant, for most, identification with pre-millennial fundamentalism that reactively erased social

responsibility from the missionary agenda” (Tizon 2010:62). Those who held such an anti-modernist view were by 1940s “generally quite happy to accept the label of ‘fundamentalist’” (Brian Stanley 2013:29). While it would take several years to steer the mainstream evangelical community from the fundamentalism, some traits of the fundamentalist ethos would nevertheless become permanent attributes of the evangelical theology.

### 1.2.2 Fundamentalism and Insistence on Doctrine before Cooperation

Another factor that drove a wedge between evangelicals and ecumenicals had to do with the insistence by conservative evangelicals on doctrine prior to cooperation contrary to the view that churches needed to put pre-eminence on cooperation and unity. It would seem that the conservative evangelical constituency present at Edinburgh was not pleased with the avoidance of doctrinal issues by conference organisers to opt for inclusivity of participants. According to Scott Latourette (2004:359), the Edinburgh conference was built on the principle that “no expression of opinion should be sought from the Conference on any matter involving any ecclesiastical or doctrinal questions on which those taking part in the Conference differed among themselves”, rather, they were to hold to the ideal that sought to project “the aim of all missionary work to plant in each non-Christian nation one undivided Church of Christ.” As such the conference deliberately left out questions of doctrine and polity so as to make room for a wide ecumenical forum (Bevans 2004:220) and to foster mutual respect among Christian denominations (Latourette 2004:406). Conference organisers confined the agenda to “strategy, policy issues—missionary training, missions and governments, the message in mission contexts, the church on the mission field...” something that David Hesselgrave calls ‘the fateful decision of 1910’, (Hesselgrave 2007:121). It was assumed by the conference organisers that, since most of the invited agencies were comprised of evangelicals or at least considered evangelical then there was no need to sign any sort of doctrinal agreement (:122) nor make any further screening of the delegates and their beliefs (:124).

In his survey of events leading to Edinburgh and afterwards in the article *Edinburgh 1910, Evangelicals and the Ecumenical Movement*, Harold Rowdon (1967:67), suggests two key issues that can be pointed out as the possible reasons for the nascent parting of ways in the years that followed. He argues that the inclusivity policy adopted at the conference antagonised the evangelicals because “it signalled the entry – apparently on their own terms- of the High Church interest.” Furthermore Edinburgh accepted within the ecumenical movement “men who were prepared to dilute their evangelical beliefs with considerable amounts of liberal thought...a factor that has continued to serve as a wedge between evangelicals and the ecumenical movement”. Rowdon argues, the effect that Edinburgh had on many evangelicals had not by the time he wrote his article been given a proper appraisal. He sees the gradual withdrawal of evangelicals from the ecumenical movement occurring as early as 1910 and summarises the main causes as (1967:67):



The home leadership of the missionary movement, which was undoubtedly the most important seed-bed of the ecumenical movement, seriously began at Edinburgh to open mind and heart to the inclusivist rather than the evangelical basis of ecumenism. Where evangelical ecumenism looked for ways and means of giving expression to a unity which already existed in the form of a body of doctrine held in common, the new ecumenism attempted to find unity through common action on the part of those who were not united on fundamental doctrines. The result was the same on the wider stage as it had been in the colleges: evangelicals began to find themselves edged out of the very movement they had commenced. True, many have remained within it; but their position is tenuous. If there is one point at which the issue was decided in principle, it was surely Edinburgh 1910.

The two viewpoints that Rowdon has suggested acted as a grounds upon which ideological and missional divergence was bred over the years that followed. Hesselgrave blames Edinburgh for setting a precedent that became, in Stephen Neill’s words, “the starting point of the modern ecumenical movement in all its forms” (In Hesselgrave 2007:122). He argues that henceforth, the IMC, which was an offshoot of Edinburgh, followed this precedent; “instead of thinking in terms of doctrine, or statement of faith, they thought in terms of ‘functions’ or purposes...and has been characterized by organizational togetherness than theological consensus” (:123). In a view similar to that of Rowdon, Hesselgrave defends the need for doctrinal inclusion at Edinburgh and argues that

“planners should not only have refused to rule out doctrinal discussion, they should have insisted on including doctrinal discussion both when planning the conference and when guiding conference proceedings”(124). He argues that the exclusion of doctrine had four ‘deleterious’ outcomes to subsequent Christian mission. First it produced “a narrow focus on the nonchristian world” thereby bypassing challenges that were being faced by Protestant missions in Latin America. Secondly, this indecisiveness on doctrinal issues was later reflected in the vacillation and confusion in IMC and WCC with regards to what really constitutes mission as well as the relationship between church and mission. Thirdly, he argues that it proved to be ineffective in training future leaders. Lastly he posits that the Edinburgh error “was ultimately reflected in the virtual abandonment of missions on the part of mainline Protestant denominations in America” (:125-126). Hesslgrave believes that it was two key twentieth century conservative Protestant movements that addressed the error of Edinburgh, namely, the fundamentalist first then the evangelicals later (:127).

The issue of doctrinal agreement before cooperation became a crucial benchmark in missionary cooperation from the conservative perspective. Its roots could be partly traced back to the theological ethos of the middle of nineteenth century confessionalism. Although Edinburgh stood in succession of the earlier conferences in the previous century, it had some distinctive features that marked some difference from its predecessors (Latourette 2004:357). The inclusivity principle showed a marked departure from earlier conferences which were characteristically Protestant and made up mainly of those who had come out of the Evangelical Awakenings and did not have any affection for the Catholic tradition (Latourette 2004:360). It would seem that, conservative evangelicals might have looked at Edinburgh as continuing with the spirit of the previous conferences which, by the end of the century had been marked by a reaffirmation of voluntarism coupled with an adherence to confessionalism. During 1850s, most church traditions opted to sponsor denominational missions and “became markedly less willing to leave foreign mission to pandenominational or nondenominational associations” (Hutchison 1987:95 in Bosch 1991:331). Churches became consumed with the establishment of church identity hence the move from “*conversio gentilium* – the conversion of the individual persons” of the earlier period of voluntarism, “to *plantatio ecclesiae*, church planting” (Bosch 1991:331). Thus from the

1850s onwards, efforts were made to plant confessional churches on the mission field with the advance of the gospel measured by “counting tangible things such as the number of baptisms, confessions and the communions and the opening of new mission stations or outposts” (Bosch 1991:332). During this period, Henry Venn and Rufus Anderson were quite prominent with their promulgation of the “three self” principle in planting indigenous churches popularised in the slogan “self-governing”, “self-supporting”, and “self-propagating” (Bosch 1991:331; Bevans and Schroeder 2004:213). It is also within this scenario that many theologically conservative Protestant missionary agencies known as “faith missions” were formed.

Faith missions adapted the late eighteenth century voluntary society model and also maintained an eschatological motif in their theology (Bosch 1991:333). This can be seen in the formation of the Interdenominational Foreign Mission Association (IFMA) in 1917. Among the founding agencies of the IFMA were Africa Inland Mission, Central American Mission, China Inland Mission, South Africa General Mission, and Sudan Interior Mission (Anderson 1988:105-106). China Inland Mission was considered the most famous and the prototype (Bosch 1991:332-333). Such missions were nondenominational in affiliation and conservative in their faith and adhered to “the fundamental doctrines of the historic Christian faith” (Anderson 1988:105). With such a background, it would follow that those of a conservative persuasion would have felt uneasy about the presence of Anglo-Catholic elements at Edinburgh as this would be seen not only as a threat and compromise to their doctrinal stance but as an impingement upon their evangelistic mission practice which, no doubt had been seen as standing in line with the tradition of the historic evangelical awakenings of the preceding two centuries. As Hesselgrave puts it, “Edinburgh 1910—avoided an opportunity to reinforce the authority of the Scriptures and reinvigorate the doctrinal verities that comprise the true gospel, confute its rivals and motivate its dissemination” (2007:127).

Having noted the foregoing, it is important to observe that, among other things the conservative evangelical constituency, having been influenced by the ethos of faith missions, placed great importance on the need for doctrinal unity before cooperation which

is one of the reasons that led to the formation of IFMA barely a decade after Edinburgh. According to Bosch (1991:333), some elements of faith missions, both positive and negative “became the common heritage of the modern evangelical missionary movement.” Among other things faith missions emphasized “the simple gospel of salvation through Jesus Christ”, “an almost convulsive preoccupation with saving people’s souls before Judgment Day,” and “virtually no interest in the societal dimension of the Christian gospel”. The contention being made here is that, Rowdon’s argument on doctrinal unity as prerequisite for cooperation should be taken seriously as a contributing factor to the evangelical ecumenical separation after 1910.

Survey of events in America, Britain and Europe that led to the differentiation of evangelicals from fundamentalists also reinforce the role that doctrine and confession played as the basis of cooperation in mission. In his book, *The Global Diffusion of Evangelicalism*, Brian Stanley shows that the dynamics leading to the establishment of evangelicalism in the different continents were not all the same (2013:29-60). In America, the basis upon which the new evangelicalism was forged starting from the 1940s onwards was by trying to make an appeal to both the ultra-conservative and separatist fundamentalist camp on one hand while at the same time trying to appeal theologically to the liberal and moderates in the American society. As Brian Stanley (2013:27-28) puts it, “leaders of the middle ground of the movement sought greater clarity of identity by differentiating their goals and ethos from separatist fundamentalists on the one hand, and, on the other, both doctrinally imprecise ‘liberal evangelicals’ and advocates of neo-orthodoxy.” The National Association of Evangelicals (NAE) formed by Harold Ockenga in 1942 represented such an effort to “provide a platform for united evangelical witness to the nation and the US government.” It envisaged to do this in a two pronged manner by offering an alternative to the liberal Federal Council of Churches (FCC) on one hand and by being more broad based than the American Council of Christian Churches (ACCC) which claimed to speak for fundamentalists or evangelicals but in reality it was somewhat separatist as it excluded historic Protestant denominations. The ACCC, was established in 1941 by the ‘Bible Presbyterian’ Carl McIntire and seemed to segregate against the historic Protestant denominations, (Stanley 2013:30). It is within such a scenario that NAE sought

to embody “an ecumenism of all those who stood for the fundamentals of the faith” (Stanley 2013:30). The founding of Fuller Theological seminary, for instance, was an endeavour by middle ground evangelicals to forge an evangelical outlook that would appeal to both sides of the divide, though “the tightrope they had suspended between liberalism and fundamentalism was a difficult and demanding one to walk” as it was not easy to establish a stable equilibrium between some conservative doctrines such as biblical inspiration, for instance, and a “genuine commitment to scholarship” (:37). Doctrine was thus the basis upon which American evangelicalism sought to define its identity. Cooperation in mission, was for the most part carried out on the basis of one’s confession of faith and how well it agreed with the accepted body of doctrine.

Though the fundamentalism in Britain was not on the same scale as that experienced in America, the main concern was with determining “precisely where the line should be drawn between evangelicals and those of more liberal persuasion”(:39). In this atmosphere, English evangelicalism, even found it impossible to retain English conservative and centrist evangelicalism as one single unit in evangelicalism in what Stanley refers to as the Edinburgh controversy (Stanley 2013:47-48). In 1953, the London IVF disaffiliated the Edinburgh Christian Union from associating with the SCM for the sole reason that the evangelicalism in Scotland was centrist in its orientation (Stanley 2013:47). A further element in British evangelicalism was the emphasis that was placed on doctrinal essentials as was done at the annual Islington clerical conference of Anglican evangelicals held in 1947.

Hugh Gough, vicar of Islington chose the conference theme as “Evangelical essentials” and attempted to address five subject areas which were taken to be essential to the evangelical faith and held in common by Anglicans. The five areas outlined were; authority, worship, preaching, the church and the individual (:39). While it was not immediately easy to establish doctrinal consensus in England, the mood changed later as the liberals felt more disinclined to claim the term evangelical leaving it to the possession of the conservatives. Later on from 1959 onwards issues of doctrine took on a renewed impetus as emerging younger evangelical clergy “combined firmly orthodox theology with a repudiation of sectarian attitudes”(:43).

### 1.2.3 The Problem of Liberal Secularisation and the Decisive Split with Evangelicals

Apart from the doctrinal challenge posed by the fundamentalists, starting, the early years of the ecumenical movement, the Christian church found itself struggling with the issue of secularisation that was touched on at the first IMC council in 1928. The ensuing Hocking Report produced four years after the conference revealed the secularistic and syncretistic direction that mission theology was heading. Such thinking took a step further than the regular social gospel and presented “a radical departure from the traditional concept of missions, the role of the missionary, and the relation of Christianity to other religions.” (Anderson 1988:106). As such this view received widespread criticism for its “optimism and relativism” although it also had its sympathisers such as the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions (:107). The secularism debate of the 1930s had already started showing a gap between conservative theologians and those who held the progressive view of mission.

The middle of twentieth century saw an increased trend toward secularisation, a missional perspective that was characterised by the desacralization of the church, the redefinition of the church as a secular movement (Anderson 1988:109). Such a theological orientation brought an expanded form of the liberal progressivism which further increased the contention between conservative evangelicals and their ecumenical counterparts with regards to their understanding of what really constituted Christian mission. As we shall see in the second chapter, the secularized notion of *missio Dei* that became the accepted view among the ecumenicals in the sixties further widened the gap and increased antagonism. Ecumenists’ mission theology had fully matured such that mission was thus understood in socio-political categories and shifted emphasis “from preaching the Gospel to social action by the church and the Christianization of society by socio-political, economic and cultural influences” (Chongnam 1985:216). The secularisation of mission became characteristic of the ecumenical mission such that for ecumenists, social involvement was a form of mission in itself since it was taken to complement what God was already doing in the world. Be that as it may, one needs to point out that even though Uppsala represented the climax of secularised missiology, it was not necessarily antagonistic to some traditional ways of

missionary approach *per se*. Scherer points out that at times Uppsala has been judged for some radical theological positions that were actually not representative of the assembly but of some individual theological scholars in the ecumenical movement who participated in *Church for Others* study which had earlier been sanctioned by the New Delhi assembly in 1961. Hoekendijk is a case in point as will be discussed in the second chapter (1987:113). At Uppsala there were also calls for holistic mission, by people like Visser't Hooft who called for a balance between vertical and horizontal aspects in mission (In Scherer 1987:120).

Since however, secularization seemed to have been the major emphasis of Uppsala, evangelicals felt they needed to make a concerted plea for the salvation of the lost lest this aspect of Christian mission was ignored. Such a notion was raised by McGavran who, by asking the question, "Will Uppsala betray the two billion," (*Church Growth Bulletin*, 4:5, May 1968) accused Uppsala of forgetting the two billion souls who stood in need of salvation (Scherer 1987:121). For evangelicals, some of whom had now been affected by the combative style of fundamentalism, mission was mainly defined in soteriological terms as the verbal proclamation of the gospel and the saving of souls through evangelisation (Chongnam Cho 1985:216). This was based on the understanding that social transformation came as a corollary of effective evangelisation. Thus there was a dualistic perspective between evangelism and social concern in evangelical missiology.

With the official inauguration of the Lausanne Movement in 1974 a significant shift in evangelical theology of mission was noticed. The issue of social engagement was given a place at this conference and it would take a few other consultations for further maturation of this theology. Nevertheless, this move began to give hope that a convergence with the estranged ecumenical brethren was perhaps a possibility particularly given that the conservative evangelical community embodied in the Lausanne was now willing to tackle issues of social engagement. This warrants the study and appraisal of Lausanne's theology of mission to understand their current thinking on evangelism and social involvement but also whether there has been indeed any narrowing of the gap with their ecumenical counterparts.

#### 1.2.4 Brief History of CWME

After Edinburgh the ecumenical line of mission developed through the efforts of the continuation committee established at the conference under the leadership of J. R. Mott as the chairman and J. H. Oldham as the secretary. In the year 1921 in New York the continuation committee brought into existence the International Missionary Council which provided a tangible tool for inter-confessional cooperation in mission (Bosch 1991:459). Four years later (1925) the 'Life and Work' movement met for the first time in Stockholm through the efforts of Nathan Söderblom (Visser't Hooft 1986). In 1927 in Lausanne, the 'Faith and Order' movement came into existence through the efforts of Bishop Charles Brent (Rowdon 1967:52). Following the proposal made in Oxford and Edinburgh in 1937 these two movements were meant to merge in 1938 when the WCC constitution was elaborated (Visser't Hooft 1986) but the projected plan was disrupted due to the Second World War (Howell 1982:4). Finally in 1948 the merger took place resulting in the formation of the World Council of Churches. The IMC continued separately with its conciliar focus on mission but a plan was put in place for its continued close cooperation with the newly formed WCC. Some of the conferences that IMC held from the time of Edinburgh include Jerusalem 1928, Tambaram 1938, Whitby 1947, Willingen 1952 and Achimota 1958. In 1958 a decision was reached to integrate the IMC into the WCC. This decision came to fruition in New Delhi in 1961 where the IMC became the Commission for World Mission and Evangelism. From here we can talk of an officially distinct ecumenical missiology. The CWME held subsequent meetings through which we can see the further development of ecumenical missionary thinking within the modern and postmodern world. These meetings include, Mexico City, 1963, Bangkok 1973, Melbourne 1980, San Antonio 1989 and Athens 2005.

#### 1.2.5 Brief History of the Lausanne Movement

The LCWE see themselves as the spiritual successor (Berlin 1966) of 1910. Even though the movement did not develop structures directly after Edinburgh, subsequent years following 1910 could be taken as the formative years of modern global evangelicalism.

Some evangelical elements might have operated together with or along the structures of the IMC for the first half of the century. It was mostly in the latter half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century that it began to develop distinct features from mainstream ecumenism and also signs of a split had grown strong (Brian Woolnough and Wonsuk Ma (2010:10). By the time the IMC was integrated into the WCC, “many evangelical agencies withdrew from the wider ecumenical movement” (Bosch 1991:461). In 1963, Ralph Odman, executive of Unevangelized Fields Mission began to call for a congress by evangelical Christians on church missions (BGC Archives: no date). Subsequent plans by various mission agencies mostly in America led to the establishment of an evangelical stream of ecumenism which operated through Wheaton 1966 and Berlin 1966 through Lausanne 1974, Manila 1989 (Bosch 1991: 461) and Cape Town 2010. While Wheaton and Berlin 1966 marked the first efforts toward a more defined worldwide meeting of evangelicals after Edinburgh, it was Lausanne 1974 that marked a significant development in evangelical mission. Efiang Utuk says, “Lausanne was to the evangelicals what New Delhi was to the conciliarists—a turning point” (:212). 1974 became significant for evangelicals in that it was at this congress that some definitive aspects of evangelical thinking on mission, evangelism, doctrine, social responsibility, church etc., were laid down. It can be asserted that Lausanne 1974 marks the official and definitive genesis of global evangelicalism in the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

### 1.3 Relevance

This study concerns two aspects of the church’s missionary calling that have existed in tension in most of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The call to evangelise and bring people to Christ and the call to be engaged in social action are both part of the church’s mission which have been a cause of tension between the ecumenical and evangelical movements.

The tension that exists between these two aspects of the church’s mandate has been described well by Bosch (1991:402-403) by drawing his argument from Reinhold Niebuhr’s (1960) observations on the *rational* ethic and the *religious* ethic and how he relates these to *justice* and *love* respectively. Bosch discusses the tension that exists between *justice* and *love*. He highlights how on one hand the religious ethic connects the

soul with the transcendent while at the same time holding on to a millennial hope in which the ideal of love and equity will be fully realized. He posits that this mystical dimension tends to cause individuals or groups of people to withdraw from the world, devalue history and focus more on the home that is in heaven while at the same time neglecting the neighbour. On the other hand the *rational* or *justice* ethic is made manifest in the prophetic dimension which “prompts the believer to get involved in society for the sake of the neighbour.” Bosch then shows how the attempt to deal with the unresolved tension brought by these aspects of the Christian ethic have played out. He points out that to a large extent the ecumenical movement has embraced the *prophetic* motif to the extent that at times “the rational ethic, which aims at justice, is more powerful than the religious ethic of love.” This sometimes threatens the transcendent and mystical aspects contained in the love ethic and even undermines the message of eternal salvation while giving “a blanket endorsement of any political movement” as belonging to God (Wieser in Bosch 402). The love ethic tends to leaven the idea of justice while elevating the ideal of love over justice preventing people from being purely political by neglecting the ethical demands thereof.

The prophetic and love ethic are still part and parcel of the Christian calling today. Christian mission, in order to be relevant to the challenges facing the world in this century, needs to find ways of resolving this tension so as to position itself for effective engagement in the society today. Even though in the past the WCC and the Lausanne had tended to dwell on their theoretical and practical differences with regards to mission, my argument is that in the years following the formation of the Lausanne, some of the initial criticisms between them mellowed and significant amount of theological similarity began to take place in some areas.

The contributions of CWME and Lausanne to world mission in our social context today are crucial and should take each other’s efforts into account. Each one of the organisations could learn something from the strengths of the other without necessarily being subsumed into another or abrogating any doctrinal confessional positions of either side. The 21<sup>st</sup> century challenges we are facing do not call for sectarian solutions. The world is in need of both a strong prophetic voice from the church as well as a strong evangelistic campaign not only for individuals but also for Christian communities that stand in need of

evangelistic revival. It is my assumption that continued mutual influence in these movements could lead to adjustment of mission theologies which will have positive impact on ecclesiology and society today. Thus, researching from a typically evangelical perspective, I believe the study of the Athens conference juxtaposed with Cape Town is relevant for both ecumenicals and evangelicals as it aims at re-igniting and improving the social and evangelistic dimensions of the missionary calling of the church.

#### **1.4 Objectives of Study**

- Survey the theological trends in mission theology in the Lausanne and the CWME.
- Establish how mission is understood in relation to evangelism and social responsibility in these movements,
- Establish the role played by *missio Dei* and kingdom of God in the understanding of mission in both movements.
- Critically appraise the CWME Athens conference.
- Critically appraise the three key conferences in Lausanne with particular reference to the CRESR, the Lausanne Occasional Paper No.51 (LOP51) and the Cape Town Commitment.
- Assess whether there has been any mutual influence in mission conferences that took place between 1974 to 2010 between CWME and Lausanne.
- Identify the similarities and the differences of the mission theologies of the two movements based on the Cape Town and Athens conferences.

#### **1.5 Delimitation**

The main focus of this study is to carry out a comparative appraisal of the theology of mission in CWME Athens 2005 and LCWE III in Cape Town 2010. The preliminary analysis will compare evangelical and ecumenical mission theology between Bangkok 1973 up to Salvador 1996 as precursors to Athens and Cape Town. This proposed timeframe has been suggested with the suspicion that some of the theological shifts in both

organisations may have been due to mutual influence through the theologies propounded by the conferences and sub-conferences during this period of time. Furthermore these theologies gradually built up to what we see in Athens and Cape Town thereby giving a solid background of missiological developments prior to the conferences under consideration.

This is not a study of the history of missions nor is it a study in mission strategies in CWME or Lausanne; rather it is a study aimed at establishing the similarities and differences of mission theology that has shaped the thinking within the Lausanne Movement III held in Cape Town and within the CWME conference held in Athens. This comparison is limited to mission and social responsibility with a view to establishing how these two aspects are understood and how they are related in the mission theology of the two organisations. With this in mind, I do not intend to discuss other various missional dimensions that might have come out of the reports and have no direct bearing on mission and social responsibility. Since the main contention here has to do with whether there is a growing social consciousness among evangelicals and whether there is a growing inclination toward evangelism among ecumenists, I will focus on establishing, from the vantage point of an evangelical, how the CWME and LCWE relate these two aspects to each other and to our post-modern setting.

*Missio Dei* is a concept that has played an important part in theological formulations in past decades in the CWME including the 2005 conference. The inception of a secularised understanding of this concept into ecumenical circles in the 1960s widened the theological and pragmatic gap between ecumenists and evangelicals. However ecumenical *Missio Dei* has over the years undergone some mitigation from the Hoekendijkian secularised definition of the sixties which saw the reinstatement of the church as a key player in the mission of God.

From the onset the Lausanne has held a Trinitarian formulation of mission but it was in the recent years that the movement actually reclaimed and endorsed the Trinitarian concept of *missio Dei* by reconceptualising their proclamation of Christ within “the larger frame of

God's mission (*mission Dei*) and with the empowering work of the Holy Spirit." This reinstatement of the concept was further connected to ecclesiology. So Lausanne helped "to re-connect the theology of *missio Dei* with the clear understanding that the church is central to how God's mission is unfolded in the world, and indeed that the church is God's redemptive goal" (Timothy C. Tennent 2014).

The reinstatement and the redefinition of the concept by the two mission camps could be an indicator of some convergence. Perhaps an analytic appraisal of the versions of this term that obtained between 2005 and 2010 could lead to a discovery of the possibility of mission theology convergence. I will thus investigate the use of this term with a view to establishing whether its use provides us with any grounds for suggesting such a possibility.

## **1.6 Statement of the research problem**

*What are the similarities and differences in the ways in which the relationship between mission and social responsibility is understood in the official reports on / proceedings of the Athens conference of CWME (2005) and the Cape Town conference of the Lausanne Movement (2010)?*

## **1.7 Research Hypothesis**

### **1.7.1 Basic assumptions**

A few basic assumptions are in order in understanding the framework of this research. Firstly it is my assumption that the organising element of the evangelical movement that ended up finding its expression in Lausanne may have had as its intension the renewal and revitalisation of the evangelistic heritage of the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> century which was seemingly lost in the first part of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. In his book, *Evangelicalism in Modern Britain: A History from 1730s to the 1980s*, (1989:3-17) D.W. Bebbington lists four aspects which he identifies as key in characterising the evangelical movement. These features are generally accepted by most scholars but they should not be taken as conclusive in their identification and description of what evangelicalism is. Since evangelicalism is very broad they do not

encompass everything that is called evangelical today. Bebbington describes the movement as marked by conversionism, activism, biblicism and crucicentricism. From this characterisation, one could perhaps posit a general observation. To the extent that these principles were left to operate fairly peacefully and uninterrupted, evangelicals tended to operate unwaveringly and even effectively between evangelism and social involvement. For instance, as noted earlier in the chapter, Mark Hutchinson and John Wolffe (2012:82-85) point out that evangelicalism is credited with playing a contributory role in the social and cultural transformation of England and America in the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> century. They base their assertions on Elie Halevy's contrast between the relative peace in Britain during the late 18<sup>th</sup> and early 19<sup>th</sup> century with the turmoil in France to which the historian concluded that the influence of evangelicalism, particularly Methodism, played a crucial role in maintaining an orderly society (2012:82). Hutchinson and Wolffe also mention the role that evangelicalism played in the revolution and democratization of America in 1776.

Evangelicals also played vital roles that led to the abolition of slavery. The role of William Wilberforce in 18th century and the role of Charles Finney in the 19<sup>th</sup> century are worth the mention here. Each time one of these evangelical identity marks came under threat evangelicals would either become combative or adaptive in their theology and mission. The forms of combativeness differ in each historical epoch but they nevertheless show that whenever these traditional beliefs are tampered with some efforts would be made to make sure that the credibility of the traditional faith was not eroded.

The second assumption is tied to the foregoing. Due to the increase of liberalism and secularism these traditions had become seemingly precarious and the ecumenical spirit of inclusivity seemed to have weakened the aspects that were taken as the marks of true traditional evangelicalism. In reaction to this phenomenon, social activism, which in the past had been part and parcel of evangelicalism (Tizon 2010:62), was incidentally dropped for fear that its accentuation as exhibited by Social Gospel advocates, might jeopardize the orthodox evangelical practice of mission. As a result, evangelicals in a reactionary manner disbanded the vestiges of what historically characterised their own mission in pursuance of theological war with the Protestant advocates of the Social Gospel. Marsden (1980:93) summaries well when he says:

Throughout the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, revivalist Protestants in America reflected fairly closely the patterns and shifts of the political thought of the times, often providing their own Christian versions of prevailing trends. Sometimes around 1900 this parallel development was interrupted. To employ a psychological analogy, it was as though a series of shocks had arrested an aspect of personality development. The shockers were religious, intellectual, and social, sharpened by the disruption of World War I. The result was almost as if the positive aspects of the progressive political era had not only been rejected but even obliterated from memory....fundamentalists emerged from the experience no so much without social or political views as fixated on a set of views that had been characteristic of middle-class Americans in the last years before the crisis occurred. Their social views were frozen at a point that had been the prevailing American political opinion around 1890, save that the fundamentalists of the 1920s had forgotten the degree to which their predecessors – and even they themselves – had earlier espoused rather progressive social concerns.

Recovering from fundamentalism was not immediately easy. It proved a little more challenging in America than it was in Britain. One of the reasons for this could be related to the first assumption made above with regards to reviving the evangelistic impetus. Processes leading to the formation of Lausanne had to a great degree followed the route of Bebbington's characterization, hence a slow recovery of the social aspect until after the official opening of Lausanne itself. In this route, doctrinal unity, which was lost at Edinburgh would be of paramount importance as key to unity and participation. Activism and conversionism would inevitably take a centre stage *as modus operandi* of mission. This suggests that one of the routes to the restoration of comprehensive ministry in the Lausanne had to have as it's *a priori*, the basic issues that characterised conservative evangelicals. In so far as the evangelical architects of the Lausanne were concerned there was need to properly re-institute that which was perceived to be definitive of evangelical missiology. It was thus of necessity that they reinstated what they believed was lost in the ecumenical movement. As a result the Wheaton and Berlin conferences of 1966 saw it as of great importance to first recapture the revivalist spirit of the Great Awakening which put an emphasis on proclamation and salvation thereby giving visibility to the evangelical viewpoint as well as an alternative to the social gospel (Bassham 1980:54; Scherer 1987:166). Furthermore, after Berlin, a group that Billy Graham organised to prepare for Lausanne agreed that they "ought to be looking again at the whole mission of the Church,

bearing in mind that this involves making disciples, baptising and teaching” (In Stanley 2014:534). As a result a congress was organised “To unite all evangelicals in the common task of total evangelization of the world” (Stanley 2014:534).

Just like fundamentalism had come up in the endeavour to combat liberalist social gospel, and thereby lost the evangelical social impetus, the evangelicals were in danger now of failing to recover from this dilemma in the late 1960s and early 70s due to increased secularisation of the time. The radical turn taken by Uppsala, particularly in section II of the assembly to increasingly define mission of the church in terms of humanisation and political liberation once again ignited the evangelical inclination to revert to a combativeness which, if it were not abated at an early stage would have led to the formation of an organisation that stood in total contra-distinction to the ecumenical movement. Thus the willingness to consider holistic mission at the onset proved promising for this new movement. Needless to say while the mission theology which ended up coming out at Lausanne was comprehensive, still a certain hesitancy and ambivalence towards embracing a broad social vision could be detected.

### 1.7.2 Hypothesis

My assumption is that, so strong were the evangelicals on the restoration of issues they perceived as pertinent to evangelical identity and mission that they looked suspiciously on ecumenical socially related mission agenda. This may have led to some evangelicals finding it difficult to propound a positive theology of social engagement of their own as some of them were trying to come out of the reality of fundamentalism. It appears the voice for the theology of social responsibility would need to come forcefully from within as well as from outside of Lausanne.

With regards to CWME, changes that led to the renewal of some traditional understandings of mission in Nairobi with the reinstatement of the church in mission, signalled a shift from a secular agenda to more nuanced missiology which intertwined contemporary social and evangelistic concerns. The following years would only confirm that such a shift was realistic. Thus the assumption in the thesis is that in the years starting the mid-70s

stretching through to late 80s if not early 90s, there was deliberate nuancing of mission theology in both organisations. I am thus working with the hermeneutical suspicion that if we carry out a critical comparative appraisal of mission theologies that Lausanne and CWME propounded between 1974 and 2010, it will be discovered that:

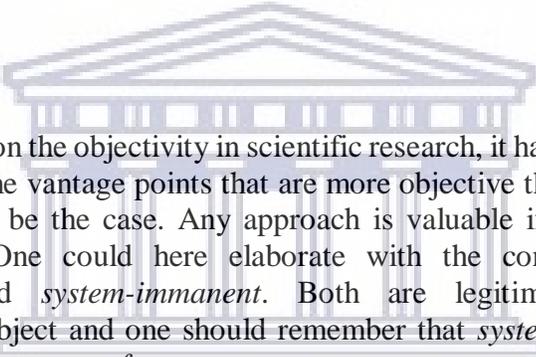
1. The Lausanne mission theology went through slow renovation to a point where it was able to articulate a working holistic mission theology.
2. The CWME deliberately worked towards a clearer articulation of evangelism as a key element of ecumenical missiology while also strengthening its social outlook.
3. The role played by officials or theologians who held membership in both camps may also have been instrumental in stimulating new thinking and debate in both organisations.
4. The presence of majority world theologians, particularly the influence of Latin American theologians in the Lausanne played a key role in shaping the newer versions of theology that ended up endorsing the role of social responsibility in mission in the Lausanne. In CWME, the open participation of the wider constituency may have been responsible for bringing to the fore, the missiological areas in which the organisation needed to renew itself.
5. A comparison of the corresponding conferences will show a mutual influence or edification of theologies and if this is so, then it should be possible to see a reasonable degree of convergence having come out of these documental conversations. Areas of divergence should also be noticed and the possible theological reasons for why there is such.

## **1.8 Methodology**

This research is a critical literary reflection on the theologies of mission in the Lausanne Movement 2010 and the corresponding conferences in the CWME up to 2005 as contained in their official mission statements and conference proceedings. In order to give the theological background to these conferences, this thesis will survey trends in theology of mission starting with the period of the IMC and later the CWME and the Lausanne.

Such a background will provide the basis upon which to carry out a comparison of the theologies that obtained between 2005 and 2010 conferences which also were there first major conferences of these two mission bodies to take place in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Such a comparative appraisal will attempt to establish how the movements stand in view of each other by reflecting on the similarities and differences in their missiologies. An establishment of some sort of convergence or rapprochement could as a result be grounds for possible cooperation.

It may be appropriate at this stage to reiterate that these comparisons will be done from an evangelical vantage point. In order to clarify my place and relation to the subject at hand and in this comparative process, an extended clarification from Hans Engdahl (2006:14) will be in order:



In the discussion on the objectivity in scientific research, it has been claimed that there are some vantage points that are more objective than others. Yet this could hardly be the case. Any approach is valuable if it is properly accounted for. One could here elaborate with the concepts *system-transcendent* and *system-immanent*. Both are legitimate ways of approaching a subject and one should remember that *system-immanent* is not the same as *system-conform*.

Writing this research from an evangelical perspective puts me in the position of *system immanent* with relation to the Lausanne Movement because of a background that has theological affinity to that espoused in this movement. Theological affinity however does not necessarily represent sameness or conformity as noted above. With regards to the CWME, *system transcendent* could be the best way to express such a relationship on the basis that while, I am aware of the WCC, I am like one studying this organisation as an outsider. So to a certain extent my immanence and transcendence to these organisations have a bearing on the interpretations that obtain in this thesis.

The task of comparing these two conferences, however, inevitably entails, an acknowledgement of other factors that will be helpful in giving a meaningful appraisal of the types of mission theology they have propounded. While this process alone is a daunting

task, it still needs to be noted from the onset that these movements are different from each other in several ways. It is vital to highlight some of the differences so that we are in a better position to grasp the theologies espoused by the movements and perhaps the setting under which they should be judged/understood. I will highlight a few key factors that we need to keep in mind.

### 1.8.1 Structural Differences

The CWME is part of a larger organised body, the WCC, which is a council of member churches while the evangelical global body is not necessarily made up of member churches (Bosch 1988:460). The CWME has structures and systems in place in different nations through WCC's local councils. "The CWME commission is composed of some 25 members, also coming from WCC member churches, mission bodies affiliated to the CWME conference and representatives of the 'wider ecumenism'. Roman Catholics, evangelicals and Pentecostals are full members of the CWME commission and participate in all its activities" (CWME: no date).

The Lausanne on the other hand is not organised in the same manner as the WCC and is run by committees which are not headquartered but coordinate "conferences and the networking of individuals and organization(s)" (Lausanne 2009). The World Evangelical Fellowship and Lausanne Committee for World Evangelization consist of fellowships, mission agencies, individuals and the like but not of churches (Bosch 1988:460). The one is a council while the other is a movement which operates through periodic congresses, forums and consultations. These structural differences complicate a meaningful comparison (Bosch1988:460). This difference necessitates that the focus of this thesis be limited to official mission statements and or proceedings in the CWME and the Lausanne. The theology in the CWME is to be read together with the theology in the wider WCC assemblies and commissions.

The structures of these organisations also seem to have some effect on the decision making in the organisations. The WCC, seems to be somewhat loose in its decision making or at least in some the decisions that will have been reached. While there are many instances

where there is a follow through on some mission themes from conference or assembly to another, the same seems to be slightly different in Lausanne. In Lausanne, from 1974 to 2010, there is a sort of controlled continuity of thrust on missiological theme. In this sense, the Lausanne seems to be tight not only on the type of mission it decides to do but also on the continuity of the same from one congress to another. To put this in different words, one could say, the mission agenda in Lausanne seems to be tightly controlled (perhaps to avoid mission drift) while in the wider WCC there does not seem to be a tightly controlled process.

### 1.8.2 The Philosophy of the Movements

The CWME is quite inclusive while the Lausanne is confessional and leans somewhat in the exclusive direction (Bosch 1988:461). The CWME's intended aim is to "offer spaces to churches and people or movements engaged in mission and evangelism for sharing reflections, experiences, questions and discoveries on content and methods of Christian witness today" (CWME :no date) This objective shows the inclusive nature that has characterised ecumenical missiology over the decades. There is a sense in which everyone is given a voice when it comes to this type of missiology. There is openness toward new voices on the missiological table. Lausanne's philosophy as paraphrased in the catch phrase, "connecting today's influencers for global mission" (Lausanne Movement :no date), is rooted in Lausanne's global vision of 1974 which according to Lausanne remain unchanged. This vision is elaborated in a fourfold manner namely, "the gospel for every person", "an evangelical church for every people", "Christ-like leaders for every church", "kingdom impact in every sphere of society". One sees in this system a strong conviction concerning the *modus operandi* of mission to which interested parties can join. While this does not necessarily brand the Lausanne as exclusive, it does however give the impression that this is the nature of mission that Lausanne's membership is expected to follow. It is born out of the evangelicals' insistence on certain absolutes when it comes to *inter alia* such issues as, Scripture, faith and approach to other religions.

### 1.8.2 Overlap of membership

Historically, a good number of the theologians who made up the Lausanne, were at the same time members of the mainline churches which were member churches of the WCC. Bosch mentions theologians such as, John Stott, Peter Beyerhaus, Donald McGavran, and Ralph Winter as examples (Bosch 1988:460-461). I am sure we could come up with a similar list for our times. Furthermore, there are a good number of evangelical churches which are at the same time active member churches of the WCC. This may not be an obstacle in and of itself, but as Bosch puts it, the overlap of membership in the organisations is a factor that should be kept in mind when dealing with these two movements (1988:461). It is the view of this thesis that, this overlap of membership was and still is bringing about the possibility of both theological convergence and cooperative rapprochement.

### 1.8.4 Rationale for Comparison

With the foregoing, the question may arise as to whether there is any reason to warrant the comparison of these bodies. To this enquiry one may respond in the affirmative on the basis of the following observations. First the movements both claim the same origin, Edinburgh 1910, and for at least two or three decades after Edinburgh, they were a unit focusing on mission as evangelism under the IMC. It appears that insofar as faithfulness to the original mission of Edinburgh, “Evangelization of the whole earth in this generation”, was concerned they remained united. When changes began to occur due to new understandings of mission in the decades that followed other parties in the movement began to view this as deviation from what was otherwise held to be proper mission. With the IMC’s integration into the WCC this opened the door for an alternative stream of fellowship that felt the need, in its view, to return to and pursue what it deemed the true spirit of 1910 as it were. Graham held that the church lost much of its evangelistic vision of 1910. He felt the church was being called upon to reaffirm biblical concepts essential to evangelism. So the Lausanne drama “revolved around the vision of Edinburgh 1910, lost by the ecumenical movement but now recovered by the evangelicals!”(Scherer 1987:169-170). Since this stream, the evangelical stream, sprouted as an offshoot out of its frustration of IMC’s

merger with WCC, this provides the grounds for comparing it with its former partner. To do it justice, it needs to be compared not with the entire structure of WCC although this plays an important role, but needs to be compared with the mission wing of this large body, the CWME.

Secondly Lausanne and CWME both claim to be carrying out the same purpose as their predecessor, in 1910, i.e. mission and evangelism. If they both claim to be doing the same thing then this is good enough grounds to compare them on the basis of the vocation in which they both say they are involved. We are not comparing apples and oranges; rather we are comparing different types of apples to see if their colour, texture and taste are similar. The fact that the Lausanne raised concerns about and even against the missiological approach of the WCC in 1960s and then went on, during the same decade to start putting their own structures in place, shows that, they were offering a different missiological voice which needed to be taken seriously. Such a voice, by claiming to be the faithful heir to missiological ethos of 1910 inevitably puts itself in a position where it needs to be compared with what WCC, is already saying so that the validity of its message to or against WCC can be weighed and its significance established. Since this message is contained in official documents, these become the key interlocutors in the process of comparative analysis of mission and evangelism and they should give us a picture of where the organisations stand in view of each other and whether they are able to influence each other even. So comparison can be warranted on the basis of official statements with regards to issues of evangelism and social responsibility.

Thirdly, the role played by the overlap membership in the two movements needs not to be underestimated. This overlap may be responsible for the mellowing of criticism in some instances as well as mutual influence on some issues within the movements. If there was mutual influence we would want to know whence the influence came and how it was received in the camps. This necessitates a comparison not only of documents but also of the role and contribution of overlapping persons or organisations, if I may so term them. This is to say, there are comparable theological treatises written by adherents to both camps which are worth looking into to see what contribution they have to make. In some cases

some of the works/statements, came out of the collaboration of people from both movements as can be seen for instance in the statement, *Evangelism: An Ecumenical Affirmation*, as well as *The Stuttgart Confession*. This suggests that while the movements are clearly different in structure, nature and philosophy, they nevertheless have points of contact which make it possible to carry out a certain amount of comparison within certain established limits, particularly in the literary arena.

With this in mind the comparison will be carried out as follows:

- 1.8.4.1 A critical survey of the mission theologies in IMC/CWME from 1928 to 1996 as carried out in the official statements will be carried out with a view to establishing the development of mission theology in this department of WCC. This survey will also provide the historical trends in theology that brought about a divergence in the understanding of mission within these mission bodies. Other key documents for the CWME include the book, *“You Are the Light of the World”: Statements on Mission by the World Council of Churches 1980-2005*, which contains five mission documents that were produced prior to Athens. This compilation just prior to Athens was meant to provide “a solid missiological basis for reflection and sharing on the conference theme” (WCC 2005:vii).
- 1.8.4.2 The survey will culminate in a detailed appraisal of the Athens conference of the CWME. This will discuss plenaries of particular interest to this study. This conference does not have an official conference report, so much of the outcome of this conference comes from these plenaries and synaxis. Those plenaries relevant to the evangelism and social responsibility will be reflected upon. A number of scholarly reflections following the conference will also be explored in light of the plenaries that took place so as to establish the conference’s understanding of the major theme at hand.
- 1.8.4.3 A survey of the origins of the Lausanne movement in the second half of the 1960s will also be done. Processes leading to the formation of Lausanne will be studied since they help to give us a sense of the evangelical self-understanding at the time.

- 1.8.4.4 A survey of the official documents of the Lausanne will also be done. Key documents that will be reflected upon will include *The Manila Manifesto* of 1989, *the Lausanne Covenant* of 1974 and the *Cape Town Commitment* of 2010. Special consultations that have a direct bearing on evangelism and social responsibility will be surveyed. Of particular interest is the document on *Consultation on the Relationship between Evangelism and Social Responsibility* which came out of the 1982 meeting in Grand Rapids, Michigan. The 2004 document Lausanne Occasional Paper 51 is also of particular interest to this study. The role played by majority world theologians in bringing about a new social consciousness in the movement, particularly Latin American theologians will be studied.
- 1.8.4.5 A detailed study and appraisal of the official document, *The Cape Town Commitment* will be carried out.
- 1.8.4.6 Missiological themes coming out of Athens and Cape Town will be compared with the aim of establishing similarities and differences. Attention will also be paid to themes from previous conferences that might have influenced a shift in the mission theology of either Lausanne or CWME.
- 1.8.4.7 Some of the issues that contributed to divergence include, the liberal postmillennial version of the kingdom of God behind the social gospel and the secularised version of the *missio Dei*. It follows that in the process of this research, the kingdom notion and the *missio Dei* concept will need to be interrogated with a view to establishing how these two concepts may have played a part in shaping mission theologies and perhaps fostering some level of convergence.

## **1.9 Literature Review**

This research is based on literary reflection. I have highlighted a few key books that I have used in laying the backbone of my thesis. Firstly I have used books that deal with the progression of mission theology. These will be helpful in establishing the manner in which theology of mission has undergone changes from one historical epoch to another. The articles in this section will also give a sense of scholarly debate that surrounded any mission theology of any given time. I have also used a second set of literature which include some

books or articles that give an overview of the history of mission through the same period of time. While the main focus of the research is not necessarily the history of mission, such literature will provide the historical settings during which certain missiologies came to be. The third group of literature concerns the official reports of the CWME and Lausanne with particular interest being paid to those reports that deal with the subjects of evangelism and social responsibility.

### 1.9.1 Mission Theology

David J Bosch book, *Transforming Mission: Paradigm Shifts in Theology of Mission*, is an insightful book in the manner it surveys the theology of mission in the diverse historical epochs of church and mission. It gives an overview of the trends through which mission theology went through transformation and the basic backgrounds to such. To a large extent it forms the largest base of my investigation on the development of mission theology over the centuries. There are other articles also that Bosch wrote that will be complementary to his epic work. I have found such articles as, “Ecumenicals” and “Evangelicals”: A Growing Relationship?, helpful in tracing the dynamics of the relationship between ecumenical and evangelicals during the period between 1960s and 1980s. What is particularly impressive about this article is his treatment of the conferences that took place during this period of time and how these conferences either reflected convergence or divergence in the theologies they produced and what seemed to have been the efforts of the organisations to try and narrow the gap between them.

Craig Ott, Stephen J. Strauss and Timothy C. Tennent, in their book, *Encountering Theology of Mission: Biblical Foundations, Historical Developments, and Contemporary Issues*, give a summary overview of the development of mission theology in a manner that connects both history and the development of theology. Writing from an evangelical orientation they frame their theological analysis on the basis of biblical authority and therefore try to engage the subject at hand constructively from that view. Their view of the church as both an agent and fruit of the *missio Dei* is insightful in seeing the current evangelical thinking on this concept. This contains a helpful discussion on an evangelical

approach to holistic. The three authors makes a case for the holistic mission through the use of the kingdom notion by showing how the church participates in this as a sign and community of kingdom. The book tresses the contours of the development of holistic mission while at the same time proposing the use of creation and gospel mandates as possible ways of propounding a comprehensive mission theology.

*Holistic Mission: God's Plan for God's People*, edited by Brian Woolnough and Wonsuk Ma, is a collection of articles written mostly by evangelical scholars. It covers a range of topics that relate to the theme of holistic mission and tries to connect these issues to the development of mission since Edinburgh 1910 in the both the majority world and the west as well. Its approach to holistic mission addresses issues of sin on individual level as well as a broader societal level. The missiology contained in this is gathered from the contributions of conservative evangelicals, Pentecostals and charismatic traditions (2010: xii). The issues of social responsibility are addressed from the perspective of expert practitioners in the areas of local churches, denominations, Christian NGOs, relief agencies and development, missionary societies and theological institutions (2010:xii). So the thrust of this book is not only in the area of theological extrapolation but also connects theological issues of social concern to praxis. The tone of the book shows that the evangelical contributors in this book are conscious of the historical backgrounds of evangelical social aversion and are intentional in articulating a theology that correlates both proclamation and relevant social involvement. It also pays attention to the changes in demographics relating to the growth of the Christianity in the global south.

Rene Padilla's book *Mission Between the Times: Essays on the Kingdom* is a book that has a collection of some of the works and essays that Padilla produced as he participated in various evangelical congresses, forums and consultations. Some of the essays contained in this book are relevant to the topic under discussion for the theological insights they give. The essays in this book are significant in showing the development of Padilla's theology of mission through the various forums that he participated in. There is a consistency on both evangelism and social action that can be traced throughout Padilla's participation in the Lausanne. His call for social action is biblically rooted and contextually relevant. In

Padilla's view, social action is connected to the idea of the kingdom of God which has a community, the local church which operates in the power of the Spirit to bring about a foretaste of the reality of the eschatological kingdom. Elsewhere, Padilla calls for a theological formulation of evangelical liberation theology which is based on biblical understanding of evangelical Christianity. These are just some of the areas that Padilla touches on. His consistent involvement in the Lausanne and the WEF played a contributory factor in helping the movement regain its social consciousness.

Rodger C. Bassham, *Mission Theology: 1948-1975 Years of worldwide Creative Tension Ecumenical, Evangelical, and Roman Catholic*. This book gives a survey of the development of mission theology in the ecumenical, evangelical and Roman Catholic circles. A study of the theological trends contained in this book has provided a good amount of relevant information in constructing the second and third chapter of this thesis. Bassham works through the contours of ecumenical and evangelical mission theology during the period of time in which divergence was at its peak. His delineation of how mission theology was related to various aspects of church life, is very insightful, balanced and helpful in getting a glimpse of the historical development of mission theology.

### 1.9.2 Mission History

Brian Stanley is an authority on the history of Christian missions. His works are very helpful in gaining insight into the historical settings in both the ecumenical and evangelical Christianity. His book, *The Global Diffusion of evangelicalism: the age of Billy Graham and John Stott*, is helpful in understanding the changes that began to take place in evangelicalism during the 20<sup>th</sup> century starting with the formation of the Lausanne as well as understanding the role that majority world theologians helped in shaping a new evangelicalism. The book also gives in-depth details of historical events surrounding evangelicalism as it took root in around the globe. Furthermore, Stanley discusses the development of evangelicalism on British soil in a manner that was different from how it was approached in America. His discussion, gives the reader an appreciation of the difference in evangelical emphasis between that which obtained in America and that of

Britain and the Isles. Such information helpful in judging the difference in theology and missionary praxis that one encounters in comparing the evangelicals from these two continents and the influence that came from theologies that emanated from these two sources.

Mark Hutchinson and John Wolffe, *A Short History of Global Evangelicalism* gives a history of the development of evangelicalism showing that this term cannot be taken simplistically since it developed over a long period of time. Their discussion on evangelicalism is insightful in approaching the study at hand in that it gives one a broader hermeneutical approach and understanding to both forms of Protestant evangelicals, i.e. the conciliar and conservative evangelicalism. There is discussion on the route that evangelicalism took in America and the route it took in Britain, Europe and the rest of the world. With regards to mission, the book delineates aspects of Protestantism that are related to some special historic reformation traditions and what type of eschatological perspective shaped their missiological approach. In this regard, the Hutchinson and Wolffe discuss how the evangelicals generally espoused an optimistic postmillennial eschatology without any sort of radical discontinuity with human history. This note is key in understanding the Great Reversal. The authors also touch on issues that relate to the development of missions in different parts of the world and during different historical epochs. In some cases there is detailed descriptions of origins of certain missional approaches, (e.g. Moravians, Keswick spirituality and so forth), and the details of specific ministries that different missions were involved in. This books gives a historical basis for a meaningful missiological discussion.

George M. Marsden's works have been used to give a background of the fundamentalist heritage that influenced the evangelicals' perspectives on issues of social concern. His books, *Fundamentalism and American Culture*, and *Reforming Fundamentalism*, are helpful in giving this needed background and perspective on how American evangelicalism came to be and how it not only struggled to deal with both fundamentalistic separatism on one end but also with tendencies of the liberalistic missiology. Marsden follows through the different contours of the development of fundamentalism in America and the type of influence it exerted not only on the conservative Christians but also on the American

culture. He also discusses the struggles that obtained in the endeavour to establish an evangelicalism that was balanced and not separatistic as was fundamentalism. He shows that tug of war that took place between evangelicals who were more neutral and believed in inclusivity and those who advocated total separation from those who did not hold to the same precepts as they did.

## 1.10 Definition of Terms

### *Evangelism*

The term evangelism is derived from the Greek verb, *euangelizein* which means “to bring, proclaim or share the good news or the gospel (*euangelion*).” Narrowly defined, evangelism is “the verbal proclamation of the gospel” (William A. Dyrness and Kärkkäinen 2008:297). The classic definition of evangelism, has to do with the preaching of the gospel and “encouraging people to enter into a relationship with God through Jesus Christ by repenting, having faith in Jesus and committing to follow him” (:297). It is “the proclamation of the inauguration of the reign of God in the person and ministry of Jesus and a call to repentance and faith (Mk 1:15). Such a definition is criticised by some for being reductionistic, in that it defines evangelism according to method and style and its aim is defined “solely in personal, spiritual and otherworldly categories” and understood almost entirely as soul winning (Bosch in Karl Müller et al. (eds) 1999:151,153). For a good part, pre-Lausanne forms of evangelicalism “emphasized evangelism for individual conversion only” and paid little attention to other aspects related to the evangelistic task (Hutchinson and Wolffe 2012:186). Furthermore, this definition is connected to the view that defines evangelism in terms of method while confusing evangelism with its *aims*. In most cases these aims are related to the number of converts attained after an evangelistic activity so much so that evangelism is deemed successful when it produces positive results (Bosch in Karl Müller et al. (eds) 1999:151). In the New Testament however, to evangelize does not necessarily mean to win converts rather evangelism “is the announcement of the good news , irrespective of the results” (John Stott 1975:60).

The term evangelism is related to the *eungelizesthai* which is transliterated evangelization and may be said to connote “the process of spreading the gospel” or refer to “the extent to which it has been spread” (1999:151). This is the language that is preferred by the Roman Catholic Church and it is used in this tradition to refer “to the proclamation of Jesus Christ not simply through words but also through Christian service, seeking justice and worship”. A parallel form of this in the evangelicalism is “the call to develop wholistic models of evangelism” which sees “social activity or responsibility as a partner to evangelism through words, like two wings of a bird working together” (Dyrness and Kärkkäinen 2008:299). There are varying definitions regarding the relationship between these two aspects of evangelism within the evangelical stream of Christianity. There are those who uphold the primacy of evangelism and tend to take social action as a visual aid to effective proclamation of the gospel and proclamation as the heart of evangelism (2008:299). Other evangelicals however, hold a position that is akin to that of the Roman Catholic concept of evangelization. Jack Dain, an Anglican clergyman who worked closely with Graham in planning for Lausanne promoted the idea of evangelization because he believed that “its vision for social transformation-would be essential to the continuing evangelical presence in the world (Hutchinson and Wolffe 2012:183, 186). His connection with Billy Graham helped to bring about a shift in thought and cultural approach that added a social dimension to Graham’s evangelistic message. At the opening of Lausanne I in 1974 Dain would refer to the key role that Graham played in setting up the congress by saying, “Our presence here...is, under God, the result of the vision, the evangelistic passion, and the dedication to world evangelization of Dr Graham. Although the resulting work has obviously been shared by many, the initiative and the essential undergirding has come from Dr Graham”(In Hutchinson and Wolffe 2012:183-184).

Based on the foregoing, this thesis will use the term evangelism as to emphasise the *kerygmatic* aspect associated with the term. As Andrew Kirk puts it, “if the underlying thought is good news, then what is normally done with news is to share it, publish it...spread it or announce it” (1999:60). Primarily evangelism has to do with communication of the important *message* (Stott 1975:63). of salvation in Christ Jesus in the power of the Holy Spirit to people in the hopes that the persons addressed will willingly

chose to come to the faith in Christ, “and serve him as their King in the fellowship of the his church...true evangelism issues in discipleship...and making disciples for Christ” (Michael Green 1990:9,11). Evangelism, says Kirk, “has an indicative and an imperative mode: it is both the conveying of a message and a challenge to act in a certain way in response to the message’s content.” (1999:61). Such a definition will help draw a distinction between the evangelistic act of presenting the gospel, regardless of the method and the carrying out of evangelism related social action as connoted in the term evangelisation. This distinction is important in that it helps us delineate what aspect of mission we are really talking about in any given situation. It is based on the premise that “if everything the Church does is called evangelism (because in some way it proclaims the reality of Christ), then nothing is really evangelism” (Kirk 1999:57). So while it is true that evangelism has socio-political dimensions, for the sake of clarity it will be used here to emphasise the communication aspect as explained.

### *Ecumenism*

The term ecumenical is derived from the Greek word *oikoumene*, the whole inhabited earth. The term connotes the scope of the church’s mission as directed at the whole inhabited world as the target of God’s mission from the start. The initial usage of the concept referred to the “movement which seeks to achieve external unity among the world’s denominationally divided churches” (Karl Müller 1999:120). According to Dietrich Ritschl, a more modern meaning had to be developed since the former had fallen into disuse. The modern and more comprehensive definition explicates “ecumenical as “the entirety of the church, which, looking back to its common original tradition and looking forward to its hope, seeks a commonality in doctrine and in the life of faith” (In Müller 1999:120). Even though the term could be used, either in its classical form to refer to ecumenical councils of the early church, or to refer to the works that different churches do together, in this thesis, the term will be used to specifically refer to the Christian body, that had as its origins at the Edinburgh 1910 and went on to establish the Life and Work in 1927 and the Faith and Order in 1937 whereupon these two bodies combined to form the world council of churches in 1948. The churches that are members of this body and adhere to the ethos embodied in its constitution and vision will be referred to as ecumenical.

### *Social Responsibility*

There probably is no one single definition that could be taken to apply to all societies but some broad elements involved in issues of social justice could be used in trying to arrive at what social concern involves. Thus social responsibility has been taken in this thesis to refer to three aspects of social justice namely *commutative, procedural and distributive* justice. These three are considered here with the understanding that they have biblical foundations as the hermeneutic in that they are consistent with what the Bible talks of when in the passages that talk about justice.

This thesis is not attempting to delve into the legal or sociological intricacies of the field of sociology or political science; rather, it will deal with the social action as a missional dimension of the churches holistic or integral mission. This is to say, the thesis will not delve deeply into specific issues of social justice, politics and so forth, rather it will attempt to articulate a theological perspective of how mission ought to incorporate or encompass, in general terms, issues relating to social justice. The argument put forward in this thesis is that the church needs to be relevant to the social needs to the communities around it whether these be religious, economic, large scale or small scale, political action or simply philanthropic activities. In Christian circles social responsibility has mostly been defined in terms of compassionate ministry, or Christian ethics.

### *Mission and missions*

The attempts to define mission are said to be of recent origin in the history of the church (Bosch 1991:511; Ronsen 2016:10). Bosch suggest the need for caution in the process of defining mission since the inflation of this concept can have both positive and negative implications resulting in what Stephen Neill quipped, “if everything is mission, nothing is mission” (in Bosch 1991:511). Bosch (511-512) further points out that it is not immediately easy to define mission because “mission is in the process of sifting, testing, reformulating and discarding...Mission is a multifaceted ministry, in respect of witness, service, justice, healing, reconciliation, liberation, peace, evangelism, fellowship, church planting, contextualization and much more...even the attempt to list some of the dimensions of mission is fraught with danger, because it again suggests that we can define what is infinite.” Thus the definition of the term mission subscribed to in this thesis is made with

the understanding of this kind of challenge surrounding this effort. In broad strokes, the term mission is used by evangelicals to describe the sending effort or activity of God to bring redemption to a lost world. In this regard mission is associated with the eternal purpose of God that culminated in the sending of Jesus Christ into the world to redeem the world and reconcile it to himself and it into his kingdom for his glory (Craig Ott S. J. Strauss and T.C. Tennent 2010:155). Mission is thus understood as sending for a redemptive and reconciling purpose. The term mission is contrasted with ‘missions’. The latter is used to designate the church’s or its organisations or society’s participation in God’s saving mission in the world.

Mission theology as a complex discipline reflects primarily on the field of missiology which in turn is also a multifaceted and interdisciplinary enterprise (Dyrness and Kärkkäinen 2008:551). It is helpful in reflecting on the centre of missiology, i.e. Jesus Christ with a view to clarifying our proximity or distance from this centre. Through theology of mission we relate “who we are, what we know and what we do in mission. It helps us bring together our faith relationship with Jesus Christ, God’s presence, the church’s theological reflection throughout the centuries...” As a discipline theology of mission operates in interaction with other cognate disciplines of missiology in an endeavour to create an integrated and deepened understanding coming out of a mutual enrichment of other disciplines. It is in this regard that the discussion of mission theology takes into cognisance of the Word/Bible, the world and the church what Dyrness and Kärkkäinen refer to as the basic framework of the church.

### **1.11 Chapter Outline**

This research has six chapters which will be outlined as follows:

The first chapter, which is my introductory chapter, gives the historical and theological context of the problem at hand, namely, the brief historical origins of the two missionary movements in the years following the Edinburgh World Mission Conference. It discusses the causes of the divergence in theology of mission with regards to evangelism and social responsibility which came as a result the postmillennial reading of the kingdom which led

to the rise of the social gospel on one hand and the emergence of fundamentalism which anchored its theology of pre-millennialistic understanding of the eschatological kingdom. In doing so, I also lay attempt to lay out the relevance of the study as well as articulate the key research question which centres on discovering the similarities and differences in the Cape Town Commitment and the outcome of the Athens conference. I also include a survey of some key texts and books that are of relevance to the study at hand.

Chapter two attempts to give theological trends that characterise mission theology in these movements from the time they were formed. The first part surveys the development of mission theology in IMC from 1928 to 1958 referred to in this thesis as the pre-integration theologies. The second part of the chapter deals with the post integration mission theologies, of conferences which came after the merger of IMC and the WCC to form the CWME. This covers the time period from 1961 to 1996.

The chapter gives an in-depth discussion of the *missio Dei*, a Trinitarian missiological concept that was used to orient mission from the church-centric focuses it had maintained to a world centred orientation that was based on the understanding that God was working in the world and therefore the world was setting the agenda for mission, not the church. This concept is discussed with a view to discussing how the divergence was widened between ecumenical and evangelicals. The discussion aims to bring out that it was during the 1960s when this concept was brought up that evangelicals came up with global concrete structures of their own.

The third chapter is devoted to discussing the Lausanne Movement. It starts off with the pre-Lausanne process in the 60s which led to the formal inauguration of the Lausanne Movement in 1974. It discusses the challenges that were faced in formulating an accepting statement on comprehensive mission theology at the Lausanne as well as how the delegates responded to the *Lausanne Covenant* during and after the congress. The chapter then follows through the major historical forums, consultations that took place between the first congress and the second congress in 1989. The focus of the chapter will be on establishing whether the mission theology developed during this time included social responsibility and if so how the same was interpreted in the overall approach to mission. The last part of the

chapter will discuss the Lausanne Occasional Paper no.51 which came out of forum conducted in 2004 on the theme of reconciliation. This paper was considered because of its treatment of Reconciliation as a missiological theme which was also done by Athens. As such this provided the grounds for meaningful comparison.

Chapter four has an in-depth study and appraisal of the Athens 2005. It delves into a reflection of selected plenary presentations, some synaxis and the conference letter and analyses how these documents influenced the outcome of mission theology at this conference.

Chapter five has an analysis of the *Cape Town Commitment* (CTC). This document is studied in conjunction with books on mission theology written by evangelical authors in the area of the theology of the kingdom. During the course of the research, it became necessary to look into whether the kingdom notion had played any role in informing Lausanne towards comprehensive mission. The assumption in the research was that perhaps the kingdom notion, was combined with the *missio Dei* concept to present an acceptable basis for holistic mission hence an appraisal of some kingdom notions by theologians from both divides to establish not only the plausibility of this view but also whether the CTC had been impacted by such. The end part of the chapter then gives a comprehensive assessment of what I take to be contemporary evangelical mission theology coming out of the CTC and contemporary literature on mission.

In Chapter six there is a comparison of theologies articulated in chapter four and five.

The first part of the chapter attempts to show that following 1974 that there have been theological shifts which give us reason to argue that there may have been some mutual theological influence in the period beginning 1974 up to 1996 caused by some formal and informal interlocutions of mission statements of that period. I will argue that the small signs of convergence that began to show up during this period may have been due to this mutual impact that the different conferences had on each other. Furthermore I will argue that the role played by Latin American theologians in this regard made a significant impact in altering Lausanne' social outlook and perhaps made it possible for Lausanne to either take a sympathetic view to or consider issues raised by the CWME.

In the second part of this chapter, I will carry out a critical analysis of the similarities and differences of mission theology in Athens and Cape Town. I will select areas of possible theological convergence and juxtapose them to see how they stand in view of each other. I will also look at the differences and attempt to discuss the nature of such differences. The last part of the chapter contains concluding remarks and recommendations.

## 1.12 Conclusion

I have attempted in this chapter to give an overview of the study at hand. I have endeavoured to give the context of the study and tried to show that such a study is relevant given the need for the Christian church to exhibit a united and cooperative approach to mission in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Given the hostilities that obtained beginning in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century between fundamentalists and conciliar Christianity and the further situation that was experienced in the 1960s, it is important to see how these two mission bodies stand in view of each other. Our world today stands in need of serious reconciliation, and there is no better place for this to be exemplified apart from the global church through its representative global bodies. Thus a study of Cape Town and Athens is important in that it shows us how the mission scenario was within the first decade of the 21<sup>st</sup> century with a view perhaps to draw some implications for mission in the years ahead of us. Identifying areas of similarities and differences is not done with the intention to further drive a wedge between the two, but with a view to establishing areas that in which cooperation is immediately possible and those areas that stand in need of more work, healing and reconciliation between these important Christian bodies.

## Chapter Two

### Historical Trends in the Development of Ecumenical Mission Theology 1928 - 1996

#### 2.1 Introduction

This chapter attempts to give a chronological development of ecumenical mission theology from the first mission conference of the IMC in 1928 to the CWME conference of 1996. In this endeavour attention will be given to the official statements that came out of each meeting as well as the historical setting, preparations and debates that led to the final outcome of the official reports of each conference.

#### 2.2 Rationale For Surveying Pre- Athens Theologies of IMC and CWME

In studying the mission theology of Athens, it needs to be acknowledged that this theology is not entirely isolated from former mission theologies propounded within the IMC and CWME respectively. Athens has a rich heritage of mission theology coming from a long string of CWME meetings. Talking about the contribution of former meetings on theology, Lalsangkima Pachuau asserts that CWME conferences “served as the centre of gravity for missionary thinking and provided the required forum for the furtherance of missionary thought...They were all signposts in the development of ecumenical missiology”(2005:415). It is through these conferences that we see the transformative phases through which ecumenical Christianity went during the past century (Hallencreutz 1988:347). The changes and theologies that developed during the course of history played a significant role in shaping CWME’s mission theology up to Athens of which this thesis is concerned.

It is also worthwhile to point out that even evangelical theology enjoys the heritage of IMC theology to a certain extent particularly given that the movements initially operated under one council for four decades before the first break took place (Günther 2003:123). In laying out the developmental stages of mission theology, this chapter will highlight the key points

in history of mission during which divergent views between ecumenical and evangelicals took place. It will also show the very theologies that caused tension and attempt at the same time to show the reasons for those tensions. The theory of Bebbington's characterization of evangelicalism will be applied to the reasons given for each of these occasions in which divergence took place with the aim to establish how evangelicals sought to maintain continuity with the spirit of 19<sup>th</sup> century evangelicalism.

This chapter will be divided into three parts. The first part will be an analytic appraisal of mission theologies from 1928 up to 1996. The second part will review mission statements contained in the book *"You Are the Light of the World": Statements on Mission by the World Council of Churches 1980-2005*, which contains five mission documents that were produced prior to Athens. These documents will be divided into two groups. The first group will deal with the official mission statement the *Ecumenical Affirmation* while the second group will review study documents that served as preparatory documents for Athens conference. The third part of this section will be a critical summary of key theological developments that came out of this period of time with particular emphasis on the significance they bear to the divergence between ecumenical and evangelicals.

## **2.3 Ecumenical mission theologies from 1928 to 1996**

### **2.3.1 Pre-integration theologies in IMC, 1928-1958**

#### 2.3.1.1 Jerusalem 1928

The continuation committee that was formed at the Edinburgh conference went on to form the International Missionary Council in 1921 at a meeting at Lake Mohonk in New York and thereafter held their first missionary conference in Jerusalem in 1928. Though not widely discussed as was with the subsequent conferences, Jerusalem holds great significance to the ecumenical mission enterprise in a number of ways. Firstly, after the Edinburgh conference, Jerusalem can rightly be termed an ecumenical mission conference. It was (Gort 1978:281):

The first meeting at which representatives from the Church in the whole world, West and East, North and South, had assembled together on the basis of parity and complete equality for deliberation on the great problems facing Church and mission and for the making of future plans.

Jerusalem made a deliberate effort to have contributors from “a wider and richer variety of experience to the subjects under consideration” (Paton in Anderson 1988:41) at the conference. The conference had 231 delegates, nearly a fourth of which was from younger churches. In his opening remarks, John R Mott, the chairman of the conference, noted that the representatives of the older and younger churches met on the ‘fifty-fifty basis referring to the parity of numbers, status, participation and interests. “This is the first time in the history of the Christian religion that the idea has been realized interdenominationally on a world wide scale”, he noted (In Anderson 1988:42). Jerusalem was significantly an international effort to examine in detail the state of world missions at the time (Cox 1981:140).

Secondly, it was a conference which marked the genesis of a good number of theological issues and debates which became key to the development of ecumenical mission theology in the years that followed. It was in Jerusalem that “the theology of missions was for the first time the subject of foremost importance on the agenda of an international missionary conference.” Before then, the biblical practice of mission had been taken for granted and not much effort was put into formulating the theoretical foundations for the Christian mission (Gerald H. Anderson 1960:1). It marked the genesis of the extrapolation of what really mission theology consisted of. Furthermore, it is in Jerusalem where we begin to see a marked contrast of viewpoints between the liberal and conservative theologians in the same movement. While these differences seem to have surfaced at this conference, they are said to have been present at the 1910 conference, but Edinburgh avoided discussion on faith and order in favour of fostering unity and the inclusion of the Anglo-Catholic participation (Latourette 2004:360). Edinburgh marked inclusivity towards liberal approaches to mission contrary to the previous expression of evangelicalism which was marked by doctrinal agreement before mission unity (Rowdon 1967:49-71). Gort asserts that these contrasts marked the ‘Continental-Anglo-Saxon’ or the ‘fundamentalist-modernist debate’ about the interpretation of the Gospel and their understanding and

practice of mission (Gort 1978:275-276). These differences had existed in Edinburgh but were deliberately left out due to the purpose and nature of the conference. Much emphasis was laid on laying out strategies for evangelisation and conversion that theological issues were side-lined.

Thirdly the various sections at this conference discussed a broad spectrum of issues that were influenced by the socio-economic, political and religious milieu of the time and it is from these sections that we can draw the missional direction that ecumenism was beginning to take. Jerusalem sought to deal with the milieu of the time by articulating the content of the Christian message and its implications to various challenges facing the world particularly the challenge of secularism (Bassham 1979:20). Some of the issues that Jerusalem dealt with include; the Christian message in relation to non-Christian systems of thought and life, religious education, the relation between younger and older churches in mission, the Christian mission in light of the race conflict, the Christian mission in relation to rural problems as well as the need for international missionary cooperation (Lossky et al. 1991:326).

The section on the Christian Message and its relation to non-Christian religions and secularism drew much debate and attention and consequently stimulated theological debates for the years leading to and beyond Tambaram. In contra-distinction to Edinburgh, Jerusalem gave prominence to the doctrinal issues in the Christian Message. Bassham notes that the planners of the conference had left out theological issues relating to faith and order but this did not deter the conference from discussing theologically divisive issues (1979:23). Given the revival of African and Asian cultures and indigenous religions, the decline of western spirituality and prestige after WW1, and growing scepticism and secularism *the ad interim* committee of the IMC which met in 1925 and 1926 was convinced that there was need for a conference that would address the state of world missions at that time. Thus the planning committee meeting in Rättvik Sweden in 1926 tasked Jerusalem to “formulate a clear definition of the Christian message”, address the problems caused by non-Christian religions and “non-Christian systems of thought...” which all “posed a formidable challenge to the Christian witness” (Cox 1981:142). Now as

early as these planning stages, two schools of thought emerged. The continuity group, mainly Anglo-Saxons, advocated adoption of positive values in other religions, while the discontinuity group, the Continentals (Germans, Dutch and Scandinavians), insisted on the termination of all non-Christian values and favoured the stern judgement of other religions by the Christian Gospel (Gort 1978:277).

During the planning stages, several “leading authorities” were asked to write papers relating to the Christian message. In 1927 Oldham had written a memorandum to different groups in different countries to study the Christian message in relation to “non-Christian systems”. He called on the groups to “enlist the help of non-Christians in the attempt to understand and interpret the values of the faiths to which they belong...The object of the groups which we wish to form is to bring out the contrast between Christianity and the non-Christian systems in the belief that through this comparison the uniqueness and transcendence wealth of the Christian revelation will be made still more apparent” (Quoted in Gort 1978:278). Most of the preparatory papers written in this regard however identified, “values which seemed to demonstrate that God had been revealing himself actively through the non-Christian religions (Cox 1981:142). The presentation nuanced some corresponding aspects between Christianity and other religions in such a way as to depict some sort of agreeable congruence and continuity between the Christian faith and those religions. This outlook identified those values deemed common to the Christian faith were considered worth preserving. Advocates of this continuity approach in a sense exonerated non-Christian religions but pointed the finger of blame at the ‘secular spirit of the modern world’ which they saw as posing a major threat to these religious values (Cox 1981:143). Some of the proponents of this view included, K Reischauer who saw non-Christian religions as “reaching out the great truths of the Gospel”, Francis Wei who saw Christianity as fulfilling Confucianism and not destroying it, While Stanley Jones argued for the universality of Jesus rather than his uniqueness (in Cox 1981:145). The most extreme version of this theology came from Professor William E. Hocking of Harvard University, who saw all religions as roads leading to God thus creating the need for a “new alignment of religious forces” in which Christianity “was summoned to join with other religions in the struggle against secularism” (Jongeneel and Engelen 1995:440). According

to Hocking, there exists only one universal religion which is expressed in different ways and names. In Jerusalem, he went so far as to express a “vision of ‘hospices’, places of peace, tranquility, study and openness to others, to be provided by religious traditions as oases of interchange.” In Hocking’s view, “conceptions of Christian uniqueness, absoluteness or finality were likely to appear as barriers of interchange” and therefore hamper such a vision (Timothy E Yates 1996:72). In this scheme, “no variety of religious experience is to perish until it has yielded up to the rest of its own ingredient of religious truth” and the Christian should be a co-worker with the “forces within each such religious system...” (in Yates: 1996:72). The goal of missions, thus is “to express the desire of Christians to share with non-Christians the highest spiritual norms and values and to cooperate with them in building a world culture” (Jongeneel 1995:440). To put it in his words, “I understand to be the ultimate objective of all missionary enterprise the creation of a common spiritual life among men” (in Yates 1996:73). The general consensus of the papers prepared for this section at Jerusalem can be seen in Rufus Jones’ conclusion in his preliminary paper entitled, “Secular Civilization and the Christian Task” in which he wrote:

The non-Christian religions are not the great rival to Christianity which in the past they have been perceived to be. On the contrary, they, too, are being attacked by secular thought and civilization. The Christian thus finds in the other religions “witnesses of man's need of God and allies in the quest of perfection” (IMC 1928:338 in Cox 1981:143).

The view portrayed in the preliminary papers was not well received by the discontinuity school of thought in Europe, particularly in Germany. Continental delegates were quite suspicious about the syncretistic inclination that was noticeable in these preparatory papers and thus expressed their disquiet. There was anxiety that the manner in which the Christian message was being handled in relation to the other faiths was showing “a discernible shift into syncretism and that the missionary movement was in danger of moving towards the ‘social gospel’ position, then widely adopted in North America.” (Yates 1996:65) Karl Heim, a professor of theology in Germany, expressed these fears by noting that “the kingdom of God means nothing more than the League of Nations, democracy and the coming of militant capitalism” (in Yates 1996:65). This atmosphere led John Mott to call for an urgent meeting in Cairo with the continental leaders a week before the Jerusalem

council. The continental leaders, with Hendrick Kraemer as secretary expressed that the preparatory papers “were drifting on the dangerous waters of syncretism” and that the papers were insufficient in their treatment of the uniqueness of Christianity (Quoted in Cox 1981:144). What they wanted was “an absolutely clear and unambiguous understanding of the unique message which Christianity bears.” According to Kraemer delegates desired “to see stated, in a more unequivocal way than seemed to be done by the papers, the fact that Christianity is a religion *sui generis* in the most pregnant sense of the word” (Speer 1928:418-419 quoted in Cox 1981:144). Kraemer further noted that by stressing values in other religions the preparatory papers drew delegates’ attention away from focusing on the ‘central points of the Christian message’. This left the Christian message without much distinction from the other religions. The conservative delegates thus rejected values in other religions in favour of the uniqueness and centrality of the Christian message.

#### *Christological Missiology*

During the conference the difference between the two camps could not have been any sharper. According to Gerald Anderson (1960:49-50), the discussion on the Christian message centred around two issues namely; 1) The antithesis between those who stressed the absolute uniqueness of the Gospel revealed in Jesus Christ, and those who, through the influence of comparative study of religions, did not want to disregard values from non-Christian religions. 2) There was also a difference of opinion over the social responsibility of the church, or the social gospel. The Christian Message that came out of Jerusalem, among other things, addressed these two divisive issues.

With regards to the other religions, the Continentals stressed unswerving adherence to the Christian message, without which, they stressed, the missionary work would be ineffective. They emphasised “the fallen nature of mankind and single hope for salvation through the coming to the Father by way of atonement and resurrection of the Son with no recognition of the religious value of spiritual truths in non-Christian religions” (1960:50). Along with Kraemer some of their prominent theologians put forward a number of arguments similar to one that was propounded by Karl Heim (in Yates 1996:65), who stated that the Jerusalem conference seemed to make no “distinction between the one true religion and all other

religions.” Professor Heim argued that the very basis of right mission was being weakened by religio-historical relativism in Jerusalem. The conference posed the threat to view Jesus as “another branch on the same tree along with Buddha, Confucius and Mahommed and therefore not really unique” (Anderson 1960:51). Any recognition of revelation in other religions was tantamount to making “the Christian Gospel and the whole question of salvation a relative matter” (:51). Gottfried Simon raised the question as to whether there would be any need for the missionary to promote his Christian values if all he needed to do was to speak of spiritual values in other religions while Julius Richter argued that “by emphasizing spiritual values, missionaries fell prey to the danger of syncretism and thus failing to gain converts to Christianity” (In Cox 1981:145). He admitted however that, the continentals did recognise some spiritual and religious values in non-Christian religions “but it would not be good missionary strategy to emphasize these values and that we should be willing on faith to sacrifice them in order to maintain the uniqueness of the Gospel of redemption in Jesus Christ (in Anderson 1960:58). According to this view, “the only purpose and strength of mission rested in the ability to proclaim and offer a way to salvation that was unique and exclusive with the Christian faith...” (:58). Conservative delegates wanted a clear rejection of all other religions with the call on the finality of Christian revelation.

With such contradictory views, it was not easy to come up with a final statement on what it is that constituted the Christian message. Due to the mediating positions of William Temple, William Paton, Oldham, the Message committee managed to come up with a unanimous statement whose emphasis drew attention to the centrality and universality of Jesus. Its opening declaration “Our message is Jesus Christ” literally summarised the central theme of the whole statement. The Jerusalem statement, as Bassham puts it, “was at heart a Christological affirmation” (1981:20). The different aspects under the rubric of the Christian message gives different variations of this conviction. It stressed Christ’s uniqueness as the revelation of God, the one through whom we are reconciled to God through the cross, and “the center of the world-wide Gospel of Apostles and the Church. Because He Himself is the Gospel, the Gospel is the message of the Church to the world” (Quoted in Gort 1978:279). This statement shows a change of focus from the content of

the preparatory papers in that it elevates the revelation of God in Jesus Christ as the basic “precondition of the Christian mission” contrary to simply juxtaposing values between the Christian faith and other religions (Hallencrutz 1988:351):

Our message is Jesus Christ. He is the revelation of what God is and of what man through Him may become...The message of the church to the world is and must always remain the Gospel of Jesus Christ...We cannot live without Christ and we cannot bear to think of men living without Him. We cannot be content to live in a world that is un-Christ-like...Christ is our motive and Christ is our end. We must give nothing less, and we can give nothing more (IMC, in Bassham 1981:20).

Commenting on Jerusalem’s outcome on the Christian Message and other religions Timothy Yates says (1996:113), ‘Whereas the 1910 Conference shouted the watchword of the Student Volunteer Movement, “The evangelization of the world in this generation,” the Jerusalem Conference seemed to whisper, “Religions must unite against secularization.”

*The Kingdom of God as basis for Social Responsibility*

Jerusalem also made an attempt at tackling the issue of social responsibility as part and parcel of what constitutes Christian mission. Meeting at a time when the social gospel had decidedly taken root in the western world, the debate between secularist and conservative theology was inevitable. In this regard Mott had expressed hope that Jerusalem would strive for “synthesis in which the individualistic and social conceptions of the gospel of Christ are regarded as integral, mutually supporting, and indispensable aspects of Christ’s all-inclusive mission” (in Bassham 1979:21). Resultantly Jerusalem provided space for “an extensive study of social problems in relation to missionary work, and brought noted experts to help in several fields, namely racism, rural problems, and industrialization” (:22). The challenge in this endeavour had to do with the fact that, some arguments for social responsibility were propounded and conveyed within the framework of the kingdom of God. As hinted at above, this discussion was one of the most hotly debated issues as was with the foregoing issue on non-Christian religions. It seems that the discussion followed the contours mapped by this fundamentalist-modernist divide. Since the church had not fully recovered from the onslaught of liberal progressivism, conservative delegates

looked suspiciously on any presentation of mission that seemed to have postmillennial overtones. To such delegates, “Ideas of human beings ‘building’ the kingdom of God...ran counter to the theological recognition that it was and is *God’s* kingdom” (Yates 1996:68). In their argument, if we talk of human beings building God’s kingdom, it ceases to be God’s and becomes a human endeavour.

Following Edinburgh’s triumphalistic conference on an evangelism oriented missiology, it is reasonable to assume that the discontinuity advocates may have envisaged, in 1928, a conference that would emphasize evangelism as its mission focus particularly given the threat that the social gospel was posing to the evangelistic task. As a result of this divide it was inevitable for Jerusalem to deal with issues relating to whether mission was mostly evangelism or whether it also included social transformation of a nature that was being proposed by the liberal advocates. Those who argued for the discontinuity of religious values in non-Christian religions “were the same ones who disclaimed any social responsibility or need for concern with social issues that might carry overtones of ‘building the Kingdom of God’” (Anderson 1960:50). Their main concern had to do with “effecting direct conversions and not being diverted with programs of social concern that could not effect salvation even if carried through to fruition...the primary responsibility of the missionary is to give the divine message to the world and not attempt the formulation of a Christian sociology for which there is not divine sanction” (:50). As was his thoughts on the debate on other religions, Professor Heim thought that the consuming interest in the social gospel movement particularly in America was another reason why the basis of Christian missions was weakening (:51). To summarise their view on social responsibility, the Continentals had already stated in Cairo; “We do not believe that the central task of the Christian missions can be accomplished by a so-called ‘Social Gospel’” (:54). This summation, perhaps lends credence to the assumption mentioned in the first chapter of this thesis that some evangelicals had hoped for an evangelistic thrust akin to the great awakenings and revivalistic ministry of the gospel as experienced in the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries.

The proponents of Christian sociology put forward their arguments in favour of both continuity and social responsibility. While the contributions of Hocking and Jones were notable, other prominent contributors in this regard include, R.H. Tawney, Harold Grimshaw from the International labour office in Geneva and Bishop Francis J. McConnell. In his argument in favour of social involvement Tawney noted that the new system of economic relations and the problem of industrialism posed a challenge to the Christian church. He argued that his was a religious question to which the church should pay its attention because:

It is concerned with the conditions of spiritual growth and vitality, with the ethical relations between the individual and his fellows, with the conduct of human beings in society and the reaction of the social order upon the moral health of human beings...Surely, whatever else Christianity may be, it is at least a body of teaching which affirms that the nature of God and man is such that, only in so far as men endeavor to live their lives in accordance with the principles expressed in the life and teaching of our Lord, can they expect to realize the highest values of which human beings are capable (In Anderson 1960:57).

He seemed to draw much attention to the moral values and principles contained in Christianity as the basis upon which social transformation could be attained. With regards to whether conversion was to be a prerequisite in such an endeavour, Tawney dismissed such a premise and argued that “there does not seem to be any foundation either in the teaching of the New Testament, or in that of the Church at its most vigorous period or in reason” (:57). He seems to have envisaged more of the teachings and values of the kingdom playing a role in the inculcation of moral and social values onto the society at large. This thought is further seen in his argument against the Continentals’ emphasis on the eschatological nature of the kingdom of God. He asserts that “because God’s Kingdom is not of this world, it does not follow that this world is not part of His Kingdom” (:57). Instead, the emphasis should be placed on what the church needs to do to address both the individual life and the fabric of society in which individuals are a part (Yates 1996:68). The intentional effort towards social change was as important as the need to change individuals since “you cannot win the individual to a life of service and self-sacrifice if the social environment within which he is set is dominated by a ruthless economic egoism.”

As such Tawney called for the development of Christian sociology and emphasised that social righteousness was a part of the Christian mission to which the church needed to apply herself (Anderson 1960:57). In his view, the church needed to disseminate knowledge of social righteousness and point the way to a society in which people could enjoy both material comfort and spiritual peace “because they feel that their social institutions and industrial organization[s] are the expression not merely of economic expediency or convenience but of justice” (In Anderson 1960:58).

Bishop McConnell echoed the same notion and expressed that the idea behind the social gospel was simply to extend the power of Jesus to a larger area of life other than simply addressing the individual. To McConnell the society does not exist apart from the individuals who compose it but since individuals act differently in groups from how they would normally act as individuals it follows that mission should try to “bring about a state of society in which more individuals can attain to saintliness” (In Anderson 1960:59). According to Anderson, McConnell paved the way for the program which produced a report on industrial and rural conditions as aspects related to missions (:60).

It goes without saying that part of the Message in Jerusalem needed to incorporate aspects of the foregoing debate into one acceptable statement about mission and social responsibility. While there were opposing views with regards to the extent to which the Gospel has to interact with the people to whom it is presented, Jerusalem attempted to tackle this matter theologically through the lenses of the kingdom of God. The conference concluded that the Gospel message speaks to both individuals and the society at large. Thus the ‘Christian Message’ spoke of the goal of mission as (in Anderson 1960:66):

Since Christ is the motive, the end of Christian missions fits in with that motive. This end is nothing less than the production of Christ-like character in the individuals and societies and nations through faith in and fellowship with Christ the living Saviour, and through corporate sharing of life in a divine society. Christ is our motive, Christ is our end. We must give nothing less, and we can give nothing more.

In its introductory statement on *The Christian Mission in Relation to Industrial Problems in Asia and Africa*, Jerusalem states that, “the Gospel of Christ contains a message, not

only for the individual soul, but for the world of social organization and economic relations in which individuals live” (IMC 1928:46, quoted in Gort 1978:289). Drawing from the Incarnation of Christ, the report called on the church to be engaged with society not only in the preaching of the Gospel but also in striving for social betterment. The report states (IMC 1928:48, quoted in Gort 1978:289):

The task of the Christian Church, therefore, is both to carry the message of Christ to the individual soul, and to create a Christian civilization... It is its duty to speak and work fearlessly against social and economic injustice.

It is through this type of engagement that the church is able to bring the society “nearer the establishment of Christ's Kingdom in the world of social relations, of industrial organization, and of economic life” (IMC 1928:48 quoted in Gort 1978:289). As a follow through on this resolution, the conference authorised the creation of the Department of Social and Economic Research and Counsel which was headed by J Merle Davis in 1930 as a branch of IMC whose aim was the aspiration of the advancement of the kingdom (Yates 1996:70).

The statement on rural problems bears language of societal transformation as part of the missionary task (in Anderson 1960:64-65):

Man is a unity, and that his spiritual life is indivisibly rooted in all his conditions—physical, mental, and social. We are therefore desirous that the program of missionary work among all peoples may be sufficiently comprehensive to serve the whole man in every aspect of his life and relationships... personal freedom lies at the basis of the freeing of society from cramping custom and blighting social practices and political bondage, so that in Christ men and societies and nations may stand up free and complete.

While the concept of the kingdom was used to formulate the social theology of mission, the Continental view of the kingdom was not left out. The statement spoke of mission as “preparation for the coming of His kingdom in its fullness” as opposed to simply building or establishing the kingdom, an issue that was rejected earlier by the Continentals (:65).

Other pertinent issues that came out of Jerusalem, included the relationship of the younger and older churches. From here on equality of status and participation by all in missionary conferences became a basic assumption in ecumenical practice (Bassham 1979:21). Indigenization of churches was given priority and “the indigenous church will become the center from which whole missionary enterprise of the area will be directed.”

So through Jerusalem it can be asserted that from the onset the ecumenical movement officially placed importance on both evangelism and social responsibility although at the same time contrasting views concerning these two aspects were also rife even after the conference. The conference made efforts to deal with these issues as theological issues. For the first time, social concern gained theological status as part of mission. In trying to describe this point (Yates 1996:70), offers here a thoughtful analysis about Jerusalem:

Here then was an attempt to hold together those who saw their work in race relations, in education, or rural development as the building of God’s kingdom and those who, while accepting social concern and individual relief as legitimate activities of the Christian church, drew back from theological simplism. To some degree it was a question of the theological status of the labels given to the activities with which few would disagree in terms of love of neighbour, so fundamental to the gospel. With this however, went a divide between the corporate and individual emphases in the social realm, which has already been observed between the pietist emphases on individual conversion and the corporate approach of figures like Gutmann in the evangelistic realm and also the reflection...between liberal and conservative views of Christian obedience and the Bible. The ‘comprehensive’ ideal had been adopted by the IMC but not necessarily by the missionary world.

With a unanimous adoption of this statement, the leaders of IMC were optimistic that the Jerusalem conference was a success but this optimism was short lived. The statement attracted a good degree of criticism within a short period of time. Among some of the criticisms levelled against Jerusalem, the continental leaders felt that the statement did not represent a unified theological consensus. Martin Schlunk, who was the editor of the German account of the meeting, expressed dissatisfaction following the conference pointing out that even though it was adopted unanimously, it did not represent a unified position. His view was widely shared by most continentals (Cox 1981:149, Coorilos Geevarghes 2010:8). Some saw in that statement, “the central failure of Jerusalem” in that

it “minimized theological differences in order to achieve the least controversial statement possible...the differences could not be buried in the language of promise” (Cox 1981:152). Some voiced that William Temple’s skill in drafting this irenic statement led him to think “he had found a solution, when he had found a phrase” (Yates 1996:68). Gort (1978:278), points out that the statement may have contained a certain note of syncretism and it also “may have concealed serious differences and crowded out important emphases through clever wording and composition.” While Gort praises some of the strengths of this statement, he thinks that the statement was too rigorous in its rejection of secularization thereby failing to see its ‘emancipatory function’ (:278).

Following the conference, the 1930s saw an increase in polarization between the two camps thereby thwarting the optimism that was voiced at Jerusalem. William Hocking’s 1932 Report of the Laymen’s Inquiry into Foreign Missions published in the book *Rethinking Missions*, sparked a lot of controversy in the IMC and confirmed the fears and concerns of the conservatives. Hocking emphasized an emerging world culture and called on the “religion of the modern man” (Cox1981:150-151). This approach would radically affect missionary approach since Christianity would have to befriend world religions rather than convert adherents of these religions. Due to this polarization, the continental position on Jerusalem took the influence of Karl Barth and Emil Brunner “whose theologies were interpreted for missionary thinking ten years later by Hendrik Kraemer at the Tamaram meeting of the IMC” (1981:149).

The above discussion shows the missionary thinking that began to develop in the first meeting of the ecumenical movement. The idea of seeing positive values in non-Christian religions produced two ideas that have some resemblance to mission approaches that took place decades beyond 1928. Those who hold a position akin to the discontinuity approach tend to acknowledge the fact that “world religions are great, coherent, exclusive systems of thought and life” but instead hold that the Christian message speaks a unique and fully appropriate word” to all these religious systems (Cox 1981:151). They proceed to develop mission strategies aimed at reaching the unreached people groups or adherents of those religious systems. This idea was develop by Kraemer but was also anticipated by the continental delegates. It plays a part in sections of the evangelical movement today where

the emphasis is placed on the qualitative difference of biblical revelation from religious aspirations of humanity (:151). Secondly Jerusalem marks the genesis of the idea of dialogue with reference to world religions. This is a view held by those inclined to the continuity theology of mission and other religions and adopt the concept of mission as dialogue (:151). These are the more liberal delegates who moved toward a positive appreciation of values in other religions who search for points of contact between religions and broaden their definitions of revelation for purposes of dialogue and mediation. It also shows us the beginning of polarization within the conciliar tradition itself with regards to conservative versus liberal approaches to mission theology. While the role of the church is central to mission in Jerusalem there is no consensus on the manner of its engagement with the world. A lot of arguments revolved around the creation of Christian sociological approach to mission. Advocates of progressivism sought to see articulated as part of mission the inducement of social righteousness in the socio-economic structures. This led Jerusalem to take practical steps to address rural and industrial issues through the studies and the Department of Industrial and Social Research and Counsel it created. This department was not created to “impose a common social theory upon the missionary world” but was a practical way of implementing the missional approach to society (Anderson 1960:74). There was concern by conservative theologians that such an approach was heading more towards emphasizing social issues rather than winning of souls.

Voicing Stephen Neill’s assessment of the conference, Hallencreutz (1988:351) raised the problem of the idea of Christian existentialism as being minimal in the deliberations at Jerusalem. This view holds that Jerusalem should have reflected more on the change from the western optimism of 1910 to Christian existentialism. He however qualifies this criticism by pointing out that the leading churchmen who influenced Jerusalem were trying to formulate a theological view of mission following WW1 and thus they were trying to identify “new ecumenical responsibilities in the search for international reconciliation” (1988:351). The emerging shift from European to American church life in mission was taking place which to a certain degree still carried with it some liberal western optimism. Hallencreutz says that “America and American church life was not as profoundly hit by the First World War and the initial challenge of Christian existentialism. Here there

remained a basis for liberal western optimism, although American mission increasingly had to face the cleavage between fundamentalism and modernism.” This explains the contribution that American modernisers made at the conference. W.E. Hocking’s report, *Rethinking Mission* is a case in point (Hallencreutz 1988:352). Thirdly, Jerusalem tentatively made provisions for interaction with other religions; an aspect that Hallencreutz says is more than a reflection of liberal western optimism but also an expansion of Christian mission in a multi-religious context (1988:352). These aspects of liberal optimism possibly minimized the existential aspect that Neill was referring to.

### 2.3.1.2 Tambaram 1938

The second IMC conference was held in Tambaram in 1938 under the theme ‘World Mission of the Church’. As such it laid emphasis on the Church (Scott Latourette 2004:369) and its role in mission/evangelism. The ecclesiological focus also seemed to have been true in the two ecumenical bodies, namely the Life and Work which met in Oxford 1937 and the Faith and Order which met in 1939 which both stressed the role of the church. There is a convergence of emphasis on this theme with the chosen theme for the Life and Work Conference that took place in Oxford 1937 whose theme was “Let the Church be the Church” and the World conference on Faith and Order the same year under the theme “The Unity of the Church in Christ”(Hallencreutz 1988:354).

Tambaram met at a time when there was “unprecedented international tensions”, a time when there was a lot of uneasiness due to diverse socio-political problems seen for instance, in the rise of totalitarian nationalist regimes, in different parts of the world. We can refer here to political developments in fascist Italy, national-socialist German, Shinto state religion in Japan, invasion of China by Japan to name a few, (Schoonhoven 1978:299). In his opening address, John R Mott noted that “it is the Church which is to be at the centre of our thinking and resolving these creative days...” (in Schoonhoven 1978:302). Given this scenario “delegates were concerned about the witness-bearing character of the church” as crucial to mission (Thomas 1996:86). Thus Tambaram was convinced that the church played a central role in the propagation of God’s mission. Evangelism was stated as the

function of the church and it was understood as taking place in two stages. Firstly the pioneering evangelism done by the foreign missionary and the second which was the establishment of the indigenous church. Tambaram emphasized that:

It is the Church and the Church alone which can carry the responsibility of transmitting the Gospel from generation to another, of preserving its purity, and of proclaiming it to all creatures...The place where this task is centered is the local Church for the whole world (in Bassham 1979:24).

Evangelism was thus taken as an “unfinished task” of the Christian mission which envisaged Europe, America, Africa and Asia as mission fields. The whole church was to take part in evangelism to the whole world. Schoonhoven (1978:307) points out that, in this conference, evangelism carried the New Testament idea of *euangelizesthai* which laid stress on the preaching of the *euangelion* in the whole world. It appears that Tambaram regarded evangelism as instrumental to world transformation. Given the tensions that existed in the world at the time, IMC tasked John R Mott to carry out studies on evangelism which he published as a book, *Evangelism for the World Today* and circulated it to the delegates under the title “Studies in Evangelism”. After deliberations Tambaram concluded that “World peace will never be achieved without world evangelization” (1978:308). This is because Tambaram understood evangelism as the activity of the “Church Universal”, in all its branches and through the service of all its members. The church’s task was to present Christ to the world, lead people to put their faith in God through the power of the Holy Spirit and accept Him as their Saviour and Lord, and this task was said to include “the preaching of the Gospel in the land of both the older and the younger churches” (in Schoonhoven 1978:308).

As was the case with Jerusalem. Tambaram defined evangelism and social responsibility as being related in the missionary task. The evangelism that was espoused in Tambaram was not to be limited only to preaching, but to the use of “larger evangelism” which includes “Christian medicine, Christian education, Christian social service”. The Church’s role in evangelism also included the “vision and hope of social transformation and of the realization of such ends as justice, freedom and peace” (in Schoonhoven 1978:308). This was considered to be a holistic understanding of the gospel because “social programs grow

out of the Gospel” (in Bassham 1979:24). Section I entitled ‘The Faith by which the Church lives’, shows that the foundations of the world had been shaken and that the hope that was expressed ten years earlier in Jerusalem with regards to building of the world had been shattered. It then shows that the role of the church was by and large oriented towards the social aspects of humanity than evangelism. The section stressed that it was the church which was “to bear courageous and unflinching witness to the nations...warn mankind of judgement which shall assuredly overtake a civilisation which will not turn and repent” (Kinnamon and Cope (eds) 1997:330-331). The section goes on to call on the church to play a key role in the creation of justice in the society. The church is (1997:331):

Called to attack all social evils at their roots. It must seek to open the eyes of its members to their implication in unchristian practices. Those who suffer from bitter wrong it is constrained to succour and console, while it strives courageously and persistently for the creation of a more just society.

The church is to be the actualisation of its message in the world because “the Christian Church under God”, is the greatest hope for the world. This entails that the church to remain true to God’s purposes it “must stand ever under the ideal of the Kingdom of God” (1997:331). The church has both a social and a spiritual role to bring effective healing with relation to disease, enlightenment and alleviation with relation to those in darkness and poverty and a true and living faith to the lost (1997:331). This led section I to call on people to “aid the Church which stands undaunted amidst the shattered fragments of humanity and works tirelessly for the healing of nations” (1997:331).

It needs to be noted that though Tambaram saw the importance of evangelism to world peace, the section report on “The Church and the Changing Social and Economic Order” recognised to the values of the Kingdom of God as the basis for a new order in the world that was filled with confusion and disorder. The report quickly distanced this view from the sphere of the theology of social gospel and highlighted that “the kingdom of God is within history and beyond history”. As such it is to be influential to every social system in the world. In doing so Tambaram stressed that individual conversion did not necessarily

lead to societal change nor did societal change lead to transformation of individuals. The following excerpt from the report clearly articulated the thinking of the conference:

As to whether we should centre upon individual conversion or upon social change to realize this Kingdom, we reply that we must do both. It is not enough to say that if we change the individual we will of necessity change the social order. That is a half-truth. For the social order is not entirely made up of individuals now living. It is made up of inherited attitudes which have come down from generation to generation through customs, laws, institutions, and these exist in large measure independently of individuals now living. On the other hand, it is also a half-truth to say that social change will necessarily produce individual change. We cannot sustain a new social order or bring it into being without new men (World Mission 127, Quoted in Schoonhoven 1978:314-315).

Some of the prominent subjects that Tambaram addressed, were issues that were carried over from Jerusalem, namely, “the Younger and Older Churches”, “The Relationship of Christian Witness to non-Christian Faiths and the Cultural Heritage”. It is in section II that the central role of the church in mission is reiterated under the heading, “The Church – its Nature and Function. The church is presented as the “fellowship to which our Lord has given His promises and through which He carries forward His purpose for mankind” (1997:332). It also “discussed the relationships between church and mission, older and younger churches in a more theological manner” (Bosch 1991:369). The discussions in this section introduced the term “indigenization” to try and determine how different forms of Christianity could be experienced in different contexts as can be seen in the following excerpt of the report:

An indigenous Church, young or old (!), in the East or in the West (!), is a Church which, rooted in obedience to Christ, spontaneously uses forms of thought and modes of action natural and familiar in its own environment, Such a Church arises in response to Christ’s own call (Quoted in Schoonhoven 1978:306).

Another carry-over from Jerusalem concerned the subject of the relationship of the Christian message to non-Christian religions which was dealt with in section five. Earlier in the decade, the American Report of the Commission of Appraisal for the Laymen’s

Foreign Mission Enquiry was published with W. E. Hocking as editor. While the report contained a lot of valuable data it proposed a new approach to the relationship of Christianity with other religions. As noted earlier, Hocking proposed that:

The Christian will therefore regard himself as a co-worker with the forces which are making for righteousness within every religious system...He will look forward, not to the destruction of these religions, but to their continued co-existence with Christianity, each stimulating the other in growth toward the ultimate goal, unity in the completest religious truth (In Bassham 1979:24-25).

Needless to say, such a view was discarded by most delegates because “it denied the uniqueness of Christianity and the absoluteness of the revelation given in Christ” (:25).

Hendrik Kraemer had been tasked by the leadership of IMC in 1936 to prepare a book for discussion in Tambaram. Consequently, his book *The Christian Message in a Non-Christian World*, created a lot of debate among the participants. Kraemer’s main contention was informed by Christian existentialism and he expounded that it was only through biblical realism that we could best judge values in other religions instead of juxtaposing them with Christianity. Kraemer is said to have built his theology on the Christian existentialism that existed in Europe in the 1920s. This existentialism “qualified reflections on Christian interactions with adherents of other religions by distinguishing between the gospel and religion, between faith and religious experience, and between the church and different religious communities. Bassham (1979:25) notes that Kraemer was also influenced by Barth’s theology and by “the struggle of the Confessing Church in Germany against Hitler’s National Socialism which proclaimed its own revelatory nature and sought to use the church as an instrument of political policy.” As a result Hendrik Kraemer reinforced these distinctions by applying a characteristic theory in the science of religion which saw individual religions as coherent wholes permeated by distinct core-motifs” (Hallencreutz 1988:355). Biblical realism was to “provide new directives for personal and social development” (1988:356). His biblical realism emphasised Christian revelation as a record of God’s self-disclosure in Christ Jesus while pressing for an awareness of discontinuity with non-Christian religions (Bassham 1979:25). By and large, Kraemer’s

theology viewed other religions negatively and viewed them as human efforts. As a result, he rejected such notions as “*preparatio evangelica*”, “natural theology”, “*logos spermatikos*” or “continuity” (Schoonhoven 1978:311). Given that the debate on the relationship between Christianity and the other religions was at its zenith and that liberal views in this regard were strong, Kraemer’s views were met with much opposition by Tambaram. He was accused of being too one sided, an accusation he admitted. It is reasonable to say that though Kraemer’s book was too conservative and radical for the delegates, it nevertheless served the task of stimulating more reflection on the subject. Kraemer himself, in his subsequent writings, redefined his position and mitigated his one sided view to a dialectical approach to other religions. He admitted this in the book *Religion and the Christian Faith* which he wrote in 1956. The debate resulted in the delegates opting for a position between the liberal and the conservative views of Christian existentialism. Delegates affirmed sympathy for the best in the other faiths while at the same time affirming a determination to witness for Christ to all people” (Bassham 1979:25). This position was famously characterised by the phrase “between Hocking and Kraemer”. This was coined by W.M. Horton who, in his presentation, “Between Hocking and Kraemer” noted that he had in his thought process a position that was close to that of Kraemer but at the same time contacts with other religions “revived in him his Hocking-self” (In Schoonhoven 1978:312).

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### 2.3.1.3 Whitby 1947

Meeting after World War II, the next IMC conference was held in Whitby in 1947 under the theme ‘*Christian Witness in a Revolutionary World*’. The agenda for the Whitby seems to have already been set by the aftermath of the war. Following the war, the conference noted that not only were the colonial powers shaken but also the churches of both the North and the South. They were both weakened and unable to “speak a word from a position of strength since the beginning of the war...” (J.F. Zorn 1999:280). Because of the war, many missions had been orphaned from their sending churches and many of the church’s infrastructure around the world had been destroyed (Sunquist 2013:116). The missionary

endeavour had been shaken and “the spiritual damage which the old Christendom had suffered could not yet be assessed” (Newbiggin 2004:177).

This necessitated the need to focus on a two key issues, namely renewing, rebuilding or picking up “where we left off”. Sunquist (2013:116). points out that the correspondence between missionary and mission societies at the time shows that there was little thought of anything but rebuilding and courageously moving forward. Secondly the situation called for strengthening partnerships of the churches in carrying out mission. This resulted in the adoption of the two part slogan “Expectant Evangelism” and “Partnership in Obedience”. This was expounded in the subject matter dealt with in the sections which included; ‘partnership in obedience, the supra-nationality of missions and the functions of the IMC’ (Lossky et al. 1991:328).

Whitby resolved to strengthen the position of the church in mission. The church was to be revolutionary but not in the same way as the revolutionary forces, rather the type of revolution initiated by the church was to have a spiritual basis of word and prayer “which express the certainty of Christians that God pays attention to human aspirations and will respond to them (Zorn 1999:281). With the post war scenario Whitby noted that there was an open door for evangelism and that the missionary nature of the church was to be affirmed in such a way that all people in the church “would be in an attitude of expectant evangelism.” Thus the church was to “present itself in the world as a church of witness” (Zorn 1999:281). The two part slogan; ‘*expectant evangelism*’ and ‘*partnership in obedience*’ enhanced this thinking and mood at Whitby. With regards to the former, the church was to be in a state of readiness to engage in its former missionary vocation again and with regards to the latter, there was need for both the ‘foreign missionary and the indigenous pastor to work together to show forth the unity of mission of the church...the commandment to evangelise is common to both...’ (Zorn 1999: 281).

Evangelism and social responsibility was taken seriously at Whitby. The milieu of 1947 necessitated such a missional outlook given the social challenges and needs that the church needed to address. Its motto “*expectant evangelism*” and the use of such terms as- *kerygma*

*and koinonia* (Bosch 1991:511) help us to get a good glimpse of the mission theology/thinking of the time. The process of evangelism included both the *kerygmatic* and *koinonia* aspects of mission. Whitby envisaged both philanthropic aspects as well as issues of social justice in its articulation of social action. As such the declaration on “Christian Witness and a Revolutionary World” stated:

As Christians, we are pledged to the service of all those who are hungry or destitute or in need; we are pledged to the support of every movement for the removal of injustice and oppression. But we do not conceive these things, good in themselves, to be the whole of evangelism, since we are convinced that the source of the world’s sorrows is spiritual, and that its healing must be spiritual, through the entry of the risen Christ into every part of the life of the world (Quoted in Bassham 1979:26).

The foregoing formulation shows that both aspects of ministry are emphasized under the rubric of evangelism, a thought that is similar to that of enlarged evangelism mentioned in Tambaram. It is noteworthy to point out that from the onset, the IMC had already started dealing with the relationship of evangelism and social concern and tried to articulate a holistic mission by using such terms as ‘larger evangelism’ or ‘whole evangelism’.

The relationship between older and younger churches was one of the most significant outcomes of Whitby. Under the banner of ‘Partnership in Obedience’, representatives of these churches met separately to discuss “issues on which they had been at variance in earlier sessions” (Latourette 2004:372). When the two groups came together for a joint session, it was discovered that their finds bore remarkable agreement that the conference was able to come to a unanimous statement. Under this banner, both older and younger churches “were equally called to accept the responsibility of mission, and they were to work in equal partnership, each contributing the gifts that God had given” (Newbiggin 2004:177). With this emphasis Whitby focused on empowering the local councils with ability to be involved in more evangelism and mission. This meant that the use of the terms older and younger churches was no longer applicable since all the churches are facing the same missionary tasks in the world. (Bassham 1979:26) In order to foster true partnership,

the meeting called for partnership of personnel, finance, policy making and administration and the churches strive to stand together with “absolute spiritual equality” (:26).

It can be deduced that Whitby continued with an ecclesiocentric theology of the preceding two conferences. The conference put priority on the evangelistic ministry of the church as did Edinburgh with the only difference being that the ‘urgency which was felt in 1947 was no longer expressed in triumphalistic terms as at the beginning of the century’ (Zorn 1999:282).

From 1910 and prior to the formation of the World Council of Churches in 1948 some major themes affecting missiology can be outlined. Firstly, according to Sunquist (2013:113), “there was a call for missionary activity to be recovered as an essential activity of the whole church.” This was a correction of the nineteenth century mission phenomenon and theological misconception that had seen mission societies developing as separate structures from the church. Mission, then, was an ‘extra ecclesial activity’. This is why Edinburgh and later conferences deliberately reaffirmed evangelism as “incumbent on every member of the church...” Edinburgh went so far as to pronounce that every church was always in a missionary context. “The whole world is the mission field and there is no church that is not a church in the mission field” (WMC 1910:24; in Sunquist 2013:113). This was reiterated in Tambaram with an extended extrapolation which noted that the mission encompassed both personal transformation and social engagement (2013:116). From then on, mission was largely focused on the propagation of the gospel through the conciliar approach of empowering national councils and or gospel societies. The major focus had been on church planting or the Christianisation of foreign lands through churches associated with national councils. Even the socio-political awareness that was raised during this time was done in the context of the church. The western church was initially seen as being in mission and the bearer of the mission but this issue began to be addressed anew in Whitby. Though this mission outlook had not yet assumed strong theological basis, it was, gathering from the spirit of Edinburgh, directed at *kerygmatic* and *koinonia* aspects of the church. The church-centric meetings of the first four conferences attempted to find ways in which the church would both evangelise as well as engage creatively and

dialectically with the society. From Jerusalem onwards, Christian mission began to grapple with the reality of encountering people of non-Christian faith.

Secondly Edinburgh came up with a division of ecclesial functions into three parts, the missionary wing, Faith and Order, and lastly the Life and Work or the department that assumed the role of cooperation in social responsibility. The third theme has to do with the Western control of churches and younger churches. This is a discussion that led to the formation of councils to represent Protestant Christianity in each country or region. The last theme refers to the evolving view of mission and other religions.

#### 2.3.1.4 World Council of Churches 1948

When the World Council of Churches was constituted in Amsterdam in 1948, the IMC was defined as being 'in association' with the WCC and vice versa. The establishment of the WCC provided "a permanent means and method by which member churches could explore a variety of concerns and theological issues, especially concerning the nature, mission, and unity of the church" (Bassham 1979:29). The two sides co-operated in the Commission of the Churches on International Affairs and in the *Ecumenical Press Service*, and they set up a Joint Committee to help facilitate their collaboration (Latourette 2004:372).

Most participants from Whitby were prominent at this assembly. Meeting under the theme, "Man's Disorder and God's Design" the assembly sought to explore the divine purpose for the church in the post WWII mission in the world. It thus held four sections, namely; The Universal Church in God's Design; The Church's Witness to God's Design; The Church and the Disorder of Society and the Church and the International Disorder.

While Amsterdam did not contribute much material to the process of reflection on mission (:29), the assembly devoted Section II to the missionary and the evangelistic task of the church and produced the report entitled "Missionary and Evangelistic Strategy". WCC affirmed that "the whole church should set itself to the total task of winning the whole world for Christ" (In Bassham 1979:29). The church emerged as the main agent through which God would accomplish his purposes while at the same time the assembly also

discussed issues pertaining to possibilities and limitations which the church has in mission (:29). Its main point of view with regards to evangelism “was that of the Christian dealing with his non-Christian neighbour” and this time, the rubric, “to the ends of the earth” which was characteristic of previous discussions, was not there (Newbigin 2004:178). The discussions grappled with the question of the uncertainty of evangelism and whether the issue was about “evangelism in six continents rather than mission to six continents.” According to Bassham (1979:29-30), Amsterdam also contributed to the theology of mission by emphasizing the crucial place of the laity in the witness of the church. This assembly introduced the idea of “The Responsible Society” in every economic and political situation they found themselves. The assembly noted that:

A responsible society is one where freedom is the freedom of men who acknowledge responsibility to justice and public order, and where those who hold political authority or economic power are responsible for its exercise to God and the people whose welfare is affected by it (in Bassham 1979:30).

#### 2.3.1.5 Rolle 1951

In between the formation of WCC and the next IMC conference was the meeting of the WCC’s Central Committee in Rolle, Switzerland to follow up on the decision that had been reached in Whitby to seek a thorough survey of mission theology. This led to the study of the project “The Missionary Obligation of the Church”. The Central Committee worked to show interdependence between the ecumenical obligation to unity and obligation to the missionary task. As such the word ecumenical was taken to:

Describe everything that related to the whole task of the whole Church to bring the Gospel to the whole world. It therefore covers equally the missionary movement and the movement towards unity...the obligation to take the Gospel to the whole world, and the obligation to draw all Christ’s whole work, and are indissolubly connected (In Bassham 1979:32).

In keeping with the Whitby spirit, the Central Committee called for “a fresh study of missionary principles and practice” with a view to awakening interest in the unfinished

task of the mission of the church to all nations (:32). The Rolle meeting was thus important and pivotal in that it defined what it was for the church to be ecumenical and that it contributed to the study that would later play a crucial role in shaping the direction of mission in the two decades that followed.

#### 2.3.1.6 Willingen 1952

The 1952 conference in Willingen marked the beginning of a turning point in IMC's mission theology. While the meeting did not appear to be a success at first, the theology that was propounded here influenced CWME mission theology for the decades that followed. This conference has been termed a "Copernican revolution" in mission theology' (D Werner 1993:66; cited in Wilhelm Richebächer 2003:590). The preparatory papers leading to this conference reiterated the urgent need for a "theology of missions". The missionary movement was in need of re-examination due to the revolutionary changes in the world which inevitably led to the questioning of the effectiveness of the traditional practice of missions, a practice which some took to be a thing of the past (Newbigin 2004:178). Thus the major item of the meeting was to revisit the nature of *'The Missionary Obligation of the Church'*. This was a research program that was adopted at Whitby with the intention of reassessing principles of the mission enterprise (Bassham 1980:52). The IMC committee which met in Oegstgeest 1948, propounded this theme "as one of the central questions calling for special attention in terms of its contemporary theological expression" (Norman Goodall 1953:10). It appears that the committee wanted the theological understanding of the church to be at par with other fields of Biblical and theological studies which had been taking place but had not been sufficiently or explicitly related to the missionary calling of the church (Goodall 1953:10-11). Secondly in its 1950 meeting, in Whitby, the IMC *Ad Interim* committee broadened this theme to include practical aspects of mission that had to deal with changes in the state of the world at the time. There was also need to rethink the "role of the missionary society in a world of revolution" in the area of its missionary policy. Norman Goodall says Willingen "was a special opportunity for corporate reflection and discussion on this twofold task of theological enquiry and policy re-formulation" (Goodall 1953:13).

### *Theology of Willingen*

The conference started with this ecclesiological theme but in the end it published a report under the title *'Missions under the Cross'*, a deliberate move from “missionary ecclesiology to missionary theology” (Zorn 1999:283). Some delegates at the conference, particularly J.C. Hoekendijk from the Netherlands, challenged the church-centric outlook of missions as implied by the study. They felt that it was inadequate and that there was an urgent need to change the locus of mission theology from the traditional manner in which mission was understood to a model that took cue from the world. The new approach was to take into consideration the revolutionary changes in the world (Newbigin 2004:178) and try to find the significance of this world history and relate it to salvation history, *heilsgeschiede*. (Günther and Cook 1999:505). Hoekendijk argued that “church-centric missionary thinking is bound to go astray because it revolves around an illegitimate center” because such a theology ‘obscures the fact that the world is the scene for the proclamation of the gospel’ (In Bassham 1979:33). He defined the church as an instrument of God’s redemptive action in the world and a means by which God established shalom in the world. This shalom, was to be “proclaimed, lived and demonstrated in an integrated evangelism” (:33).

Wolfgang Günther asserts that (2003:528), given the state of affairs in the world at the time, people were beginning to question whether mission was necessary at all. Thus three conflicting views were presented which all aimed at addressing the nature of ministry in the world. The Germans preferred the salvation history model, the Dutch preferred history of promise in which the eschatological aspect of mission work with its two dimensions was emphasized. The dimensions had to do with the fulfilment of God’s promise in Christ and secondly the expectation of the coming of God’s kingdom which both operated in a comprehensive approach in meeting both spiritual and physical needs (Bassham 1979:33). The American theologians’ study related the missionary task “to the signs of Christ’s present sovereignty in the secular world”, but this was later substituted by a document based on the missionary calling of the church on the Triune God Himself (Newbigin 2004:179). This resembled a move “from a vigorous Christo-centricity to thoroughgoing

trinitarianism” (Bassham 1979:33) which postulated a proclamation that was relevant to culture and society on the basis that God was both Lord of the Church and the World.

This led to a shift from the ecclesiocentric and soteriological models of mission to a Trinitarian context which later came to be expressed by the phrase *missio Dei*. (Further discussion of this concept will follow in the discussions between New Delhi and Uppsala Assemblies below). The conference “Statement on the Missionary Calling of the Church” stated that mission has its source in the Triune God (Goodall 1953:189).

The missionary movement of which we are a part has its source in the Triune God Himself. Out of the depths of His love for us, the Father has sent forth His own beloved Son to reconcile all things to Himself, that we and all men might, through the Spirit, be made one in Him with the Father, in that perfect love which is the very nature of God (In Bassham 1979:34).

This theology was elaborated in a fivefold manner. 1. God has created everything and all His creation is to be reached by His redeeming love. 2. Humanity is alienated from God. 3. God sent one Saviour to save all the lost through his death resurrection and ascension and create in Himself a new humanity of which Christ is the head. 4. On the basis of the accomplished work, God sent His Spirit to gather the church and lead it into all truth as well as empower the church for mission as His witnesses. 5. Through the Spirit we are enabled to be “ambassadors beseeching all men to be reconciled to God...” (Goodall 1953:189-190). This formulation meant “rediscovering the classic doctrine of the *missio Dei* as the Father sending the Son, and the Father and the Son sending the Spirit, a double sending which precedes and includes another movement, that of the church being sent into the world by the Father and the Son” (Zorn 1999:283). This theology also makes room for the involvement of lay people in mission, a key development that was not there before. The section of the report entitled the ‘Total Missionary Task’ shows that God sends forth the church to carry out His work to the ends of the earth, to all nations and to the end of time.” This sending has geographical dimensions, “to every inhabited area of the world”, it also has a social dimension, “to every social, political and religious community of mankind” and also carries with it a mandate for the church to “proclaim Christ’s reign in every moment and every situation” (Goodall 1953:190-191). Referring to the Trinitarian

engagement in mission theology, Sunquist says “this should be understood as a recovery of the theology of the ancient church as it first struggled to make sense of and explain the person of Christ, the work of the Holy Spirit, and their relationship to the Father. Now mission was understood as part of the nature of the Triune God – God in Community fully reconciled and bringing about the reconciliation of all creation” (2013:126). He sees this in a positive light as something that was being re-discovered at Willingen to address the world that had been devastated with WWII seven years earlier. It was a message portraying the role that the church needed to play in identifying with the world while listening to the world with a view to reconstructing and rebuilding societies. What the church needed to do hence forth was to discern and understand “sure signs of God’s sovereign rule”, in order to determine how mission ought to be carried out (2013:126).

Given the radical socio-economic and political changes in the world at that time Willingen directed the mission of the church to address these challenges. The conference encouraged the church to live in solidarity with the world. This is drawn from the “indissoluble link between God’s mission and mission in solidarity with Christ incarnate and crucified” (Zorn (1999:283). The church was called upon to be a witness in word and deed to “what God has done, is doing and will do in Christ.” In witnessing, the church is not to stand aloof and become judgemental to the world but it is to be involved by being “God’s people in the world.” This calls for identification with the world particularly in the areas of love and justice, areas in which the church was said to have been weak (Goodall 1953:191-192). M.A.C. Warren (1953:24-45) in his paper on “*The Christian Mission and the Cross*” presented at Willingen, gives some insightful elaboration on the nature of the church’s solidarity with the world. He discusses that God’s solidarity with man through redemption carries with it implications for the missionary movement. Firstly it encourages the church to take history seriously since there is a sense in which history binds us to the past. Secondly it teaches us to “accept the contemporary situation, the history of our own time, as being all part of God’s dominion”(1953:28) This calls for the church to be ‘world-affirming’. Thirdly the church needs to accept its responsibility in the present because to Warren “if God is the Lord of history then events are not ‘out of hand’” though they might seem gloomy at times (1953:28). Fourthly Warren stresses that:

We must accept involvement in the world and do so in the spirit of the Christ incarnate and crucified. The principle of the Incarnation and of Christ's identification with sinful man, the mystery involved in the words 'He was made sin for us', He was 'made a curse for us', 'who His own self bore our sins in His own body on the tree' – all these point the Church to an inescapable involvement with the world and with sinful mankind. The Church has to infiltrate the whole of man's world with the Good News, with the demonstrated reality of a God who can and does redeem man at every point of his life (1953:33).

In the report, "Reshaping the Pattern of Missionary Activity", the conference also articulated a comprehensive view of mission that included both evangelism and social action:

Faced with the task of Christian witness in such a world, we are called to hear anew and accept once more our Lord's commission, 'Go ye therefore'; to realize the Church as the instrument in God's hand; to face the problem of Communism and secularism; to raise a prophetic voice against social, economic and racial injustice (In Bassham 1979:36).

The concept of the eschatological nature of mission, propounded by Hoekendijk and the Dutch report, found a place in some Willingen statements. Within this concept is contained the ideas of evangelism and proclamation:

The Christian Mission to the ends of the earth is a necessary activity of the church in preaching the Gospel to all the nations in the time between the resurrection and God's ultimate fulfilment of His purpose of mankind (:35).

This eschatological approach and focus on the world was later picked up at Evanston in 1954 and would bear fruit in the 1960s (Sunquist 2013:126).

A further significant aspect of this meeting was the introduction of the notion of 'witness', *martyria* as an overarching concept in mission. This witness was to manifest itself through *proclamation, fellowship and service* (Bosch 1991:511-512). According to Bosch, this concept influenced mission theology for the next three decades after Willingen. While the

concept of *missio Dei* was later used to denote secularised approach to mission to the point of even suggesting the exclusion of the church in mission as would be discussed below (Stephen Bevans and Roger Schroeder 2004:290), still remained a strong influence on ecumenical mission theology.

In summary, Willingen is noted for bringing out a new model of mission theology. After Willingen, the church could no longer be taken as the starting point or the goal of mission. Mission was not to be understood as subordinated to the church but both the mission and the church should be taken up in the *missio Dei* (Bosch 1991:370). “The church needed this theological re-centring on God, to make it more certain of the origin and imperative of its mission” (Zorn 1999:283). Mission was still defined in a comprehensive manner that encompassed both evangelism and social responsibility.

#### 2.3.1.7 WCC Evanston Assembly 1954

In 1954, the WCC held its second Assembly in Evanston, Illinois. While this assembly “did not produce an explicit new thinking of missionary questions”, it nevertheless discussed issues that had bearing on the missiological programme of the IMC. The assembly deliberated on the issue of Christian eschatology as a missiological approach. This was combined with an expanded view of evangelism, in a manner that Sunquist says, “tended to collapse the goal of mission into the process of the mission...the goals of reconciliation or justice were defined as proclaiming the good news, which meant that racial reconciliation became evangelism” Be that as it may, Evanston, carried forth the Willingen thought on the eschatological approach to mission and gave it space for further discussion, starting with the preparatory papers. The term evangelism was broadened to include all that was called mission. It meant bringing persons to Christ through faith and it also meant “helping to bring about social transformation and incorporating people into the life of the church” (2013:128). Evanston also took further steps to work towards the integration of IMC and WCC. By this time, the assembly had the Rolle statement before it, and the report from East Asian Study and Consultation at Lucknow in 1952 to build on. Lucknow called for a study on the integration of IMC and WCC and this was accomplished

in 1954. At this time, the Joint Committee was reconstituted under the leadership of Norman Goodall as full time secretary and H.P. Van Dusen as chairman. In 1956 the Joint Committee meeting at Herrenalb decided to press for closer links between the organisations and decided:

To recommend to the parent bodies that in the opinion of the Joint Committee the time has come when consideration should be given to the possibility of full integration between WCC and the IMC, subject to an adequate safeguarding in any plan of integration of the distinctive expression of the Mission of the Church as this has been embodied in the IMC (In Bassham 1979:41).

In 1957 a draft plan of integration was prepared at Lambeth Palace and later submitted to the WCC Central Committee in preparation for the Ghana 1958 IMC conference.

#### 2.3.1.8 Achimota 1958

The next IMC meeting took place in Achimota, Ghana in 1958. The conference met under the theme, *The Christian Mission at this Hour*. This was a transitional conference which laid the groundwork for the integration of the IMC into the World Council of Churches. It carried further the discussion on the theology of integration that was started at Willingen. This theology entailed structural adjustments on the part of both institutions (Günther and Cook 1999:505). A major part of this conference deliberated “on whether or not it was a good idea that the WCC (which is not a church) should take in the IMC (which is not a mission) (Sunquist 2013:129). While this integration was approved at this conference it was marked by opposing arguments. Those who opposed the merger voiced concerns that this move would hamper, dilute and lose the missionary focus of the IMC in favour of the order and unity (:129). They argued that integrating the IMC into the WCC would stifle and quench the missionary spirit. They feared that integration would lead to the creation of a “bureaucratic organisation in which the missionary vision and trust would be lost” (Lundström 2006:63). In their view, mission could be fulfilled *without* unity (1987:100). Others were suspicious of “what they supposed to be some of the theological directions of the WCC and rejected the idea of integrating missions into an ecclesiastical organisation”

and others, particularly the Norwegian missions, feared that “WCC would weaken their confessional identity” (Zorn 1999:285). More criticisms came up after the actual merger took place in 1961. Following the merger some considered moving more toward the evangelical stream in the years that followed (Gunther 2003:530). So while it was recognized that a great deal of discussion would be needed beyond this conference, the conference decided to “accept in principle” the integration of the two councils and recorded its opinion that the draft plan was a “generally suitable instrument” for this purpose’ (Newbiggin 2004:184). The plan was then disseminated to the member of councils of IMC for further study and comments. A lot of discussions took place between this conference and the third WCC assembly at which the integration was finally realised.

Apart from the integration debate, Achimota, in its received statement entitled *The Christian Mission at this Hour*, asserted that “mission is Christ’s, not ours”. Christ is the one who was sent by God in the world as a servant to suffer to the point of death on the cross. This word of judgment and mercy was taken as “the only true motive of Christian mission and the only standard by which the spirit, method and modes of Christian missionary organization must be judged” (IMC 1958:89). All missionary work was to take cue from the servanthood of Jesus and stay on course with God’s mission. Secondly we are also “fellow-workers with Christ in His mission” and this calls for humility because “Christ trusts us to discharge His mission in His form, the form of a servant, a servant whose characteristics are humility and suffering” (IMC 1958:89). This means that, thirdly, the church is responsible for mission. This was taken to mean that “it would be illegitimate to talk about the one without at the same time talking about the other” (Bosch 1991:370). Each church in its organized life cannot be Christ’s without being His missionary servant” (IMC 1958:89). With this the home base for mission was now taken to be everywhere and mission would no longer be understood as coming from the North to the South or from the West to the East.

The fourth part of the statement has a discussion which regards the distinction between the older and younger churches. The fact that the mission is Christ’s and not ours means that churches in the missionary task “stand all alike under His judgment and mercy.” This

entails that the “distinction between ‘older’ and ‘younger’ churches, whatever may have been its usefulness in earlier years, is no longer valid or helpful. It obscures the status of churches before God, and so obscures the truth that precisely in the fact of being churches they are all equally called to obedience to their one missionary Lord” (IMC 1958:90). This appears to be an emphatic reiteration of the views that were expressed earlier in Tambaram and Whitby. This conference moved a step further and called for a transition from the “concept of churches for others (with *missionary* and “*missionees*” churches) to a concept of churches with others” (Zorn 1999:285). Mission was to be understood as partnership which called for an end to “tutelage of one church over another” (Zorn 1999:285). The fifth part of the statement emphasised the need for proclamation regardless of divergent views and perspectives on this aspect of the missionary task. The statement stressed that “this is the hour in which Christians must go out into the world in the name of *Christus Victor*” (IMC 1958:91).

An important missiological aspect from Achimota was the decision to be taken on the study on the “Theology of Mission” and a joint study with WCC on “The Word of God and the Living faiths of other Men”. The first aimed at trying to understand the new patterns of mission that were occurring in that era. It attempted to address the question; “What does it mean in theological terms and in practice in this ecumenical era, for the Church to discharge its mission to the world?” (In Bassham 1979:43). The focus of this study was twofold: Firstly it intended to explore the “biblical and theological basis and goal of mission” and secondly it sought to find “a theological evaluation of the existing structures, expressing the missionary responsibility of the churches and of those which are emerging” (:43). The second area of study became clearer in the 1960s as the mission world came to grips with the renascent faiths in Africa and Asia.

These two conferences 1952 and 1958 are significant in that the former introduced the beginning of a shift in thinking from the traditionally ecclesiocentric and soteriological approach to mission to a rather broad Trinitarian understanding of mission. The latter, while not a bearer of much new theology of mission, was nevertheless very significant in concretising the framework for the merger of WCC and IMC. The role of the church was

stressed and built on a Christological axis, in that the church needed to learn from the servanthood of Jesus Christ in its missionary task. It also included the important debate on the younger and older churches, an issue which was to be important for mission for the years to come.

### **2.3.2 Post integration Theologies in CWME, 1961-1996**

#### 2.3.2.1 WCC Assembly New Delhi 1961

The WCC assembly that was held in New Delhi in 1961 marked a very important stage in the history of missions as well as the development of mission theology. Among the many issues that were discussed in New Delhi, there are three issues which stand out due to the influence they bore on ecumenical missiology in the years following this conference. Firstly, it was at this assembly that the IMC was officially integrated into the WCC. It became the Division on World Mission and Evangelism (DWME) and then later changed to the Commission for World Mission and Evangelism (CWME). One of the major themes that were stressed at New Delhi with regards to the merger was the importance of unity between church and mission. There were thus high hopes that the integration would bring new insights onto the ecumenical understandings of mission and church since the two councils were now working together (Mark T.B Laing 2012:119). Laing points out that the report on “Witness” stressed the necessity of unity in the Church’s proclamation task in the world, while at the same time the report on “Unity” stressed the relationship between unity and mission stating that; “In the fulfilment of our missionary obedience the call to unity is seen to be imperative...there is an inescapable relation between the fulfilment of the church’s missionary obligation and the recovery of her visible unity” (WCC, *New Delhi Report*, 78 quoted in Laing 2012:119). Leslie Newbigin, the general secretary of the CWME at the time of the merger, also stressed the need for mission and church unity in his sermon when he said, “The obligation to take the Gospel to the whole world, and the obligation to draw all Christ’s people together, both rest upon Christ’s whole work and are indissolubly connected. Every attempt to separate these tasks violates the wholeness of Christ’s ministry to the world.” (Quoted in Laing 2012:120).

While the integration marked a milestone in ecumenical missiology, there were criticisms levelled against it. Lundström (2006: 63) cites a number of criticisms that emanated from some American evangelicals such as Arthur Glasser and Arthur Johnston whose criticisms targeted the merger as well as the theology of Christian presence that surfaced in New Delhi. It was seen as having diluted the effectiveness of CWME to a certain extent. Whereas mission was the sole concern of IMC, from now on, “mission was now just one of many concerns within the WCC” (Laing 2012:122). Others, like Max Warren, felt that the IMC was more effective outside of the WCC than in WCC. In his assessment, the integration of IMC created a vacuum which he felt was being filled with unforeseeable consequences for the ecumenical and missionary movements of the future” (1979:108). This decision was done without much enthusiasm by the delegates who attended the conference in Achimota and its fulfilment in New Delhi set “the main stage in the separation process between the ecumenical and evangelicals...” (Lundström 2006:63). Warren admits that he himself and others shared certain misgivings about the integration but somehow they went onto cast the vote for integration. He admits that this approval was given with somewhat muted enthusiasm. (1979:104). Laing (2012:125) has an insightful summary of the challenge evangelicals posed to the IMC leadership on the issue integration:

The demands of integration, with the questions of how to resolve the numerous issues fully occupied the energies of the leadership. Beyond their immediate concerns, what was less apparent to the IMC was the extent to which evangelicals support for the IMC had eroded. The numerical trends were alarming: by 1957 almost 60 percent of American missionaries were not cooperating with the IMC- and 70 percent of all foreign missionaries were American. Sterling efforts were made to retain the loyalty of evangelicals within IMC councils. But, considering the “barrage” of anti-ecumenical “propaganda,” the facilities did not exist to effectively communicate the IMC message on integration to the growing majority outwith the remit of IMC. Instead, those missions continued their isolation from the ecumenical movement with growing suspicion about liberal theological developments within the WCC.

The evangelical separation that was ignited by this merger was interpreted by some as a positive move as it was seen to provide a channel to continue with the key concerns

embodied in the IMC (2012:125). There is thus a correlation between the period of time during which the merger was being debated and the time during which the formation of the evangelical stream began to take shape as evidenced by the conference that was held by the Interdenominational Foreign Mission Association in Chicago 1960.

The second important missiological issue that came out of New Delhi had to do with the assembly's articulation of the Christian presence as crucial to the process of evangelism. Meeting under the theme "Jesus Christ: the light of the Word, the assembly included a section on "Witness" which sought to elaborate the church's role and approach in the evangelistic task. Three key issues can be deduced in understanding the underlying theology of this section. Firstly there is an emphasis on the fact that God has not left himself without a witness in the world "even among men who do not yet know Christ..." God has already given witness of himself in that "he has been and is at work authenticating his own message to men" (1962:79). This suggests that Christ is already in the world but there is need to point him out. This is connected to the second emphasis of the report which has to do with the activity of the church in bearing witness to God's presence. The urgency to carry out the evangelistic task is taken as arising from the Gospel of Jesus Christ who is the light of the world and his "light has preceded the bearers of the good news into the darkest places. The task of the Christian witness is to point to him as the true light, which is already shining" (New Delhi Report 1962:77). The role for the church is to witness to who Jesus is by pointing him out to those whom he had already initiated his witness.

The third aspect coming out this section has to do with the approaches used in carrying out the evangelistic task particularly given the "resurgence of ancient faiths" and the need to reach the men of the other faiths. Since this task of evangelism was being performed in new situations, this means that new strategies and methods were required so that the church could venture "into new forms of human social relationships with appropriately new ways of approach and understanding, a renewed sympathy with all men in their aspirations and suffering and a fresh determination to speak to men the truth of the Gospel in the actual situation of their lives" (1963:78). With this foundation, the section goes on to call for appropriate forms of communicating the good news of Jesus Christ in ways relevant to the

particular age in which evangelism is taking place. This is where the idea of Christian presence is introduced and articulated. There must be a willingness on the part of the missionary to “identify” with those he is addressing. He is called upon to be close the hearer “to sit where he sits”, as an essential condition which will earn him the right to be heard. The section refers to this as “sympathetic identification” which is deemed to be a reflection of the love of Christ. In this endeavour, “the witness should himself be first of all a listener.” Furthermore, the listener should study the milieu in which his message is to be proclaimed with the aim of gaining a listening ear from our hearers (1962:82-83). The section went on to introduce the term ‘dialogue’ as a form of evangelism. This term was at the time still undergoing experiment but represented an endeavour to find new approaches to the evangelistic task in the twentieth century (1962:84). This new direction of evangelism as Christian presence with the initial introduction of the term dialogue at this stage marks a significant development in ecumenical understanding of evangelism. This became an important element in ecumenical missiology starting with Mexico 1963 up to Salvador 1996 (Lundström 2006:61).

New Delhi also developed the integrated nature of evangelism and social action. This meant that witnessing the gospel might also be taken as “engagement in the struggle for social justice and for peace as a form of practical ministry in the midst of the people Christians seek to serve” (Bassham 1979:64). This is rather consistent with the manner in which the previous IMC meetings had been expanding the term evangelism to include both social awareness and the winning of souls to Christ.

The third missiological issue that came out of this assembly was the decision to authorize a study project on *The Missionary Structure of the Congregation*. This decision was going to impact the path of ecumenical mission theology for the next two decades. With the merger having taken place, church and mission had now been brought together in ecumenical theology. This however meant discussions on church and mission would also take a new look. The question was thus raised as to how the structures of the church affected mission or how mission should shape the structures of the church (Bassham 1979:63). The purpose of this study was to discover the extent to which the local church, its organisation,

equipment and cultural outlook could be used in furthering mission in the world (Lundström 2006:62). This project was significant in that it expanded on the Trinitarian concept that was earlier introduced at Willingen. The idea that the world was providing the agenda for the church and the need for the church to identify with this agenda, had already surfaced in 1960 at the Strasbourg conference of the World's Student Christian Federation (WSCF) at which Hoekendijk made an impact on the students (Bosch 1991:382). Through Hoekendijk's influence, it was during this decade that the *missio Dei* concept underwent further development and influenced ecumenical missiology in subsequent conferences. It is also the development of this concept that led to more polarization between evangelicals and ecumenicals during this period of time. With that in mind, it will be worthwhile to revisit in some detail the development of *missio Dei* at this juncture and see how the concept went through modification. This discussion has been placed here in order to maintain some chronology and continuity in the development of this mission theology because it was mostly during this period of time leading to Uppsala that the concept was fully developed and took centre stage in ecumenical theology.

### **2.3.2.2 The Development of the Missio Dei Concept**

The term *missio Dei* was not necessarily used at Willingen though the idea carried by this concept was prevalent at that conference. Karl Barth is credited with being the first one to use the term *mission Dei* in the area of mission theology when in 1932 at a missionary conference in Brandenburg he articulated that mission was an activity of God himself (Bosch 1991: 389; Richebächer 2003:590). He "called for the grounding of mission not in ecclesiology, soteriology, or comparative religion, but in the activity of God himself" (Ott et al. 2010:63) This idea was taken up by Karl Hartenstein who in his Württemberg report some weeks after the Willingen conference coined the term *missio Dei* in summarising the conference's official report (Wilhelm Richebächer 2003:589). He also distinguished it from *missio ecclesiae* (Bevans and Schroeder (eds) 2004:290). In this summary Hartenstein wrote,

The sending of the Son to reconcile the universe through the power of the Spirit is the foundation and purpose of mission. The *missio ecclesia* comes from the *missio*

*Dei* alone. Thus, mission is placed within the broadest imaginable framework of salvation history and God's plan for salvation (in Richebächer 2003:589-590).

In this model, mission is rooted in the very nature of God. The classical doctrine of *missio Dei* can thus be formulated as “God the Father sending the Son, and God the Father and Son sending the Spirit was expanded to include yet another “movement”: Father, Son and Holy Spirit sending the church into the world” (Bosch 1991:390).

According to Günther (1970:114 quoted in Richebächer 2003:590) this formula “originally described the wider implications of the salvific work of God for the kingdom, of which the missionary activities of the church were seen as an indispensable part component.” Following Willigen, Georg F Vicedom is also credited with expounding a classic understanding of this concept. In his book *Missio Dei*, Vicedom sees mission as the activity in which God is both the sender, and the One sent as well as the content of the sending for the purpose of redemption. In this mission, the church plays a key role because not only does it belong to God but it is also his tool (In Tormod Engelsen 2003:482). All the life of the church should be permeated by mission because this describes the life of the believer. Vicedom’s *missio Dei* also attempts to “redefine theologically the role of the "nations" in God's work in the world at this stage of history.” He does this by expanding the concept of the *missio Dei* to the Kingdom of God. This concept is expanded to include “God’s work as creator and preserver and the Lordship of God” and it is through this understanding that God “brings his direct influence to bear on the world” (Quoted in Engelsen 2003:484). It can be asserted that at the inception of the concept, there was an effort to articulate that the mission of God included both the salvation of individuals and “the holistic aim of establishing Christ's rule over all redeemed creation” (Engelsen 2003:482). This formulation aimed at establishing that mission, is not to be limited simply to the carrying out of individual commands in the Bible. This makes mission “a human act of obedience, easily separated from God’s overarching purposes in history...” (Ott et al. 2010:61). But mission is to be taken as participation in the overall mission that God is undertaking. Mission according to *missio Dei* is therefore a reframing of our “understanding in terms of God’s own character and prerogative” (Ott et al. 2010:62). As noted earlier, Sunquist sees this “as a recovery of the theology of the ancient church as it first struggled to make sense

of and explain the person of Christ, the work of the Holy Spirit and their relationship to the Father” (2013:126).

The changes to the above formulation began to appear in the latter half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. During this time the *missio Dei* concept had gained much currency in mission circles but there was no consensus on the broadness of its meaning among theologians. There were some who called for a wider formulation of the concept to include a secular dimension while others had hoped to “protect mission against secularization and horizontalization, and to reserve it exclusively for God” (Bosch 1991:392). Ott and Strauss outline three directions in which understandings of *missio Dei* moved during this period.

1. Under the influence of Hartenstein and Freytag, the Germans took an eschatological, salvation-historical view which took mission as “God’s activity in history between the two comings of Christ. When the gospel is preached to all nations, Christ will return to establish his kingdom in fullness.”
2. The Dutch, with the influence of Hoekendijk saw mission as “God’s activity *in* the world to *serve* the world.” Kingdom promises are fulfilled within history.
3. Due to the influence of the social gospel the Americans looked at mission as aiming for “personal and social transformation” in the world (2010:63-64).

Ott, Strauss and Tennent point out that it was the Dutch and American perspectives of mission that won the day in the 1960s. The concept was now clothed with secularistic overtones due to the increase in modernistic outlook on life. Furthermore, those who took this outlook “tended to radicalize the view that the *missio Dei* was larger than the mission of the church even to the point of excluding the church’s involvement...” (Bosch 1991:392).

Hoekendijk is of particular interest in this reformulation of the *missio Dei*. He is known for calling for a secularised understanding of the Christian calling and mission. Even though he started attacking the church centred view in Willingen, his view did not win the day then (Engelsviken 2003:488). His theology became very influential in the 1960s. It was well received by the WSCF when he addressed students at a conference in Strasbourg.

In his 1950 article, “The Call to Evangelism” Hoekendijk propounded a theology of evangelism that is different from the usually accepted meaning of evangelism. For him ‘the

Messiah is the subject of evangelism'. Secondly the aim of evangelism is to be consistent with what Israel expected the Messiah to do, and that is to establish shalom which is 'much more than personal salvation'. Rather, this shalom "is at once peace, integrity, community, harmony and justice" (In Kinnamon and Cope (eds) 1997:333). From this perspective of shalom, the meaning and aim of evangelism is taken to be "the realization of hope" for the earth. This conception of evangelism as hope and expectancy entails a rejection of *propaganda* because for Hoekendijk, propaganda's essential character "is lack of expectant hope and an absence of humility." It tends to impose things on people (1997:334-335). This view of evangelism also rejects *plantatio ecclesiae* as the goal of evangelism. Church planting as a goal of mission is said to be deficient in that it sees mission as "the road from the Church to the Church" (1997:335). To Hoekendijk this cannot be the aim of missions, "evangelism and *churchification* are not identical..." and there is a sense in which they may be opposed to each other (1997:336). He proposed what he terms 'the right translation of messianic shalom' in evangelism. This includes three key aspects, the proclamation of the *kerygma*, which proclaims the shalom and in a way that touches history, the living out of the shalom through *koinonia* by an open community "which is free to relate itself to every form of existence" and thirdly the humble demonstration of the shalom through *diakonia*. This roadmap constitutes the messianic shalom or evangelism of hope.

Hoekendijk (1967:68-69) further proposed that there should be a new order of thinking when speaking about the mission of the church. He argued that there was need for renewal to take place in the church, a renewal that would entail radical change, and could be rightly called, 'the liberating of our liberty' (1967:68). This liberty is only made possible through God's liberating acts which take place in history, i.e. in the world. For him, since God is not "a temple dweller, [and] in the strictest sense of the word, he is not even a church god...not a God of the *status quo*", it follows that he is a forward looking God who operates through the history in the secular events of the time outside of the church (:68). This meant that in order for the church to be relevant in mission it was to look at what God was doing in the world since the world set the agenda for mission. He argued that the new order should be God-World-Church and not God-Church-World as previously held (:69). As for what would become of the church, Hoekendijk argued that if the church were to assume its role

as the ‘Messianic community’, she would need to prove her legitimacy “by being there for the other” through self-emptying like the Messiah did. This would be termed as the pro-existence of the church for the world (:70). A pro-existent church, Hoekendijk would argue, “can therefore never be organized exclusively in local parishes. In its place, or at least parallel with it, all sorts of other forms of church life must be developed. If the church does not do that, she will come to stand outside of her own and will no longer be able to serve the people who have become our contemporaries” (:71-72). This suggests that the radical church renewal objective is more admirable than the restoration model. The restoration model, which Hoekendijk, disparages (1967:72-73), is seen:

When the church in her life just orients herself to the past, when she aims her life at “the people who are still around” (just notice how often this is said: “the people who are *still* around”), it can be predicted with certainty that her style of life will become ever more old-fashioned, more archaic, so that she becomes increasingly a foreign element in our time and finally will maintain herself only as a religious ghetto.

Hoekendijk was keen to see established, a sort of Christianity that was relevant to the contemporary situation and “understood by today’s reader of the daily paper” (:73). He accuses the church of having “estranged herself from the milieu” around her resulting in “a wornout and hallowed out style of life’ which fails to have a grip on the world. The church should thus deprive herself and take up a form that is akin to her society so that she can be at par with the rapidly changing world and this would entail a changing of its life and structures to follow a pattern set out by the changing world.

This secular thinking grew in strength so much so that due to its influence, the New Delhi assembly authorised a study project on ‘The Missionary Structure of the Congregation’ (as noted earlier) which focused on the nature of the church and evangelism (Newbiggin 2004:194). Two groups were tasked to work on this project, a group from Western Europe and a group from North America and their findings were published in 1967 by WCC. In their final reports, both groups propounded a *missio Dei* that bore great resemblance to the Hoekendijkian thinking on mission though this is not to say that he was the sole progenitor of a secularised *missio Dei*. He happened to present a version that seemed to resonate with

the spirit of the time and he presented it in such a manner that it made an impact on its recipients.

In its study the European group made a case for secularization by pointing out that it is “inherent in the biblical faith in God...The world in the bible is entirely secular...” (1967:10). This means that the secular is not necessarily or inherently evil but instead plays a key role in the eyes of God. The group went on to assert that that this contemporary understanding of God’s operation in the world also raises the issue of “*Christus extra muros ecclesiae* – of Christ outside the walls of the Church” (1967:11). This means that Christ’s work is not confined to the church only but is also found outside the church in the world working in the unfolding of history. This calls the church to a partnership with God in this history. In doing this the group distinguishes the *missio Dei* from missions. They outlined the purpose of *missio Dei* as *shalom* with the understanding that *shalom* stands for all aspects pertaining to human life. It is “a social happening, an event in interpersonal relations...it involves the realization of the full potentialities of all creation and its ultimate reconciliation and unity in Christ” (1967:14-15). This *shalom* is not only realized in the churches but God is “using men and women both inside and outside the churches, to bring signs of the *shalom*” (1967:15). This entails that the church has to look outside its walls to discern this operation of the *shalom* which in turn necessitates a new understanding of the relationship between the church and the world. The new relationship was portrayed to be God – World – Church since “God’s primary relation is to the world, and it is the world and not the church that is the focus of God’s plan”(1967:16-17).

The North American group echoed similar premises in its paper. It held that “God’s object of concern is the world” (1967:69). As such the group employed the same sequence of mission as God – Word – Church as discussed above. The group asserted that worldliness is key to the “divine intention in its creative and redemptive aspect” (1967:69). In this sequence, the church is taken as “a segment of the world, a *postscript*, that is, added to the world for the purpose of pointing to and celebrating both Christ’s presence and God’s ultimate redemption of the whole world” (1967:70). The church is to participate with God in his mission, because this constitutes the church’s missionary calling. The conversion that is involved in this missionary task is not similar to that which is found in traditional

evangelism, i.e. turning from the world, rather “it is a turning towards the world, now seen from the perspective of hope, in the light of God’s purpose...it is a movement toward the world into which both the insider and outsider are called jointly to enter and in which they together become participants of God’s mission” (1967:75). The goal of God’s mission has been singled out by this group to be humanization because this was taken to be definitive of the messianic goal during that period of time. Mission needed “to point to the humanity in Christ as the goal of mission” (1967:78). This humanization went beyond people to even humanizing social structures of which the church is one of those structures needing such humanization for the sake of the betterment of society (1967:78). Further discussion on the adoption of these documents will be covered under the Uppsala Assembly.

To summarise, the discussion has attempted to establish that the Trinitarian concept of *missio Dei* went through several phases of development and understandings since its inception. While it literally became “a tag on which an enormous range of meaning has been hung...[and] has been used to advance all kinds of missiological agendas” (J. A. Kirk 1999:25), two key opposing positions can be articulated. The first position is termed salvation *history ecclesiological Approach*. According to Richebächer (2003:593), the “concerted missionary activity of the church is urgent and justified if the church is to become once again the tool of God’s missionary work”. This would be the stance that would be taken by those within conservative evangelical inclination. The second view is termed the *historical eschatological approach* or the *historical promise approach*, which “allows the missionary activity of the church to “dissolve” in God’s universal activity in history and considers the relationship of God’s redemptive action in the world, and the church’s action in the world as being detached from each other and existing alongside each other.” Richebächer (2003:593-594), points out that it was due to this polarization of views that a split between evangelicals and ecumenical emerged. He mentioned however that the process of polarization is not limited to the concept of *missio Dei* though the semantic problems relating to the use of the concept have contributed to the split between evangelicals and ecumenicals.

### 2.3.2.3 Mexico 1963, CWME

In 1963 two years after the integration, the CWME convened its first conference in Mexico City. Holding the conference in a Latin American city was considered very significant in that it signalled that the continent could now be treated as a legitimate mission field for Protestant missions. Prior to this time, Latin America was considered to have been substantially reached by the Roman Catholic Church so much so that carrying out Protestant mission work in this continent would constitute ‘unwarranted proselyting’. According to Goodhall (1972:22):

In fact those agencies which were attempting work in the unevangelized areas of Latin America had easily discovered that large sections of the population had remained far beyond the reach of the Roman Catholic Church, partly because of limitations placed upon that church by governments of countries which had broken free of their colonial dependence, and partly through the inherent weakness of the church itself. Further, in many areas it was not difficult to conclude that a nominal Roman Catholicism was indistinguishable from paganism.

This is one of the reasons why Latin America was not represented at the World Missionary Conference. At Edinburgh there was debate as to whether Latin America could be considered a legitimate ‘mission field’ for Protestant missions with the exception of some Indian and aboriginal tribes who were considered to have not been reached with the Gospel (Goodall 1972:21-22). This Mexico conference also marks the time when representatives from the Eastern Orthodox Church attended as members of the CWME and not just as observers. This was significant in that, while these representatives had attended on the basis of their church’s membership in the World Council of Churches, and therefore participates in the CWME, their presence in this particular conference “reflected the beginnings of a new era in the relationships between Eastern Orthodoxy and the historic missionary movement of the western churches.” This is better understood by the following depiction of the relationship that existed between the two (Goodall 1972: 23):

From the early years of the nineteenth century onwards, Orthodoxy had viewed western missionary activity not only with suspicion but often with

intense and bitter hostility. Doctrinally, ecclesiologically this activity appeared to the Orthodox world as the aggressive expression of a Protestantism which was fundamentally heretical and dangerous. Its evangelistic concern could only be equated with proselytism and was to be resisted at all costs. Conversely, most representatives of the great missionary enterprise of the nineteenth century regarded the Orthodox churches very largely as ecclesiastical museum pieces, lacking that vital spark which produces a passionate dedication to the task of winning the world for Christ.

With such a descriptive background of the relationship between Protestantism and the Orthodox world, one can only applaud Orthodox participation in 1963 as a landmark gain in ecumenical endeavours.

The main theme at the conference was “*Witness to Six Continents*” and it was divided into four sections which dealt with rubrics under the main theme of ‘Witness’ subdivided as follows: The witness of Christians to men of other faiths, men in the secular world, congregations in the neighbourhood, and witness of the church across national and confessional boundaries. Much of the discussion that took place in Mexico bore much affinity to the themes that were dealt with in New Delhi. The section on witness and the view of the church’s role in the secular world resonate with what transpired in the assembly. Delegates struggled with a new theological understanding of mission. As stipulated in the 1961 Trinitarian missiology, delegates had a difficult time locating the nature of God’s activity outside the church and then relating this activity to the church (Bassham 1979:65):

Debate returned again and again to the relationship between God’s action in and through the Church and everything God is doing in the world apparently independently of the Christian community. Can a distinction be drawn between God’s providential action and God’s redeeming action? If the restoration and reconciliation of human life is being achieved by the action of God through secular agencies, what is the place and significance of faith? If the Church is to be wholly involved in the world and its history, what is the true nature of its separateness?

While no specific answer to the above was immediately discovered, the delegates did shift away from preoccupation with the church as was with the previous conferences and moved more toward the discovering of “the shape of Christian obedience being written for them

by what God is already actively doing in the structures of the city's life outside the Church.” (1979:65). Newbiggin (2004:194) highlights that Mexico can be regarded as being highly significant for conceiving the missionary task in the context of what God was doing in the secular world. This step is something that Willingen could not achieve although it tried to break out of the ecclesiocentric missiology of Tambaram. Some of the significant outcomes of this conference include the decision to enlarge mission to include all continents as seen in the catch phrase “mission to six continents”. This meant that from this time onwards, both the North and the South would be considered mission fields. Mission was no longer limited to non-Christian lands but now also included the post Christian lands as well.

In the section that dealt with people of other faiths, Mexico built on the foundation of ‘Christian Presence’ laid in New Delhi by stressing the need to meet the men of other faiths through dialogue. By 1963, the term ‘dialogue’ had become a key term in witnessing to men of other faiths (Goodall 1972:30). By using it officially as a means for evangelism this conference attempted to change the domain of discussion from focusing on religions as was done in Jerusalem, to focussing the on the personal domain of the *man* of another faith (Anastasios Yannoulatos 1978:356). This move from religions to the men of other religions distinctly placed ‘dialogue’ as a missionary framework (1978:356). The report on section I went on to lay out the rationale for dialogue by pointing out that Christian witness is not just about declaring Christian truth to others; rather it should recognise the reasons for which men of other faiths hold for following their religion and try to establish which aspects of their religion could be preparatory for the gospel. “The vitality, or lack of it, that any man finds in his faith, and the sincerity of his search for God, may in the providence of God become opportunities for Christian witness” (CWME 1964:116). In witnessing or dialoguing, there should be “a willingness to respect the faiths of others and to adopt a positive attitude towards the hidden values of other religions” (Yannoulatos 1978:357). While Mexico put forward dialogue as the form of Christian witness, the conference also called for “vigilance against religious relativism and syncretism” (CWME 1964:117). It emphasised the need to safeguard the Gospel and the other man (Bassham 1979:52) by pointing out that “without the first, dialogue becomes a pleasant conversation and without the second, it becomes irrelevant, unconvincing or arrogant” (CWME 1964:117). It calls

for a transparent listening to the other faith while taking cognisance of the fact that “an individual cannot be separated from the religion or community which dominates him in all his thoughts and deeds” (CWME 1964:117). Meaningful dialogue therefore, calls for a thorough knowledge of another man’s religious system but the message of the good news must still be presented. The centrality of the name of Jesus needs not be compromised in the listening process. The fact that other religious beliefs can play a part in the process of evangelisation cannot be denied but it still needs to be maintained that Christianity by its very nature has “a universal claim and offers a universal gift” and these issues need to be brought openly to the listener somewhere in the dialoguing process so that the process does not end at merely listening to each other. This suggests that Christian witness “whether through dialogue or other means – is witness to a Name which is above every name”(Goodall 1972:31-32). Bishop Sabapathy Kulandran (Jaffna Diocese in South India) made this point clearly at the conference when he said (quoted in Goodall 1972:32):

But to stop with that initial agreement is to eliminate dialogue and live in illusion that there are no disagreements. Disagreements do exist; and hence the need for dialogue. Disagreements must be faced and the greater the knowledge of other faiths the greater the knowledge of what these agreements really are...To stop at disagreements is to lose faith in the possibility of evangelism. The step from the state of disagreements to that of ultimate agreement is the most important step in a dialogue and the most important act in evangelism; it is to convince the man with views so different from ours that God’s offer is being made to him also. Since all men belong to God and the commission to evangelize is to evangelize all men that step must be taken.

So there was an endeavour in Mexico to implement the shift in mission praxis with regards to evangelising men of other faith as was articulated at the assembly in 1961. While dialogue was now endorsed as an evangelism approach within a missional framework it is fair to say that the two views on continuity and discontinuity which surfaced in Jerusalem with regards to the values in other religions continued to exist.

By the time this conference convened, the WCC had already commissioned the study on the ‘Missionary Structure of the Congregation’. The questions concerning the nature of the church were still prevalent at this stage (Lossky et al 1991:330). Delegates wanted to

understand the nature of God's mission in the world as well as "its relation to the mission to which God calls the church" (Bassham 1979:52). As a result Mexico City did not only endorse this study but its final conference message affirmed something that resembled the main theme of the study. The conference resolved to "discover a shape of Christian obedience being written for them by what God is already actively doing in the structures of the city's life outside the church" (Quoted in Bassham 1979:52).

The section that dealt with Christian Witness to Men in the Secular World revealed the direction that Mexico had taken with regards to the interaction of the church and the world. It repeatedly called on the church to be more involved with the secular world so that it can provide the answers needed by this society. Instead of living a compartmentalized existence, the church was called upon to be assimilated into the society by joining the laity "where they are, *inside* the secular world" (IMC1963:119). In its argument for secularization, the section argues that, since secularization appears as a revolutionary attempt by man to emancipate themselves from all forms of dependency, it thus presents man with both 'greater freedom' and 'new enslavement' at the same time. Since it is not clear what man might choose when his life hangs in the balance like this, it becomes the duty of Christians to be "involved with all mankind in the process of secularization and with the making of these choices which present themselves not once but again and again"(1963:119). Basically the argument is that the church cannot assume that the people will make the right choices in the struggle for their lives in the world, the church needs to be involved with the very secular world and in so doing guide people in the making of right choices. The church needs to take cognisance of the various dimensions of secularization and be able to adapt relevantly to each sphere of society upon which secularisation would have made impact. This could be in reference to man's social environment or nature, issues of race and culture, struggle for liberation from unjust social orders or fight for justice in secular structures that exploit people rather than serve them as a God-given function and so forth. With regard to what the task of mission is, the section elaborates that Christian witness, "...should articulate questions and answers from within the modern world and take up the points of decision which God Himself has provided through secularization...The pattern of Christian mission in the secular world must therefore be one of constant encounter with the real needs of our age. Its form must be that of dialogue...if we take the

situation of man seriously, and understand that mission has to take place from *within this world*, our church structures will need to undergo radical change” (1963:120).

In its section III on the Witness of the congregation in its neighbourhood, Mexico’s theology was clearly Hoekendijkian, further confirming that the idea of the world supplying the agenda for mission had by now taken root in ecumenical theology. It appears though that the Mexico conference was grappling with how the relationship of the church and the world could be understood in God’s plan. Mexico felt there is a dialectic in the way God uses the church and the world. This was made so by the emphasis that was put on the evidence of God’s redemptive work outside of the setting of church life. This led Mexico to conclude that the “evidence of changed lives is often to be found in other areas than in a recognized congregation”, in other words, “God is at work also in the activities of secular agencies”(1963:122). The section report gives a list of social rehabilitation type of exercises carried outside of the walls of the church and yet seemed to be effective in social transformation; “Drunkards are reformed through Alcoholics Anonymous; lives broken by fear and anxiety find healing in a group therapy session in a hospital; homes torn apart by jealousies and conflict find new unit at Marriage Counselling Agency; families almost dehumanized by over-crowded tenements are restored to better human relationships by a city council’s imaginative rehousing scheme...” (1963:122). This assertion presupposes that Christ is already present as Lord, over the whole world and with this comes the new emphasis of the witnessing task of the church; “It reminds us that we are to watch for the signs of Christ’s presence in the communities of the world. Therefore the church should seek for the gift to interpret what is happening now in the events of the world...” With this understanding, the report delineated that the church is called to:

- (a) Constantly to ask where God is at work in the world;
- (b) to take the incarnation seriously; to be “Christ to our neighbour” (Luther), by serving and suffering through involvement in the arenas of the world’s struggles not only as individuals but as old and new forms of congregation;
- (c) by word and deed to interpret for the world the Saviourhood as well as the Lordship of Christ in the events of our time (1963:123).

In analysing the impact of the whole conference, Yannoulatos (1978:356), observes that:

The general feeling was that what was achieved in Mexico was less new theological insights and much more the consolidation of previous achievements, the reaching of what came close to theological consensus, rejecting certain tendencies prevalent in the Protestant missionary tradition, and adopting principles which had been put forward in rudimentary form in previous Protestant world missionary Conferences from Edinburgh (1910) to Achimota Ghana 1957-58).

One major significance of this conference is seen in its consensus on the relevance of the Trinitarian model of mission in an endeavour to address the secular world. This is not to say that all delegates saw the same thing in this model but that at this juncture this Trinitarian model was formally adopted and was to be developed further in the years leading to Uppsala and Bangkok. The *missio Dei* concept was now widely accepted than when it was first introduced.

#### 2.3.2.4 Geneva Conference on Church and Society, 1966

In Geneva 1966 the WCC convened a world Conference on Church and Society. Bassham (1979:53), says this conference “strengthened the thrust toward the world as the locus for mission as it sought to analyse and reflect upon the social, economic, and political forces involved in shaping the world.” The study also focused on the structures the church needed to develop in order to respond to the issues in the world. In an endeavour to be relevant to the changing world, the conference message called for the church to maintain “constant dialogue between scientists and theologians, between those who engage in the study of social problems and those who spend their time in the common tasks of society” (Thomas and Albrecht (eds) 1967:49). It also took note of and affirmed the radical position of secularization by pointing out that “this radical position has a solid foundation in Christian tradition and should have its rightful place in the life of the Church and in the ongoing discussion of social responsibility” (1967:49). The church is to look at new opportunities of service in the world and make use of them because the church can best “contribute to the transformation of the world only as it is itself transformed in contact with the world”

(1967:49). This conference, while not convened by CWME sheds more light on the role that secularization had on the understanding of mission within the WCC. It also bears witness to the trends that were taking place at the time leading to Uppsala since it also influenced Uppsala with its world focus.

### 2.3.2.5 WCC Assembly Uppsala 1968

The WCC assembly held in Uppsala in 1968 played a significant role in further developing the Trinitarian theology of mission. It met under the theme, *Behold I Make all Things New*. It was known as “WCC’s most activist and politically oriented assembly...” (Lossky et al. 1991:1093). The work of the whole assembly focused on six sections, namely “The Holy Spirit and the Catholicity of the Church”, “Renewal in Mission”, “World Economic and Social Development”, “Towards Justice and Peace in International Affairs”, “Worship” and “Towards New Styles of Living” (WCC Uppsala 1968). Because of the focus of this thesis, the discussion on Uppsala will zero in on the report on “Renewal in Mission” since it is of particular interest to the development of ecumenical mission theology. This is not to say that other sections of the assembly do not have relevance to mission but section II represents an effort towards defining what mission was and it is for this reason that this section has been selected here. As was mentioned above in (2.3.2.1), section II was built on a study that was launched by New Delhi on the ‘Missionary Structure of the Congregation’, a study that was completed in 1967 as well as the Geneva Conference on Church and Society.

Section II was divided into three areas, “The Mandate for Mission” which laid the theological basis of the section; The second part, “Opportunities for Mission” gives suggestions on situations in which mission could be carried out. Thirdly, “Freedom for Mission”, suggests new structures in the church for carrying out mission.

In the theological foundation one of the things that stand out has to do with the need to define mission in holistic terms. The section report says (WCC Uppsala 1968:28):

We have been charged with a message and ministry that have to do with more than material needs, but we can never be content to treat our concern for physical and social needs as merely secondary to our responsibility for the needs of the spirit. There is a burning relevance today in describing the mission of God, in which we participate, as the gift of a new creation which is a radical renewal of the old and the invitation to men to grow up in their full humanity in the new man Jesus Christ.

Christology plays a key role in this theological basis. In order to drive home the idea of renewal, there is an emphasis on the new humanity which is only made possible through Jesus' incarnation, death and resurrection. Through Jesus' life on earth and his obedience to the Father and his "triumphant suffering and death, we see what man is meant to be...man's alienation is overcome by forgiveness of God and the way is opened for the restoration of all men to their sonship" (:28). Section II then describes the new humanity as a gift which needs to be appropriated through faith. This gift operates through the Holy Spirit who gives men "a variety of moments of decision...[and] takes the Word and makes it living, converting word to men." This idea is inevitably connected to evangelism, to which the paragraph in the section says, "Our part in evangelism might be described as bringing about the occasions for men's response to Jesus Christ." Successful evangelism, and the putting on of the new man, should issue in changed attitudes and relationships. In other words evangelism should issue in both vertical and horizontal relevance, "For there is no turning to God which does not at the same time bring a man face to face with his fellow men in a new way" (:28).

The influence of the church growth movement may have paid off in Uppsala. Bassham (1979:81), notes that the contribution of conservative evangelicals, such as McGavran, impacted aspects of "Renewal in Mission" which dealt with the relationship of church to mission in such a way that Uppsala also saw the need for the urgency of church growth. Paragraph 5 of the report shows that the section had taken cognizance of the need for church growth through the assimilation of new people that come into the church as a result of the church's mission. The report acknowledged that (WCC Uppsala 1968:29):

Mission bears fruit as people find their true life in the Body of Christ, in the Church's life of Word and Sacrament, fellowship in the Spirit and existence

for others. There the signs of the new humanity are experienced and the People of God reach out in solidarity with the whole of mankind in service and witness. The growth of the Church, therefore, both inward and outward, is of great importance. Yet our ultimate hope is not set upon this progress, but on the mystery of the final event which remains in the hand of God.

Uppsala went on to define mission in broader terms to include, “the achievements of greater justice, freedom and dignity as a part of the restoration of true manhood in Christ.” Such a perspective, said Uppsala, would mean that in carrying out mission, there must therefore exist, “a more open and humble partnership with all who work for these goals even when they do not share the same assumptions as ourselves” (:29).

The second segment on opportunities for mission, Uppsala emphasised the role of the laity. This was premised on the rationale that since the church is meant for others, it must of necessity include men and women wherever they are. In this regard, the section proposed a few situations through which the church could take part in mission. Some of the areas proposed include, centres of power, revolutionary movements, universities urban centres and industrial areas as well as the suburbia and rural areas. Because of the changing situation in the world, the report suggested a criteria to judge and evaluate mission priorities (:32):

- do they place the church alongside the poor, the defenceless, the abused, the forgotten, the bored?
- do they allow Christians to enter the concerns of others to accept their issues and their structures as vehicles of involvement?
- are they the best situations for discerning with other men the signs of the times, and for moving with history towards the coming of the new humanity?

The segment on “Freedom in Mission” focused on creating structures of church life that will not inhibit people from flexibly working in the world around them. Such a process would entail “a continuing re-examination of the structures of church life at all levels” and in the process the question to be asked is not “Have we the right structures for mission?” but rather “Are we totally structured for mission?” (:33). This segment, like the preceding one, also broadened the sphere of mission to go beyond the walls of the church by pointing out that (:33):

Laymen and women express their full commitment to mission, not primarily through the service they give within the church structures, but pre-eminently through the ways in which they use their professional skills and competence in their daily work and public service...we need to recognize what is our Christian obedience in the total ministry of the Church.

Theological education was also raised as one area in which clergy and laity would be trained so that both can understand the world they live in and know how to approach it.

The role of the church in the community emphasised that in any contemporary locality of mission, “the congregation must recognize its own missionary role in proclaiming the Gospel in word and deed...that we discover the creative possibilities in the points of tension, conflict and decision in society, and try to make real our profession of love through the active pursuit of justice” (WCC Uppsala 1968:34).

Several viewpoints can be outlined as a way of assessing the theology of section II. According to Scherer there were modifications that were done by Uppsala on *shalom* and *humanization* the two aspects that were articulated as the goals of mission in the two studies. Scherer highlights that “traditional references to mission and to IMC’s theology of integration were quietly deleted in favor of a Christological statement of the mission mandate which took ‘humanization’ in Jesus Christ as its theological keyword...The term ‘humanization’ is stripped of philosophical connotations and detached from the notion of humanization as part of a historical world process.” The section is evaluated by Scherer as being “theologically less radical than the work which preceded it...The radical worldliness of the Uppsala report on mission is found instead in its strategic proposals” (1987:119). The section’s report on renewal of structures of mission also bears a secular missional outlook. The report shows that, in a church for others, the fields for mission “are no longer the exotic places in foreign lands, but rather localities in the secular world where there is human need, growth, tension, decision-making responsibility, and conflict” (1987:120). This put the church in danger of not being relevant as an ecclesial community since the locus of ministry now lay in the *secular* world. Since the church tends to be less effective than secular structures in some societal issues, Uppsala called for the re-examination of all church structures to see whether these allow the church to be in mission. In this regard openness to the world was called for (Lossky et al. 1991:1093).

Uppsala placed its understanding of mission “within the sphere of God’s activity in history” and with this thinking, the conference “climaxed the development of the *missio Dei* based on the *world* as the locus of God’s mission”(Lossky et al. 1991:1093 and Scherer 1987:119). From this time on Hoekendijk approach to mission theology became the ‘received view’ in WCC (Bosch 1991:383). Mission was now seen as the “the historical process of the renewal of society...” (John Stott 1975:29). After Uppsala, mission became an umbrella term for health and welfare services, youth projects, activities of political interest groups, projects for economic and social development, the constructive application of violence, etc., (Bosch 1991:383).

This radicalization of mission by Uppsala further alienated the evangelicals, who by now had decidedly embarked on the path to establish a new movement all together as is evidenced by the two meetings in 1966 in Wheaton and Berlin. In keeping with my theory based on Bebbington’s characterisation, it is plausible to posit that the culmination of the paradigm shift from the Christianisation to humanization that was officialised in Uppsala meant for evangelicals that some of their central absolutes, namely conversion and evangelistic activism had been taken away from their missiology. Evangelicals regarded that WCC’s theological trends were bordering on the margins of apostasy (Bosch 1988:462). Some of the criticisms they levelled against WCC as recorded by Eugene L. Smith, who was an ecumenical observer at the Wheaton meeting earlier in 1966, included “theological liberalism, loss of evangelical conviction, universalism in theology, substitution of social action for evangelism, and the search for unity at the expense of biblical truth” (Eugene L. Smith 1966:481). This view is reminiscent of the displeasure that some evangelicals showed at the Edinburgh meeting when the movement which they thought would operate on the basis of doctrine had opened “mind and heart to the inclusivity rather than the evangelical basis of ecumenism” (Rowdon 1967:67; David J. Hesselgrave 2007:123). Rowdon suggested that this move by the ecumenicals was the reason behind the change of attitude by evangelicals after the 1910. After Mexico and Uppsala we see a similar scenario taking place again. Thus from Mexico’s postulation of Christian presence and dialogue to Uppsala’s humanization and shalom, “the severing of

their links with conciliar movement was no longer regretted but acclaimed by many” (Bosch 1988:462). The exit door was now opened for the evangelicals who felt that their agenda had been replaced by a very different missiology which not only threatened the essential message of the gospel but also had been seriously threatened by neglecting the vertical and replacing it with the horizontal dimensions of mission (Lundström 2006:70; Bosch 1988:462). It is interesting to note here that even progressive evangelicals like Carl H F. Henry who earlier in 1947 had challenged fundamentalists to re-instate social activity in evangelicalism was drawn into this criticism against WCC’s “alleged preoccupation with horizontalism” (Bosch1988:462). Prior to the adoption of the section II report, several delegates, including some conservative evangelicals, aired their criticism of the document. Most of the criticism they voiced, raised concern over the lack of proclamation of the gospel, repentance of the lost, forgiveness of sins, and general lack of concern for the spiritual state of mankind (WCC Uppsala 1968:25-27). Donald McGavran, reacting to the substitution of evangelism, wrote an article entitled “Will Uppsala Betray the Two Billion?” in reference to the number of people that were still considered non-Christians in the world. He argued that the preparatory document on ‘Renewal in Mission’ “said nothing about the necessity of faith, nothing about the two billion who have never heard about sending missionaries” (In Bassham 1979:79). John Stott supported him in this regard (Bosch 1988:463). Stott (In WCC Uppsala 1968:260), held that the prior concern of the church should be with the millions of people who are perishing without Christ and stand in need of Christ. Stott “did not find in the report any concern for spiritual hunger of man comparable to that which had been expressed regarding physical hunger and poverty.” He did not see the WCC eager enough to obey the Lord’s command to go and preach the Good News. Arthur Glasser pointed out that evangelicals were not pleased with the section’s emphasis on the secularised gospel and reduction of the church’s mission to social and political activism (In Bassham 1979:79). Peter Beyerhaus, a conservative evangelical became rather articulate in his criticism of WCC that in 1970 he drafted the *Frankfurt Declaration* in which he discussed the “fundamental crisis in mission” for which WCC was held explicitly responsible (Bosch 1988:463). From this time on, the relationship between ecumenicals and evangelicals would be characterised by tension, the divergence was now official and the evangelicals blamed ‘WCC theology’ for this.

In his overall assessment of Uppsala Report on “Renewal in Mission” Bassham highlights that this report has been described as:

a hotchpotch, a compromise document, a variegated patchwork quilt sewn together out of bits and pieces contributed by delegates and advisers whose convictions were in fundamental disagreement (David Allan Hubbard in Bassham 1979:114).

This is to say, Uppsala tried to be accommodative of various viewpoints some of which were not even coherent. The report contained significant influence from *The Church for Others* report and the Geneva Conference on Church Society study with its emphasis on the new humanity and dialoguing with the secular world. At the same time, it also contained ideas from delegates who resisted this above hermeneutic in favour of more traditional elements of mission such as proclamation and witness through the work of the church (Bassham 1979:83). All these were affirmed in Uppsala. It could thus be noted that even though Uppsala was marked by the adoption of the secularized *missio Dei* and hence a focus on the world, it also made some efforts to include some traditional factors that indeed were positive for the missiological agenda. So one could make an observation to the effect that while Uppsala is in most cases understood as the climaxing of the secular agenda and therefore an antithesis of the evangelical concern for the lost souls, such may not entirely be the case. Visser’t Hooft, in his plenary address, pleaded for a holistic understanding of mission which incorporated both evangelism and social concern. He called for a reconciliation of both the *vertical* and *horizontal* concerns of salvation when he said:

A Christianity which has lost its vertical dimension has lost its salt and is not only insipid in itself, but useless for the world. But a Christianity which would use the vertical preoccupation as a means to escape from its responsibility for and in the common life of man is a denial of the incarnation, of God’s love manifested in Christ. The whole secret of the Christian faith is that it is man-centred because it is God-centred. We cannot speak of Christ as the man for others without speaking of him as the man who came from God and who lived for God (WCC Uppsala 1968:318).

The foregoing could be looked at as addressing both the WCC and those who were calling for strict evangelism. It is a statement of a mission approach which applies to both

constituencies of missiology with the reminder to not emphasize one aspect of mission over another but to address both aspects as essential to the practice of wholistic mission. So in this holistic sense, Scherer asserts that the WCC “could speak of evangelism as bringing about occasions for people to respond to Jesus Christ.

### 2.3.2.6 Bangkok 1973, CWME

Bangkok 1973 was the next CWME conference after Mexico City. Meeting under the theme ‘*Salvation Today*’ Bangkok was taking up a missiological theme that was not resolved in Uppsala with regards to whether salvation was to be understood in individualistic terms relating to eternal life or whether it could also be understood as referring to a kingdom of righteousness in this world (Lundström 2006:74). Bangkok met at a time when Latin American liberation theology had experienced a breakthrough around 1970 through the influence of Gustavo Gutiérrez, and others. The Catholics had conducted a congress on liberation theology in Bogotá in 1970 and 1971 and so did the Protestants in 1971, in Buenos Aires (Lundström 2006:73). Given the appalling conditions of starvations, oppression, and exploitation under which millions of people were living in the world delegates at Bangkok demonstrated what Bosch (1991:385), says was “a holy impatience with any complacency on the part of the church.” Participants not only called for personal and corporate repentance for their complicity with institutional injustice in the world but went on to influence the articulation of a comprehensive outlook of salvation (Günther 2003:531).

The sections at the conference focused on a) ‘Salvation and Cultural Identity’, b) Salvation and Social Justice’, and c) Renewal of the Churches in Relationship to Salvation’. While there was a three year regional study on the topic of salvation, these findings did not greatly influence the discussion in the sections. The conference was said to be “an experiment in group dynamics” therefore much of its theology came out of these groups (Bosch 1988: 464; Günther 2003: 531). Emilio Castro (1973:137) points out that “There were no pre-fabricated texts; material came from the groups which had been wrestling with these issues and were filled with the personal experience of the delegates.”

Section I dealt with the topic of “Culture and Identity”. Discussions in this section included the issue of dialogue with people of other faiths, Christian identity, racial identity, cultural change and conversion. The issue of identity was very crucial to Bangkok. Personal identity was taken to be strongly related to cultural identity since “Culture shapes the human voice that answers the voice of Christ” (1973:188). As a result the section placed much emphasis on the cultural identity of the church and the need for the Christian faith to be rooted in the culture of the context in which it entered. Drawing from the incarnational model of Christ, the report maintained that “Christ became a real man. He identified himself fully with real men of whatever tribe, race, colour or culture.” In this way “the Son of God comes into the history of every people when in the Incarnation he becomes a member of their own family” (1973:187,189). This has implications for the life of the church in that “The one faith must be made to be at home in every context...” Furthermore this contextualization of the Christian faith will lead to richness in theology articulated in local cultural contexts:

Proper theology is reflection on the experience of the Christian community in a particular place, at a particular time. Thus, it will necessarily be a contextual theology; it will be a relevant and living theology which refuses to be easily universalized because it speaks to and out of a particular situation (1973:190).

The discussion on conversion and cultural identity articulated a comprehensive view of conversion which was taken to include the gathering of the converted into a community of worship, teaching and service but also this conversion was taken to result in social action. The report further looked at conversion as a calling out of people “away from what is regarded as oppressive power structures or even away from a type of social action which is regarded as dehumanizing or superficial” (1973:192). While the relationship between conversion and social change is clear, the report also encouraged the church to adjust appropriately where instances of secular conversion take place apart from the church. This may be in the form of renewal to church life or even a rejection of the cultural development in question (1973:192-193).

The report on the section on “Salvation and Social Justice” starts by laying the basis for which socio-oriented salvation is to be understood. It affirms that both approaches to

salvation are inseparable. Couched in socio-political terms, the Trinitarian mission of God is affirmed with a particular emphasis on the liberating ministry of Jesus based on Luke 4:18. Christ is portrayed as liberating and empowering men and women. He liberates people from the prison of guilt and through faith in him; 'creative freedom for the salvation of the world' is released in man (1973:199). This comprehensive definition of salvation as liberation touches not only persons but social structures as well. This can be seen by the following excerpt from the report:

The salvation which Christ brought, and in which we participate, offers a comprehensive wholeness in this divided life. We understand salvation as newness of life — the unfolding of true humanity in the fullness of God (Col. 2:9). It is salvation of the soul and the body, of the individual and society, mankind and 'the groaning creation' (Romans 8:19). As evil works both in personal life and in exploitative social structures which humiliate humankind, so God's justice manifests itself both in the justification of the sinner and in social and political justice. As guilt is both individual and corporate so God's liberating power changes both persons and structures. We have to overcome the dichotomies in our thinking between soul and body, person and society, humankind and creation. Therefore we see the struggles for economic justice, political freedom and cultural renewal as elements in the total liberation of the world through the mission of God (1973:199).

Bangkok also related the issue of liberation to church itself. The influence of Hoekendijk was still present in Bangkok particularly in relation to the role of the church in salvation. Hoekendijk had criticised the church for being immobile, self-centred and introverted (Bosch 1991:384). This view was still held by delegates at Bangkok who were frustrated with what they felt was the "bourgeois nature of the church" and were hoping "that a new understanding and praxis of mission would lead to the renewal of the church itself" (1991:385). This thinking led Bangkok to call on the church to seek first its own salvation so as to be able to bring salvation to others. Bangkok held that:

Without the salvation of the churches from their captivity in the interests of dominating classes, races and nations, there can be no saving church. Without liberation of the churches and Christians from their complicity with structural injustice and violence, there can be no liberating church for mankind...We seek the church which initiates actions for liberation and

supports the work of other liberating groups without calculating self-interest. We seek a church which is the catalyst of God's saving work in the world, a church which is not merely the refuge of the saved but a community serving the world in the love of Christ (1973:200).

The working out of the comprehensive salvation was said to target four social dimensions which are said to relate to each other. These dimensions are related to the struggle for:

- Economic justice against the exploitation of people by people
- Human dignity against political oppression by their fellow men
- Solidarity against the alienation of person from person
- Hope against despair in personal life (1973:201).

In order for this salvation to touch the world, the need for active involvement and participation in economic justice, political freedom and cultural change was emphasised.

Section III entitled "Church in Renewal" linked proclamation and salvation to social transformation. It called on the local church to be missionary by including "in its programme a continual renewal of its own life, proclamation, dialogue, service of the needy, projects to improve the relational life of the community, and action for social justice" (1973:217). In order for local congregations to remain true to the *missio Dei*, they are to be conscientized about the relevance of Christ to the life of the world. This calls for "a conversion from parochial self-absorption to an awareness of what God is doing for the salvation of men in the life of the world" (1973:218). This is intertwined to the need for congregations to cooperate with others, even outside of their denominations to address 'mission to their local situation.' Church growth was defined as "numerical growth of the church and the development of a new man in every person, the rooting of the Christians' faith in local realities and their commitment to society" (1973:219). This is connected to renewal through the power of the Holy Spirit and studying the Bible. As the church grows in numbers, it must at the same time grow in its awareness in "the call of Christ to participate with him in liberating society." The same is true of the church which grows in its awareness of societal needs; it must not neglect "the call of Christ to pass on his invitation to those who do not know him, to be reconciled to God" (1973:219). In its deliberations on the relationships and partnerships between churches, the section called for

the churches “to be their authentic selves in mission in their own milieu.” It went on to propose a “moratorium in the sending of funds and personnel for a set period of time (1973:222, 223). This moratorium would be applied where appropriate and not necessarily in every country.

While Bangkok included a discussion on both the vertical and horizontal dimensions of salvation in its Section II and tried to present a balanced view of these two aspects, the tone on social justice came out stronger than the conversion aspect. As a result Bangkok got criticized for failure to give a conclusive theological expression of salvation. Scherer says:

This was partly due to the fact that the conference had no clear biblical exposition of salvation as a working basis, and partly to the conference committee’s practice of associating biblical salvation more or less indiscriminately with salvific themes and personalities in contemporary social and political movements and in other religions.” The main theme that was really dealt with was not “‘Salvation Today’, as it was ‘Liberation in Christ’ – liberation from various forms of captivity” (1987:121-122).

Some evangelicals were not slow in voicing their concerns about the theology of Bangkok. In a letter written in response to Bishop Arias’ paper, “That the World May Believe”, John Stott pointed out that while the Assembly was right in listening to the cry of the oppressed it should also in the same vein had given an ear to the cry of the lost (1973:31). He lamented that pre-conference literature only talked about the judgement of God on oppressors and unjust structures but made no reference to the judgement that will befall sinners (the oppressed as well as the oppressors). He went on to reject the universalism concept of ‘anonymous Christians’ saying this was incompatible with the teachings of Christ and the apostles and is a deadly enemy of evangelism (1973:32). He then implored Bangkok to not only work for political liberation but to also restore the urgency of evangelism (1973: 32-33):

I would like now to suggest one way in which to recall to the urgency of evangelism those to whom the quest for justice, love, liberation, humanization and quality of life are paramount. It is to urge that their concerns are absolutely right and also urgent, but too narrow and even too superficial. If justice means the securing of people's rights, is not one of their most fundamental rights the right to hear the Gospel? If love seeks to

serve men's highest welfare, can we leave them alone in their spiritual lostness and still claim to love them? My plea is that the World Council will be concerned with the total demands of justice and love, and with the fullness of freedom, humanization and life with which God himself is concerned. When this happens, the urgency of evangelism will have been recovered.

Peter Wagner, voiced that the evangelistic mandate of mission was ignored while the horizontal dimension was given more attention. In his article, "Disneyland at Bangkok?" (1973) he criticised the WCC secretary general then, Philip Potter, for dismissing the *Frankfurt Declaration*, which was presented by Peter Beyerhaus for purposes of discussing the "fundamental crisis of Christian mission". The CWME did not afford this document discussion at a world forum but instead reserved it for discussion in Germany since it had been produced by a group of German theologians (Wagner 1973). Wagner further raised more criticism when Potter responded to McGavran's document on reaching the two billion as "totally futile". Wagner held that Potter "reflected little sensitivity to such essential components of salvation doctrine as the depravity of the heart of man, the need for personal regeneration by the Spirit, and the eschatological realities of eternal life and eternal damnation." Wagner did not seem impressed by Potter's delineation of Christian responsibility as "the liberation of persons and societies from all that prevents them from living an authentic existence in justice and shared community." In his view, Wagner argues that the evangelicals agreed with the need for social concern "but they were not willing to let it stand as the central objective of 'Christ's mission and ours'". Because Bangkok did not emphasise soul winning, Wagner suggested terming it a living example of "The Babylonian Captivity of Christian Mission".

Peter Beyerhaus did not have many kind words to say about Bangkok. In his 1973 article, "The Theology of Bangkok", he accuses Geneva of having a preconceived end to which the staff skilfully directed the conference through what he referred to as group dynamics, which he did not seem to approve. Secondly Beyerhaus described WCC as experiencing a 'hermeneutical crisis'. He felt that WCC did not seem to hold a common conviction about the reliability and authoritative place of the Bible for Christian faith and ministry. This meant that 'present day experiences and quests' became, for the ecumenical, the starting

point in problem solving, so much so that “the Bible (when it is consulted) is understood within the framework of current political, social, cultural, religious or psychological problems.” In this way, he says, Scripture is substituted by a situationalist approach which the ecumenicals call ‘contextuality’. He says the conference proceeded with the topic of salvation under a seeming biblical coverage which ended up broadening the concept of salvation and deprived it of its Christian distinctiveness, “that any liberating experience as all can be called ‘salvation’. Accordingly any participation in liberating efforts would be called ‘mission’. In his view, Beyerhaus articulated his perception of Bangkok, in the article “My Pilgrimage in Mission”, (2000:174) thus:

I left Thailand under the abiding impression that the WCC’s new concept of world mission— which according to the closing speech of DWME director Emilio Castro now had replaced the "missionary era"—had gone far beyond a mere imbalance between evangelistic and social responsibilities. Rather it seemed to reflect an ideologically utopian, or syncretistic, view of One World that in the minds of its proponents was equivalent to the biblical expectation of the Kingdom of God.

Needless to say though Bangkok had attempted to address both salvific and social justice issues, the latter came out louder than the former. Because of this perceived outcome, Bangkok sealed the withdrawal of the evangelicals from the ecumenical mission movement (Günther 2003:532). Evangelicals would continue to take part in CWME conferences but the ideological and structural shift was complete and even confirmed by Bangkok.

#### 2.3.2.7 Nairobi 1975, WCC Assembly

The fifth assembly of the WCC was held in Nairobi, Kenya in November 1975 under the theme, “Jesus Christ Frees and Unites”. The assembly was divided into six sections namely, “Confessing Christ Today”, “What Unity Requires”, “Seeking Community: The Common Search of People of Various Faiths, Cultures and Ideologies”, “Education for Liberation and Community”, “Structures of Injustice and Struggles for Liberation”, “Human Development: The Ambiguities of Power, Technology and Quality of life” (In Bassham 1979:99).

Nairobi was described as a consolidating and reconciliatory assembly (Bassham 1979:99, Scherer 1987:126). The assembly recapitulated the position of Uppsala and at the same time exhibited a strong interest towards evangelism and the giving of a theological rationale for the role of the church in the world (Bassham 1979:99). Furthermore, Nairobi is credited with giving an explication of what Bangkok had tried to do in articulating a comprehensive understanding of salvation. When the Nairobi assembly took place, several documents were placed before it, which in a way shaped the outcome of the Section I. Some of the documents before Nairobi included, report from Bangkok (1973) on “Salvation Today”, the Lausanne Covenant (1974), and the statement from the Roman Catholic Bishops’ Synod on “Evangelization in the Modern World” which provided the occasion for Pope Paul VI’s Apostolic Exhortation *Evangelii Nuntiandi* in 1975 (Scherer and Bevans 1992:3). Theologians point out that because of these documents, Nairobi, through its section I showed a sign of growing ecumenical convergence on the issue of evangelism (Scherer 1987:127, Scherer and Bevans (eds) 1992:3, Bassham 1979:100, Lundström 2006:82).

Scherer (1987:126), describes Nairobi as providing “a churchly, confessional, and Trinitarian statement on mission.” Section I on “Confessing Christ Today”, has several rubrics which delineate areas of confession through which the theology of mission is made visible. Mission in this section is holistic and has emphasis on evangelism and the church. Nairobi endeavoured to open up space for of evangelization and the local church (Lundström 2006:82). Thus in the affirmations of Section I, an intertwined presentation of evangelism and the creation of a local ecclesial community which in turn has a mission to carry out can be noticed. The report shows that the assembly intentionally worked towards a holistic missiology which kept a balance between evangelism and social concern. So on one hand, evangelism is presented in no uncertain holistic terms while the church also is portrayed as carrying out holistic mission (Scherer and Bevans (eds) 1992:4-11).

As the royal priesthood, Christians are therefore called to engage in both evangelism and social action. We are commissioned to proclaim the gospel of Christ to the ends of the earth. Simultaneously, we are commanded to struggle to realize God’s will for peace, justice and freedom throughout society...Christians witness in word and deed the breaking in of the reign of God.

Evangelisation in Nairobi was given both spiritual and social dimensions. This is seen paragraphs 53-58 of the report. The report asserts that Christians do not have the option to keep the good news to themselves, instead there is an imperative to proclaim the gospel. Evangelism is likened to “a beggar telling another beggar where they both can find bread.” (para.56). According to Bassham (1979:99), “the most distinctive phrase used at Nairobi to outline the mission of the church was the description of it as the whole church bringing the whole gospel to the whole person in the whole world.” This phrase carries with it the holistic vision of evangelism and it is vividly brought out in the four parts of the phrase, ‘whole gospel’, ‘whole person’, ‘whole world’ and ‘whole church’. With regards to the whole gospel the confession asserts (Scherer and Bevans 1992:10):

The gospel is good news from God, our Creator and Redeemer... The gospel always includes: the announcement of God’s kingdom and love through Jesus Christ, the offer of grace and forgiveness of sins, the invitation to repentance and faith in him, the summons to fellowship in God’s Church, the command to witness to God’s saving words and deeds, the responsibility to participate in the struggle for justice and human dignity, the obligation to denounce all that hinders human wholeness, and a commitment to risk life itself. In our time, to the oppressed the gospel may be new as a message of courage to persevere in the struggle for liberation in this world as a sign of hope for God’s inbreaking kingdom.

The proclamation of the gospel on the one hand carries with it salvific aspects related to forgiveness of sin and repentance and on the other hand it has a prophetic role on social aspects which relate to the struggle for justice and the denunciation of things that bar human wholeness. Lundström (2006:83), describes this as a combination of a “more person-oriented, forgiveness-centred and church oriented understanding of evangelism, together with a rather strong emphasis on socio-political, action-oriented view which saw evangelism as a struggle for justice and human dignity and wholeness”. Bassham (1979:99), says this outlook summarises the full scope of God’s gift to people and it is expressed in a comprehensive way to show “the wholeness and newness of life which God wishes his people to discover.” In this regard, Bassham (:99) then asserts, “What Bangkok

had tried to do in terms of comprehensive understanding of salvation finds its explication here.”

The discussion on ‘the whole person’, brings out the holistic idea by pointing out that the gospel “speaks to all human needs and transforms our lives”. It also includes an ecclesial aspect by asserting that the gospel unites us “as God’s people, it answers our need for community and fellowship” (Scherer and Bevans 1992:10). The whole world is taken to be not only God’s creation but “also the arena of God’s mission” which the church ought not to neglect since it is the object of God’s love. Again in this area Nairobi brings out a holistic understanding of the mission of the church by pointing out that, in the world, “our obedience to God and our solidarity with the human family demand that we obey Christ’s command to proclaim and demonstrate God’s love to every person...” (1992:11). Lastly, concerning ‘the whole church’, Nairobi brings out clearly that evangelism is to be carried out by every member of the church through the expression of different gifts within the church as a body. Evangelization thus should start at the local congregation through the diverse aspects that obtain in the ministry of the church such as worship, sacrament, preaching, teaching and so forth.

The report also contains a Christological confession which stresses the identity of Jesus as the true witness of God and the role of the Holy Spirit who strengthens Christian witness. Confessing Christ should lead to evangelism and to discipleship. In keeping with the church focus, there is a call to personal and communal discipleship which must follow after one’s conversion. Such a discipleship rejects any sort of “superficial gospel-preaching, an empty gospel without a call into personal and communal discipleship” (para.14). Confession of Christ is thus “not only intensely personal; it is also essentially communal” (para.32). Nairobi makes a strong affirmation of the need for the church as an ecclesial community by asserting that “the key to authentic confession is the Christian who is a Christian within the community of faith” (para.47). Thus the existence of the church is tied to the role that the church plays in mission (1992:7).

Those who take part in the life of Christ and confess him as Lord and Saviour, Liberator and Unifier, are gathered in a community of which the author and sustainer is the Holy Spirit. This communion of the Spirit finds its primary aim and ultimate purpose in the Eucharistic celebration and the glorification of the Triune God.

The church, as a community of the Spirit, is led by the Spirit into carrying out a holistic type of mission which involves struggling with spiritual and social issues. With regards to the mission of the church, Nairobi rejected the reduction of “liberation from sin and evil to social and political dimensions on one hand and on the other also regretted others who “limit liberation to the private and eternal dimensions.” (para.19).

Overall, Nairobi came out with a balanced missiology which sought to realign ecumenical thinking with other Christian traditions but also to maintain consistence with its own tradition. Scherer asserts that the world as a supplier of the agenda did not disappear but what could be of significance is that the WCC, in Nairobi, “once again quietly embraces the New Delhi theology of integration, which held that the church or Christian community is the proper and primary instrument of God’s mission in the world” (1987:130).

While it has been noted above that there was influence from Bangkok, Lausanne, the Roman Catholic Synod and the Orthodox church on the subject of evangelism, there were also other voices in attendance at Nairobi who made significant contributions in the direction of the same subject. Bishop Mortimer Arias is credited with exerting considerable influence that led to the formulation of certain articles pertaining to evangelism (Bassham 1979:99). In his address, he argued for the essential priority of evangelism calling it a primary and permanent task and thus called on the WCC to renew its commitment to evangelism (1976:14-15). Arias tried to reconscientise the WCC to return to evangelistic aspects of its mission that had been enshrined in some of its previous conferences. Some of the issues he raised in this regard include (1976:15):

We have not always been faithful to our recognized calling;  
We have not always given priority to what ought to be our priorities;  
We have not always been worthy of our predecessors from Edinburgh 1910  
to Mexico 1963;  
And we have not always fulfilled the hopes which gave rise to the WCC  
and its merging with the IMC.

Having laid these charges, Arias proposed some affirmations which he felt would enable the WCC to navigate its mission back on the right track. The affirmations he listed all were aimed at giving an integral basis of what he termed true evangelism in the world today

(1976:15-16). Arias' address, having been drawn from various Christian traditions, "represented a more general ecumenical consensus concerning holistic evangelism" (Lundström 2006:82). Another key voice at Nairobi was M. M. Thomas, the moderator of the central committee who commented on the theological convergence on the theme of evangelism in Nairobi as seen in the four Christian traditions mentioned above. He said (In Scherer 1987:127):

*Firstly*, in their emphasis on the whole gospel for the whole man in the whole world; *secondly*, in their effort to relate evangelism to the identity of the Church and to its growth, renewal and unity; and *thirdly*, in their affirmation of the realities of the contemporary world, especially the renaissance of cultures and religions, and the dynamics of service, development and justice in society.

Nairobi thus was able to come up with a reaffirmation of the church and evangelism thereby marking the first significant move towards convergence with the evangelicals. One could say that Nairobi marked a turning point in the positive direction in defining mission and in creating some theological meeting ground with their estranged counterparts, the evangelicals. Some of the discussions that followed Nairobi are contained in the first section of chapter six in this thesis.

#### 2.3.2.8 Melbourne 1980, CWME

The next CWME conference held in Melbourne in 1980 further pursued some of the concerns laid out in Bangkok. The main theme to which the conference directed its theological deliberation and articulation was "the poor". Meeting under the theme '*Your Kingdom Come*' the conference held sections entitled; 'Good news to the poor', 'The kingdom of God and human struggles', 'The church witness to the kingdom' and 'The Christ – crucified and risen – challenges human power'. Scherer (1987:131) asserts that there is special theological advantage in the title of the theme. Firstly the theme, by virtue of being a coordinate of *missio Dei* "is adapted to a discussion of the church's relation to the missionary task, and to reflection on the worldly context of mission." The kingdom theme also relates to the unfinished "theological agenda of the Willingen Conference

(1952) where such issues as the relation of church and kingdom, eschatology, and Christology were not treated with finality.”

“It was at Melbourne that the ‘poor’ was singled out as the crucial criterion for testing the effectiveness of mission” (Birgitta Larsson and Emilio Castro 2004:128). This theology was built on the concept of ‘God’s preferential option for the poor’ which was a key concept in Latin American liberation theologies (Kinnamon 2004:60). This phrase came about following two conferences held by Latin American Roman Catholic Bishops in Medellin, Colombia (CELAM II, 1968) and at Puebla, Mexico (CELAM III, 1979). It was at Puebla that this phrase was coined (Bosch 1991: 435). In the 1970s the time during which this concept was developed WCC publications echoed this concern.

Since God had shown preferential treatment for the poor throughout history, the church needed to develop its mission along the very same lines. Luke 4:18 was used to show Jesus’ concern for the poor and the comprehensive nature of mission.

The Church of Jesus Christ is called to preach Good News to the poor, even as its Lord has in his ministry announced the kingdom of God to them. The churches cannot neglect this evangelistic task. Most of the world’s people are poor and they wait for a witness to the Gospel that will really be “Good News”...Mission that is conscious of the kingdom will be concerned for liberation, not oppression; justice, not exploitation, fullness, not deprivation; freedom, not slavery, health, not disease; life, not death. No matter how the poor may be identified, this mission is for them (CWME 1980:175-176).

This called for a non-condescending type of solidarity with the poor that involved not only meeting their physical needs but also “standing with them against political and economic systems of oppressive inequity” (Kinnamon 2004:128). The poor were looked at as already being in mission to change their own situation. The churches needed to respond to this by becoming a “missionary movement that supports what they [poor] have already begun, and that focuses on building evangelizing and witnessing communities of the poor...”(CWME 1980:177). Melbourne went on to give four recommendations through which the church could be relevant to the poor. Churches needed to:

- a) Become churches in solidarity with the poor

- b) Join the struggle against the powers of exploitation and impoverishment
- c) Establish a new relationship with the poor inside the churches
- d) Pray and work for the kingdom of God (CWME 1980:177-178)

This theology of the poor influenced the theology of the CWME up to Athens.

The report on section II called upon the church to revise its understanding of the kingdom so that it did not only point to the eschatological world but to an understanding of the kingdom as being present at hand. This entails that the church is to be involved in various struggles humans are facing in the world. The church needs not to 'succumb to despair and passivity' rather it should "join forces with all those who hope" (1980:180). The kingdom is not only futuristic, it needs to be witnessed to today in 'words and deeds'. The church has the task to proclaim the "the final revelation of God in Jesus Christ, and by the assistance of the Holy Spirit establish such visible signs of the kingdom of God and offer new hope to all who long for a more human world" (1980:181). In an endeavour to establish relevant witness to the world Melbourne's understanding of the kingdom is not far removed from the theological outlook that takes the world as the source of agenda for mission. This can be clearly illustrated in the following affirmation of the report:

We find ourselves as churches and individual Christians involved in and a part of people's struggles for liberation and self-determination in our own countries. This means that we and the churches we belong to must awaken to the role we are playing in these struggles and be ready to look for God's presence in what is happening, even when He surprises us (1980:181).

Melbourne saw that there are areas of struggle that the church is not involved in and people have to look for it in other places apart from the church. "In many countries the struggles for liberation and self-determination have taken place outside the churches and even in spite of the church." It is in such settings that the church is called upon to "discover anew and more deeply what the Gospel as a message in words and deeds means amidst human struggles and what the role of the church as a servant to the Gospel in a concrete situation implies" (1980:182). Evangelism as part of the local mission of the church is directed at the social, economic and political life of human societies. Melbourne went on to stress that

“such participation in struggles for human rights is itself a central element in the total mission of the church to proclaim by word and act the crucified and risen Christ (1980:186).

Another important aspect of Melbourne has to do with the role of the church in mission which was articulated in its section III. While the conference did not necessarily return to the earlier ecclesiocentric outlook of mission (as in Tambaram 1938) it took a more serious position on the church than had been done in earlier conferences. This move can be traced back to the 1975 WCC assembly in Nairobi which although it called for the cleansing of the church, also reaffirmed its validity with the church supplying the agenda for the assembly rather than the world as had happened in Uppsala (Bosch 1991:388). So this shift in both Nairobi and Melbourne registered a theological turning point in so far as *missio Dei* and *ecclesiology* are concerned. Melbourne distinguished clearly between the church and the kingdom. Section III referred to the church as a witness to and a sacrament of the kingdom (quoted in Bosch 1991: 388). Scherer sees this as “one of the clearest affirmations of the new status given to the church as the instrument of divine mission, especially in the post Nairobi period” (1987:137). This role of the church is also repeated in the section on ‘the church and its unity in God’s mission of the 1982 document *Mission and Evangelism: An Ecumenical Affirmation* a product of Melbourne conference. The WCC Vancouver assembly held in 1983 “endorsed the new ecumenical consensus on the crucial importance of the church in mission” (Bosch 1991:389). The section also made a link between church and evangelism when it stated that; “The story of God in Christ is the heart of all evangelism, and this story has to be told, for the life of the present church never fully reveals the love and holiness and power of God in Christ” (1980). This evangelistic task which is carried out through holistic proclamation is not only to be lived out in word and deed but it is also the “responsibility of the whole church and every member” (Scherer 1987:137). Proclamation of the Good News is taken to be the responsibility of the whole church and is a “continual necessity and all people, believers and unbelievers, are challenged to hear and respond since conversion is never finished”(1980:195).

The promulgation of the kingdom of God in connection with *missio Dei* needs to be noted as a significant theological outcome of this conference. Before then, the kingdom of God

had for the most part carried with it some postmillennial connotations which seemed to suggest the creation of an earthly utopia. At this conference, Melbourne deliberately embarked on a search for a theology which addressed the vertical and horizontal aspects of the kingdom in an endeavour to bring out the integral role of the church as the proclaimer of the gospel and one that participates in human struggles. One thus sees a dialectic of divine justice in history alongside the justification of sinners by grace” (Scherer 1987:135).

#### 2.3.2.9 San Antonio 1989, CWME

The San Antonio conference held in 1989 met under the theme, *‘Your will be done: Mission in Christ’s way’*. It had four sections which were entitled, ‘Turning to the living God’, ‘Participating in suffering and struggle’, ‘The earth is the Lord’s’, and ‘Towards renewed communities in mission’.

Section I on “Turning to the living God” started by affirming *missio Dei*. It stressed that carrying out mission in the name of the living God and proclamation of the kingdom of God constitutes the vocation of the church in the world. This is because it is God who calls the church and enables it to be involved in mission. The affirmation on the Triune God implies several things with regard to the mission of the church in the world. It points to the “cosmic dimensions” of the nature of the mission of the church. “Since our mission serves the coming of the reign of God, it is concerned with bringing the future into the present, serving the cause of God’s reign: the new creation” (F. Wilson 1990:26). The affirmation also needs to be understood in light of present reality in history which is a reality filled with human struggles of various evils. This calls the church into involvement with these struggles because “there is no evangelism without solidarity; there is no Christian solidarity that does not involve sharing the message of God’s coming reign” (1990:26). The section also reiterated the call to evangelism that was endorsed in Nairobi 1975 “that the Christian community should be assisted to proclaim ‘the gospel of Jesus Christ, by word and deed, to the whole world to the end so that all may believe in him and be saved’” (1990:27). Further emphasis was raised on the need for unity in mission among churches, as was stressed at Melbourne, there is an “inextricable relationship between Christian unity and

missionary calling, between ecumenism and evangelization” (1990:27). The church was also called upon to grapple with the continued problem of secularization by conducting “ongoing and penetrating studies of the issues of secularization and secularism and of ways of responding to this challenge faithfully, sensitively, and with integrity” (1990:31).

Among the different issues covered in section I, the issue of witness and dialogue is quite significant particularly with the presence of delegates from other faiths in the conference. Some key things stand out in this discussion. There is a call to respect and affirm “the uniqueness and freedom of others” in the process of witnessing Christ. The “evangelistic mandate” of the ecumenical movement is reaffirmed by pointing out the role played by proclamation of the gospel in inviting people to a personal saving faith in Christ and the need for Christians to carry the message of God’s salvation in Jesus Christ to every person and to every people...” (1990:32-33). In reaffirming the evangelistic task, there is caution that is to be heeded in view of people of other faiths (1990:32):

We would like to emphasize that we may never claim to have full understanding of God’s truth: we are only the recipients of God’s grace. Our ministry of witness among people of other faiths presupposes our *presence* with, *sensitivity* to their deepest faith commitments and experiences, *willingness* to be their servants for Christ’s sake, *affirmation* of what God has done and is doing among them, and love for them. Since God’s mystery in Christ surpasses our understanding and since our knowledge of God’s saving power is imperfect, we Christians are called to be *witnesses* to others, not judges of them.

One can detect however some oscillation between the affirmation of salvation in Christ and God’s acts in other religions. On one hand the section tried to emphasize the uniqueness of the message of salvation in Christ and on the other it also tried to appreciate positive values in the other religions which could be looked at as pointers to the working of God. This vacillation can further be seen in the statement, “We cannot point to any other way of salvation than Jesus Christ; at the same time we cannot set limits to the saving power of God.” One might take this to presuppose that while there is salvation in Christ, the saving power of God could be existent also beyond the Christian faith.

The section delineated between personal salvation and the calling of people “to follow Jesus in the service of God’s reign” a service which is more world oriented. Thus the section called for two-pronged approach to other faiths, that of *witness* and *dialogue*. Dialogue was viewed as an invitation to “listen in openness to the possibility that the God we know in Jesus Christ may encounter us also in the lives of our neighbors of other faiths...”. In the same vein “the mutual sharing with people of other faiths in the efforts for justice, peace and service to the environment engages us in dialogue – the dialogue of life” (1990:33). In other words, Christianity participates with other religions in addressing socio-political issues. Within the perspective of dialogue the section also makes mention of tension that is there between the ministry of witness and the affirmation of God’s presence in people of other faiths and concludes by saying, “we appreciate this tension, and do not attempt to resolve it” (1990:33).

The section on ‘Participation in suffering and struggle’ focused more “on the plight of the poor and oppressed minority peoples” (Lundström 2006:106). Participation in suffering is seen as being at the “heart of God’s mission and God’s will for the world...The followers of Jesus Christ are invited to participate with the people who are crushed in their struggle for the transformation of society” (1990:37-38). San Antonio tried to correct the one sided view of mission espoused by Bangkok and Melbourne – it was the view that gave ‘prominence to the social and political involvement of mission’ (Günther and Cook 1999:507). Major emphasis was on ‘the fullness of the gospel’ in the “creative tension between spiritual and material needs, prayer and action, evangelism and social responsibility, dialogue and witness, power and vulnerability, local and universal” (WCC 1990:20 quoted in Kinnamon 2004: 60). The section discussed the “the creative capacity of power in working for ‘the good of the poor and their liberation from oppression’” (1990:38). It viewed this power in the “context of suffering and struggle,” which was taken to be “the core of God’s mission and will” (1990:38). This operation of the creative power is to be seen in the working out of God’s justice in its various dimensions apart from distributive and retributive justice but also include; “justice as the founding, building and organizing of community: a community with people, a community with God, and a community with nature” (1990:39). The discussion on the use of creative power can be

understood as an effort to complement what might have been lacking in the two preceding conferences. Thomas Stransky, (1990:50) makes note of the significance of San Antonio in this regard when he says:

The combination of Bangkok's affirmation of liberation for the sake of cultural identity, justice and peace and a fully human life, and of Melbourne's convictions on the world's marginalized being in God's centre, was translated at San Antonio into Christians "participating in suffering and struggle" through creative power, including the power of resistance as a form of witness.

There was more discussion in San Antonio on the different forms that resistance could take as compared to what Bangkok had discussed. The main point however is that, the understanding of mission as struggle and liberation of the poor is carried as a key missional element. Resistance is taken as a form of witness when it is a "refusal to accept the vision of society imposed by the oppressor; it is the envisioning of an alternative society, with equality, justice and love" (1990:41). Suffering, struggling and resisting different forms of oppression are looked at as ways of witness that affirm the mission of God.

Key things that came out of section III include the church's role in the stewardship of creation. In this regard, the section affirmed that mission extends to God's creation. "Because the earth is the Lord's, the responsibility of the church towards the earth is a crucial part of the church's mission" (1990:54). The church is thus called upon to "bring the power of the gospel and the hope of the resurrection to the sufferings of creation, extending God's love for all the world" (1990:54). Section IV emphasized the renewal of the Christian idea of community to combat the resurgence of individualism. A renewed understanding of the Holy Trinity was taken as the basis upon which this model of community can be reformulated because "it is God's firm purpose to unite all human beings in a single community" (1990:69). This renewal of missionary communities was considered from three angles; popular religiosity and faith communities of the poor; Christians across frontiers and international relations in mission. While the Christian faith can be expressed in a variety of popular ways among different communities, there is need for "gospel preaching to respect all cultures and be incarnated in them. The tough question

however among the delegates had to do with how the uniqueness or ‘specificity’ of the Christian faith was to be preserved in many cultures” (1990:71). In keeping with the *missio Dei* model of mission, the local church was encouraged to take part in frontier mission. This mission is holistic in nature:

As Jesus was sent by God into the world, so are all Christians sent out by Christ to socio-economic, cultural, racial as well as geographical frontiers for mission in the power of the Holy Spirit (John 20:21)...Crossing frontiers in mission demands profound sensitivity to the cultures and values of others, a posture of incarnational dialogue, and identification with people in their struggle for justice, freedom and human dignity, all of which arise out of a life of prayer nurtured by the scriptures (Luke 11:2-4), (1990:74) .

A few things can be pointed out in analyzing this conference. San Antonio created a warm space for participation for evangelicals and other Christian traditions. It was noted that the evangelical participation at this conference was stronger than it had been in previous conferences, (Lundström 2006:108). San Antonio is also attributed with an effort by its delegates to reach out to the Lausanne movement which was meeting in Manila the same year though this gesture was not immediately reciprocated.

With regards to other religions, the conference developed further the ecumenical understanding of witness and dialogue. Building on Jerusalem and Mexico, it went further to define its relationship with people of other faiths (C. Duraisingh 1989:404). However San Antonio also is criticized for its lack of unique theological contribution to missiological thinking (Klaus Lundström 2006: 109). This was due to the small number of theologians and missiologists who attended the conference. As a result this affected the nature and depth of theology that came out a phenomenon that resulted in the conference to be characterized as “a festival or a spiritual retreat” (Günther 2003:535).

#### 2.3.2.10 Salvador de Bahia 1996, CWME

The next CWME conference was held in Salvador de Bahia in 1996. This conference met under the theme “*Called to one hope: The Gospel in Diverse cultures*”. This topic was chosen “in response to the WCC assembly in Canberra where difficulties became apparent regarding how the relationship between the gospel and culture will shape the form of

Christian witness” in the twenty first century (Günther and Cook 1999:507). As entailed in the theme the conference “tried better to understand the way in which the gospel challenges all human cultures and how culture itself can give a clearer understanding of the gospel” (Larsson and Castro 2004:141). The focus was not so much on taking the gospel to every culture but rather on inculturating the gospel in a culture in such a way that it becomes well understood within that culture and unleash its power therein (Kinnamon 2004:61). By carrying out this focus, Salvador “explored the creative tension between contextuality and catholicity” since the gospel is not limited to one culture (Larsson and Castro 2004:141). Culture was taken to include religion. Jacques Matthey (1997:20), notes that the special emphasis of the conference was in its affirmation of the ambiguity of culture. Section I affirmed, “The overwhelming impression is one of ambiguity. Culture is intrinsically neither good nor bad. It has the potential for both ....Culture is both a result of God's grace and an area for human freedom, for better or for worse” (Quoted in Matthey 1997:20). This definition led to introspective reflection, constructive self-criticism of cultures from which the delegates came. The definition opened the door to the understanding that culture can be criticized and challenged. As a result, Matthey reports that this led to some delegates from Asia and Africa to ask the questions; “How do we deal with what is in us — and not imposed on us by foreign or economic rules?” or: “How do we bring about change in our cultures from within when we are ourselves those who have to be addressed?” (1997:21). This gives room for people within a certain culture to work on transforming their own culture without imposition from outside cultures.

The discussion on culture inevitably led Salvador to debate on the questions of syncretism and power that arise in the process of cross cultural sharing of the gospel. Delegates came up with two possible definitions of syncretism that are worth noting. The first was the traditional definition which sees syncretism as the “mixture of elements that do not belong together or which are in conflict...a failure to maintain a faithful correspondence to the gospel.” The second definition saw syncretism as “merely a mixture of elements from different sources. In that respect, any cultural expression of gospel is syncretistic” (Quoted in Matthey 1997:22). This definition entails that there are some cultural elements which in the past might have been considered pagan or inappropriate for the Christian faith but

now they have found a place in the same faith. According to Matthey, this “rehabilitation of syncretism could prove to be a major consequence of Salvador's approach to culture as including religion” since it comes with the understanding that “inculturation necessarily is to some extent syncretistic.” The main issue then will not be in carrying out a witch hunt for syncretism rather, there will be need to moderate the use of syncretism/inculturation so that “practices or theologies help to express the faith in Jesus Christ or whether they alienate from the core of the faith” (Matthey 1997:22).

Salvador also discussed “the shape of an ecumenical, intercultural hermeneutics” (Günther and Cook 1999:507). Some criteria was set up in this regard which emphasized the need for faithfulness to God’s self-disclosure in the Scriptures and to a life-style that is in line with the reign of God as well as an openness to the wisdom of other Christians and relevance to the context (WCC 1998:20). For the process of contextualization to be effective, Salvador emphasized that local churches should be on the forefront in assuming “primary responsibility for mission and for discovering contextual expressions of the gospel” (Larsson and Castro 2004:142).

Criticism of the conference lay in its polycentric nature. The drive to inculturate the gospel in different cultures and allow each culture to speak on its own, made it difficult to articulate clearly what the conference resolved. It may also open the door for a myriad of theologies resulting from numerous inculturation processes. Günther articulates this point clearly when he says:

There is no longer any arbiter in theological arguments about the correctness or otherwise of any inculturation. All theologies and all churches, with their respective contexts, are players in the game; they bring their own interpretation of the rules with them, and appeal to the Bible which is now, in turn, multi-vocal, that is, it speaks differently to different contexts (2003:534).

#### **2.4 Mission Statements from 1980 to 2005**

The book, *“You Are the Light of the World”*: *Statements on Mission by the World Council of Churches 1980-2005*, contains five mission documents that were produced prior to Athens. This compilation was meant to provide “a solid missiological basis for reflection

and sharing on the conference theme” (WCC 2005: vii). According to the WCC, these documents “do not all have the same authority” but they all together represent “a fair picture of the main theses and emphases of ecumenical missiology” (WCC 2005: vii). A brief overview of these documents will be in order.

#### 2.4.1 The Ecumenical Affirmation

The Ecumenical Affirmation (EA) as noted above was the official statement of the CWME on mission up to 2013. The new statement is entitled: *Together Towards Life: Mission and Evangelism in Changing Landscapes* and it does not feature in in this research which only goes as far as Cape Town 2010. The EA, which was drafted at the request of the WCC central committee in 1976 represents efforts by the CWME to give a holistic ecumenical contribution to the missiological debate of the time. Contemporary theologies of mission at the time were the *Lausanne Covenant* produced by the evangelicals and *the Evangelii Nuntiandi* (EN) produced by the Catholics and as noted above, Nairobi bore affinity to these two documents in its articulation of ecclesiology and evangelism. Much of the work on this document took place during the Melbourne conference whereupon in 1981 the central committee was handed the completed work for first reading leading to the official adoption in 1982 (Emilio Castro 1982:2). Included in this document are mission ideas from missiologists and mission practitioners from Catholic, Orthodox and evangelicals thus making this statement truly ecumenical in its affirmation. It also marks a deliberate shift from the secular thinking which characterised WCC theology in the 1960s to an approach which sought to reaffirm and articulate an ecumenical commitment to both witness/evangelism and social action.

The overall mission theology in the EA is Trinitarian with a Christological concentration. This is seen in the first section on the call to mission. “The saving ministry of the Son is understood within the action of the Holy Trinity; it was the Father who in the power of the Spirit sent Jesus Christ the Son of God incarnate, the Saviour of the whole world.”

Under this Trinitarian approach the church is looked at as having been sent into the world as an instrument for the kingdom of God’s mission. There is a considerable emphasis on

the role of the church “as a function of the mission of God” (2005:2). This role of the church is further elaborated from a Christological perspective which emphasizes the two way mediatory role of Jesus between God and creation and from creation to God (2005:8). In this regard, solidarity and identification with people is considered key to fulfilling this two way role. The church identifies with people in the world through humble service and in turn “lifts up to God its pain and suffering, hope and aspiration, joy and thanksgiving in intercessory prayer and eucharistic worship” (2005: 8). Thus witness, proclamation, solidarity with the marginalized and meaningful involvement with different religious and socio-political issues of our day are emphasized as part of Jesus’ invitation into God’s kingdom (2005:4).

The EA sees mission as a propagation of kingdom values through the apparatus of the church. The concept of the kingdom carries both the kerygmatic and diakonic aspects of mission, i.e. evangelism and social responsibility. It talks about mission in terms of preaching and teaching and also encompasses various aspects that explain the church’s transformative involvement in different structures of society in the world. In the same vein as it emphasises evangelisation, the document also has a strong sociological bent. This can be seen through the language which emphasises socio-political dimensions of mission. For instance proclamation of the kingdom is seen as the heart of the church’s evangelistic vocation in the world. This vocation is fulfilled through a wide range of ecclesial activities such as Eucharistic worship, prayer, planning for mission and evangelism, daily solidarity with the poor, advocacy or confrontation of oppressive powers and many others (2005:8). The church is to be engaged and identified with people in order to induce these Christian values in the society.

The document also affirms the role of the church in evangelisation. The fact that the church was sent into the world, (Acts 1:8) constitutes its mark of apostolicity. The church is referred to here as a witnessing community. With this the EA emphasises the need for unity in mission calling for a good relationship “between ecumenism and evangelization” (2005:5). It further affirms the need to multiply local congregations in all human communities as part of the evangelisation strategy.

Lastly the EA outlines about seven convictions which guide the ecumenical mission focus. One central theme seems to unite these convictions together thereby giving a good appreciation of the emphasis of ecumenical theology in holistic mission. It would appear that ecumenical missiological affirmations have direct bearing on historical/sociological processes. The document has a holistic outlook and seems to have the social aspect as the locus of its mission theology. In these convictions it is clear that the EA does not lose sight of the contemporary scenarios in the world at the same time and it is formulated in such a way as to address these scenarios within a Trinitarian and Christological approach.

#### 2.4.2 Mission and Evangelism in Unity Today

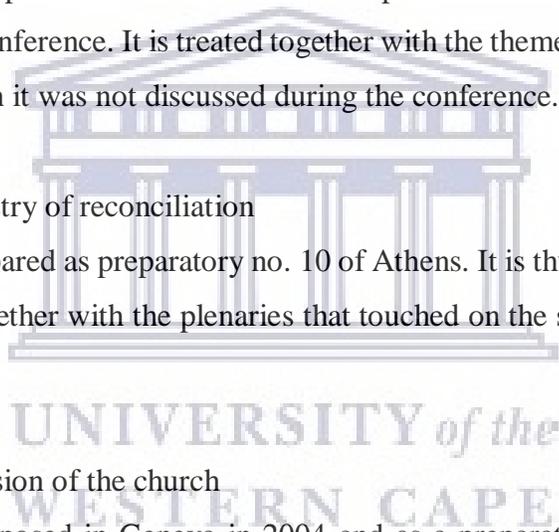
The summary of this paper has been included in chapter four as one of the preparatory papers for the Athens conference. It is treated together with the themes that were addressed at the conference though it was not discussed during the conference.

#### 2.4.3 Mission as ministry of reconciliation

This document was prepared as preparatory no. 10 of Athens. It is thus included in chapter four to be discussed together with the plenaries that touched on the same subject matter it addresses.

#### 2.4.4 The healing mission of the church

This document was proposed in Geneva in 2004 and as a preparatory paper No. 11 for Athens and was published in January 2005. It was not presented officially to WCC prior to its publication. It is to be read together with the paper on reconciliation though it is not discussed in this thesis.



## 2.5 Analytic Summary of Mission Theologies in CWME

From this brief survey of the development of ecumenical mission theology a few analytic observations can be made with a view to establishing how mission has been understood in the period of time in question. Attention will be paid to the place given to evangelism and social responsibility in CWME. This is done with a view to identifying areas of divergence that will help us in assessing the degree to which the movements could have either converged or diverged between Athens and Cape Town. We cannot look for areas of convergence without at the same time pinpointing the perceived areas of tension which brought about divergence in the first place. It is important to point out these theological causes of separation because they help us analyse whether there have been any changes on such theological points in the movements by 2010.

Since the establishment of IMC three stages in this movements' theological development of mission can be traced. These can be divided them into three time segments (Scherer 1987:94). The first period from 1938 – 1961, (Scherer starts with 1948 – 1961) marks the period which characterised an “internal struggle for self-understanding” for the ecumenical movement (Bassham 1980:52). During this time mission was understood as emanating from the locus of the church or institutions directly associated with the church. Mission theologies prior to the merger of IMC and WCC, were highly *ecclesiocentric*, the church was the main agent of God's mission. It was understood as “the task of the whole church, with the churches drawing closer together in unity to share in the work given by God to all Christians...” (Bassham 1980:52). It is fair to say here that during this period, ecumenism maintained an evangelistic focus in its deliberations of mission. No theology of evangelism was fully developed at this stage though the Tambaram conference did take significant strides in allocating study time before and during the conference. It is however generally true that prior to Edinburgh, the missionary enterprise took evangelism for granted as the call of the church so much that there was not much exposition on what mission really is theologically (Anderson 1960:1). According to Dietrich Werner, “ecumenism in this period was seen as an imperative rooted in the overarching concern for world evangelization (:185). What we see during this period is an attempt to create dialogue “between

evangelism and the developing worldviews and ideologies that were gaining strength in these decades.” It appears that the evangelism of this time was intertwined with social aspects because we see attempts being made to address world situations through the use of evangelism.

Jerusalem and Tambaram tried to address how the Christian faith should approach other religions. Tambaram in particular saw evangelism as a connection between evangelism and world peace. Whitby saw evangelism playing a role in re-establishing partnerships and nations in a world shattered by WWII.

Jerusalem and Tambaram were significant in that they marked “the emergence of an ecumenical tradition of missionary thinking” (Scherer 1987:93). They show the early stages of the theological fissures that would further develop within the ecumenical movement with regards to liberal versus conservative approaches to secularisation, approach to culture and to non-Christian religions. The differences that began to occur at this very early stage of ecumenical mission signify the early stage in the divergence of understanding of mission among members of the IMC. Some would have wanted mission to proceed strictly along the lines established at Edinburgh – focus on evangelism as the main goal of mission, but there were “radical changes in mission philosophy” as well as “conflicts and tensions between principal agents, reflecting the turbulence of the new missionary situation” (Scherer 1987:94). A tendency was developing during this time to create an enlarged view of evangelism which incorporated both salvific aspects and social oriented activities. Jerusalem picked up on the idea of the concept of development that was prevalent within socio-economic structures of the world during that period of time and incorporated it in its missional articulation (Newbigin 2004:174). Great effort was put in uniting both the individual and social aspects of mission. In order for this to succeed, evangelism was taken as addressing both aspects. The kingdom of God was used as a hermeneutical departure point for the further extrapolation of the theology of social change. For the first time, social responsibility was granted a theological footing, though this did not come about easily. Willingen became the turning point of ecumenical mission theology through the introduction of *missio Dei* and the replacement of a church-centred missiology. The evangelism that was propounded here and throughout the fifties deviated from the

evangelistic norm of 1910. Evangelism was seen as a tool that could be used in creating a better society not through preaching but through positive interaction with society. According to Werner (1993:187):

Evangelism was now seen as a tool to be used in the struggle towards making the church open to society and against the spirit of restoration and self-closure. This was the period in which the emphasis was on new forms of specialized ministries, lay academics, lay-people movements, and ways to transcend the boundaries of traditional parochial church life.

This type of messianic approach to evangelism was a complete rejection of the traditional understanding which connected evangelism to soul saving and church planting. This redefining of evangelism in favour of a socio-oriented evangelism became a major cause of divergence among people who wanted to see the conversion of souls as being the key purpose of the evangelistic task.

The integration debate which was instituted at Willingen and was officially finalised at Achimota was taken by most evangelicals as having detrimental effects on the evangelistic mission of the church. Some held that “the merger would mean a loss of freedom and identity for the missionary movement, (Coorilos Geevarghes 2010:10) and others held that “the missionary impetus would be dulled and even submerged into another agenda” (Alan J. Bailyes 1996:487). As a result of this merger (Wolfgang Günther 2003:531), many evangelicals started moving out of mainstream ecumenical mission. These alienated evangelicals would end up finding a global body of missionary expression through the Lausanne.

These early ‘tensions and conflicts’ were key to the structural separation that would occur between ecumenicals and evangelicals in the 1960s. The separation between these two groups had its germinal roots in the early stages of the ecumenical mission enterprise and it built up to a boiling point in the sixties due to what was perceived as “mission drift” from the original goal of Edinburgh. The separation therefore represents efforts to remain true not only to the spirit and mission of Edinburgh i.e. evangelism, but to the ethos of the evangelicalism that was exhibited in the nineteenth century. Achimota’s decision to join the structures of WCC laid a threat to the activist and conversionist traits which were some

of the character traits that defined evangelicalism. This brings us back to my original assumption that conservative evangelicalism holds to certain absolutes which they protect so much that if these come under threat, the people involved would either revert to separatism or find other forms or channels of expression. The Achimota decision represents a significant step in divergence in that it not only represented a divergence of ideas but led to the eventual formation of a totally new structure of expression.

The second period, 1961 – 1975 marks the period when the world became the locus of God’s mission. This also became the period of polarization between evangelical and ecumenical perspectives of mission. The Trinitarian understanding of mission propounded in Willingen as conceptualised in *missio Dei* took up a secularized outlook in 1960 onwards. As secularization gained currency at the Uppsala assembly the church found itself at the periphery of mission in ecumenical theology. Controversy regarding evangelism was at its peak in Uppsala with the evangelicals such as Donald McGavran asking “*Will Uppsala betray the two billion?*” in an article published in 1968. Such a question which to a great degree represented the thinking of the evangelical constituency at the time shows that the major issue of contention lay in the area of evangelism and particularly the understanding of the term thereof. While evangelicals wanted to see evangelism connected to preaching and salvation, ecumenicals were viewing the same as expanded evangelization which defined mission as a struggle for justice and liberation. Bangkok took this focus to the extreme when it defined salvation in socio-political terms as liberation. Whether this can be called evangelism or not, was a debatable matter. Werner (1993:191), highlights that after Uppsala and Bangkok new trends developed in which, “evangelization had to restate and reinterpret itself in a global situation of grave inequality and structural injustice, and see itself from the perspective of the periphery”. This trend showed up in subsequent CWME conferences.

These developments resulted in the further alienation of the evangelical community from the mainstream ecumenism. The secularised *missio Dei* of this period simultaneously took place with the birth stages of the worldwide evangelical community starting in the Wheaton than later in the Berlin evangelical conferences of 1966. It was during the 1960s that

processes leading to the establishment of the Lausanne took place. These were mainly due to theological reasons as was highlighted in the study on the “Missionary Structure of the Congregation”, the WCC Berlin conference on Church and Society and the outcome of the Uppsala assembly. Though the Bangkok conference came at a time when the evangelicals were poised for inaugurating a new movement, its focus on liberation theology further widened the gap that was between the two bodies. At this stage, the evangelicals saw the ecumenical movement as betraying the missionary enterprise. As a result they had to establish an alternative channel to pursue the worldwide goal of “Evangelization of the world in this generation”. This led to the official inauguration of the Lausanne Movement in 1974.

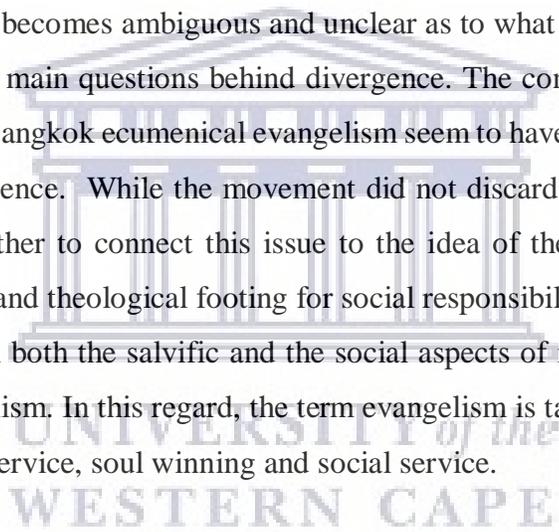
The third period 1975 to 1989 termed the period of integration began to show signs of synthesis of previously opposing missiological viewpoints and affirmation of the church as “a valid instrument in the mission of God” (1987:94). The WCC Nairobi assembly was significant in reaffirming the role of the church. Nairobi came up with a “more balanced ecumenical missiology...It was one that valued both Christian witness and social solidarity” (Werner 1993:191). This was reiterated in Melbourne and San Antonio. It needs to be noted however that the world oriented theology still existed though not in strict Hoekendijk formula. It appears however that through these two conferences, while the church’s position was restored under the *missio Dei*, the evangelicals saw that there was a lack of evangelistic urgency for the lost and the activist thrust was lacking as well (Lundström 2006:92). The focus on people of other faiths in San Antonio conference and the discussion on culture in Salvador met with some criticism from evangelicals. CWME positions on these issues are also a matter of divergence with the evangelicals.

The eighties were a time when the official mission statement, the *Ecumenical Affirmation* surfaced and became an official document on mission in WCC for at least three decades. Two additional study documents since then were drafted in 1997 and 2000 but were not accorded official status by WCC. These documents mark a concerted effort on the part of the ecumenical movement to bring about a truly ecumenical thinking on evangelism. The mission statements in the documents are significant for reaffirming both evangelistic and

socio-political aspects of the missionary task. This thinking was present in both the preparatory papers and plenary papers at Athens.

## **2.6 Conclusion**

In conclusion, I have tried to show through these theological trends that the ecumenical movement has through the decades from 1910 to 2005 modified its thinking on mission and evangelism. That evangelism has been a recurring theme in the WCC cannot be denied but the various efforts to redefine it as enlarged evangelism or as evangelization to reorient it towards socio-political endeavours led to it being understood as synonymous with liberal approaches to the betterment of society. When evangelism ceases to focus on proclamation and salvation of souls it becomes ambiguous and unclear as to what its aim is. This seems to have been one of the main questions behind divergence. The conferences have shown that from Jerusalem to Bangkok ecumenical evangelism seem to have been on a downward spiral in terms of its essence. While the movement did not discard the salvific aspect of evangelism, it went further to connect this issue to the idea of the kingdom of God to promulgate the biblical and theological footing for social responsibility. This was done in an endeavour to contain both the salvific and the social aspects of mission in one aspect and therefore avoid dualism. In this regard, the term evangelism is taken as encompassing both proclamation and service, soul winning and social service.



## Chapter Three

### Lausanne Congress for World Evangelisation: Development of Mission Theology

1966 - 2004

#### 3.1 Introduction

This chapter will attempt to give a review of the processes that led to the establishment of the Lausanne Movement. It will then treat the formation of the Lausanne Movement in some detail and review theology that was articulated in Lausanne's first mission document, *The Lausanne Covenant*. The conference dynamics surrounding the adoption of this document will also be reviewed. The chapter will then proceed with the development of Lausanne's missiology from its first congress, the second congress in Manila and the consultation on holistic mission in 2004. Particular attention will be given to how the evangelicals dealt with the missiological issues of evangelism and social responsibility. As a prelude to this discussion, I will give a brief discussion of the key features that one could use to characterise modern evangelicalism. These features are part of the method utilised in this thesis to analyse the theology of the Lausanne.

#### 3.2 Features of Evangelicalism

According to D.G. Hart (2004:19), the term evangelicalism is a construct that developed over the last half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Though the term started appearing in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, defining it in terms of one precise definition is not possible. The term is used to refer to a broad and multifaceted movement that existed over a long period of time. Due to the diversity that exists nowadays with regards to groups that claim the term evangelical as definitive of their self-identity, it makes it even more difficult to come up with one specific way of identifying what evangelicalism is. The usage of the word "evangelical" can be so multifaceted that different definitions of its meaning can even contradict each other" (João B. Chaves 2013:25). It causes some scholars to question whether we should refer to evangelical movements rather than a singular movement. Roger E Olson (2007:79-84),

points out that defining evangelicalism needs to be done with its historical background in mind because to disregard its historical origins would lead into carrying out an abstract exercise detached from the processes that led to the phenomenon we see (2007:715). He asserts that behind evangelicalism lies the influence of European Pietism, and Puritanism which tended to incorporate scholastic Protestant orthodoxy. These two Christian brands informed the ethos of evangelicalism though the two often exist in tension with each other within the same movement (:737-738). Talking about the operation of these two strands of evangelicalism, Olson suggests that the Puritan strand, with its leanings towards the Protestant scholastic tradition, tends to be reformed and is strongly confessional in doctrine while the Pietistic strand leans towards revivalism, transformation experiences wrought by the Holy Spirit and tend to hold a cavalier attitude toward tradition (:754-755). Such an overview helps to get a grip at some of the noticeable issues that seem to characterise evangelical relations over the years. In further trying to show the vastness of evangelicalism, Olson then identifies 7 groups which could be classified as evangelical. 1. Evangelicalism as synonymous with authentic Christianity, 2. Evangelicalism as referring to 16<sup>th</sup> century Protestant Reformation, 3. Evangelicalism as the party in Anglicanism/Episcopalian that resisted Roman Catholic elements, 4. The Pietistic revivalist tradition in the 18<sup>th</sup> century is also labelled evangelical, 5. Fundamentalists, 6. Neo-fundamentalists, and 7, Evangelical identified as any enthusiastic, militant, and highly conservative Christian group. As such some broad generalisations of the type of evangelicalism we are talking about may be necessary so as to identify the type of Christianity in question. Hutchinson and Wolffe (2012:17-18), describe evangelicalism, as a fluid and diverse phenomenon could be understood as having no specific boundaries and thus cannot be rigidly defined. It is also a phenomenon which has individualism as an abiding aspect. In spite of the diversity and varieties of evangelicalism scholars seem to agree that there are some basic features which can be taken as constituting evangelical spirituality (Oddvar Sten Ronsen 2016:10). We can thus talk about evangelicals as representing “a recognisable, self-aware distinct style of Protestantism undergirded by shared convictions and assumptions.” (Hutchinson and Wolffe 2012:18)

In his book *Evangelicalism in Modern Britain: A History from the 1730s to the 1930s*, W.D. Bebbington identifies four special marks that he characterises as forming “a quadrilateral of priorities that is the basis of Evangelicalism.” These are “common features” that have persisted and remained constant over a long period of time and can be used as characteristics of an Evangelical tradition (1989: 3-4). The evangelical tradition can be identified by the exclusive place it gives to *conversionism*, *activism*, *Biblicism* and *crucicentricism*. Though this formulation was done in reference to Britain, it nevertheless gained widespread usage as a tool for understanding and analysing worldwide evangelicalism (Hutchinson and Wolffe 2012:15). Furthermore, while it is acknowledged that it has its weaknesses, this classification’s strength lies in “its short circuiting of controversy on theological specifics.” This enables it “to accommodate the variety of evangelical views on the precise process of conversion, the exegesis of Scripture, priorities for engagement with the wider world, and the significance of the Christ’s sacrificial death and the divine plan of salvation” (Hutchinson 2012:15). At the occasion when the British Evangelical Alliance celebrated its 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary, Bebbington restated his definition to include the world phenomenon. He stated that “evangelicals across these [many] denominations are all united in the bonds of the gospel. As many of them discover, through joint expressions of their activism...they all try to be obedient to the Bible and therefore faithful to the cross, and eager for conversion” (In Mark A. Noll 2004:443).

Three of the four features above correspond to Stuart Piggin’s (In Wolffe 2012:17) interpretive model of evangelicalism which he based on his historical survey of evangelicalism in Australia. He asserts that in its quest to remain consistent with Reformation principles it holds an *experiential* aspect of salvation by faith alone, (*sola fide*), it is secondly *Biblicist* in that it insists on the sole authority of Scripture (*sola scriptura*). Thirdly it is *activist* in that evangelicals understood the Gospel “not only as the divinely given instrument for the rebirth of the individual soul, but also as an instrument for the renovation of society and culture (In Hutchinson and Wolffe 2012:17). Piggin’s three-tire model which he also terms ‘Spirit, Word, and world’ “offers a convenient tool for interpreting change and diversity within evangelicalism in terms of the ascendancy or relative recession of one or other strand” (Hutchinson and Wolffe 2012:17). To elaborate

this point he shows that Pentecostalism and charismatic evangelicalism tended to place emphasis on the Spirit, fundamentalists seemed to emphasise the rigorous interpretation of the Word and those evangelicals inclined to social change emphasised the world aspect and its transformation through ‘the renovation of society and culture’. This is seen in the activist nature of the 19<sup>th</sup> century movements for social and moral reform which heightened concern for social change later on in the 20<sup>th</sup> century with the ‘New Christian Right’ in the United States and the radical evangelicalism of the developing world (Hutchinson and Wolffe 2012:17). I will treat Piggin’s model as implicit within Bebbington’s fourfold formulation. It seems to contain dimensions that are not explicitly expanded in Bebbington and yet important for interpreting evangelicalism.

In trying to analyse the theology of the Lausanne, I will attempt to use these four marks to show that the Lausanne, from the time of its inception has been trying to maintain a type of evangelical outlook that connects it to the evangelical tradition of the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> century which it felt was lost after Edinburgh. The contention here is that, the overarching thought among conservative evangelicals is to revive and reinstate the revivalist and pietistic type of missionary approach experienced in those two preceding centuries while continuing with the Puritan ethos. I will apply these four characterizations on the key documents discussed above. I will then argue that the changes that took place in mission theology of the Lausanne, had to come through people from within the movement who, were able to show that a theology of social service can be rightly formulated through these rubrics or aspects congruent to such rubrics without at any point becoming or even appearing liberal. A brief review of these points will be in order.

### *Conversionism*

Conversion is presented as the content of the Gospel which urges people to turn away from sin, repent and come to Christ in faith. All preaching had to involve a call for sinners to be reconciled to God. The approaches to calling for conversion differed from one preacher to another but at some stage in Evangelicalism, it was common to insist on the reality of hell so as to get listeners to be concerned about their spiritual warfare. Bebbington makes mention of preachers like Jonathan Edwards, Joseph Milner and others whose sermons

dealt with topics such as hell, destruction of sinners and backsliders and so forth. (1989:5-6). Though fear was used as a motive for conversion, “more emphasis was laid on the forgiving love of God” (Bebbington 1989:5). The subject of conversion included other important theological convictions. The doctrine of justification by faith was a distinguishing factor in the 18<sup>th</sup> century evangelicalism. It emphasised that salvation is not something one achieves but something that one’s receives (:5). Connected to this was the doctrine of assurance of salvation. It was believed that when one is converted then they can be sure about it. Though there is no agreement on the precise timing of conversion, there seems to have been a general acceptance that some conversions may be quick while others may be gradual and that not all conversions should be preceded by a crisis situation in a person’s life. While the Holy Spirit is taken to be the one who quickens people unto salvation, in the 19<sup>th</sup> century some evangelicals, in the eagerness to maximize conversions, began to elevate the role of the *will* as a crucial factor in the person’s salvation. This led to a modification of theology by a section of Evangelicalism and carefully planned methods of evangelism targeted to assist enquirers to make the choice to believe (:8-9). Conversion was also strongly connected to baptism though there have been debates as to the precise time when one becomes a Christian, whether it is at conversion or through baptismal regeneration. Be that as it may, what Bebbington brings out here is the fact that Evangelicals, starting from the 18<sup>th</sup> century roots, have held consistent view of conversion through justification by faith, which assures one of their salvation, it is wrought by the Holy Spirit and culminates in baptism. This conversion is called for during the preaching of the Gospel whereupon listeners are to exercise their will and respond to this call.

### *Activism*

This aspect refers primarily to the orientation towards evangelism and service that has come to characterise evangelicals over the years. The idea of activism is wrought by the understanding that when a person is converted, they need to show gratitude by engaging in a campaign for the salvation of others. Jonathan Edwards wrote, “Persons, after their own conversion, have commonly expressed an exceeding great desire for the conversion of others...” (Quoted in Bebbington 1989:10). Throughout the 19<sup>th</sup> century, evangelicalism was characterised by a lot of action in carrying out a diversity of church or mission related

activities. These activities, from what Bebbington points out, “often spilled over beyond simple gospel work...” into different types of social services that embodied the ethic of the gospel (:12). Because of the kerygmatic nature of this aspect, McGrath, while agreeing with the other three features summarised by Bebbington, ‘would replace “activism” by the narrower concept of “evangelism”’ (Ronsen 2016:10).

### *Biblicism*

The Evangelicals’ consistent and insistent devotion to the Bible is built upon the understanding that, its pages contain all spiritual truth. This is based on the understanding that most evangelicals’ belief in the inspiration of the Bible. This belief in the Bible does not mean that Evangelicals held far-fetched views and concentrated on obscurities, rather a genuine reverence of the Bible aimed at bringing home its message and encourage its devotional use (:13-14). Though all evangelicals believe that God inspired the Bible, there are, however, divergences when it comes to topics such as the inerrancy and infallibility of the Scriptures. Debates on plenary inspiration, inerrancy and interpretation of Scripture ensued from 1820s onward leading to the schism between conservative and liberal approaches to the Bible among evangelicals. The evangelicals’ reverence for the Bible explains the continual affirmation of the authority of the Bible and the continual insistence that it be used in determining doctrine, theology and mission.

### *Crucicentricism*

The evangelical movement emphasised the doctrine of the cross in its presentation of the gospel. The reconciliation of humanity to God is only possible through the work of the work achieved by Christ on the cross. So strong was the atonement belief held that “to make any theme other than the cross the fulcrum of a theological system was to take a step away from Evangelicalism.” The standard view of evangelicals in this regard was that, “Christ died as a substitute for sinful mankind. Human beings...were so rebellious against God that a just penalty would have been death” (1989:15). The cross was then seen as being indispensable to sanctification. In Henry Venn’s words, “all treatises written to promote holiness of life, must be deplorably defective, unless the cross of Christ be laid as the foundation...”(quoted in Bebbington 1989:16). While there existed differences in belief

and expatiation of this theology among Calvinists and Arminians, particularly Methodists, Bebbington says that “Most Evangelicals were content to adopt a ‘moderate Calvinism’ that in terms of practical pulpit instruction differed only slightly from the Methodist version of Arminianism” (1989:17).

### **3.3 The Background of Lausanne – 1960s**

A review of theological trends in the evangelical movement can be traced in separate processes that led to the official establishment of the Lausanne Movement. Prior to 1960 evangelicals “had few formal relations with one another” (Scherer 1987:166). They existed as separate groups and agencies each of which carried out their mission task primarily in the area of evangelism. The two key themes of evangelicals at this stage were “obedience to the Great Commission and a concern for saving souls” (Roger Bassham 1980:54).

As noted in the previous chapter, some evangelicals who had ties with the IMC, opposed its integration into the WCC citing among other things that the move would jeopardize the evangelistic task of the church. The Achimota conference in Ghana signalled that some mission councils that would not continue their membership upon integration, (Laing 2012:118). By this time, starting with the 1920s, a shift in missionary influence had taken place from Europe and Britain to North America, (Bassham 1980:53) and American foreign missionaries constituted about 70 percent of evangelical missions in the IMC (Laing 2012:125). The integration thus gave these missions reason to believe that the IMC had lost the spirit of Edinburgh and given in to what was taken as the liberal element of the WCC. This led to the isolation of these missions and set them on the path to start something which, in their view would continue with the true spirit of Edinburgh. Thus the latter half of the 1960s is the time when evangelicals began to build up a strong intellectual basis for their faith (Woolnough and Ma 2010:10). This was particularly so given the revolution toward secularization that was taking place in the world during this decade. Evangelicals felt the push to articulate their faith and doctrine in such a manner as to counter the winds of this time. They also needed to form associations that ‘reflected their theological viewpoint’ (Bassham 1980:54). Evangelical agencies began to hold meetings “designed to

give greater visibility to the evangelical viewpoint and to explore common strategies” (Scherer 1987:166). One of the main aims of these meetings was to make known the evangelical alternative to the social gospel of the time and what was ‘perceived as the liberalism of mainline denominations and the ecumenical movement in general’ (1987:166).

The last part of the 19<sup>th</sup> century saw the formation of a number of independent missionary organisations, popularly referred to as “faith missions”, the most outstanding of these being the China Inland Mission founded by J. Hudson Taylor father of “faith missions”. Some of these faith missions would play a significant role in the formation of evangelicalism later in the 1960s. During the first half of the twentieth century, some of these missions joined together to form a platform of fellowship, mutual support and solidarity for the evangelical missionary movement. This resulted in the formation of an inter-mission organization, the Interdenominational Foreign Mission and Association at Princeton in 1917 (Mäkelä 1999:40). It comes as no surprise that such a body came into being during the peak of the social gospel movement, no doubt as a reaction of dissatisfaction with the status quo and the direction of mission at the time. As a result, when IFMA adopted its statement of faith its theology was not only anti-ecumenical but also entirely fundamentalist in nature (1999:40). Thus IFMA was formed as a fundamentalist reaction to the missionary outlook of the time (David J. Hesselgrave 2007:127).

The conference that was held at Moody church Chicago in 1960 by the Interdenominational Foreign Mission Association (IFMA) marks the date on which American evangelicals started to organise an alternative evangelical Protestant missionary movement. John F. Walvoord, President of Dallas Theological Seminary, is said to have given an address entitled “The Theological basis for Foreign Mission” in which “he was not seeking to innovate but to be true to his understanding of evangelical tradition” (Laing 2012:125). Laing argues here that Walvoord bypassed the issues of *missio Dei* and based his arguments on a theological paradigm that was a restatement of fundamentalist convictions which had already been rejected in Willingen. This move seems to be an endeavour to not only connect the emerging movement with Edinburgh’s evangelical

fervour for evangelism but by echoing SVM's rallying cry, "The evangelization of the world in this generation", in its closing statement also aimed to put itself in continuity with the renowned evangelical tradition and missionary impulse of the late 19<sup>th</sup> century (Norman E. Thomas 1996:148; Bassham 1980:54). Obedience to the great commission was reiterated, the need for the salvation of souls and also a cognisance of the need to adjust mission to the changing times (Bassham 1980:54).

### **3.4 Wheaton Congress 1966**

Six years after this meeting, the efforts of the evangelicals finally resulted in a major congress on the Church's Worldwide Mission co-sponsored by the Interdenominational Foreign Missions Association (IFMA) and the Evangelical Foreign Missions Association (EFMA) in April 9-16, 1966. EFMA was regarded as the mission branch of the NAE (BGC archives: no date). The conference took place in Wheaton and it was attended by 938 delegates from 71 countries. The aim of this congress, to put it in a summary form, was for the "evangelical leadership to make plain to the world their theory, strategy and practice of the church's universal mission" (Harold Lindsell 1966:3 in Bassham). According to Laing (2012:125), "Meeting soon after the Second Vatican Council, Wheaton sought to "refute" and "rebut" perceived tendencies and errors amongst Roman Catholics and conciliar Protestants. It was seen as an exercise of discernment at a time when the organisers saw that "Protestantism was afflicted with doctrinal uncertainty, theological novelties, and outright apostasy" (WD 1966: 459). This was no doubt in reference to the evangelical view of the larger Protestant movement embodied in the ecumenical movement which was critically taken by conservatives at this stage as having embarked on the destructive theological path. That the congress was anti-ecumenical is quite clear from its call for an evangelical consensus when it clearly stated:

Contemporary Protestant movements that boldly contend for the non-existence of the Gospel revealed by God, that propagate a neo-universalism denying eternal condemnation, that substitute inter-church reconciling service for aggressive evangelism, that blur the biblical distinction between 'Church' and 'Mission', between Romanism and Protestantism, and that create ecclesiastical organizations moving in the direction of a worldwide

religious monopoly, likewise demand a careful assessment and response (WD 1966: 461).

To most evangelical missions this congress met to deal with the false doctrines of the ecumenical movement. The congress was thus a confessional act by the Christian community to protect the true faith affirming what evangelicals truly believe, to provide ‘an antidote to “ecumenical theology” and creating a true focus for missionary service’ (Hesselgrave 2007:130).

Out of this conference came the *Wheaton Declaration* which produced several missiological affirmations which could be summarised under the following rubrics; 1) ‘the primacy of preaching the gospel to every creature’, 2) mobilization of the church for ‘the evangelization of the world in this generation’, 3) priority of church planting over all other activities, 4) centrality of the local church in the continuing task of mission and evangelism. The maturity and growth of the churches in the South was also noted (Scherer 1987: 166). A careful study of the document will show that there are some correlations between its contents and the fourfold characterisation of evangelicalism. This is to say, evangelicals, always understood themselves to be in continuity with the traditions of piety and revivalism of the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> century evangelicals. Thus, the articles contained in this document bear signs of Biblicism, conversionism, crucicentricism and activism. In other words, the characteristic traits of the historic pietism seemed to come out more clearly in the form of evangelicalism that was being propagated in Wheaton.

The Declaration’s language on preaching the gospel and the authority of the Scriptures is consistent with the Biblicist and conversionist orientation of evangelicalism. It regards the ‘evangelistic mandate’ to be crucial and therefore places importance on the preaching of the gospel to “our generation, to the peoples of every tribe, tongue, and nation” (WD 462-463). Since the lostness of humanity has eschatological consequences of eternal damnation, it follows that the preaching of the testimony of the gospel is strongly tied to the ‘explicit imperative: you must be born again’. The preaching and teaching of the Bible to this effect must be ‘forthright and thorough’. Wheaton touched on the place of social responsibility in mission and this is connects to evangelism. Thus the mission of the church with regards to verbal proclamation of the gospel also has social dimensions and has to be

“accompanied by our service to the poor, the sick, the needy, and all the oppressed”(WD 465). The social responsibility highlighted at this stage seems to be more in the areas of philanthropy.

The church plays a central role in the missiology of Wheaton. There is a connection between mission and church growth. No doubt church growth advocates such as Donald McGvran played a significant role in influencing Wheaton toward this direction. McGvran believed that society could be changed through an increase of people who had believed in the Lord and therefore capable of exhibiting Christian values which were needed for societal transformation (1983:110-111). The preaching of the gospel should lead to church planting in every community, as such there is a strong call by *Wheaton* for “all churches, mission societies, and training institutions to study diligently the nature, ministry and growth of the Church as set forth in the Scriptures...that research be carried out...to learn why churches are not growing and make such knowledge available...we urge the missionary enterprise to evaluate church growth opportunities now overlooked and to review the role, methods and expenditures of our agencies in the light of their significance to evangelism and church growth” (WD: 468). It is quite interesting to note the congress is making a call for strong ecclesiology at a time when the ecumenical movement was at that point in time making a transition from church-centric to a secular oriented missiology. The mission paradigms of the two movements at this stage were quite divergent. There is reason to believe that Wheaton’s is retrospectively addressing the major missiological issues that had been on the IMC agenda since the first missionary conference in 1928. This can be seen in that the congress stated in no uncertain terms the type of mission conviction they would have wanted to see articulated then. With regard to mission and syncretism, for instance, Wheaton seems to show its disapproval of the direction that New Delhi and Mexico had taken in identifying values in other religions that could be used in the dialogical process of evangelism. It discards as “deviant and heretical [those] views within Christendom advocating a depersonalized theism acceptable to religions of East and West.” Such views are seen as compromising the uniqueness of Christian truth (WD1966: 462).

While the Wheaton Congress was “consciously repudiating the ecumenical movement’s approach to mission” and realign itself to the Edinburgh evangelical heritage, it still could not ignore the same reality that the ecumenical movement was also struggling to deal with, namely, “the relationship between missionary organizations and indigenous churches, the appropriate balance between evangelism and social involvement in mission, and the way in which spiritual unity should be expressed in some visible form”(Bassham 1980:54). So the congress sought to address a broad range of issues among which it also attempted to regain its social mission. In its discussion on social responsibility Wheaton laid out issues which were considered to be premises upon which social mission would be based. A lengthy quote here may be necessary to get a good grasp of Wheaton’s rationale for social engagement:

Whereas evangelicals in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries led in social concern, in the twentieth century many lost the biblical perspective and limited themselves *only* to preaching a gospel of individual salvation without sufficient involvement in their social and community responsibilities.

When theological liberalism and humanism invaded historic Protestant churches and proclaimed a ‘social gospel’, the conviction grew among evangelicals that an antithesis existed between social involvement and gospel witness.

Today, however, evangelicals are increasingly convinced that they must involve themselves in the great social problems men are facing. They are concerned for the needs of the whole man, because of their Lord's example, His constraining love, their identity with the human race, and the challenge of their evangelical heritage.

Evangelicals look to the Scriptures for guidance as to what they should do, and how far they should go in expressing this social concern, without minimizing the priority of preaching the Gospel of individual salvation (WD 473).

One can deduce four points from this affirmation; 1. The declaration acknowledges that evangelicals had been active in social issues in the past but later changed to focus mainly on salvation of the soul. 2. The emergence and threat posed by the social gospel led evangelicals to hold a dualistic view between evangelism and social involvement thereby elevating the primacy of evangelism. 3. Evangelicals were now convinced that they needed to get involved in social issues but the only way they were going to do this was through; 4.

Their own Scriptural conservative exegesis in contra-distinction to the liberal rationale for social work. That evangelism for the salvation of souls would remain central. It appears here that Wheaton was making a deliberate choice that would safeguard its evangelistic conviction which apparently had lost room in the WCC. It follows that in its declaration on mission and social concern, Wheaton “made a serious attempt to link evangelism and social action and strongly affirmed the commitment of evangelicals to racial equality, social justice, and religious liberty...” (Bassham (1980:54). The declaration pointed out that the evangelicals were now reaffirming their social consciousness and involvement after overcoming the antithesis between evangelism and social responsibility:

That we reaffirm unreservedly the primacy of preaching the Gospel to every creature and we will demonstrate anew God's concern for social justice and human welfare;  
That evangelical social action will include, wherever possible, a verbal witness to Jesus Christ;  
That evangelical social action must avoid wasteful and unnecessary competition; That when Christian institutions no longer fulfil their distinctively evangelical functions they should be relinquished;  
That we urge all evangelicals to stand openly and firmly for racial equality, human freedom, and all forms of social justice throughout the world (WD 1966:474).

Padilla holds that this declaration marked the emerging of a new attitude toward social responsibility within evangelical circles. He attributes this new concern to the presence and participation of a good number of theologians from Two-Thirds World (1985:28). The presence of these participants explains why such a mission document as this could have come out of U.S.A at this time since, “evangelicalism in that country was simply not interested in social change or social activism” (1985:28). He bases his argument on Robert Booth Fowler’s work, *A New Engagement: Evangelical Political Thought, 1966-1976*, in which Fowler, highlighted that in the mid-sixties, American evangelicalism was focused on individual conversion and action but was “leery of major social and political changes.” This was in contra-distinction to what was happening in the two-thirds world which was “increasingly concerned about social implications of the Gospel” (Padilla1985:31). Their contribution, according to Harold Lindsell, “weighed in heavily in determining the final shape of the Declaration” (in Padilla 1985:) The same thought is echoed by Brian Stanley

who highlights that prior to Lausanne 1974, “for many Evangelicals, issues of social and economic justice remained marginal to their understanding of the mission of the Church” (Stanley 2013:534). He gives reference also to the participation of Two-Thirds World theologians as significant in fostering a new sense of social conscience among the evangelicals.

While the congress articulated its own missiology pertaining to their time, its deliberations were also marked by militant attacks on ecumenical missiology particularly given the fact that, Wheaton met at a time when secularization was at its zenith (Bosch 1988:462). This affected the theological outcome of this conference to a certain degree. The affirmation on church and unity for instance was only limited to the evangelical community while a lot of indifference was registered with regard to developing relationships with the Roman Catholic Church and other Christian bodies. Efiog Utuk (1986:207), criticises Wheaton for being too negative, ambiguous, indifferent and comfortable in the world of idealism and make-believe” instead of advocating radical change to social issues as was done in New Delhi. He blames Wheaton for failing to formulate “church – or cosmic centric missions”, for unwilling to put evangelism and social responsibility on the equal footing or “even to consider them as indissolubly linked, biblical motifs.” Instead Wheaton only acknowledged the biblical origin of these two aspects.

Eugene Smith in the article “The Wheaton Congress in the eyes of an Ecumenical Observer”, noted that there were frequent attacks on the ecumenical movement. Out of the fifteen papers that were presented at this conference, nine of them had some kind of attack on the ecumenical movement. Most of these charges lay in the areas of “theological liberalism, loss of evangelical conviction, universalism in theology, substitution of social action for evangelism, and the search for unity at the expense of biblical truth” (Smith 1966:33). This marked a growing sense of divergence between the movements.

Wheaton is important to take note of because it gives us not only the genesis of worldwide evangelicalism but also it signals initial attempts at articulating an evangelical mission theology which while it began to take issues of social concern seriously it nevertheless stressed priority on verbal proclamation. Its desire to differ from the conciliar movement

and attune itself to historic evangelicalism caused the congress to focus much on reaffirmation of evangelical doctrines but at the same time affected the degree to which its church-cosmic theology would be relevant to social issues of the day. One could posit that this outcome was to be expected given the nature and theological outlook of its sponsors, IFMA and EFMA (Utuk 1986:207). At its inception in 1917 IFMA was fundamentalist reaction to the liberal missiology of the time, (David J Hesselgrave 2007:127). It was IFMA's goal for its members to hold a "strict adherence to the evangelical doctrines and standards of historical Christianity and the burden to carry the Gospel to those regions where Christ has not been named" (Bassham 1980:54). EFMA was established in 1945 as a missionary wing of the conservative National Association of Evangelicals whose seven-point Statement Faith had strong affinity to that of IFMA, in its 'affirmation of the authority of Scripture and orthodox doctrines' (Hesselgrave 2007:129). With this in mind, it is clear why the conference took more of a strict conservative outlook that emphasised doctrine and authority of Scripture and evangelism. With this background, voices offering a different mission hermeneutic would have to come from outside of the sphere of these two organisations. As a result the contribution of Latin American theologians at this conference was crucial to induce the much needed orientation towards social action. The difference in historical and contextual backgrounds on the participants helped to bring about this awareness on the large North American evangelical constituency which seemed to have been bent on one direction. From this time on in the history of Lausanne and evangelicalism at large, changes in mission theology would come through mostly through the influence of those participants who shared different social backgrounds with the North American evangelicals. Be that as it may, Wheaton represents *the terminus a quo* in the process of developing evangelical mission theology and with this congress, "historical critical method had found its way into bastioned evangelical missiology" (Utuk 1986:210).

Several years prior to Wheaton Carl F. Henry is considered one of the most influential persons among evangelicals who began to raise their voices on issues on social involvement particularly in North America. He was one of the earliest evangelicals to write about the need for social responsibility in his 1947 book entitled *The Uneasy Conscience of Modern Fundamentalism* (John Stott 2006:30). He brought to the fore the contention

that when fundamentalists revolted against the social gospel, they at the same time turned their backs on the ‘Christian social imperative’ in what became known as the Great Reversal. Henry denounced the ‘evangelism only’ approach as “an unbiblical fundamentalist reduction’ (In Tizon 2010:64). John Stott points out that though many did not heed the call of Henry’s book at first, the message gradually caught on and found its way into the 1966 Wheaton conference. Both John Stott (2006:27) and Ron Sider (1993:20) mention Carl F. Henry as well as David O Moberg in connection with their influence in calling for a social consciousness among evangelicals.

### **3.5 Berlin World Congress on Evangelism 1966**

The Wheaton meeting was followed by the Berlin World Congress on Evangelism which was held from October 24<sup>th</sup> to November 4<sup>th</sup> in 1966. This was sponsored by the Billy Graham Association in conjunction with the magazine *Christianity Today*. The conference, meeting under the theme “One Race, One Gospel, One Task”, attracted 1100 conservative evangelicals from 100 countries. This conference aimed at defining biblical evangelism while stressing its urgency and also studying obstacles to evangelism and how to overcome them (Scherer 1987:167). In their opening speeches, Billy Graham, the honorary chairman at the congress, and Carl Henry, explained that, evangelism as the primary task of mission “had been neglected, distorted, and even abandoned by other Christians, especially those related to the ecumenical movement” (Bassham 1980:54). Billy Graham, in his opening speech entitled, “Why the Berlin Congress” admonished the church to recommit herself to the task of proclaiming the gospel and converting people to Christ. By engaging in this task, he held that the church, “would have a far greater impact on the social, moral, and psychological needs of people than it could achieve through any other thing it could possibly do” (Quoted in Padilla 1985:28). In so doing Graham laid the theological premise for what we could understand as an evangelical understanding/approach to social transformation.

In terms of mission theology, the conference identified what it referred to as the ‘supreme mission of the church’ as “bearing the Good News of God’s saving Grace to sinful and lost

humanity; calling upon men and nations everywhere to repent and turn to works of righteousness, and bringing the world of salvation to mankind in spiritual revolt and moral chaos” (Quoted in Tokunboh Adeyemo 1985:44). It stressed the final authority of the Bible calling for the rejection of any evangelism that does not issue from the Scriptures (Scherer 1987:167).

The issue of evangelism and social action was also touched on though it was a sensitive matter and was not dealt with adequately (Scherer 1987:167; Athol Gill 1976:90). While social responsibility was reaffirmed the congress upheld “that evangelism must continue to hold a primary place in authentic biblical mission” (Tizon 2010:64). Padilla suggests that Graham’s opening remarks on the connectedness between proclamation and social change, with the latter being a corollary of the former, might have been taken for granted by the conference organisers leading to the omission of discussion on that matter. “This might have been the main reason why the question of the relationship of evangelism to social responsibility – a recurring theme in the discussion groups during the conference – was not given proper attention at the plenary sessions, despite the fact that ‘many delegates felt there should have been more effort to crystallize thinking on it’”(Padilla 1985:28; Gill 1976:90). As a result, Berlin did not come up with a comprehensive statement on social responsibility. It only dealt with some social issues in the context of racism (Tokunboh Adeyemo 1985:44). It officially deplored racism and rejected “the notion that men are unequal because of distinction of race or color” (Quoted in Padilla 1985:28). The statement on racism, though lengthy in form is said to have exhibited weaknesses in that, it looked at racism in “purely personal terms” (Gill 1976:90) and through the lenses of evangelism when it stated that racism was not only a denial of the gospel but also a “deterrent to the evangelistic task” (Scherer 1987:167).

Efiong S. Utuk in his article “From Wheaton to Lausanne: The Road to Modification of Contemporary Evangelical Mission Theology” outlined a few points of critique on some of the weaknesses of Berlin. He observed that while the setting of the Congress in a divided city was consciously designed to show how prepared the evangelicals were in engaging a revolutionary world, evangelicals still seemed to have wanted to use Berlin to contrast

themselves from the ecumenical movement in their mission understanding. He drew this from the editorial of the magazine *Christianity Today* which reported:

In contrast to other recent ecumenical conferences, such as Vatican Council, World Council of Churches assemblies, and the conferences on Faith and Order and on Church and Society, [the Berlin Congress] assumes both the Reformation principle of the final authority of the Bible and apostolic emphasis on the evangelization of mankind as the primary mission of the church (quoted in Utuk (1986:210).

Utuk further observed that the outcome of the congress seemed to have been predetermined by its sponsor, Billy Graham. Berlin oscillated between tradition and modernism with the papers presented being largely ‘inspirational and hortatory’ without addressing penetrating missiological questions. Padilla (2003) echoes the same view when he highlighted Billy Graham’s opening remarks in which he said, ‘if the church went back to its main task of proclaiming the Gospel and people converted to Christ, it would have a far greater impact on the social, moral, and psychological needs of men than it could achieve through any other thing it could possibly do’. In this statement, Padilla saw the setting of the basic premise of the Congress organizers, beyond which “no advance was made towards a more comprehensive concept of mission” (2003). Thus in keeping with this evangelistic focus, “Berlin appropriated for itself the Student Volunteer Movement's watchword— evangelization of the world in this generation— as its goal and aim for missionary strategy” (Utuk 1986:210). This laid more emphasis on the focus on evangelism as the previous congress had done and in so doing continued in its quest to be the inheritor of the evangelistic heritage of the previous century. One thing was clear when Berlin convened, their aim was to emphasise the place and importance of the evangelistic task.

With regard to the connection between, evangelism and social concern, Utuk notes that a gradual shift from a “one-dimensional mentality to a double one” was taking place. The problem however lay in “telling what this indissolubity entails” (1986:210). With regard to projects on interfaith dialogue instituted at Wheaton, Berlin marked a change of view in the matter. In this regard, Berlin regressed and “ignored Wheaton's double signal of triumphalism and sympathetic study of non-Christian religions, and suggested only triumphalism” (1986:211).

Apart from these and other weaknesses, it can be asserted that the conference marked a significant step in “the construction of contemporary evangelical mission theology...The congress reminded the delegates and their constituencies that evangelicalism need not translate into quietism” (1986:212). It also was significant as a platform that aimed to “give larger visibility to the evangelical cause and... to offer a biblically based alternative to ecumenism” (Scherer 1987:167). Bosch sees Berlin as having been more constructive than Wheaton in that it “did not concentrate on the ‘errors’ of the conciliar movement to the same extent” even though its official documents still “reflect a militant and self-conscious evangelicalism” (1988:463).

### **3.6 Other Efforts Towards Comprehensive Mission, 1960 – 1973**

It needs to be noted that apart from Wheaton and Berlin there were also other evangelical persons/agencies that were making efforts to adopt a mission theology that encompassed social responsibility. After the Berlin Congress of 1966 there were several regional congresses: in Singapore for Asia (1968), Minneapolis for the United States (1969), Bogotá for Latin America (1969), Ottawa for Canada (1970), Amsterdam for Europe (1971), and Madrid for Spain (1974), (Escobar 2012:73). Some of these efforts are attributed with having some influence on the official stance on social responsibility articulated in Wheaton, Berlin and ultimately Lausanne. In the years between Wheaton and Lausanne there was a steady growth of interest by some American evangelical leaders to issues of social concern. In 1973 in Chicago, around fifty evangelical leaders attended a Thanksgiving Workshop on Evangelicals and Social Concern. Samuel Escobar was one of the people who presented his perspectives at this conference. The conference produced the *Chicago Declaration of Evangelical Social Concern*, a document “which put forth clear condemnations of racism, sexism, militarism, civil religion, materialism, and economic injustice from an evangelical standpoint...” (Michael Clawson 2012:794). This declaration, says Sider, is “probably one of the many streams that contributed to the strong insistence at the Lausanne Congress...that the world evangelical movement dare not neglect social responsibility” (Sider 1993:20). According to Clawson, the wider evangelical constituency in America slowly became sensitized to the realities of poverty

and social oppression through the efforts of young evangelicals who took short term mission trips to Two-Thirds World. Some of the avenues used included the various mission conferences, Christian Colleges and evangelical student ministries that highlighted international voices on issues concerning American imperialism, consumerism and antipathy towards social justice (2012:793). By 1960s and 70s, the Wheaton College started paying attention to global politics and social issues and even offered degree programmes “which exposed hundreds of students to international development work” (2012:793). Such a development could explain why leaders like Billy Graham had at this time showed concern to deal with social issues in both the Wheaton and the Lausanne congresses. It was an issue that could no longer be left at the periphery of mission.

Another development was the Urbana Missions held by Inter-Varsity tri-annually. In 1970 its theme was Christ the Liberator and the main emphasis was on the church’s role to confront war, racism poverty (:793). Escobar gave a talk at this conference on the topic Social Concern and Evangelism in which he challenged Christians that “they could witness to the power of God to liberate us from sin, if we are able to also show by word and deed that we are being liberated from those sins of social injustice, social prejudice, abuse and selfish individualism” (In Clawson 2012:793). In 1973 the Urbana Missions would hold another conference at which Escobar and Gregorio Landero, both Latin Americans gave addresses. Stott mentions other significant developments in this direction in 1967 among the Evangelical Anglicans in England who in their first national congress described evangelism and compassionate service as belonging together in God’s mission.

### **3.7 Lausanne Congress on World Evangelization 1974**

The next official meeting after Berlin was The Lausanne Congress on World Evangelization which was held in Lausanne, Switzerland in 1974 (July 16-25). The Congress was attended by 2700 participants from 150 nations. It was organised by the Billy Graham Evangelistic Association as a sequel to Berlin, the planning for which began around 1970 and 1971 respectively through the efforts of Billy Graham (Stanley 2013:534). From the onset, Graham’s intention was to call for a meeting whose aim would be “To unite all evangelicals in the common task of total Evangelization of the World” while at

the same time hoping that the very congress would also promulgate “a more pronounced emphasis on the Church than did Berlin: it would involve ‘the entire mission of the church’” (Quoted in Stanley 2013:535). Given the fact that the ecumenical movement had by that time increasingly swerved to the left through Uppsala and Bangkok, evangelicals “felt that a restatement of a more orthodox yet properly comprehensive view of Christian mission was imperative”(2013:535). This explains why at the opening of the Lausanne Congress, Graham described the fourfold objectives of the meeting as, creating a biblical definition of evangelism, challenging the church to complete the task of world evangelization, stating the relationship between evangelism and social responsibility and developing networks of evangelicals. Graham’s call to deliberate on the relationship between evangelism and social responsibility showed that, he and other leaders took this issue seriously and wanted to see it resolved. Such an approach also allayed some of the fears held by ecumenicals that the Lausanne was perhaps going to use this event to inaugurate a movement radically opposed to WCC (Bosch 1988:464). Rather it demonstrated that the key focus of the organisers was to develop what would be known as an evangelical missiology. Lausanne thus became “the turning point for the worldwide evangelical constituency” (Stott 2006: 30). This marked the official beginning of evangelical ecumenism and from this time on the movement would have three major international congresses which include Manila 1989, and Cape Town 2010.

The deliberations at the congress culminated in the adoption of the *Lausanne Covenant*, the official document which contains a clear articulation of mission theology of the congress. This document is a comprehensive doctrinal statement which covers a wide range of theological issues pertaining to evangelization and social responsibility. Athol Gill attributes such an outcome to the fact that the congress committee “sought to embody ‘a consensus of the mind and mood’ of the participants and so represents a crystallisation of evangelical thinking at that particular time.” A summary analytic appraisal of the key themes of the *Covenant* will be in order.

### 3.8 Analysis of the Lausanne Covenant

The article on the purpose of God is quite Trinitarian and “offers points of contact with all who adhere to a Trinitarian understanding of *missio Dei*” (Scherer 1987:171). The term *missio Dei* is not used in the Covenant but the articulation of Trinitarian missiology here comes close to this concept (Engelsviken 2007:205). The missiology espoused here emphasises God’s calling the church out of the world and sending it back into the world as a servant who witnesses/evangelises for the extension of the kingdom. The intertwining of servanthood and witness can be taken as reference to holistic mission in that witness refers to evangelism and proclamation while the concept of servant could be in reference to the active role of mission in society (Engelsviken 2007:205). In what seems to be a reference to both the ecumenical and evangelical missiology up to this time, the article confesses that conformation to or withdrawal from the world are the reasons why the church failed in its mission task toward the world. This marks the preparedness of the evangelical movement to take a more a different church-cosmic theology.

The article on the authority of the Bible re-affirmed the “divine inspiration, truthfulness and authority of the Bible...without any error in all it affirms, and the only rule of faith and practice” (LC2). This is further connected to the power of accomplishing God’s purpose in salvation through the illumining work of the Holy Spirit. Engelsviken thinks that the insistence on the authority of the Bible is not only an endeavour to remain true to the spirit of the reformation but also to emphasise that “the Bible contains the message that is communicated in mission and evangelism...it is the Bible not the world that sets the agenda for mission” (2007:206).

The document is Christocentric in matters of salvation and it affirms the uniqueness and universality of Christ in the face of other religions and universalism. While it acknowledges the role of general revelation in nature, it rejects the idea that this could be salvific. Thus in approaching matters relating to other faiths the Covenant is quite ‘skeptical about dialogue as opposed to evangelism’. It rejects “as derogatory to Christ and the gospel every kind of syncretism and dialogue which implies that Christ speaks equally through all

religions and ideologies” (LC3). In this regard the document “is at odds with some ecumenical and Roman Catholic theologies of dialog...” (Scherer1987:172). It also rejects any notion of universalism by pointing out that the fact that Jesus is the Saviour of the world does not “affirm that all people are either automatically or ultimately saved, still less to affirm that all religions offer salvation in Christ.” Rather the Covenant raises need for all people to have personal commitment to Christ, a stance which is consistent with evangelicalism’s insistence of personal conversion.

Article 4 talks about the nature of evangelism. It explicates the meaning of evangelism by connecting it to a strong Christocentric orientation. This is to be read together with the preceding article about the uniqueness of Christ. There is a connection between proclamation and personal response to the good news. Evangelism involves the proclamation of the good news “that Jesus Christ died for our sins and as raised from the dead according to the Scriptures, and that as the reigning Lord he now offers the forgiveness of sins and the liberating gifts of the Spirit to all who repent and believe” (LC4). The church’s presence in the world is indispensable to the evangelistic task. Presence is taken as a prerequisite for authentic evangelism since personal contact is necessary before evangelism can take place. This presence should not take the place of proclamation neither should dialogue be substituted for evangelism (Engelsviken 2007:207-208). When dialogue is used in evangelism, its purpose is to “listen sensitively in order to understand.” The article uses the terms proclamation and persuasion as two stages in the evangelistic process. Proclamation lays out the “historical, biblical Christ as Saviour and Lord”, while through persuasion people are invited “to come to him personally and so be reconciled to God.” Engelsviken suggests that the rejections in article 3 and 4 on inclusivism and universalism need to be read in light of the polemical situation during which the congress was being held. This could be taken as a sort of response to the WCC even though the ecumenical movement was not referred to explicitly. In Engelsviken’s view, while the Lausanne never saw itself necessarily as a direct institutional alternative to the WCC it clearly represented “an alternative missiology compared with some of the more radical viewpoints within the ecumenical movement, represented by persons, documents and conferences...” preceding Lausanne 1974 (2007:206).

Of the 15 articles that make up the *Covenant*, 6 of these are devoted to issues connected with evangelism as a key aspect in the mission of the church. Ecclesiology plays a key role in Lausanne's missiology, the church is said to be "at the very centre of God's cosmic purpose and is his appointed means of spreading the gospel." Its primary task is stated clearly as evangelism thus there is a call upon the church to "break out of our ecclesiastical ghettos and permeate non-Christian society" (LC6). This emphasis on the church as God's instrument to carry out the evangelistic purpose in the world could be understood, as being consistent with Lausanne's view of how it perceived the Mission of God, which in WCC was officially taken as *missio Dei*. Thus this statement, which emphasizes that God works through the church to change the world could be taken as a counter-statement against the Uppsala view which had to a great extent marginalised the role of the church in mission through its secularised *missio Dei*. In Lausanne's understanding of God's mission, the church is indispensable to God's mission. This necessitates the need for visible unity of the church as this furthers the evangelistic cause in the world. LC7 speaks of cooperation "for the furtherance of the Church's mission" while LC8 encourages evangelistic partnerships with the younger churches for the purposes of "world evangelization". This marks an acknowledgment within the Lausanne of the change that was taking place in the world with regards to practice of mission which in the past was dominated by the west. It was the duty of all churches "to reach their own area and to send missionaries to other parts of the world." Furthermore the task of world evangelisation came with an urgency of reaching the 2.700 million people who were not evangelised at the time. Thus we see not only an imploration to "pray earnestly for the salvation of the unreached and to launch new efforts to achieve world evangelization" but also the exhortation for missionaries to "flow ever more freely from and to all six continents..." in carrying out this task (LC9). In the evangelistic process the culture of the missionary should not be imposed on the people that are evangelised. Cultures "must always be tested and judged by Scripture..." and the gospel "evaluates all cultures according to its own criteria of truth and righteousness, and insists on moral absolutes in every culture" (LC10).

Other articles in the *Covenant* deal with issues of "Education and Leadership"(LC11) with the aim of balancing 'church growth' and 'church depth' in matters of theological

understanding and nurturing of strong churches. Article 12 deals with “Spiritual Conflict” and raises the alarm to be watchful against the intrusion of false gospels that will demean the evangelistic task. Its main point seems to be an “attack on worldliness and secularism in the church” (Scherer 1987:177). The article on “Freedom and Persecution” (L13) emphasizes the “freedom to practise and propagate religion” and raises a concern for those who have been “unjustly imprisoned” and those “who are suffering for their testimony to the Lord Jesus.” It boldly makes an affirmation that the Christian community will not be intimidated rather they will “seek to stand against injustice and to remain faithful to the gospel.” The role of the Holy Spirit is emphasised in LC14. Since the Holy Spirit “is a missionary spirit;” evangelism therefore “should arise spontaneously from a Spirit-filled church.” It follows that a church that is not missionary contradicts and quenches the Spirit. The last article LC15 talks about the return of Christ. The time between his ascension and his return is meant to be used for mission.

Article 5 on “Christian Social Responsibility” needs to be dealt with separately and with a little more detail here since it was not only an issue of major contention at the congress but it also plays a crucial role in study of this thesis. While the foregoing discussion can be readily understood as bearing traits that are characteristic of the evangelical movement, i.e. conservatism in its confessions of faith, evangelization, proclamation etc., LC5 marks not only a new direction in evangelical mission thinking but also bears a rather radical shift in the direction of social involvement. It is the final product of what Billy Graham had asked the congress to define at the beginning of the congress. It is the first official and global statement on what evangelicals think about social responsibility. With this declaration comes a decisive break with the ethos of fundamentalism on social issues and perhaps also, a correction of flawed biases that the evangelical community had hitherto harboured in the process of trying to differentiate themselves from the perceived liberals. It was perhaps time for those with the right doctrine to apply it on social issues (Douglas (ed) 1975:324) An analysis of a section of the article is in order:

We affirm that God is both the Creator and the Judge of all men. We therefore should share his concern for justice and reconciliation throughout human society and for the liberation of men from every kind of oppression.

Because mankind is made in the image of God, every person, regardless of race, religion, colour, culture, class, sex or age, has an intrinsic dignity because of which he should be respected and served, not exploited. Here too we express penitence both for our neglect and for having sometimes regarded evangelism and social concern as mutually exclusive. Although reconciliation with man is not reconciliation with God, nor is social action evangelism, nor is political liberation salvation, nevertheless we affirm that evangelism and socio-political involvement are both part of our Christian duty. For both are necessary expressions of our doctrines of God and man, our love for our neighbour and our obedience to Jesus Christ. The message of salvation implies also a message of judgment upon every form of alienation, oppression and discrimination, and we should not be afraid to denounce evil and injustice wherever they exist. When people receive Christ they are born again into his kingdom and must seek not only to exhibit but also to spread its righteousness in the midst of an unrighteous world. The salvation we claim should be transforming us in the totality of our personal and social responsibilities. Faith without works is dead (LC5).

The LC5 marks a turning point in evangelical's social consciousness. Among other things, the statement "introduces the language of *justice* and *reconciliation* in human society and *liberation* from oppression..." (Scherer 1987:173). This type of language, which for some time was almost entirely characteristic of ecumenical thought patterns, has found its way in evangelical theological formulations. Evangelism and social responsibility were put side by side as constituting Christian mission. Salvation and the prophetic work of social justice were put together although the exact operation of the relationship was not specified. It was acknowledged that the two constitute mission. It needs to be noted though, that in this article, the Lausanne endeavoured to differentiate its understanding of salvation and social action from that espoused by their conciliar counterparts. Such a statement as "*reconciliation with man is not reconciliation with God, nor is social action evangelism, nor is political liberation salvation*" should be read in light of the preceding Bangkok meeting which had radicalised the meaning of salvation. As such, the above statement is an explicit rejection of such a theological view and an intentional retention of the distinction between evangelism and social action (Ott et al. 2010:139). Both are important but they are different, that seems to be the message the article. Thus in this article and preceding articles in the Covenant, one sees the decision to hold a concept of holistic mission which retains the "Evangelical emphasis on proclamation of the gospel of Jesus Christ while also describing the kind of missionary presence it requires" (Escobar

2000:105). Be that as it may, the LC5 marked some success in achieving a broad-based consensus.

Now seeing such an article in such a conservative non-monolithic movement begs for clarification as to how such an article came to be. It thus may be worthwhile to take note of three observations that Carl F. Henry (1976) and Valdir Steuernagel (1991:53) separately make in an endeavour to better evaluate the missiology that came out of Lausanne. They attempted to classify the viewpoints of the delegates at this conference in three general categories according to the theologies they brought to the table. These categorizations, though not cast on stone, are important to note because they provide us with hermeneutical keys and clues to understanding the *Covenant* as well as other deliberations that took place in this congress. It seems that most evangelical deliberations from this point on seem to fit more or less in any of these three templates of viewpoints.

Carl F. Henry identified three approaches to social responsibility within the evangelical community. He identified the fundamentalists at the far right who insisted on evangelism as the church's main missionary task. Secondly he placed the two-thirds world evangelicals to the left with their insistence on involvement in social justice and the liberation of the oppressed. In this group are also young evangelicals and others who argued that the gospel is not limited simply to personal salvation only. The third group consists of those evangelicals who are in the middle of these two positions "who see evangelism as primary but also emphasize and implement social concerns as distinct ventures" (In Dennis P Hollinger 1983:104) It is to this third group which holds a moderate view of mission, that Billy Graham and the NAE were seen as belonging. Billy Graham viewed social transformation as a corollary of effective evangelism. This is a view he espoused at the beginning of Wheaton and he reiterated in his 1968 article "False Prophets in the Church". In this article Graham argued that the church's main task was evangelism which is concerned with the changing of men's hearts. "The only way to change men is to get them converted to Jesus Christ. Then they will have the capacity to live up to the Christian command to love thy neighbour." Graham further asserted that the proclamation of the Christ crucified is the "only panacea for problems that face the world" (Quoted in

Hollinger 1983:104). It appears that by the time of Lausanne, a good number of American evangelicals had started moving more toward this middle ground position in which social concern was regarded as important but only as it is related to evangelism.

Valdir Steuernagel's general categorization also makes mention of the three strands that came to Lausanne. His categorisation corresponds somewhat to Henry's but his is slightly different in that while Henry's classification seems to be based on American evangelicals, Steuernagel's groups are broad-based and refer to worldwide evangelical constituency. He identifies the North American evangelicalism as approaching issues of *social concern* by rereading the Bible "in the light of its own growth and public awareness." He notes that this is typified by Billy Graham. This would be a position similar to Henry's middle ground category but the difference being that in Steuernagel's categorization, this would fit the conservative right. Secondly Steuernagel identifies the British side of evangelicalism as paying attention to *socio-political involvement*, an approach which he says was "consistently kept alive". John Stott is used as a good example of this tradition. This appears to be Steuernagel's middle ground. Thirdly, the *social justice* approach which denounced all forms of oppression is attributed primarily to Two-Thirds World evangelicalism which read the Bible "in contexts of dependency, poverty, injustice and oppression...this evangelicalism...was prepared to re-evaluate the evangelicalism imported from the North and to face the challenge of becoming contextual." The Latin American Fraternity is cited as a good example of this approach (Steuernagel 1991:52-53).

Escobar (2000:107–114), also identified these three missiological trends in Lausanne and went on to categorise them according to the type of theology they brought to the Lausanne. He identified the evangelicals from Great Britain as coming with 'post-empirical missiology', which came firstly with "a renewed search for biblical patterns to correct and illuminate contemporary mission activity"; secondly with "critical work of writing and interpreting the history of missionary activity", and thirdly with "the visualization of the future of mission as a global task in which the churches of the North Atlantic world enter into creative patterns of partnership with church in the Third World" (:107-108). The second category he identified as managerial missiology. This is the evangelical

contribution from North America with the characteristic influence of the church growth movements. Escobar (:109), points out that this missiology emphasises quantitative approach which is typical of pragmatic orientation. Mission work is carried out through a linear task with “logical steps to be followed in a process of management by objectives, in the same way in which the evangelistic task is reduced to a process that can be carried on following marketing principles” (:109). This approach also stresses the use of statistical analysis as a way of measuring missionary effectiveness. The second issue Escobar highlights in this missiology is its pragmatism which he says, “de-emphasizes theological problems, takes for granted the existence of adequate content, and consequently majors in method” (:110). The last category Escobar identifies is what he referred to as “a critical missiology from the periphery”, which is characterised not so much by the question “how much missionary action is required today but [by the question] what kind of missionary action is necessary” (:112). This has been identified with theologians from the Two Thirds World with particular reference to Latin American theologians. While on one hand, this missiology aims to differentiate itself from ideologies of the West, it also “incorporates some insights from liberation theologies as well as others from church growth methodologies”.

While these categorizations help to give a picture of the voices that came to the table in Lausanne, it needs to be highlighted that these descriptions were not necessarily representing monolithic strands of each category. For instance, North America also had its own radicals who held views that resembled those of their British and Latin American counterparts. British evangelicals also varied in their views of what it meant to be evangelical. They struggled to achieve doctrinal consensus because they had their struggle between the conservative and liberalist tensions and even varied on their views concerning the inerrancy of Scriptures (Stanley 2013). Thus the classifications may be used here in a general sense to show the predominant thinking that came with each group rather than represent concrete monoliths. The Lausanne should not be taken as a group of people coming with a single ideological persuasion of how mission should be carried out. They were and still are a diverse people with varying and even contrasting missiological ideas. This is perhaps where the diversity of evangelicalism comes to the fore, where on one hand

we have pietistic evangelicalism with its stress of revivalism and on the other hand we have the scholastic evangelicals who applied some historical-critical studies to issues of mission. It is because of the diversity and contribution brought by these strands that we can better judge not only the general transformation of the mission theology in Lausanne but in particular the above article on social responsibility. It is the assumption of this thesis that the contribution by an enlarged and diverse community of backgrounds at Lausanne was quite instrumental in getting the movement to adopt a more nuanced approach to mission, a move which North American evangelical constituency would probably have not done to that degree on their own.

### **3.9 Influence of Two-thirds World Theologians on the Outcome of the Congress**

It is widely believed that papers presented by René Padilla, Samuel Escobar, Orlando Costas and John Gatu had some significant amount of influence on the final outcome of the covenant particularly article 5. Notable non-Two-Thirds World scholars who shared a similar view with the young theologians and who also had impact on the *Covenant* include Carl F Henry, George Hoffman and others (Tizon 2010:67; Brian Stanley 2013:541-545; Athol Gill 1976:90-91).

Padilla's presentation on "Evangelism and the World" is said to have been very controversial. His aim was to bring out the cosmic aspect of the gospel as it relates to salvation (Brian Stanley 2013:541). The gospel, he claimed, does not only deal with man as an individual but approaches man in relation to the world of creation, to man as a member of humanity. These diverse aspects that surround man's existence and experience in the world should inform the aim of evangelization to go beyond "the subjective experience of the future salvation of his soul, to a radical reorientation of his life..." (Padilla 1975:134). For Padilla, the church needed to repent from two forms of worldliness; namely the "confusion of the Gospel with moralistic rules and practices" and secondly "adaptation of the Gospel to the 'spirit of the times'" summarised by the term "Culture Christianity" (1975:135-136). The former is most probably in reference to the moral

regulations of fundamental evangelicalism while the latter is referring to the role played by the American culture in the process of evangelisation both of which Padilla attacks as ‘marks of a worldly church’ and inimical to the proper evangelistic process. Thus he attacked “culture Christianity” exported from North America describing it as a form of Christianity that “not only has turned the Gospel into a cheap product but has also turned the strategy for the evangelization of the world into a problem of technology” (1975:139). This makes the Christian message “a marketed product which guaranteed to the consumer ‘the highest values – *success* in life and personal *happiness* now and forever’ (Stanley 2013:541). Padilla criticised the strategists’ aspects of the church growth movement with its emphasis on numerical growth for presenting a truncated gospel of conformism. This type of gospel is insufficient and as Gill puts it, is “distorted in its lack of emphasis upon the radical nature of discipleship and its lack of interest in the social implications of the Gospel” (Gill 1976:91). To Padilla, the church needed to effectively carry out both its prophetic and evangelistic ministry in the world. These are terms that carry reference to the role that the church plays in “denouncing the evils that frustrate the purpose of God in society” as well as the role it plays in integrating “men into that purpose of God whose full realization is to take place in the Kingdom to come”(1975:138). It follows that if the church fails in the former, it will inevitably fail in the latter role.

Samuel Escobar presented a paper on “Evangelism and man’s search for freedom, justice and fulfilment” Escobar warned “against the danger of making Christianity the official ideology of the west in the same way that Communism had become the official ideology of the eastern bloc” (Stanley 2013:541). He (1975:305) called on the church to embrace a form of discipleship that takes its context seriously. He notes that starting with Berlin 1966, a rediscovery of the social dimensions of the gospel had begun to emerge. After Berlin, Escobar noted, “national and regional Congresses rediscovered and articulated evangelical social concern with a surprising coincidence in contents and tone” (:306). In the various examples that Escobar surveyed, he showed that the congresses saw the necessity for social involvement as well as the compatibility of evangelism and social concern. Evangelicals were increasingly growing in their epistemological awareness of the role that they had in getting involved in social work.

Escobar argued through the Scriptures to show that evangelism did not need to stand alone but it needs to go hand in hand with social awareness. He (:308) asserted, “in evangelism we are so eager to have people listen that we fail to recognize that they want also to look. They want to look as they listen, and what they see with their eyes should confirm visually the truth of what they hear with their ears.” It is in this regard that Escobar calls for quality discipleship noting that this concern for quality is relevant for both effective evangelism and social concern. If Christians demonstrate a quality of life that is characteristic of people transformed by the Spirit, this will have impact on “individual lives as well as the structures in which they live” (:309). In order for Christians to make the necessary impact in the society, Escobar warned that they must resist the temptation to tone down the gospel in the hopes of accommodating the nominal Christian. So evangelism must be met with its ethical demands and must not be reduced to a religiosity that does not call for repentance and fruit bearing. He emphasized that an evangelical spirituality “without discipleship in the daily social, economic, and political aspects of life is religiosity and not Christianity” (:310). In developing strategies of obedience in God’s mission, Escobar discussed several axioms that he believed would help in visualizing the task and content of the work that has to be done. Firstly he pointed out that the Gospel as God’s message of salvation accomplished in Jesus Christ, addresses the totality of man life, as an individual and as a member of the human race. This entails that “God’s salvation transforms man in the totality of his life and in that way, affects man’s life and human structures” (:312). This necessitates that evangelism should not be one-sided but should address the human in fullness. The second axiom, is ecclesiological and it called on evangelised people to be incorporated into a community. Such a community is a signpost of the Kingdom of God and it shows what God can do with man as an individual and as a member of the human race (:312). Another axiom, Escobar raised shows that the involvement in social action is not done with the intention of creating a utopia given the reality of man’s sinfulness and imperfection. What transformed people need to do in working for social change in the world is to be salt and light knowing that “perfection never comes completely before Christ’s return” (:313). Escobar ends his paper by pointing out situations in which the church might find itself in mission and how it ought to operate in such. In a situation where Christians are a small minority in a given society “their way of life usually provides a vivid contrast with that of

society around.” Christians in this situation should be involved in service both in the context of the local Christian community and in the context of the mission field and in the process demonstrate personal excellence (:314-315). Secondly, where the society has a long tradition of Christian influence and seems to have lost its influence, Christians should remain faithful to the Gospel and to the Lord. They should explore new ways open to them for Christian action and contribution towards social reform but they should not “watch indifferently in the name of commitment to evangelism” (:314, 316). The last situation involves a society where power may have been achieved by an anti-Christian force. In this scenario, Christians need to operate with faithfulness to the Lord and to the unchanging Word. They should demonstrate courage while looking for avenues for personal evangelism, communal worship and simply allow God’s power to work quietly through daily life (:317).

In a nutshell, Escobar’s paper called the evangelical community to involvement in holistic mission by pursuing evangelism that addressed the totality of human existence. This means the individual does not remain the only focus of evangelism and transformation but also the social structures that surround the individual. This marks one of the early times in evangelical missiology when a call was made for mission to not only focus on the individual but also on the structures of society and address issues related to social justice.

In his response to questions that were directed at his paper, Escobar pointed out that the Evangel, (Luke 4:16-19), cannot be spiritualised in a world where millions of people are poor and suffering (Douglas (ed) 1975:319). He advocated that the issue of social and political needs that people have by looking at the work of Jesus in the church. He argued that Jesus works through the church as a community of people through whom social and political maladjustment is dealt with under the Lordship of Christ. The community had to be distinct from the rest of the society. Because such a community has itself been transformed by the power of Christ it has “revolutionary effect in changing society” (:320). He called on the church to be’ communities that are distinct from the rest of the society” (:322). He asserted that real freedom, in the Christian terms means “subjection to Jesus Christ as Lord, deliverance from bondage to sin and Satan...and consequently the

beginning of new life under the Law of Christ (I Cor.9:19), life in the family of the faith” (:322). It is from this heart that has been made free in Christ that concern for human longings for deliverance from economic, political, or social oppression should be rooted/developed. An evangelist with such a heart will demonstrate concern and solidarity with the oppressed a fact that Jesus demonstrated during his earthly ministry. The missionary and evangelist image we project, should, like Jesus, stand with the poor and the oppressed. He argued that in the presentation of the gospel, we should not be found standing with those that are in the wrong or be found perpetuating understandings of scripture that might hinder the proper propagation of the gospel.

To the concern that a continued emphasis on the working out of the social implications of the gospel might lead to the demise of the evangelistic task, Escobar argued that “the social gospel, for instance, deteriorated because of poor theology...The sad thing is that, those who have the right theology have not applied it to social issues” (:324). Escobar suggested that the answer to this lay in the biblical teaching on the level of the local church through the preparation of the layman. He explains this by saying (:324-325):

Teaching is an indispensable part of the life of the body and if it is not provided, a group called church can degenerate into nothing but a social club or a sect. Part of the teaching is how to live in the world as a Christian: the ethics of the Kingdom. Laymen then penetrate society by a way of life that is new in family relations, business, citizenship, and every area of daily life...It is also to teach them how to apply the teaching and example of Christ in their family life, in their business activities, in social relationships, in their studies etc. Those who teach need to be solidly rooted in the Word of God but also very aware of the world around them, so that they can help in the application.

Orlando Costas presented two papers on the theme “Evangelism-in-depth” in which he argued that an in-depth evangelism went beyond the individual but also dealt with the “socio-economic structures of the present age” (Stanley 2013:542). Stanley notes that, though Costas was less visible at Lausanne than Padilla and Escobar, “Carl Henry identified him as the leader of the most radical group among the Latin American Evangelicals at the congress...” (2013:542).

Without delving into an in-depth study of John Gatu's presentation at Lausanne, it is important to note that his call for a moratorium of missionaries from the west might have had influence on the outcome of articles 8 and 9 of the *Covenant*, (Stanley 2013:543-545). Stanley notes that Gatu, as an active member of the WCC (member of WCC central committee and vice chairman of Faith and Order) had already raised the moratorium issue about two times in 1971 in Milwaukee Mission Festival and at the CWME conference in Bangkok in 1973. His presence at Lausanne thus became quite suspicious and concerning to many conservative evangelicals. At Lausanne, while speaking for the East African strategy group and having toned down his stance due to the preceding debate within this group, he addressed the congress and rather than calling for a moratorium called instead "for a temporary cessation of western assistance" with the aim of forcing "Africans to assume new responsibilities". Stanley notes that as a result of this call (2013:544):

A significant insertion was made in the draft text of the section of the Lausanne Covenant dealing with the 'urgency of the evangelistic task': 'A *reduction* (my emphasis) of foreign missionaries and money in an evangelized country may sometimes be necessary to facilitate the national church's growth in self-reliance and to release resources for unevangelized areas. Missionaries should flow ever more freely from and to all continents in a spirit of humble service.'

### 3.10 The Influence of Radical Discipleship

Apart from the above highlights it can be asserted that to a large extent the type of language we see in the *Covenant* was achieved through the radicalising elements in Lausanne known as the Radical Discipleship who, even with this wording, did not think that the Lausanne had gone far enough in its articulation on social issues. The Radical Discipleship was an *ad hoc* group of about 200 people at Lausanne, mainly composed of theologians from the Two-Thirds World. They formed a committee to voice their concerns. This group is believed to have exerted considerable influence on the deliberations at Lausanne thereby affecting the final outcome of the official document particularly article 5.

After the third draft was presented to the participants to review and submit proposals and amendments, the largest group to present such was the Radical group (made up of about 500 participants) which held that the third draft of the *Covenant* had not gone far enough in its articulation on social responsibility. As a result the group drafted 'A Response to Lausanne' which in reality was an alternative statement (Stanley 2013:546). The Response stressed that the Evangel must be understood as "good news of liberation, of restoration, of wholeness, and salvation, that is personal, social, global and cosmic" (in LC 1974:574). The group insisted that there should be no "dichotomy between the word spoken and the word made visible in the lives of God's people." It went on to "repudiate as demonic the attempt to drive a wedge between evangelism and social action" (LC 1974: 575). In matters of responding to the Evangel, the new birth is not only subjective but also includes "a placement within the messianic community which exists as a "sign of God's reign..." The group's articulation of evangelization seem to be grounded in Trinitarian approach to mission in that it is derived from the sending of Christ into the world by the Father whereupon He sends the Church into the world. Christ's coming into the world had social implications. As such the church is sent to follow the holistic and incarnational method of identifying and suffering with the world. Christ "sends His community into the world, as the Father sent Him, to identify and agonize with men, to renounce status quo and demonic power and to give itself in selfless service of others for God" (LC 1974:575). It follows that the proclamation of the cross by the church entails that the church must also be continually marked by the cross, a phrase which found its way into LC6 on the 'the church and evangelism'.

The unilateral action of the Radical Discipleship would have had some negative consequences for the unity of evangelicals had, John Stott, the convener, not given some prominence to the Response, by presenting it to the congress as an addendum to the *Covenant* when he presented the *Covenant* for signing (Tizon 2010: 68). Valdir Steuernagel (In Tizon 2010:68) saw the Lausanne "as a sign of strength and delicate moment of consensus. One step backwards...and Lausanne would have lost the radical group; one step forward and it would have lost the conservative evangelicals." Even though the Response was not granted official status, some of its language found its way into the

*Covenant* (as has been hinted at above) showing that it had made some impact. John Stott also announced that he would sign the Response in addition to the Covenant (Stanley 2013:546). This move, according to Tizon (2010:68), had positive connotations for the subject of social responsibility. He points out that the affirmation of socio-political involvement, drafted into the *Covenant*, as well as the inclusion of the Response among Lausanne's congress papers gave a new level of validation to the status of social concern since the 'fundamentalist-modernist debacle.' The same is echoed by Padilla, who praised the Response, highlighting that it "provided the strongest statement on the basis for wholistic mission ever formulated by an evangelical conference up to date." He asserts that "social involvement had finally been granted full citizenship in evangelical missiology" and he attributes this to the influence of Two-Thirds World people (1985:29).

A close analysis of the *Covenant* will reveal an imprint of the theology of the four theologians discussed earlier as well the theology of Radical Discipleship in some of its articles. As noted above, the wording of article 5 alone bears resemblance to the language of liberation emanating from Latin American circles. Brian Stanley (2013: 546-547) discusses the different stages through which the Covenant went before it came to completion. He highlights some of the changes that were made in an endeavour to accommodate the views coming from both radical and conservative elements in the congress. His discussion gives us a picture of the manner in which aspects of radical evangelical theology made it into way into the final draft.

The final version of the *Covenant*, which was painstakingly prepared by John Stott, bore signs of skilful amendments which Stott had to employ in an "effort to bridge the gap between the more radical Evangelicals and conservatives..." (Stanley 2013:546). This skilful work included promoting the article on social responsibility from number 7 to number 5. Article 8 on the "churches in evangelistic partnership" starts by declaring the 'dawning of a new missionary era' and the fast disappearing of western dominance on mission. LC9 on the urgency of the missionary task not only bore Gatu's insertion 'on national reductions in expatriate missionary numbers and funding' but went further to call on the affluent to 'develop a simple life-style. With regards to LC10 on evangelism and

culture, Stanley says, “the initial statement that ‘missions have *sometimes* exported with the gospel an alien culture’ became ‘missions have *all too frequently* exported with the gospel an alien culture’”. The statement on spiritual conflict in LC12 with regards to “an undue preoccupation by the Church with statistics or their dishonest use...was now more roundly castigated as an example of worldliness infiltrating the Church (Stanley 2013:546-547). One can detect the influence of Padilla and Escobar’s papers in the formulations on culture and preoccupation with statistics which Padilla had categorized as forms of worldliness from which the church needed to repent.

### 3.11 The Debate Following Lausanne

Generally the Lausanne *Covenant* was well received throughout the evangelical world despite some of its limitations (Padilla 1985:29). The wholistic approach in the *Covenant* found much support from the Two-Thirds World evangelicals. Stanley notes that in Britain the “British Evangelical opinion on the Congress moved from initial scepticism to retrospective enthusiasm for the *Covenant* and all that it stood for...” (2013:548). Most of the opponents of the *Covenant* were from the North American evangelicals who expressed misgivings about the theology of holistic evangelism that emerged at Lausanne. With regard to this group, Stanley observes that unlike their British counterparts, the American Evangelicals, moved from “initial enthusiasm for the congress as a rallying cry for world evangelisation to a more guarded attitude towards the broadening of Evangelical concept of mission which the Covenant undoubtedly represented” (2013:548).

It may be fair to say that, while the Lausanne truly marked a decisive moment in global evangelical consciousness, particularly in its official signing of the *Covenant*, the congress still left some lingering issues which would take another decade to address. Following Lausanne, a tension-filled debate would ensue with regards to whether evangelism had primacy over social concern or not. The first such debate was held in Mexico City in 1975 by the Lausanne Continuation Committee which met to establish continuity with Lausanne project. The more conservative side in this meeting wanted to see evangelism given a primary role while the other side advocated a broader view of mission which encompassed

social responsibility. In the end, the meeting took cognisance of the both aspects of ministry but eventually the primacy of evangelism was upheld, with the appeal being made to the reaching the 2.7 unreached people (Tizon 2010:69).

When the committee met a year later in Atlanta (then known as the Lausanne Committee for World Evangelization LCWE) it formed four working groups which were to focus on *theology, strategy, intercession* and *communication* (Scherer 1987:176). The Lausanne Theology and Education Group (LTEG) which was later named the Theology Working Group (TWG) was given the task to “promote reflection on issues related to world evangelization and in particular, to explore the implications of the Lausanne Covenant” (Tizon 2010:69-70). The Strategy Working Group (SWG) which worked closely with MARC-World Vision (Mission Advanced Research Center) dealt with issues of resources, strategies, methods involved in the evangelistic task with particular reference to the “Unreached Peoples” project (Scherer 1987:177).

### **3.12 The Consultation on Simple Life-style, London, 1980**

After its inception, the LTEG would sponsor four consultations from 1977 to 1982 two of which are significant to the subject under discussion. In conjunction with the WEF’s unit on Ethics and Society, the LTEG sponsored The Consultation on Simple Life-style (SLC) which took place in High Leigh, London, in March 17-21, 1980. It sought to articulate further the theological implications of article 9 of the *Covenant* which states:

All of us are shocked by the poverty of millions and disturbed by the injustices which cause it. Those of us who live in affluent circumstances accept our duty to develop a simple life-style in order to contribute more generously to both relief and evangelism (LC9).

The deliberations over this article led to the synthesis of the participant’s views which they summarised in a statement called “The Commitment”. Needless to say The Commitment is structured with language that bears strong theological affinity to the theology that was being propounded by CWME in Melbourne the same year and that of the Roman Catholic Bishops Conference which had taken place in Puebla in 1979. The Commitment, in trying

to address the issue of simple life-style, delved into what one might consider the theology of the poor, which emphasised “God’s preferential option for the poor, divine judgement on oppressors, the pattern of Christ’s own identification with the poor, the risk of suffering for Christ’s sake, and Christian support for changes in the political structures...” (Scherer 1987:180).

The Commitment starts by denouncing “environmental destruction, wastefulness and hoarding” (Scherer and Bevans (eds) 1992: 268-272). It goes on to call for proper stewardship of the earth’s resources as well as for a just and equal distribution of the same. Involuntary poverty is described as an “offense against the goodness of God.” With this, the church is called upon to “stand with God and the poor against injustice, suffer with them and call on rulers to fulfil their God-appointed role.” The Christian community is implored to follow the example of the early church and be ready to use its good for the benefit of the need. This requires that the church and its para-church organisations revise its budgets so that it transacts its “corporate business with minimum expenditure...[and] integrity in corporate lifestyle and witness.” With regards to personal lifestyle, there is a call to “manage on less and give away more” and a renunciation on waste and extravagant personal living. Rather than acquiesce to what it calls, “gross disparity and an intolerable injustice”; the Commitment preferred to call for “a New International Economic Order”. Christian agencies were called upon to “give generously to human development projects”, but in the same vein, the action toward governments was deemed essential. In the area of justice and politics, the Commitment asserted that the church “is inevitably involved in politics”, resultantly Christians are called upon to express the lordship of Christ in “their political, social and economic commitments and their love for their neighbours by taking part in the political process.” This is seen as the way for contributing towards change. Evangelism is reaffirmed but mainly in connection with the call to responsible living by the Christian community. The call is not so much on strategy or verbal communication, although this is stated, but on the manner the church presents itself in the society. The emphasis is on the understanding that the social life of the church has a bearing on the effectiveness of its witness in the society. Furthermore, the simple the lifestyle the church

lives, the more the resources are released for evangelism and development. The Commitment states:

The credibility of our message is seriously diminished whenever we contradict it by our lives. It is impossible to proclaim Christ's salvation if he has evidently not saved us from greed, or his lordship if we are not good stewards of our possessions, or his love if we close our hearts against the needy. When Christians care for each other and for the deprived, Jesus Christ becomes more visibly attractive...The affluent lifestyle of some Western evangelists when they visit the Third World is understandably offensive to many (Scherer and Bevans (eds) 1992:272).

This development is indicative of the fact that elements of more radical trends toward holistic mission were making an effort to articulate a mission theology that intertwined the Christian life with the social aspects. That the radical elements had stronger leanings towards issues of social justice cannot be denied. At the same time the reaction of the LCWE to the outcome of London, reveal that the debate for the primacy of evangelism over social concern was still rife. The Lausanne leadership did not look positively on the SLC. To the Lausanne leadership, the SLC seemed to have elevated the social aspect above the evangelistic task. As a result, the SLC was castigated for being imbalanced in the selection of its participants, who in the eyes of Lausanne leadership, tended to lean toward the radical side and "did not adequately connect the theme of simple lifestyle to the singular focus of world evangelization" (Tizon 2010:70). As a result the leadership, took the step to append a note in the publication that it "does not necessarily endorse every view point expressed in it" (Scherer 1987: 182).

### **3.13 Consultation on World Evangelization, Pattaya 1980**

Following the London debacle, the LCWE went on to use the Consultation on World Evangelization (COWE) held in Pattaya, just three months after SLC, as a platform to reassert the 'narrower' agenda of mission i.e. primacy of evangelism (Tizon 2010:70). The results of the Pattaya consultation can be described as having reversed the ground gained by the SLC. Pattaya, in the *Thailand Statement*, started by asserting commitment to both evangelism and social responsibility while at the same time pointing out that the two are

not identical. The statement also endorsed the *Lausanne Covenant* in its entirety and went on to reaffirm the LC's declaration on the primacy of evangelism in the mission of the church (LC6). From this, the statement drew the ethic that "if therefore we do not commit ourselves with urgency to the task of evangelization, we are guilty of an inexcusable lack of human compassion..." (Scherer and Bevans (eds) 1987:275). This development was quite welcome by the 'church growth proponents' in Lausanne. Tizon mentions Peter Wagner as one key person who "applauded the fact that COWE upheld 'functional definition of evangelism agreed upon by the LWCE'" (2010:70). Needless to say the radical constituency was not pleased with this outcome. This resulted in their jotting a 'Statement of Concerns' to the LCWE, a statement that was signed by nearly a third of the participants. The statement, challenged the committee "to look at the world in terms of social, economic and political institutions in addition to the category of unreached people groups and to provide guidance for justice to Christians living in oppressed lands and for abetting oppressive regimes" (Tizon 2010:71). The statement called on the LCWE to take seriously issues of social concern and urged the committee to reaffirm its commitment to all aspects of the *Covenant* (2010:71). However after the signers of the statement, met with the chairman of the LCWE, Leighton Ford, did not get the response they were hoping for at this conference. The LCWE's response was described as 'cool and disappointing' by Orlando Costas (Cited in Tizon 2010:71-72). This response firstly denied that it had undermined the comprehensive scope of the *Covenant*, secondly, the Lausanne leadership said that it was already in the process of planning another consultation to deal with such issues, and thirdly denied that it was not the LCWE's prerogative to give guidelines on how the evangelicals in oppressed situations were to operate (:72). Thus hopes of the concerned group would have to come through another consultation which would deal with issues of social concern and evangelism in an in-depth manner. At this stage however it is important to note that the debate of primacy was still the status quo six years after the inauguration of the movement. According to Tizon (2010:72), the narrower view of mission won the day at Pattaya, a scenario that left the evangelical community more divided than it had been earlier. One can observe that within the same year, consultations which were only three months apart propounded mission theologies that were quite divergent from each other with regards to social responsibility. This shows that Lausanne

needed to attain internal convergence first before we could talk about convergence with the WCC.

### **3.14 Consultation on the Relationship between Evangelism and Social Responsibility, Michigan 1982**

A key consultation was held in Grand Rapids from 19-25 June in 1982 on ‘The Relationship between Evangelism and Social Responsibility’, to address issues pertaining to evangelism and of socio-political involvement. This was jointly sponsored by the LCWE’s theological Working Group and the Theological Commission of the World Evangelical Fellowship. The consultation had a fairly good diversity of participants from different geographical regions, denominational backgrounds as well as evangelical viewpoints (Strauss et al. 2010: 140). The official document ensuing from this consultation, *Lausanne Occasional Paper 21*, or simply CRESR, starts by acknowledging that “evangelism and social responsibility have been intimately related to one another throughout the history of the church...”. In language reminiscent of the *Wheaton Declaration’s* affirmation on evangelism and social concern, it noted that earlier evangelicals involved themselves in both activities without feeling the need to define their relationship. The relationship of the two went hand in hand as could be seen in the different revivals of the 18<sup>th</sup> century. This changed however at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century when the theological liberals “confused the kingdom of God with Christian civilization in general, and with social democracy in particular, and they went on to imagine that by their social programmes they could build God’s Kingdom on earth” (4A).

The consultation brings out two possibilities as to why the evangelicals divorced themselves from social action. Firstly it points out that “it seems to have been in over-reaction to this grave distortion of the Gospel that many evangelicals became suspicious of social involvement” (4A). Secondly it mentions the problem of dichotomy which had become characteristic of evangelical thinking. The consultation expounds by saying:

We tend to set over against one another in an unhealthy way soul and body, the individual and society, redemption and creation, grace and nature,

heaven and earth, justification and justice, faith and works. The Bible certainly distinguishes between these, but it also relates them to each other, and it instructs us to hold each pair in dynamic and creative tension.

So the withdrawal from social action and the emergence of a dichotomy between evangelism and social involvement in evangelical thinking was largely due to the evangelicals' quest to avoid any appearance of the social gospel of the late 19<sup>th</sup> century and early 20<sup>th</sup> century (Stott 1996:179; Athol Gil 1976:92). Section 4B of the CRESR acknowledges that there may be "occasions when it is legitimate to concentrate on one or the other of these two Christian duties." They do not necessarily have to occur together. 4C delineates the three types of relationships in which the two could be understood.

It defined *social activity* as a *consequence of evangelism*. This means that "evangelism is the means by which God brings people to new birth, and their new life manifests itself in the service of others." This is further clarified by pointing out that the evangelistic process could actually aim for social responsibility as saved people are called upon to perform good works after they come to Christ, (Eph2:10; James 2:14-26) This necessitates the inclusion of social responsibility into the teaching ministry of the church just like what is done with evangelism. Secondly, *social activity* is looked at as a *bridge* to evangelism in that "it can break down prejudice and suspicion, open closed doors, and gain a hearing for the Gospel." It provides a passageway to go from 'felt needs' to people's "deeper need concerning their relationship with God". Thirdly *social activity* is also said to be a *partner of evangelism*, "like the two blades of a pair of scissors or the two wings of a bird." This is drawn from the manner in which Jesus's ministry of *kerygma* (proclamation) and *diakonia* (service) went hand in hand. "Indeed, so close is this link between proclaiming and serving that they actually overlap."

Furthermore the Lausanne differentiated between *social services* (philanthropic activity directed toward meeting or relieving different types of social needs) and *social action* which deals with "removing the causes of human need", and deals with "political and economic activity" and "seeks to transform the structures of society...looks beyond persons to structures" (Stott 1996:196-197; LOP 21: 27).

**Social Service**

Relieving human need  
Philanthropic activity  
Seeking to minister to individuals and families  
Works of mercy

**Social Action**

Removing the causes of human need  
Political and economic activity  
Seeking to transform the structures of society  
The quest for justice

In the last part of 4C, the consultation went to great length to try and give a more comprehensive elaboration of both the relationship and the operation of the two. An extended quotation is warranted here so as to give a clear picture of this delineation:

This is not to say that they should be identified with each other, for evangelism is not social responsibility, nor is social responsibility evangelism. Yet, each involves the other.

To proclaim Jesus as Lord and Saviour (evangelism) has social implications, since it summons people to repent of social as well as personal sins, and to live a new life of righteousness and peace in the new society which challenges the old.

To give food to the hungry (social responsibility) has evangelistic implications, since good works of love, if done in the name of Christ, are a demonstration and commendation of the gospel.

It has been said, therefore, that evangelism, even when it does not have a primarily social intention, nevertheless has a social dimension, while social responsibility, even when it does not have a primarily evangelistic intention, nevertheless has an evangelistic dimension.

Thus, evangelism and social responsibility, while distinct from one another, are integrally related in our proclamation of and obedience to the gospel. The partnership is, in reality, a marriage.

The last part of the statement (4D) went to great lengths to try and deal with the question of primacy. While some were not comfortable with affirming LC6 which gives primacy to evangelism, they were only able to endorse it, firstly on the basis of the foregoing elaborations and secondly on the basis of the following two reasons. Evangelism was taken to have *logical priority* in that “the very fact of Christian social responsibility presupposes socially responsible Christians, and it can only be by evangelism and discipling that they have become such.” The second thing is that “evangelism relates to people’s eternal destiny...if we must choose, then we have to say that the supreme and ultimate need of all humankind is the saving grace of Jesus Christ, and that therefore a person’s eternal,

spiritual salvation is of greater importance than his or her temporal and material well-being.”

CRESR set the pace for evangelical theology on mission which now encompassed social transformation as a key player in mission. The thinking in Lausanne now followed the line of thought characterised by maintaining an equilibrium between evangelism and social activity although it needs to be noted that the primacy of evangelism was again reiterated. This meant that the consultation, though significant, “failed to dissolve the tension between evangelical advocates of social justice and the more traditional evangelical supporters of mission” (Scherer and Bevans (eds) 1992:276). David Bosch, points out that the weakness of this document still lay in its insistence on a dual approach to mission as it still stressed the primacy of evangelism over social concern. He attributes this to the differences in the participants which he says “were far reaching in some respects” thereby making it impossible to produce a monolithic position.

### **3.15 The Church in Response to Human Need; Wheaton 1983**

The document “The Church in Response to Human Need” which came out of the WEF sponsored meeting in Wheaton a year later in 1983 is credited with producing what Bosch saw as the first international evangelical document that talked of the primacy of neither evangelism nor social responsibility. This was possible due to the fact that most participants in this consultation were more inclined towards the integration of evangelism and social responsibility. Thus they were able to make more progress than they made in the creation of the CRESR (Bosch 1988:469). This report tries to espouse a biblical view of transformation that relates to individuals as well as to the society. It carries the theme of transformation and applies it to social involvement while at the same time rejecting the theology of escape that seemed to mark evangelical fundamentalism. It advocates a practical involvement in socio-political issues affecting society because “our very non-involvement lends tacit support to the existing order.” Thus, rather than adopting an escapist mentality, “either we challenge the evil structures of society or we support them” (Vinay Samuel and Chris Sugden (eds) 1999:264). With this in mind, the document calls for ways in which the church should engage in protest with a view to effecting changes in

the society. It is considered the church's role to "address issues of evil and social injustice in the local community and the wider society" (1999:272).

The deliberations at Wheaton, in trying to find the best terminology to use in describing evangelical mission, settled for the term transformation over the term development, which seemed to have been in use widely at the time. Participants cited that development meant different things to different people, for instance, for the Western political and business leaders, the term describes "the process by which nations and people become part of the existing international economic order" while for the Two Thirds World people it carries with it the secular ideological notion of "developmentalism". This in turn is characterised by "a mechanistic pursuit of economic growth that tends to ignore the structural context of poverty and injustice and which increases dependency and inequality" (1999:264). While some participants held that development could be retained and reinterpreted in light of the biblical message others felt that it carried negative overtones and that it was not an easy term to relate to the biblical theological constructs. As a result transformation was picked up as term which does not have a 'suspect past' and is applicable to many societies. Unlike development, transformation, should be looked at in light of the Gospel which challenges the "social forces of secularism" to which most people adhere and encourage people to "change from a condition of human existence contrary to God's purposes to one in which people are able to enjoy fullness of life in harmony with God"(1999:265). This entails that even the developed nations stand in need of this transformation. The document, *inter alia* applies this concept of transformation on issues of ecology, culture, social justice, the local church, and Christian agencies. In all its rubrics, the document involves interplay between the Good News and the world/society and how the former is meant to interact with the latter with a view to transforming it. It is an endeavour to uphold the importance of both proclamation of the gospel and participation in the society as central to Christian missional vocation. Thus, the document includes an affirmation that "the Kingdom of God is both present and future, both societal and individual, both physical and spiritual" (1999:274). Alluding to its understanding of the ecumenicals' emphasis on social issues and the evangelicals' weakness in that area, the affirmation states; "If others have over-emphasized the present, the societal, and the physical, we ought to confess that we have tended to

neglect those dimensions of the biblical message” (1999:274-275). This marks an attempt by this consultation to redefine evangelical mission understanding in ways that do not demarcate between evangelism and social involvement, or talk about the primacy of any of these two entities over another, an attempt that Padilla thinks, “completed the process of shaping an evangelical social conscience” (Quoted in Bosch 1988:469). Ronsen (2016:20), suggests that after Grand Rapids, the Wheaton consultation exemplified that the trend toward the weakening of priority of evangelism in holistic ministry had begun to take place. The WEF did not give priority to evangelism and did not attempt to give an affirmation of “an inextricable link between social action and evangelism in its final statement” (2016:20). In Bosch’s view, Wheaton, marks the first time when an official statement from an international evangelical meeting when the “perennial dichotomy was overcome” (1991:407). After this consultation, “evangelicals not only embraced social responsibility but began to with greater boldness to speak of holistic mission” (Ott et. al 2010:140). Edward R. Dayton, vice president of World Vision would in his paper, associate social transformation with Christian mission and ask the rhetoric questions, “is not the mission of the church social transformation in every dimension.” (Dayton 1987:54, Quoted in Ott et. al 2010:140). The Wheaton statement was so significant to Padilla that he could with confidence assert that (2003):

The Wheaton Statement is quite an accomplishment as a synthesis of the theological basis for integral mission and a summary of the most significant questions that may be raised with regard to the Church as God’s agent for holistic transformation. It would be difficult to find in evangelical circles around the world any document drawn up after 1983 that would go further than the Wheaton 1983 Statement in recovering an integral view of the Church and its mission...In unequivocal terms the Wheaton Statement affirmed social and political involvement as an essential aspect of the Christian mission.

It needs to be noted here that this meeting was convened by World Evangelical Fellowship and therefore it was not binding on Lausanne (Scherer 1987:193). Though it does not belong to the Lausanne stream of consultations, it nevertheless gives us a picture of what other components of evangelicalism were trying to do to address the issue of social responsibility. Furthermore WEF as a member agency closely related to Lausanne, is made

up of participants who also took part in the CRESR and there is a sense in which they took this consultation as a sort of addendum to the CRESR with concepts and clarifications which did not seem to find room in the Grand Michigan. WEF provided another forum which gave space to views that could not be accommodated in the previous meeting hence it becomes necessary to connect it with the Lausanne theology of mission. Scherer puts it well when he suggests that the Wheaton 83 “could be understood as a critique of the more cautious Grand Rapids statement, as a mild rebuke to LCWE for its hesitancy, and as one more effort by progressive evangelicals to move evangelicalism in the direction of greater commitment of action for justice” (1987:194).

### **3.16 LCWE, Manila 1989**

The second LCWE congress (Lausanne II) was held in Manila from July 11-20 in 1989. It was attended by over 3000 delegates from 170 countries. The congress which met under two themes, ‘Proclaim Christ until He Comes’ and ‘Calling the Whole Church to take the whole Gospel to the Whole World’ produced an official document entitled *The Manila Manifesto* which is seen as the “quintessence of the debate highlighted and generated at Lausanne...”(Baileys 1996:493). Engelsviken (2007:204), points out that this document “is an elaboration of the LC [Lausanne Covenant], and always to be read and understood in connection with the LC.” In the first part the *Manifesto* contains 21 affirmations which include a re-affirmation of the *Lausanne Covenant*. These affirmations represent an expanded missional perspective which remains in tune with the movement’s evangelical thinking. The second part is an expatiation of the affirmations whose titles correspond directly with the three main headings of the congress theme namely, ‘The Whole Gospel’, ‘The Whole Church’ and ‘The Whole World’.

In the first section that deals with the Whole Gospel, the Lausanne keeps its Biblicist heritage and starts by upholding the authority of the Scriptures showing that it is through them that we get not only the revelation of God’s character, will and acts of redemption but also the knowledge of his mandate for mission. It is through the Bible that the mandate for mission is established. The authority of Scripture is tied to the imperative to proclaim

the 'whole gospel' as 'good news', 'God's enduring message to our world'. There is a lot of stress laid on the human predicament because of sin (MM1). Because every part of humanness has been distorted due to sin, humans are alienated from God and there is nothing which they can do on their own to save themselves. "Neither human religion, nor human righteousness, nor socio-political programs can save people. Self-salvation of every kind is impossible. Left to themselves, human beings are lost forever." Connected to this is the rejection and repudiation of any 'false gospels' that in any way might seek to minimize this predicament and deny the incarnation, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. Anything that minimizes sin or confuses grace with human effort becomes a threat to the salvific nature of the gospel. It appears here that the *Manifesto* locates the seat of human problems as primarily spiritual so much so that no socio-economic programme can alleviate this type of human need apart from the salvific act of Jesus Christ. Thus the predicament of humanity finds its answer in 'good news' (MM2) that God, in his love "came to us in Jesus Christ to rescue and remake us." This entails the necessity of proclamation of this good news to all people and the church is under obligation to make this news known by declaring the truth faithfully and contextually. The section goes further to place apologetics in a missiological framework by connecting it to bold proclamation of the gospel. In this connection, apologetics is taken as "integral to the biblical understanding of mission and essential for effective witness in the modern world."

The uniqueness of Christ (MM3) is upheld and emphasised in view of our pluralistic world. The identification of positive attributes in other religions as having salvific value is rejected. The elements of truth and beauty that can be found in some of the religions of the world are as a result of the traces of God the Creator that men and women have seen in creation. These however are not to be taken as alternative gospels. The document affirms a strong Christocentric view of soteriology by saying, "other religions and ideologies are not alternative paths to God...Christ is the only way" (Affirmation 7). "We, therefore have no warrant for saying that salvation can be found outside Christ or apart from an explicit acceptance of his work through faith" (MM3). This uniqueness of Christ "in his life, death and resurrection", is held uncompromisingly "in all aspects of our evangelistic work

including inter-faith dialogue.” The crucicentric doctrine plays a key role in the proclamation of the good news.

The sub-rubric (MM4) on the gospel and social responsibility should be read together with affirmations 8, 9 as well as MM2 on the human predicament in which the proclamation of the good news is linked to a theology of the poor. In these rubrics, the *Manifesto* emphasizes the need for the visibility of the authentic gospel through proclamation and loving service. Both MM2 and MM3 link the preaching of the kingdom of God with the kingdom demands of justice and peace. The primacy of evangelism is clearly stated because “our chief concern is with the gospel, that all people may have the opportunity to accept Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour.” The section could be taken as Lausanne’s endeavour to expand and expound on the CRESR, which had affirmed a three tier relationship between evangelism social responsibility as well as explicating two forms of social involvement that the church should be involved in. Manila could be seen as trying to shed more light to these forms, namely; *social service* and *social action* and how they relate to different aspects of the church’s mission.

The proclamation of good news in MM2 is linked to the Lukan emphasis on the poor, as seen in Luke 4:18, the key verse of the congress. Two groups of ‘the poor’ are noted, first the poor spiritually and secondly the poor materially and powerless. The former need “the free gift of salvation’ while the latter need “the love of brothers and sisters who will struggle with them for their liberation from everything which demeans or oppresses them” The language of the poor used here as well as the expatiation of Luke 4 on the same topic is quite similar to ecumenical formulations of the same particularly when seen in view of Bangkok and Melbourne. The concept of the ‘poor’ had been introduced on the missiological scene by the Latin American Roman Catholic Bishops in Medellin, Colombia (CELAM II, 1968) and at Puebla, Mexico (CELAM III, 1979) (Bosch 1991: 435). In the 70s it had been adopted into ecumenical theological framework such that in Melbourne it became a predominant theme of the CWME conference. Given the time frames during which these conferences took place in view of each other it appears that Manila had finally managed to fit this theology into its official mission formulation, particularly given the context that the same effort had been attempted in High Leigh but met with antagonism in

Pattaya by Lausanne's leadership. So the *Manifesto* in using the radical theology tries to balance both spiritual and material poverty when it links proclamation of good news to alleviation of social injustices. This shows an attempt to place evangelism and social responsibility in an integral relationship in which both aspects of human experience, physical and spiritual are taken seriously without appearing to be dualistic.

Affirmation 8 talks about the church's role in demonstrating "God's love visibly by caring for those who are deprived of justice, dignity, food, and shelter." In affirmation 9, the language is more radical and formulated in the context of the kingdom of God it says; "We affirm that the proclamation of God's kingdom of justice and peace demands the denunciation of all injustice and oppression, both personal and structural; we will not shrink from this prophetic witness." Whereas affirmation 8 seems to refer to philanthropic acts of service to those deprived of justice (*evangelism and social service*), 9 is referring to the prophetic voicing against evil within structures and even individuals (*evangelism and social action*). The church should play a role in denouncing such evils as institutionalised violence, political corruption, exploitation of humans and so forth. There is thus an effort to keep the two issues tightly together to form what the *Manifesto* talks of as the inseparable "integration of words and deeds", "good news and good deeds" in the mission of the church.

Prior to Manila the Lausanne had not used such strong language in official documents, particularly with reference to structural injustice. This was language peculiar to ecumenical circles with particular reference to Bangkok. It is true however to note that the social orientation agenda seems to have had gained momentum by the time of the Manila congress. From this time on, in the ecclesiology of Lausanne, the church is not limited to inward growth, though this is not neglected but it is directed to the outward community "in evangelistic witness and compassionate service" (Affirmation 16). There is a call for the church to witness and to serve the community, an affirmation of both evangelism and social involvement all taking place at the same time. True biblical mission is thus taken to be incarnational which implies identifying with people's "social reality, their sorrow and suffering, and their struggles for justice against oppressive powers." Given the history of

the Lausanne up to this stage, and the debates that characterised the movement in this regard from 1974 to 1982, Engelsviken (2007:209), has this say: “One might say that the so-called ‘radical evangelicals’ of the South had won the day in relation to more traditional evangelicals, mainly represented in the North. There has since been a certain convergence between the ecumenical and evangelical mission movements in this area.”

At the same time that Manila went to great efforts to expatiate on the church’s role in social issues, it equally made an effort to distance itself from adopting a postmillennial secularised missiology. As a result the *Manifesto* cautiously points out that “commitment to social action is not a confusion of the kingdom of God with a Christianized society. It is rather, recognition that the biblical gospel has inescapable social implications” (MM4). In other words, adopting an integrated missiology does not necessarily indicate a change in hermeneutical locus. This is why it appears that the Lausanne is comfortable formulating its social theology from a Biblicist departure point. This cautiousness is seen clearly in MM9 where the Manifesto talks about cooperating in evangelism. It first defines ‘cooperation’ as ‘finding unity in diversity’ then it qualifies this unity by pointing out that cooperation with the other Christian bodies, such as the Roman Catholic Church or the ecumenical movement should be done without compromising the biblical truth. By so doing the *Manifesto* limits this cautious participation to matters which do not impinge on its doctrinal conviction; “Where appropriate, and so long as biblical truth is not compromised, cooperation may be possible in such areas as Bible translation, the study of contemporary theological and ethical issues, social work, and political action. We wish to make is clear, however that common evangelism demands a common commitment to the biblical gospel.” In reference to cooperation with the WCC, the *Manifesto* stresses the need for “a positive and yet critical participation” in its work and urges the “World Council of Churches to adopt a consistent biblical understanding of evangelism.” While admitting its share of responsibility in the dividedness of the body of Christ, the Lausanne goes on to call for “frank and patient dialogue on the basis of the Bible...” This marks an important development in the move towards convergence. By pointing out the centrality of the Bible in its quest for unity and cooperation, the Lausanne is laying out to the WCC the starting point of dialogue which as noted earlier is the main issue that evangelicals felt was missing

in Edinburgh. The biblical hermeneutic is the main bone of contention that has in the past kept the two movements apart and it appears that to the extent to which this matter is tackled, to that extent will meaningful convergence occur.

By and large, the *Manila Manifesto* did not change the position taken by Lausanne I and the CRESR (Ronsen 2016:22) but reaffirmed the evangelicals' commitment to both evangelism and social action as the previous meetings had done. While not producing new theology it represents an expanded view of their mission theology in terms of the context of the time then. It came up with newer versions or nuances on subjects related to social justice in some of its affirmations but did not necessarily produce new missiological shifts.

### **3.17 Analysis of Theological Developments in LWCE**

A theological analysis of the Lausanne documents discussed above has revealed an interplay of these characteristics. From Wheaton to Manila, there has been an insistence in all the affirmations on the absolute authority of the Scriptures. This is a key thing that evangelicals, have emphasised from the time of Edinburgh to present. The authority of the Bible has been given a prominent place in Lausanne documents so much so that, it has been used as a basis for both unity and cooperation. This is not to say that there was unanimity among evangelicals with regards to the nature of inerrancy and infallibility of the Bible. On the American scene, views ranged from the inerrancy of the autographs of Scripture, to infallibility and to the idea of inerrancy of what the Bible affirms rather than its full text (Hesselgrave 2007:129). British conservative evangelicalism also held varied views on the prominence they placed on the inerrancy of Scripture. Though the British conservative evangelicals were prepared to acknowledge the inerrancy of the Bible, “there was a more insistent emphasis than was customary in the United States that such inerrancy must be understood in relation to the soteriological and practical purpose of Scripture” (Stanley: no date). John Stott emphasized that inerrancy should be understood in terms of the trustworthiness of the Bible as a means of leading people to salvation in Christ (Stanley). Amidst all the varying positions on the place of inerrancy or infallibility, evangelicals nevertheless emphasised the salvific effect of the Bible and its absoluteness in issues of faith and morality. This insistence on the authority of Scripture should be seen in light of

the challenge that liberal higher criticism was posing to the conservatives at the time. While evangelicalism was trying to differentiate itself from separatist fundamentalism on the American scene it was at the same time trying to curb the liberalistic influence that seemed to have become the order of the day in British evangelicalism<sup>97</sup> after the WWII (Stanley). The authority of the Scriptures had to be defended and it had to be connected to its Christocentric and soteriological purpose (Stott 1956, in Stanley).

So though there have been exceptions to the extent to which different groups of evangelicals upheld the inerrancy and infallibility of the Bible, it was always as a starting point in evangelical missiology. This point is important to stress here because therein lies the biggest complaint of conservative evangelicals, who felt the ecumenical movement and other Protestant liberals gave in to the demands of higher criticism and ended up discarding some aspects of the biblical faith including miracles. It is within this type of framework that the official documents were formulated with particular connection to biblical authority. The *Manila Manifesto* for instance, connects a common commitment to the *biblical gospel* as a prerequisite to common evangelism, it urges WCC to hold to “a consistent *biblical understanding* of evangelism”; and that Lausanne can only be in dialogue with others on the *basis of the Bible* (my emphasis) (MM9)

Even though a variety of views and opinions existed on the nature of biblical authority, one thing that was well agreed upon was the *activist* priority of evangelism. Stanley says that this was the most obvious commonality shared by all across the evangelical spectrum. Evangelism was the central theme at the founding of the Lausanne. As noted earlier, it was Billy Graham’s hope when he met with his organising team that after Berlin, there needed to be another congress whose main purpose would be to ‘To unite all evangelicals in the *common task of total Evangelization of the world*’ (my emphasis). In these planning stages, Graham made it clear that the congress would be “looking again at the whole mission of the Church, bearing in mind that this involves making disciples, baptising and teaching’ (In Stanley 2013: 534). From the onset, the activist nature of the Lausanne was clear, Graham hoped for a movement that was going to be ‘totally and thoroughly evangelical’ to fill the vacuum that was created by the likes of the radical theology. So when Lausanne came to being, it saw itself as fulfilling this activist aspect of the evangelistic task that was

neglected by the ecumenical movement. This explains why, the primacy of evangelism is central in Lausanne's missiology. It appears that the social aspect of Lausanne's mission was kept in view and accepted in principle in so far as it did not impinge on the mandate of making of disciples. That could probably be one of the reasons why it was not immediately easy to put a strong social agenda in the early stages of the Lausanne. Even though the founding leadership of Lausanne acknowledged the place of social responsibility in mission, they did not want this issue to eclipse the very purpose for which they had called the congress - evangelisation. It would seem that as long as social activism was expressed within the context of evangelism this was acceptable to the conservative members of the Lausanne. These would be the people who no doubt accepted social responsibility but probably espoused the view that social action occurs as a corollary of effective evangelism. But now that the world scene had changed there was also another side of evangelicalism made up of theologians who wanted to see the activist nature of evangelicalism expanded to include the physical and the spiritual aspects of people as seen in the *Manifesto's* extrapolation of the poor. According to this view social responsibility needed to be aimed for and not left to come out as a corollary or consequence of evangelism. Due to the influence of this group over a period of fifteen years from Lausanne's inauguration, an expanded view of evangelism gradually deepened its roots in Lausanne's missiology but within the orbit of proclamation of the crucified Christ, conversion and biblical authority.

As a result the social orientation that developed in the movement needed to have ground in a Biblicist hermeneutic so that it was fairly acceptable to the Lausanne evangelical constituency which was working so hard to distance itself from any appearance of social or secularised gospel. Having castigated the ecumenical movement for failure to uphold doctrine and elevating humanisation, the Lausanne sought to correct that error as it were, and insist on biblical formulations for all its missiological affirmations. Thus, in view of social action the *Manifesto* could state that; "Our continuing commitment to social action is not a confusion of the kingdom of God with a Christianized society. It is rather recognition that the biblical gospel has inescapable social implications." Furthermore in dealing with the secular pressures of modernity, the Lausanne, premises its involvement

with society on the Christocentric doctrine and seeks “to relate the lordship of Christ to the whole of modern culture and thus to engage in mission in the modern world without worldliness in modern mission” (MM10). So there is in the Lausanne a direct link between social activism, crucicentricism and a Biblicist view of mission.

### **3.18 The Influence of Latin American Theological on Lausanne**

If one does not carry out a careful look at the theology of Latin American evangelicals in Lausanne, one can easily categorize their theology within the general category of Latin American liberation theology which was radical in its approach. One can easily confuse the radical approach of Latin American evangelicals at Lausanne for a typical liberationist approach that was developed in the 1970s in Latin America. This could have been one of the reasons why some leaders in the North American camp were quite reluctant to incorporate aspects of integral mission being proposed from the South America evangelicals. Daniel Salinas, in the book, *Latin American Evangelical Theology in the 1970s: The Golden Decade*, discusses that North American evangelicals went to great lengths to promote their version of evangelicalism in Latin America and tried to counter ecumenical Protestant Christianity as well as Roman Catholic missions. While there are areas of affinity between the radical liberation theology and the evangelical version of integral mission propounded in Lausanne, it should be understood that the liberation articulations of the latter came amidst efforts to articulate a contextually relevant evangelical theology of Latin America which inevitably had to converse with aspects of liberation within the framework of a truly evangelical hermeneutic. The development of Latin American evangelical theology according to Samuel Escobar (2012:72-73), had started gradually for more than a decade preceding the birth of liberation theology in Chimbote Peru a few months before the Latin American Catholic Bishops met in Medellin Colombia in 1968. It needs to be noted here that though evangelical Christianity was steadily rooted and growing in 1960s, it was quite fragmented and characterised by polarization. The formation of the *Fraternidad Teológica Latinoamericana* (Latin American Theological Fellowship, FTL) in 1970 was the culmination of the efforts by some Latin American evangelical theologians to promote “a vision of the church’s mission

they called *misión integral* which integrated both evangelism and socio-political involvement on behalf of the poor and oppressed” (Clawson 2012:791). FTL felt that this aspect had been neglected by what they took to be “the highly speculative thought of traditional North Atlantic theology (Chaves 2013: 14). The *theologia perennis* developed in Europe was inadequate to deal with praxis of Third World settings with which it was not in dialogue. This makes it inevitable for a theology to have a pre-commitment to a specific context if it will remain relevant to that context (Chavez 2013:15). Thus at the core of these theological efforts of this movement was the need to (Escobar 2012:71):

Establish a biblical foundation for theology and an agenda in which an important point was to make a distinction between the biblical content and the Anglo-Saxon trappings...received from missionaries and previous generations of Protestant thinkers. We engaged in the development of a contextual theology that aimed to be “forged in the heat of Evangelical reality in Latin America, in faithfulness to the Word of God.

So at its inception, the FTL did not necessarily have liberation theology as its only agenda, though this would be an important interlocutor in the process of formulating a contextually relevant theology. The founders seemed to have had a broad range of factors they were aiming to address. There seems to have been dissatisfaction with practising theology in Western categories of thought and expression. The group felt that the FTL and evangelicals in Latin America should not be limited to the “adaptation of an existing theology of universal validity to a particular situation...” aided by the missionary paternalism of the West (Padilla in Escobar 2012:71). Alternatively the FTL sought to develop a theology based on a new open – ended reading of Scripture with a hermeneutic in which the biblical text and the historical situation become mutually engaged in a dialogue whose purpose is to place the Church under the Lordship of Jesus Christ in its particular context” (Escobar 2012:70). The FTL also aimed for their evangelical theology to have a missiological thrust that would be expressed in strong evangelistic vocation of evangelical churches in Latin America (Escobar :76) This agrees with what N.E. Thomas (1981:476) says when he asserts that the dynamic movement in Latin American Christianity embraced an integral concept of liberation evangelization which was “biblically grounded and begins with the affirmation that God is actively involved in the struggle of the poor for justice...concludes

with a call to all Christians to proclaim both word and deed a whole gospel for all persons, especially the poor.” This missiological focus would be seen later on when FTL organised evangelism congresses, CLADE II in 1969, CLADE III in 1992 and CLADE IV in 2000. Their theology, which Escobar describes as theology on the road would need to come out of an encounter between doctrine and context making it “a ‘dialogue of love’ with our culture without departing from the biblical roots of our faith” (in Escobar 2012:71). Escobar is pointing out that the efforts to develop a Latin American evangelical theology had started prior to the official launching of liberation theology. It was not necessarily preconditioned by the liberation theology but it represented a quest by evangelical theologians to find a biblical and contextual hermeneutic to express their Christian faith. This suggests that Latin American evangelical theology, if looked at from this perspective should not be viewed as a liberation theology per se but as a contextual theological construct which had liberation theology as one of its interlocutors. The context within which the Latin Church was operating required that any relevant and faithfully engaged theological exercise take cognisance of other theological endeavours of the time which were applying themselves to the context in question. As such the FTL were endeavouring to formulate theology with a ‘strong missiological component in which the evangelization of Latin America was a key element’ (Escobar 2012:73), and the context of Latin American experience of “extreme poverty, political oppression, and widespread despair” would be taken seriously (Clawson 2012:791). According to Valdir Steuernagel, “Missiological reflection had to struggle with issues such as poverty, and justice, working with the assumption that evangelization and quality of life are not strangers to each other...” (1991:3)

That these theologians espoused some aspects of liberation theology within their evangelical theology is evident. In a way they were trying to show that it is possible to be both evangelical and hold a biblically sound liberation theology. The two should not necessarily exclude each other simply because the antecedent liberation theology had questionable hermeneutics. Given that there were other interlocutors with different departure points the FTL tried to differentiate their theology from the mainstream liberation theology put forward by the Roman Catholic theologians as well as a liberal Protestant

group of theologians in WCC known as *Iglesia Sociedad en América Latina*, (ISAL) who already had done some work in this regard over a period of time. ISAL had come about in 1961 as a response to the WCC study launched in 1957 to “find out and clarify what is the Christian responsibility before the rapid social, political, and economic changes taking place in Asia, Africa, and Latin America” (Luis L. Odell in J.D.S. Salinas 2009:56). Subsequently in the 1960s, ISAL ‘consciously adopted a Marxist analysis and interpretation’ and increasingly became radicalised in its theology to the point where it supported violent revolution as solution to Latin American’s problems (J.D.S. Salinas 2009:57-58). Because ISAL became more radicalised and had Marxist and socialist leanings, its programme became a challenge “to those who were concerned about the difficult economic and social conditions in the continent but could not support ISAL’s hermeneutics” (Salinas 2009:58). The FTL decided “they needed to provide a moderate and evangelical alternative that nevertheless acknowledged the important questions and challenges raised by ISAL” (Clawson 2012:792). The errors of ISAL, according to the evangelicals were “due to the fact that it begins with the revolutionary situation and interprets the Scriptures on the basis of presuppositions derived from leftist ideologies...The result is a secularized Gospel the dominant notes of which coincide with notes of Marxist tone” (Padilla, in Clawson 2012:792). Furthermore, the notion of radical liberation theologians to find a Marxist political strategy to foster the kingdom of God was vehemently criticised and rejected by key FTL leaders. Such an approach to societal change “has clearly fallen prey to a humanist illusion that is in agreement with neither the historical facts nor biblical revelation. Such an action amounts to a sociological kidnapping of theology” (Padilla 1983:17). For Pedro Arana a Presbyterian Theologian and Pastor, ISAL’s problems lay in its understanding of the ultimate goal of providence, namely the humanization of the human beings equated ISAL’s goals with those of the Marxists...which reduced everything to a horizontal dimension, dissolving everything into naturalism with the consequence that the biblical witness is abandoned” (Salinas 2009:59). Thus the FTL took cognisance of these social realities to which the contemporary liberation theologies were applying themselves but felt the need to articulate their theology while “upholding their evangelical commitments to the authority of scripture, the divinity of Christ, and the necessity of evangelism” (Clawson 2012:792). According to Padilla, “The

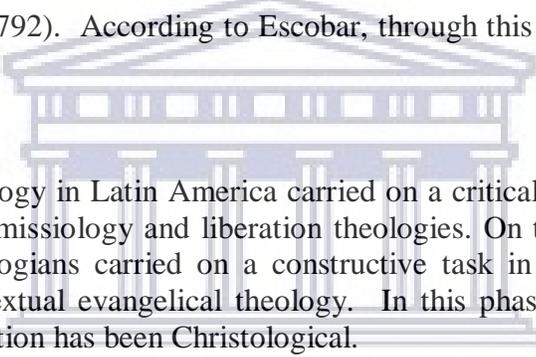
question for me is not, how do I respond to liberation theology, so as to show its flaws and incongruities? But rather, How do I articulate my faith in the same context of poverty, repression and hopelessness out of which liberation theology has emerged?" (In Clawson 2012:792). In trying to address the continuum between radical politics of the time and the conservative evangelical faith, evangelicals creatively made use of some of the premises and insights upon which Latin American liberation theology was built. Gustavo Gutierrez's doctrine of the preferential option for the poor is taken to be a key premise of liberation theology upon which evangelical theologians decided to base their reflections (Chavez 2013:2). Gutiérrez's view of evangelism is predicated on the assertion that "God's saving activity as revealed in Scripture begins with involvement in the struggle for liberation of his people" (Thomas 1981:477). It follows that any meaningful proclamation of the Word of the Lord will have significance only in that context, for 'God is a liberating God, revealed only in the concrete historical context of liberation of the poor and oppressed'" (Gutiérrez 1978:247 in Thomas 1981:477). With regards to the issue of the theology of the poor, Escobar has this to say (2012:77):

Liberation theology also offered a new reading of Scripture, a fresh reading through the perspective of the poor, a vision from the underside. This was the most engaging aspect of liberation theology for evangelicals. It uncovered the abundant biblical material about God's special preference for the poor and the prophetic criticism of social injustice. Evangelicals had not paid enough attention to it.

It would be on the basis of engagement with the poor that FTL would base its version of liberation theology. There was a general feeling that liberation theologians in Latin America needed to break away from traditional Western mindset significantly in formulating their liberation theology (Chavez 2013:15). In this regard it is not merely a rationalistic theology of the intellect practiced from a distant balcony as was with the case with 'the traditional rationalistic theology of Catholic scholasticism' for which it was criticised (Escobar 2012:78) but one that in the same way that 'God's *logos* became a historical person', it also involves 'participation and a new way of life' (Padilla 1983:15). Because of the stress on historical *praxis* in the method of this theology it appears that more

emphasis was laid on *orthopraxis* than *orthodoxy* in this theology which is one of the main areas it differed from North Atlantic theological formulae (Thomas 1981:477).

The main issue in this theology is the application of biblically based assertions to address the context of the poor. This is what the FTL was bringing to the North Atlantic dominated Lausanne movement, a moderate theology sensitive to the suffering of the poor which incorporates some creative tension between gospel and some liberation premises of the contemporary movements of the time. Thus through a process of dialogue between context and revelation the FTL propounded their “on the road theology” from a Christocentric hermeneutic which regards Jesus’ Lordship over all creation and all spheres of life as the premise upon which to understand mission in holistic terms encompassing both spiritual aspects of conversion and physical aspects of action on behalf of the poor and in service of social justice (Clawson: 792). According to Escobar, through this process of theological formulation (2012:80):



Evangelical theology in Latin America carried on a critical assessment of both managerial missiology and liberation theologies. On the other hand, evangelical theologians carried on a constructive task in their effort to articulate a contextual evangelical theology. In this phase the thrust of theological reflection has been Christological.

Escobar qualifies this theological process, as “the search for a Missiological Christology.” Threefold themes can be seen in the formulation process; the theology was to be biblically oriented, missiologically Christocentric with a holistic vision, and contextually relevant. This Biblicist, Christocentric and missiological basis of evangelical liberation theology, on one hand makes it different from liberal theology and contemporary civil rights activists’ departure points but on the other hand makes it consistent with the commonly held features of evangelical tradition. These aspects make it fit well within Bebbington’s classification of evangelical tradition.

The contextual aspect of the preferential option for the poor coming out of this theology explains why the language of liberation and justice featured prominently in the *Covenant*, in *CRESR* while *The Commitment* of 1980, *Wheaton 83* and the *Manila Manifesto* all include expanded versions of liberation and justice for the poor. For Latin American theologians, the locus of their liberation conscience was the poor or in Stanley’s words they

propounded a theology of “‘social action’ or a Gospel whose contours were actively shaped by the concerns of the poor...” (Stanley 2013:550). When the Latin American Evangelical theologians came to Lausanne, they did not considered it a place for ‘missiological and theological monologue’ from the West but a forum for ‘global dialogue’ in which they would participate and contribute in searching for biblical answers relating to social dimensions of gospel. Their evangelical theological expositions developed out of the context of the poor which they had worked on in the past decade needed to find global space for dialogue. The Lausanne proved to offer that space though not an easy one (2012:73). The nature of their radical viewpoints/theology need not be mistaken for radical liberalism rather they represent a unique viewpoint which, prior to this period of time had not been extrapolated in that way within the movement. It was a theology informed by a different praxis.

Their efforts to develop this theology in evangelical terms would be crucial in the process to alleviate fears by their North Atlantic counterparts who, based on their knowledge of radical liberation theology of the time, suspected FTL of importing into Lausanne a missiology embellished with socialist and Marxist ideologies. João Chaves says that North American evangelicals never challenged the goals of Latin American theologians such as calls for “a more just world”, it was the method and presuppositions used by the theologians that was regarded as misguided, insufficient and even heretical. Chaves points out however that there were some North American evangelical theologians who went beyond the mere acceptance of goals of liberation theology and incorporated its method into their own theologies. He cites Ronald Sider and Clark Pinnock as examples (2013:2). According to Alister Chapman (2009:358), during the 1970s and 1980s, American evangelicals were predictably “suspicious of anyone whose thinking bore even a whiff of Marxist influence.” Communism and socialism were to the evangelical world, “‘unpardonable sins”, the Antichrist, obnoxious diseases of apocalyptic proportions’ (Salinas 2009:50). Consequently, evangelicals devised strategies and methods to exorcise them at the slightest suspicion of encountering their ugly presence (Salinas 2009:50). This is one of the reasons why they were in constant conflict with Padilla and Escobar, who, though they witnessed the appeal of Marxism during their ministry in university campuses (Chapman 2009:360-

361; Escobar 2012:71), they nevertheless did not succumb to its ideology. As noted earlier Padilla criticised the absorption of Marxist ideas into liberation theology (Chapman 2009:360). However, Padilla and Escobar's call for a theology of gospel and society which emphasised justice in the here and now as opposed to American pragmatism, or 'functionalist social science' (Chapman 2009:360; Escobar 1989:351) only strengthened the thinking that they may have been perpetuating a social gospel of some kind. Thus conservative evangelicals looked at this theology with a great deal of displeasure on its method and presuppositions and concluded that it was misguided, inefficient, and even heretical (2013:2). They feared that evangelistic mission of Lausanne might be 'torpedoed' by what they perceived as the ecumenism and social gospel of radical discipleship (Clawson 2012:796; Stanley 2013:550). Writing twelve months after the congress, Peter Wagner would describe three 'torpedoes' which he says were deployed to divert the main goal of evangelization that was intended by organizers of Lausanne. The first one, he purported, intended to divert the congress from issues of evangelism and focus on social action instead while the second one attempted to confuse evangelism and Christian cooperation and the third torpedo attempted to confuse evangelism with Christian nurture (Stanley 2013:550). In his analysis, Wagner felt that at Lausanne all three torpedoes missed their targets when the continuation committee that met later in 1975 to discuss a compromise statement on the total mission of the church insisted that "our particular concern must be the evangelization of the 2,700 million unreached peoples of the world'..." (Stanley 2013:550). Chapman thinks that the dialogical problem between Latina American theologians and the North American counterparts was an epistemological one. He asserts that the epistemology of Lausanne hampered the process of dialogue and ended up making it more difficult to bring about a theological shift even amidst a diversity of participants in the movement. He thinks that this epistemology did not allow for the possibility that one might be wrong (2009:363). Any revision to the norm was looked at as detrimental to the biblical tradition and the task of evangelisation.

Be that as it may, the theology brought to Lausanne by FTL, though new to the West was formulated in such a way that it addressed issues related to the poor while at the same time acknowledging upfront that social action is not evangelism, nor is political liberation

salvation (LC5) but nevertheless it is our Christian duty. It follows that the church's integral mission in society should revolve around both evangelism and social action with particular emphasis on liberating the poor from all forms of oppressive systems. From 1974 onwards Latin American's evangelical theologians would work hard to sensitize their North Atlantic counterparts to see the role of an evangelical comprehensive theology in the working out of mission. It is an acknowledged fact that it was the evangelical Latin American theologians who played a key role in bringing about a paradigm shift in Lausanne's thinking of mission (Padilla 1985, 2003, Ott et al. 2010). Because of their influence the period from 1974 became dominated by the deliberations on the relationship between evangelism and social responsibility. According to Clawson, "Many rising North American progressive evangelical leaders were present at or aware of these events, and it is not hard to see a connection between their social activism and the integral mission theology first developed among Latin Americans" (2012:797).

### **3.19 Reconciliation as the Mission of God, the Pattaya Forum, 2004**

The document, Reconciliation as the Mission of God is contained in the *Pattaya Covenant* which came out of a Forum for World Evangelization held in Pattaya, Thailand from 29 September to 5 October 2004. The theme of the forum was "A new vision, a new heart, a renewed call." It was a significant forum in that it brought 1530 participants from 130 countries to work on 31 issues of which reconciliation was one.

The document recognises that the mission of God in the broken and fallen world is reconciliation. This reconciliation is perceived as being holistic in that it includes relationships with God, self, others and the creation and culminates in the *eschaton* with the coming of Jesus. The operation of this mission is brought by the breaking in of the kingdom of God in the world. The church is called upon to participate in the working out of this mission as "an agent of hope and holistic reconciliation in our broken and fragmented world." The church has a role to play in various types of conflicts that take place in it. This is a point that is reiterated in the CTC with the repeated call for the church to repent for its complicity in some of the conflicts and brokenness that have taken place

in the world. The church is urged in this document to learn to name and confess sins of the past and present while at the same time encourage others to do the same. The church is to be a community that encourages forgiveness and live in the way of repentance and costly peace making.

*a. The Context of Reconciliation*

The first part the document addresses the context of reconciliation. In this regard Pattaya pointed out that since the transmission of the gospel does not take place in a pure historical stream but in a world tainted by poisoned and muddy history, it becomes imperative for the church to take serious cognisance of the social and historical context of conflict. In this regard the church needs to seek to engage with four interrelated dimensions of historical social conflicts. The past and its trauma must be considered, and secondly the past must be named and remembered correctly. Thirdly the present must be described and engaged with properly and lastly attention must be given to how the future is imagined.

The document also called on the church to take cognisance of the church and the mission context. In this regard Pattaya called on the church to steer clear of what it referred to as the ideologies of escape that cause Christians to stay away from reconciliation. Firstly the church needs to reject dualistic theologies which tend to be silent about social problems and places non-human spiritual categories on things that negatively affect people. These preach the sufficiency of individual salvation while neglecting issues of social transformation or vice versa. Pattaya makes a decided effort to shift its theology from what had up to that time been the predominant propensity towards the importance of the spiritual over the physical or vice versa and laid stress on the importance of both spiritual and social. Secondly, Christians were urged to reject ethnocentrism, racialism, sexism or nationalism which promoted loyalty to specific interest groups, rather they are implored to direct their ultimate loyalty to Jesus alone who bids all people to love their neighbours. Tied to the foregoing is the third ideology which promotes a false belief of God's creation of essentially different people groups. This works against the whole idea of reconciliation as it creates and maintains permanent boundaries of racial segregation, apartheid, genocides, caste systems and so forth. The spirit of individualism is the fourth ideology that is to be

rejected for causing Christian disunity, schisms, competitions and splits which harm churches and communities. This again is an example of the break with the past that Pattaya was registering with regards to how individualism had to a great extent been part and parcel of the evangelicalism's philosophy. The other idea to be rejected also marked a break with what was known to be evangelical mission philosophy since the 1960s onwards, "adopting numbers of conversions or church plants as a primary measure of Christianity's growth". This, in the eyes of Pattaya was characteristic of a superficial discipleship, homogeneous growth, and perpetuation of separation and alienation which was unacceptable as it segregated lives limited to "people like us". This again is an attempt to revise or review some attributes of the church growth movement which had by now become an accepted missiological view in Lausanne movement. Some of the commonly held assumptions in church growth were here either being renovated or discarded. The very ideas on numerical growth, homogeneous unit, were in this regard put on the spotlight and shown to have some weaknesses when viewed from the vantage point of reconciliation as they seem to hamper such a process.

The document called on the churches to formulate theological alternatives that encourage authentic reconciliation. In this regard, the success of church planting and revivals that result in church growth should not lead to an attitude of triumphalism but rather choose to be self-critical so as not to be implicated in destructive conflicts. Furthermore when social crisis occurs, the church needs not to be neutral and in the same vein the church should desist from a dichotomy between the evangelistic and the prophetic. The church needs to maintain both the personal holiness aspect and the prophetic social presence. In this section the Pattaya, registers a strong socio-oriented articulation and challenges the church to actively speak the truth to the powers.

Three things were noted as presenting formidable challenges to the church's capacity to become a prophetic church. The religious *pluralist stance* promotes social transformation without calling for personal conversion risking losing the uniqueness of Christ, while the *quietist stance* keeps silent in the face of social evil while people suffer persecution. This elevates the sufficiency of individual salvation but does not address issues of social

transformation and therefore risks losing the public social witness of the church. Lastly the *assimilationist stance* misuses the Bible to support a particular social or political view that supports the status quo. This tends to merge the Christian view with the interests of governing authorities while risking losing all prophetic distance. To a certain extent this is often associated with comfortable neutrality which represents the complacency of those on the side or privileged to prophetically challenge and transform the status quo.

*b. Biblical and Theological Foundations for Reconciliation*

In the second part entitled 'hope for reconciliation,' the document lays down the Biblical and theological foundations of the reconciliation. By and large, the missiology of reconciliation from Pattaya was an effort to articulate a thoroughly biblical theology of mission with proof texts from Scripture. A significant aspect in this regard is the use of the biblical notion *shalom* as an overarching term that describes the overall aim of God in reconciliation. It is a term that carries with it the notion of wholeness and peace desired in reconciliation. Biblical *shalom* is here delineated as encompassing "all dimensions of human life, including the spiritual, physical, cognitive, emotional, social, societal and economic. *Shalom* pursues mercy, truth, justice and peacefulness through both personal conversion in Christ and social transformation."

It is important to note that Lausanne deliberately chose to use the term *shalom* to describe a missiological theme even though this term had been a subject of great contention when it was applied on secularised theology of *missio Dei* in the 1960s. While it is clear that the Lausanne rooted their concept in strict biblical grounding, this move nevertheless seems to have been a bold one for conservative evangelicals given the historical background and the emotive theological baggage which this term carried. Perhaps this might also be reflective of the shifting change of approach to mission which some quarters in Lausanne were making while not necessarily discarding their Biblicist foundations.

Pattaya connected reconciliation to evangelism, by noting that "God's mission of holistic reconciliation is the overall context for evangelism and making disciples...however to stress evangelism without also being agents of holistic reconciliation betrays the full truth

of the gospel and the mission of God.” The mission of peace-making is not secondary or optional but it is delineated as central to Christian mission along with planting churches and making disciples. Ecclesiology is also connected to reconciliation and this entails that the church itself needs to be a reconciled community so that it can carry out the ministry of reconciliation.

An important aspect of reconciliation is the quest for justice. This means sin has to be named, judged publicly and condemned. The type of justice to be sought though is primarily restorative rather than retributive with the hope that there will be peace and common life between enemies and alienated people. The document also makes note of the unseen spiritual forces of darkness that make the reconciliation process challenging. While the pursuit for reconciliation is crucial it is an on-going struggle, which is not expected to end conflict in the world but rather to transform it.

The sub heading, “Placing Reconciliation at the Heart of Christian Mission in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century” which appears at the end of the document shows that when Pattaya met, the delegates were consciously intentional in formulating the theology of reconciliation as a new missiological model. Some of the concluding theological remarks are worth noting. The document urges Christians:

1. To embrace biblically holistic reconciliation at the heart of the gospel and Christian life and mission in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, and as integral to evangelism and justice....This involves intentionally embedding this vision into the mission of our churches and institutions...
2. To humbly examine ourselves in the Christian community, seeking to identify and dismantle the escapist ideologies and practices which steer us away from reconciliation. ...This is grounded in the hard work of biblical study, social and theological analysis...”
3. To cross the difficult divisions, barriers, and borders to talk face to face with and listen to those we are separated from.

4. To preach and teach radical discipleship with Christ and costly peace-making as normative of the Christian faith.
5. To refuse neutrality or silence in relationship to destructive conditions.
6. To intentionally shape pastors and congregations able to live the alternative and work toward shalom.
7. To joyfully and publicly proclaim in our Christian preaching and life, God's victory and God's future of reconciling "all things" in Christ.

### **3.20 Conclusion**

By and large the development of mission theology in the Lausanne between 1974 and 1989 had been quite gradual and constructive. The insistence on the primacy of evangelism was maintained, and perhaps this was to be expected since this was the stated vision of the establishment of the movement from the beginning. The growing diversity that obtained in the movement from 1974 onwards meant that mission could no longer be articulated in categories of the Trans-Atlantic Christianity of that past. This meant that the different backgrounds that came at the Lausanne table were able to contribute to the modification of its mission theology which for the most part was articulated from North American perspective still bore residual traits of fundamentalism to a certain extent. That the North American evangelical constituency was quite influential in the movement is quite evident from the beginning. The views from Wheaton and Berlin, which to a certain extent depicted American evangelicalism and its insistence on evangelism, were quite dominant in early evangelical missiology. Without the balancing effect of Latin American and British theologians, some fairly radical formulations of social responsibility would probably have not found their way into Lausanne's official documents. Due to this diversity, Lausanne had to deal with its own internal divergences before we could even talk of convergence with WCC. These internal divergences however proved to be quite helpful in gradually shaping Lausanne's missiology because in the end they brought about constructive debate on the implementation of social responsibility as standing on equal footing with evangelism. The best influence that Lausanne needed to modify its social outlook needed

to come from within its own ranks, and based on their agreed upon hermeneutic to adopt a viable theology of social action.



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## Chapter Four

### An Appraisal of the Athens Conference 2005

#### 4.1 Introduction

This chapter will give an appraisal of the Athens conference. The first part of the chapter gives the setting of the conference including the welcoming and opening addresses by the host and the secretary general respectively. The second part of the chapter deals with the key preparatory documents that were prepared on three main topics of the conference theme. It needs to be pointed out that some of the preparatory papers were not discussed at the conference. Though these papers contain a significant amount of theology, they nevertheless were not given much room. They will be included here for the theology they bear which is very significant for reflection in this thesis. The third part is an analytic summary of the official letter that came from Athens. The fourth part of the chapter contains the critical theological analysis of the conference plenaries and some synaxis (group workshops). Not all synaxis will be included. Scholarly articles written on Athens by participants will form a basis for analysing preparatory papers, plenaries and synaxis of the conference thereby giving a balanced theological analysis of the missiology of Athens. The last part of the chapter will present an overall review of the missiological significance of the conference.

#### 4.2 Conference Setting

This 13<sup>th</sup> conference of the Commission for World Mission and Evangelism, took place at Aghios Andreas centre in Athens from 9 – 16 May. The conference met under the theme “*Come Holy Spirit, Heal and Reconcile: Called in Christ to be Reconciling and Healing Communities*”. With a gathering of 600 people from 105 countries, this conference is hailed as one of the ‘broadest gatherings of Christian churches and organisations in the early 21<sup>st</sup> century’ (Athens 2005). The conference is also notable for the diversity and representative nature of its participants. It included a full participation of delegates from

non WCC churches, i.e. the Roman Catholic, Pentecostal and Evangelical churches and networks. This wide representation of confessions was very significant for missiological deliberations that took place in the plenary sessions as well as the synaxis. Tormod Engelsviken notes that the conference “took seriously the wider constituency” and gave “voice to people and groups who have not so far been heard clearly enough in the WCC...” (2005:190). By including such diversity the WCC “crossed a frontier by giving equal voice to all these other ecclesial and confessional traditions” (Pachau 2005:416). In this approach which Pachau designates as ‘poly-vocal mode and method’, Athens demonstrated the true spirit of what ecumenism constitutes – many voices.

The Conference concentrated on the different elements of its theme, included space for issues pertaining to the ‘Decade to Overcome Violence’ as well as issues related to HIV/AIDS. The opening plenary was marked by the theme ‘*Come Holy Spirit Heal and Reconcile*’. This plenary consisted of welcoming address, opening remarks and two plenary papers.

In the welcoming address, Archbishop Christodoulos of Athens highlighted what he saw as the important aspects of the conference. The liturgical dimension was pointed out to be a significant element of the Christian witness. He emphasised that it should neither be replaced by verbal proclamation, rational comprehension nor other elements characteristic of the post-modern era. Christodoulos described mission in the Orthodox as the ‘meta-liturgy’, the ‘Liturgy after the Liturgy’ which is to be understood as a silent witness and not only as going out.

The second aspect he touched on was the pneumatological factor seen in the first part of the theme – ‘Come Holy Spirit’. According to Christodoulos the initiative role of the Holy Spirit in mission constitutes an acceptable foundation for missionary activity. The conference theme represents a pneumatology that is conditioned by Christology and vice versa... this constitutes a balanced missiology since “it relocates both Christology and pneumatology within the traditional Trinitarian framework” (Matthey (ed) 2008:144). Mission as the ministry of reconciliation is the third aspect Christodoulos raised by pointing

out that a proper understanding of sin leads to a proper understanding of reconciliation. Salvation is the key to transformation and restoration of relationship with God, man and the cosmos. The Orthodox tradition places an importance on healing such that healing and reconciliation have a sacramental dimension.

After laying down these aspects, Christodoulos went on to give the practical consequences that such a theology will have on the effects of globalization, on church life and the world at large. He asserted that the church needs to be in a position to respond to these global aspects in a threefold manner; firstly by rediscovering her prophetic voice, and raise concerns about peace, the poor and the marginalised etc. Secondly the church needs to witness to the values of the kingdom despite secular efforts to push the church into a private sphere. Christodoulos stressed that “the church should position herself in a counter-culture attitude...” (2008:146). Thirdly he asserted that the church should maintain a missionary attitude rooted in love towards God and others which is “the key and the way to healing and reconciliation”.

Dr Samuel Kobia, the secretary general of WCC, gave the opening remarks for the conference. He started by pointing out that mission and evangelism in the contemporary context called for a threefold conversion in our thinking and attitudes. Firstly he called on the conference to “rethink our assumptions concerning the geography of mission.” (2008:147). This is due to the gradual shift of mission from North to South. This shift, he noted, suggests that the Christian vision of mission must also have a corresponding conversion. Secondly he called on the church to recognise the spiritual, moral, theological and missiological implications that are brought about by the change in global dynamics. And thirdly he called on the church to enlarge the vision of unity to include joining the East and the West even as Christendom continues to overcome tensions between North and South. In his discussion on healing, reconciliation and peace he called for the need to “look beyond our own communities for the sake of the whole world” (2008:148), which is now characterised by division and ‘identity politics.’ He called on the conference to ‘highlight peace and non-violence as gospel imperatives’ in order to address the situation in the world.

Kobia also stressed the need for confession and repentance with regards to the historical baggage exhibited by past mission practices.

### 4.3 Preparatory Documents

Plenary papers played a key role in bringing out the theology of Athens. While these plenaries contain important contribution toward mission theology in this conference, they nevertheless portray the views of the presenters and do not necessarily give official views representative of a broad spectrum of discussion and reflection. Even though the plenary presentations were later debated in synaxis, no formal reports from these workshops were formulated in view of what transpired in those discussions. This necessitates the use of the three preparatory documents that were meant for Athens as integral to the theology of the conference. Even though these documents were not discussed at length, nevertheless they were meant for Athens and their contributions represent the missional inclination of the CWME at that time. They contain theological information that if it were debated at the conference it might have influenced the official outcome of the conference significantly. So a summary of these documents will be included here so that their information can be used alongside conference information in the process of evaluating Athens.

#### *Mission and Evangelism in Unity Today*

This document has no official status since it was not presented to any governing body of the WCC. It was adopted as a study document by the CWME in 2000 in preparation for 2005. It came about as a quest to look for a statement that was more in tune with the new world context. This process started in 1994 and it initially aimed at revising the *Ecumenical Affirmation* and present the recommendations to Salvador in 1996. After getting new recommendations from participants in Salvador there was a decision made to prepare a new statement all in all (Matthey 2001:427). The statement “attempts to articulate anew the churches’ commitment to mission and evangelism in unity within the context of the challenges facing them today” (WCC 2005:63).

The document tried to improve on the definition of mission and evangelism given in the *EA*. The *EA* was taken to be “neither clear nor consistent with its use of mission and

evangelism or proclamation (Matthey 2001:428). Mission is given a broader holistic meaning of a church which participates in God's mission. This involves proclamation by word (*kerygma*), deed (*diakonia*), prayer and worship (*leiturgia*), witness (*martyria*); teaching in the church; healing as wholeness and reconciliation into (*koinonia*) – communion with God, people and with creation as a whole. Evangelism on the other hand is described as focusing on 'explicit and intentional voicing of the gospel...' which leads to conversion and discipleship (WCC 2005:63-64).

*Missio Dei* is seen as the overarching concept on which the mission of the church is based. The statement tries to correct the one-sided trend in the use of the concept in ecumenical theology. Matthey (2001:429-30), points out two major trends in the use of the concept. The first one is the classical formulation in which God is in mission, sending his Son and the Spirit to enable the church to witness in the world. The second trend points to God's activity in the secular political and social events of the world. The church is called upon in this view to discern the signs of the times and join God in the agenda to bring shalom and humanization into the world. In its final version which Matthey calls a third trend of *mission Dei* theologies, the statement has a broader aspect of God's mission and also emphasizes the role of the church in God's overall mission. This trend thus promotes "a more inclusive understanding of God's presence and work in the world...even in most unexpected places". The formulation also emphasizes the unit of the Father, Son and the Spirit. Thus in this formulation we see a move from Christological to Trinitarian description of mission which emphasises the operation of the Trinity in the sending and working with the church. The emphasis on mission in Christ's way is also reinstated.

The statement has a section on the effects of globalization on the contemporary context of mission. It is in this context that this document suggests six paradigms of mission to counter the forces of globalization. The church is called upon to emphasise the value of human life as having been created in God's image as opposed to defining human beings in economic categories. The document emphasises a holistic Christian life of faith since the "religious life and secular life are a single reality" (WCC 2005:73). With regard to the individualism

of post modernity, the document calls for life in community which embraces both a local community and an inclusive and diverse catholicity.

There is also emphasis on incarnating and translating the gospel in local cultures since by so doing the gospel will have affirmative and transformative aspects on the culture. However, caution is to be taken in the process of inculturation lest this process raises questions of syncretism.

Dialogue is given a prominent place in matters of witness among people of other faiths. This is a recurring line of thought in WCC statements. This is based on the understanding that in other religions there is some kind of “evangelical preparation” or some unique presence of the Spirit which can be used as common ground in witnessing the gospel. In order to address the relativism of the world today, the statement touches on the question of truth of the gospel but does not give a conclusive remark on the issue of the truth of “the gospel before the gospel” which has some adherents in the ecumenical field. On the question of unity in witness the emphasis is on working together in areas that are common to all rather than focus on things that divide. Some guidelines, convictions and commitments were also laid out in endeavour to foster constructive common witness.

#### *Mission as ministry of reconciliation*

Reconciliation featured as a theme in 2001 but it was not until 2004 that the first draft of this document was presented to CWME. This is the first document outlining reconciliation as a missiological model. The document lays out the world scenario which necessitated the reconciliation as a mission paradigm of our time. From a theological point of view this document has a balance between pneumatology and Christology. It states that in mission “the understanding of Christology should always be conditioned in a constitutive way by pneumatology” (WCC 2005:95). The continued role of the Spirit in our mission today as stated in Luke 4:18 is taken to be the ‘bold proclamation of the liberating gospel to people bound by sin, a healing ministry to the sick and suffering, and the struggle for justice on the side of the oppressed and marginalized’ (2005:94). The Old and the New Testaments illustrate the activity of the triune God in reconciliation.

It is the Pauline theology however that brings out the threefold operation of reconciliation. According to Pauline theology, reconciliation needs to take place between God and human beings, between humans themselves and reconciliation of the cosmos. The death and resurrection of Jesus Christ provides the foundation upon which the church can further pursue this ministry of reconciliation down through the course of history (2 Cor. 5:18-21). In this process, the Holy Spirit gives empowerment and renewal for the continued work of reconciliation. This role of the Spirit in reconciliation is also understood in connection with the view of the Spirit as the source of Christ with the church as the eschatological synaxis. This suggests that the going forth of the church in mission will be viewed as the outcome of the Eucharistic gathering of the church – a liturgy after liturgy (WCC 2005:103).

Different sacraments including Eucharistic liturgy also create room for reconciliation. Since the church is made up of reconciled believers in Christ Jesus, it follows that these believers in turn become a reconciling community. The statement further emphasises that reconciliation is to be taken as an imperative for mission. The gospel is indispensable in this regard. Because reconciliation involves persons in the society it is to be considered a process and a goal which not only aims at restoring peace between God and humanity but also seeks to establish peace and justice in the society. It thus aims at addressing individuals, groups and nations. Thus processes of reconciliation must be initiated and sustained paying due attention to victims and wrongdoers and the dynamics involved in addressing these groups. Six aspects of reconciliation are noted as, truth, memory, repentance, justice, forgiveness and love.

In carrying out its mission of reconciliation, the church's primary role is to seek reconciliation between God and humanity, between humanity and the rest of creation (ecociliation) and in the area of human relationships. This also touches on broken relationships among churches. In order for reconciliation missiology to take shape, it has to be accompanied by a corresponding spirituality which is characterised by humility, transformation, self-emptying, and so on. The last part of the statement talks about equipping for reconciliation through appropriate teaching on issues of justice and

forgiveness. It also adds a pastoral aspect by advocating the creation of atmospheres conducive for reconciliation within ecclesial settings.

One can highlight an area of concern with regards to what the paper says in its article 25. It says; “the Spirit knows no limits and reaches out to people of all faiths as well as those without any religious commitment – a growing number in this time of secularization. The Church is called to discern the signs of the Spirit in the world and witness to Christ in the power of the Spirit (Acts 1:8) as well as engage in all forms of liberation and reconciliation (2 Cor. 5:18-19). Such an assertion tends to present us with a quasi-secularised view similar to Hoekendijk’s discernment of what God is doing in the world. While it is clear that this is not the intention of the preparatory paper, it does however present the possibility of identifying events in the world as the work of the Spirit particularly if those events partake of a liberation and social justice nature. So while the document points out in article 27 that the Holy Spirit is fully dependant of Christ and is the agent of Christ, there needs to be a lot of carefulness in discerning the nature of operation the Spirit may be carrying out in the world in a manner that is consistent with Christ. This is to say, in the process of discerning the working of the Spirit in the world, we need not identify our human secular observations and political aspirations with the Holy Spirit.

#### *The healing mission of the church*

This document was proposed in Geneva in 2004 and as a preparatory paper No. 11 for Athens and was published in January 2005. It was not presented officially to WCC prior to its publication. It is to be read together with the paper on reconciliation.

#### **4.4 The Official letter from Athens**

The Athens conference did not have an official document coming out of the plenary sessions instead; “*A Letter from Athens to the Christian Churches, Networks and Communities*” was sent out as a summary of the discussions that took place in the conference.

In its introduction, the letter gives the setting of the conference by giving a brief appraisal on the broadness and diversity of people who attended. It points out that the main issues of discussion centred on discerning the direction of reconciliation and healing in our contexts. It went on to give an appraisal of the state of affairs in the world by pointing out the growth of the church in the South and the East due to “faithful Christian mission and witness.” This growth has led to a great diversity that had never been experienced before in the movement; however with it comes also the challenge of appropriate inculturation. The letter also took note of the increase in “violence, oppression, exclusion, division, corruption...” evils that are challenging the world. This is the context that sets the stage for the healing and reconciling work of the Holy Spirit. In this regard the letter proposes a return to the “roots of our faith” and confessing the Triune God revealed in Jesus Christ.

Athens also pointed out the many areas that stand in need of reconciliation in the world context at the time. A lot of this has to do with global politics and economics, reconciliation between Christians and people of other faiths as well as the challenge to overcome the causes of violence. The letter emphasised that “the call to non-violence and reconciliation stands at the heart of the Gospel message” and on this basis it went on to explicate its vision of the goal of the missionary agenda based on 2 Cor. 5:19-20. In this passage Athens picked up the notion of ‘the new creation’ in Pauline theology and affirmed this as the “goal of our missionary endeavour.” Reconciliation and healing play a pivotal role “to the process by which that goal is to be reached” (Matthey (ed) 2008: 325). Important factors in the reconciliation and healing process were noted as involving “listening, truth telling, repentance, forgiveness and a sincere commitment to Christ and his justice” and the continued “sustaining presence of the Holy Spirit” among other things (2008:325). The conference also highlighted the need for reconciliation and healing within Christendom as this is crucial for ‘a fuller and more authentic participation in God’s mission’.

It is my view that the letter tried to present a balanced report on matters related to spiritual acts of reconciliation and healing as well as the struggle for social, economic and ecological justice. The report did not commit itself to one hermeneutical view. There is an intertwining of ecumenical, Orthodox, evangelical and Pentecostal elements in the wording

of this letter. Based on a Trinitarian understanding of mission, the letter contains interplay between Christology and Pneumatology in its presentation of the theology that transpired in Athens. This also gives us a grip on the theological intention of the theme, “*Come Holy Spirit, Heal and Reconcile: Called in Christ to be Reconciling Communities*”. In this theme we see that God calls the church to be, in Christ, an agent of healing and reconciliation and does this mission through the power of the Holy Spirit. We see an ecclesiology that is based on a Trinitarian understanding of mission. The church has a role but only in so far as it operates as an ambassador for healing and reconciliation toward “new creation”. There is one key paragraph which brings out what Athens defined to be the mission of the church. The kind of community that Athens defined is a:

A community that bears witness to the Gospel in word and deed; that is alive in worship and learning; proclaims the Gospel of Jesus Christ to all; that offer young people leadership roles; that opens its doors to strangers and welcomes the marginalized within its own body; that engages with those who suffer, and with those who struggle for justice and peace; that provides services to all who are in need; that recognizes its own vulnerability and need for healing; and that is faithful in its commitment to the wider creation.

#### **4.5 Evaluation of the Theology of Athens**

As noted above, Athens did not produce any official document containing the conference’s mission statement. This makes it rather difficult to reflect on the outcome of the conference in a theological manner. In this lies one of the weak points that most people have noted concerning Athens. Though several voices have raised different concerns about the theological outcome of Athens one thing that seems to be consistent in most evaluations is the *broadness and diversity of participation* at this conference. This is noted by many scholars as a positively distinguishing mark of the CWME conference as compared to previous conferences (Norman Thomas 2005:457). The fact that the conference took place in a predominantly Orthodox setting was also noteworthy as was remarked by Anastasia Vassiliadou (Matthey (ed) 2008:436). The theme is also applauded for being timely, broad and relevant to the context of the time.

While there is no unanimous agreement on the effectiveness of the structure of the conference, a good number of people seem to have appreciated the worship setting and the synaxis for the interaction that such avenues afforded the participants. With the synaxis approach however meant there would not be the usual sections and the representative reports they normally produce. Kinnamon laments the absence of sections because without them, “it was particularly difficult to get an overall impression of the event...there is no final report from Athens” (2005:389). Due to the absence of section reports and official reports one has to “to distil, from Athens, especially from the plenary presentations on the conference theme a sense of direction for contemporary discussions on mission” (Kinnamon 2005: 389). Due to lack of an official consensus from Athens it would seem that such a wide gathering of Christians had nothing to tell the world in a unified manner. Athens is looked at by some theologians as having little reflection on mission theology and direction for the 21<sup>st</sup> century. However, mission theology from this conference needs to be investigated from the manner in which different presenters and synaxis deliberated on the main theme. Even without an official report, there were some key theological themes from Athens which represented new directions/inclinations in understanding of mission.

#### **4.5.1 *Missio Dei* and *Missio Ecclesiae* in Creative Tension**

In his discussion of the significance of Athens to contemporary mission, Kinnamon identified three motifs, each of which “affirmed previous thinking about mission in the WCC, only to ‘balance’ it with some significant addition” (Matthey (ed) 2008:389-390). These missiological motifs were, *missio Dei* introduced initially at Willingen, the second had to do with the pneumatology which probably was a follow-up on the controversy of Canberra Assembly in 1991, and lastly the liberation-oriented theme that had characterised ecumenical theology from 1970s well into the 1980s. The three motifs identified by Kinnamon somewhat correspond to the three themes that stand out at the conference theme.

The Trinitarian theology of *missio Dei* was not specifically discussed, but its influence was nevertheless acknowledged and expanded with an insistence on *missio ecclesiae*. The insistence of the ecclesiology was seen as a deliberate move from the former *missio Dei*

understandings of the sixties which excluded the church and located the world as God's primary area of mission. This emphasis on the church is seen in the conference theme itself, "Called in Christ to be reconciling *communities*" which shows that the "mission is God's but God's mission has a church – and its instrumental role is vital to God's healing – reconciling purposes" (2008:390). Samuel Kobia, the secretary general of WCC, pointed out that the conference theme, which regards mission as reconciliation and peace, is not only based on God as healer and source of unity but is also a 'modest exercise in ecclesiology'. This linking of ecclesiology and mission is reference to the relevance of the church in the contemporary world. The theme at Athens "relates the mission of healing and reconciliation of the Triune God to the church's specific calling within that mission." (Thomas 2005:452). The church has a part to play in the reconciliation and healing of the whole creation. There is thus a return to "linking of *ecclesiology* to mission" which was the missiology from Tambaram to New Delhi but was later shifted almost exclusively to God's work in the world outside the institutional church. From here Athens picks up an integrative missiology which began in Nairobi, but largely ignored, at Melbourne, San Antonio, and Salvador (Thomas 2005:452).

Through the treatment of theme, the different presentations showed some connectedness between this Trinitarian model of mission with ecclesiology. The synaxis following the first plenary touched on this topic as well. Participants in this synaxis pondered on the question of the connection between pneumatology and missiology. According to Christopher H. Grundman, the moderator of this synaxis, "it was noted that the *missio Dei* concept lacked reflection about its pneumatological implications" (Matthey (ed) 2008:225). As such the participants proposed that missiology be defined in the context of Trinitarian richness in *missio Dei*.

In his paper on the significance of Athens, Jacques Matthey discusses several missiological shifts that Athens put in motion. One of the points he makes with regards to *missio Dei* is that in the theme title for Athens, there was an intentional move to keep *missio Dei* and *missio ecclesiae* in creative tension. He starts by acknowledging that the Willingen conception of *missio Dei* had been arrived at "in reaction to narrower or exclusively

ecclesiocentric formulations of the missionary task” (2008:330). He admits however that the subsequent formulations based on the term *oikoumene* ended up being extreme and neglected “the specific purpose and mission of the church, disregarding the spiritual needs of persons and communities and uncritically referring to a linear Western perspective on time and history, considered as ‘progress’” (2008:330). After a period of reflection on the matter, the CWME decided to keep the *missio Dei* concept as expressing the conviction that “God has a holistic and global vision and purpose for humanity and creation” as is contained in the first part of the conference theme. Matthey asserts that the second part of the Athens theme contains the mandate of the *missio ecclesiae* which is the healing and reconciling role of the church as a community (2008:330). Matthey goes on to say that the “the specificity of the Athens conference was to have put more theological weight on *missio ecclesiae*, in a conscious attempt to find a better balance between the wide and the specifically church-related approaches to mission.” In this regard, Matthey concludes that the “Athenian emphasis’ allows for a certain convergence in ecumenical theology” (2008:331).

In his welcoming remarks, Christodoulos also laid an emphasis on the role of the church in Trinitarian mission. The church has a role to play not only in its private life but in the globalized world as well. She is to exercise her prophetic role in addressing issues related to the marginalised. The church is to witness to kingdom values and maintain a missionary attitude rooted in love. The church’s mission, according to Christodoulos does not operate necessarily in activist or programmatic agendas but in being “living witnesses in word and deed” (Athens 2008:143). This in turn will issue in speaking out for Christian values in the world. Hence the need for a prophetic voice in matters of justice peace, poverty etc. and a call to witnessing, speaking out and upholding Christian values with others.

This link between *missio Dei* and *missio ecclesiae* is a significant development coming out Athens. Its roots can however be traced to some of the earlier preparatory documents. While *EA* does not have an explicit Trinitarian terminology, the study document, *Mission and Evangelism in Unity Today*, as noted earlier, specifically identifies God’s mission as the source and basis for the mission of the church (2005:65). This document contains a

compounded and holistic version of *missio Dei* (Matthey 2001:429-30). So while the document is not stated explicitly it appears that some of the missiological trends stated in it made their way into the Athens theme. It is through Christ in the Holy Spirit that God dwells in the church thereby empowering all Christians for service. While the document upholds the God's involvement with the world at large it also presents the church as playing an important role of proclamation. "The church is sent into the world to call people and nations to repentance, to announce forgiveness of sin and a new beginning in relations with God and with neighbours through Jesus Christ" (2005:66). This represents efforts to balance a world oriented *missio Dei* with one that focuses on the spiritual lives of people through the church. One can see this oscillation in the document as well as in Athens. On one hand, the God's working could be affirmed "even in unexpected places", meaning outside of the church, but at the same time, through the Spirit, the mission of the church "is to call people into communion with God, with one another and with creation." The document endeavours to place *missio Dei* and *missio ecclesiae* side by side while at the same time stressing that *holistic* mission to which the church is called should be aimed at "the whole person and the totality of life..." because this constitutes not only the goal of *missio Dei* but also mission in Christ's way. Valdir R. Steuernagel (2005:430) summarises Athens' ecclesiology and mission as follows:

In the past, some of the CWME conferences struggled with the church and showed signs of uneasiness with the place of ecclesiology in an open kingdom theology. This conference made it clear that the place of the community in the process of healing and reconciliation is clear as well as needed and affirmed.

In keeping with the intentionality on ecclesiological emphasis, Athens held a synaxis on "New Ways of Being Church" which was addressed by Desmond van de Water. This synaxis explored ways in which the church could be structured in such a way as to make it more relevant to the 21<sup>st</sup> situation. The Council for World Mission held that the *mission agenda* helps to shape the emerging new church (Matthey (ed) 2008:230). The synaxis brought to the fore what it termed non-negotiables of being church. Accordingly, the mark of real church was its ability to be contextual and relevant "to the needs, hopes and concerns of the local community life" around it (:230). The call for contextual relevance does not

suggest conformity to un-Christian values and norms but the “church’s presence should be transforming presence within the community, witnessing within its internal and external life to the values and standards of the Kingdom of God” (:232). Secondly, the local church understands its role as the *primary agent of Christian ministry and mission* within its local community. It should thus not do things that will hamper its mission by upholding old church institutional models which come with the burden of institutional maintenance. Rather the new church should pursue the type of life which will promote its local ministry and mission. Thirdly, it follows that a church should be seen as a *welcoming community*. Fourthly the new church should be *connected to the world church and to the ecumenical community* while promoting unity in mission. Lastly the local church should be willing to *engage with the major contemporary global mission challenges of the age* (:232-234).

#### **4.5.2 Pneumatology as a Missiological theme**

The second theological theme which corresponds to Kinnamon’s second motif is the Holy Spirit. Athens is noted for being the second WCC conference to deal with the subject of the Holy Spirit following the Canberra Assembly of 1991. Canberra’s theme was “Come Holy Spirit – renew the whole creation”. The potential for bringing pneumatology into the forefront of mission was aborted at Canberra (Thomas 2005:452) precisely due to the controversy that followed when the Korean theologian Chung Hyun Kyung, “invoked the spirits of persons who died as a result of injustice and of parts of creation exploited by human greed” (Kinnamon 2005:390). The theme of the Holy Spirit would wait until 14 years later when Athens convened. It follows that Athens was a deliberate attempt by WCC at giving a balanced ecumenical perspective on the Holy Spirit, following this controversy. Thus the CWME preparatory process of for Athens in this regard was built on the contributions from Orthodox and Pentecostal theologians as well as Kirsteen Kim, one of the plenary presenters (Matthey ed. 2008: 340).

So the conference affirmed the pneumatological focus but “insisted on linking the Spirit with the Son” (Kinnamon 2005:390). This is clearly articulated in the noteworthy remarks that Christodoulos gave at the beginning of the conference. According to Christodoulos the

initiative role of the Holy Spirit in mission constitutes an acceptable foundation for missionary activity. The conference theme represents a pneumatology that is conditioned by Christology and vice versa. This constitutes a balanced missiology since “it relocates both Christology and pneumatology within the traditional Trinitarian framework” (Matthey (ed) 2008:144). Christodoulos here refers to maintaining an interconnectedness of understanding in the operation of the persons of the Trinity in mission. This view is consistent with the Orthodox doctrines of ecclesiology and salvation which are pinned on pneumatology. According to Veli Matti Kärkkäinen (2002:67-68), Eastern Orthodoxy ecclesiology is permeated with pneumatology. Eastern Orthodoxy never thinks of the church apart from Christ and from the Holy Spirit.”

Kirsteen Kim drew parallels between Paul’s use of the Athenians’ spiritual language to present the Christian gospel and how Greek thought and language was also used to shape Christian theology and particularly the understanding of the Holy Spirit the theme for which the Athenian conference had now gathered. The Holy Spirit, she continued, came and comes it three ways. She talks of the coming of the Spirit at Pentecost whereupon the church was born (Acts 2:41-42) and the simultaneous starting of the Christian mission to Judea, Samaria and to the ends of the earth (Acts 1:8) (Matthey (ed) 2008:152). Secondly she talks of the Spirit as “in and of Jesus” showing the role the Spirit played in the conception, anointing and ministry of Jesus. The third aspect is the operation of the Spirit before the coming of Jesus among the people of Israel and in the whole creation. Having expounded on these three interrelated modes Kim urged that the activity of the Spirit in mission needs to be discerned in contra-distinction to the activity of other spirits in the world. This requires that we discover the way in which the Spirit is moving so that we may join in. Any differentiation between the Holy Spirit and other spirits will require the gift of discernment which the Holy Spirit gives (1 Cor. 12:10). It follows that any activity in the discernment of the Spirit will “always be Christ-centred.”

She outlined four criteria for this discernment which consist of ecclesial, ethical, charismatic and liberation dimensions. The ecclesial criterion is concerned with the confession of Jesus as Lord within a Christian community. The ethical dimension relates to the evidence of the fruit of the Spirit, (Gal. 5:22) and Christlikeness seen through good

works born out of a good heart and character not ‘unregenerate legalism.’ The charismatic criterion refers to the practice of the gifts of the Spirit which is done in love (1 Cor. 12:4-11; 1 Cor. 13:1-3). The liberational aspect which involves being on the side of the poor is the fourth criterion based on Luke 4:18 and is taken to be the “touchstone for all claims to be filled with the Spirit.” To these four criteria, other delegates proposed the ecological criterion as the fifth dimension “stressing the integrity of creation in light of the Spirit’s creative and life-giving work in the whole of the cosmos” (Engelsviken 2005:191). The question of discernment to a great extent does not revolve only around criteria but about power. Kim raises the question, “Who has the power to discern the Spirit for others?” Drawing from the warning given by Orthodox participants in Canberra, in which they warned “against a tendency to *substitute a ‘private’ spirit, the spirit of the world or other spirits for the Holy Spirit*”, Kim advocated that the authority of those with power to discern must be judged in connection with its compatibility with the Spirit of Christ.

With regards to the theme of healing and reconciliation Kim encouraged a comprehensive appreciation of the Spirit. Our vision of the Spirit should enable us to hold twofold aspects of the ministry as spiritual activity of meditation and contemplation on one hand and action for social transformation and development on the other, in other words ‘presence and activity.’ Reconciliation through the Spirit is also given two dimensions, namely the balancing of truth-telling with listening, justice with peace. So just as healing and reconciliation take place in people’s hearts and in the church, the Spirit’s healing and reconciliation is described as taking place in the world through human development and sustenance of the ecosystem so as to bring wellbeing and joy. “Wherever and however the Spirit is present and active, the Spirit leads to Jesus Christ, who reveals the Father.”

Kim’s theology was concerned primarily with the discerning of the Holy Spirit in ecumenical deliberations as well as exploring “the broadness of spirituality as understood in the mainline ecumenical tradition” (Pachau 2005:418). In this regard, she “succeeded in synthesizing new and traditional perspectives, suggesting a pattern for the development of a pneumatological missiology within a Trinitarian framework” (Matthey (ed) 2008:340). Her pneumatology advocated a biblically holistic understanding or discernment of the

Spirit that is shaped by a contemporary and contextual spiritual experience of a particular people/context. Since God always operates through his Spirit as could be seen in the threefold coming of the Spirit, it follows that his mission is also carried out in the power and presence of the Spirit. But this is taking place in a world which also has contrary spirits working for evil and injustice whether in individuals or society at large. This calls for discernment. This discerning of the Spirit must be judged by how Christ centred it is lest it leads us to other spirits. The role played by Christology in this regard is very important in guarding against the tendency towards unorthodoxy which could arise by connecting local spiritualities or ideologies with the person of the Holy Spirit.

This Christ-centeredness in Kim's pneumatology is seen as "a crucial criterion for authentic discernment of the Holy Spirit... This is intended to guard against baptizing our agenda as "of the Spirit" in an age when violence is often carried out with an assurance that God is on 'our side'" (Kinnamon 2005:390). The Christological centre is very important because without it pneumatology "can lead either to a militant form of pneumatomonism, or to syncretism" (George Mathew Nalunnakkal 2005:7). The same criterion is also used in judging the power used by those who discern for others. There must be congruency between the practice of power and compatibility with the Spirit of Christ on the use of that power. Allen Anderson, in his analysis of Kim's thesis, asserts, from a Pentecostal perspective, that "the power wielded by those who claim to 'discern the Spirit for others' must be tested against whether it is compatible with the Spirit of Christ" (Anderson 2005:337).

As noted earlier, Kim's theology should also be read in light of Canberra. In separate written statements evangelicals and orthodox participants had insisted that a theology of the Spirit should maintain an inseparable link between the Spirit and Christ. In their Open Letter, the evangelicals raised the concern that there was insufficient clarity in "the relationship between the confession of the Lord Jesus Christ as God and Saviour... the person and work of the Holy Spirit and legitimate concerns which are part of WCC agenda..." Orthodox Christians on the other hand insisted that "Pneumatology is inseparable from Christology..." (In Matthey 2001:431, 441). These concerns were noted by WCC in its formulation of the Statement on Mission and Unity in Evangelism Today.

A Trinitarian approach was used in article 12 to show the inseparable operation of the Father, Spirit and the Word in a venture to avoid separating the presence of God or Spirit from the Son. Kim's theology seems to show a similar formulation when she connects the work of the Spirit with Jesus who reveals the Father. Here the "Spirit-centric" and the "Christocentric" missiologies are located within the Trinitarian setting so as to avoid what Nalunnakkal terms "narrow Christomonism and pneumatomonism" (2005:13). So the locus for a proper pneumatological mission is presented by Athens, as being tied to or conditioned by the confession of Christ within a Trinitarian framework so that a sound discernment of the spiritual can be done.

Wonsuk Ma's pneumatology was aimed at articulating the role of the Holy Spirit in the Pentecostal and charismatic mission. He pointed out that the Pentecostal-Charismatic movement is not homogenous nor is the pneumatology of such movements standardized. This movement is not necessarily a direct/sole product of the awakenings that started in Azusa Street in North America under William J. Seymour. Based on the example of Pentecostalism in India and Korea and "indigenous Pentecostals" from Africa and Asia he argues that such occurrences give good reason to conclude that there were 'multiple fountainheads' of Pentecostal-charismatic origins taking place in different other places although they may not have been documented. Two points stand out in his reflection. Firstly he describes the Pentecostal-Charismatic movement as representing the "poor" whose lives are characterised by poverty and sickness. Secondly he defines the core of the pneumatology of this movement as being the "empowerment" for witness. His pneumatology thus has a holistic aspect.

With regards to the social aspect Ma asserts that the outpouring of the Spirit in the 20<sup>th</sup> century can be associated with the uplifting of the poor and marginalized who constituted the majority in Pentecostal followership since its inception. Ma exemplifies this argument by pointing out that "Most participants of the Azusa Street revival came from the lower socioeconomic bracket of society. Urban African-Americans and ethnic immigrants, with "sprinkles of whites", made up this controversial epicentre..." (WCC Athens 2005:160). In this regard Pentecostalism can be viewed as connecting the Spirit and the poor. Ma

distinguishes between religion *for* the poor and *of* the poor pointing out that the Pentecostal churches were made up *of* poor people marginalised from established churches of the time. Pentecostalism became a “haven for the disinherited”. The visit of the Spirit through miracles etc... constituted social upliftment. Pentecostalism is said to have brought upward social mobility in Latin America and Asia hence the defining of Pentecostal mission traditionally as evangelism (directed at soteriology) and care for the poor and marginalised (social aspect). Ma stresses that in this regard Pentecostalism brought liberation.

Ma further asserted that the 20<sup>th</sup> century outpouring of the Spirit brought paradigm shifts for the poor. He pointed out that the Spirit brought a change in their self-understanding from that of the marginalized to that of people openly “called” for God’s ministry. This was accompanied by a strong eschatological expectation for the return of Christ which resultantly fostered a sense of urgency in evangelism. Thirdly, there was a strong restorational expectation in the early church which focused on the regular occurrence of healings and miracles. Lastly there was the experiential aspect through baptism in the Holy Spirit. It was Pentecostal holistic worldview and emphasis on the immanence of God that appealed to the non- western world thereby resulting in explosive church growth.

With reference to the pneumatology of the foregoing three scholars it is worthwhile to note that they bring three traditions to the ecumenical table, traditions which were vital for this body at this time. As hinted at above, the Orthodox perspective was very crucial for CWME in its emphasis on the role of pneumatology as it is held in the Eastern Orthodox tradition Kärkkäinen (2002:67) points out that the ecumenical movement, which had been dominated by the west was charged by its Orthodox counterparts of being too Christocentric to the exclusion of the Spirit. A Greek orthodox theologian and WCC official, Nikos A. Nissiotis (in Kärkkäinen 2002:67), charged western theology with “Christomonism”, citing that “Christianity in the West is seen as unilaterally referring to Christ, the Spirit being an addition to the Church, its ministries and sacraments.” Kärkkäinen (2002:68), suggests that it was “the entrance of the Eastern Orthodox in the WCC that contributed to the strengthening and proliferation of pneumatological perspectives in WCC theologies.” Such a background helps us get a clearer picture of the

contribution and insistence of Christodoulos on the pneumatological conditioning of Christology and vice-versa. While not limiting the developments in the ecumenical movement to the contribution of this one tradition, it does however put into perspective Kärkkäinen's view that in the ecumenical movement there has been a "pneumatological renaissance", a "resurgence of pneumatology" which caused the ecumenical movement to begin to look into the doctrine of the Holy Spirit, which had somewhat been forgotten by this body. Such was brought about by the influence of the Eastern Orthodox as noted above but also the Pentecostal and Charismatic strands of Christianity played a crucial role as well not forgetting the reformulation of theology in Vatican II (2002:78). In Kärkkäinen's view, this rerouting towards pneumatology was not done for the mere sake of theologizing but in pneumatology there is seen the possibility of Christian unity.

Ma focused his attention on showing the role that the Spirit has played and still is playing in both evangelism and social transformation among the non-western poor. Kim observed "that the biblical testimony to the Spirit is differently nuanced in different cultural contexts" (Anderson 2005:337). Even with these different hermeneutical and pneumatological foci it is still significant to note that both scholars used similar terminologies that are otherwise widely used in ecumenical circles. Both theologians associate the Holy Spirit not only with private meditation but with active involvement in the social transformation and development. With regards to terminology, "Ma's use of terms such as 'liberation,' 'holistic' and 'ecumenical' to describe phenomena in the Pentecostal practice of mission serve as a bridge as well as interpretive tools" (Pachau 2005:418). The use of such terms is actually in tune with the growing inclination of Pentecostal theologians to view faith, healing and deliverance in liberational perspectives from the vantage point of the poor and oppressed (Nalunnakkal 2005:18). Such language could be the starting point for discussing a more comprehensive pneumatology of mission between the ecumenical movement and those of the "wider constituency". However what is missing in this plenary is the integration or relation of these two pneumatological strands. This causes one to ask whether the Athens conference made "any advancement in the conceptualization or doctrinal clarification of the Holy Spirit in relation to mission?" (Pachau 2005:421). The two pneumatologies should not have been ends in themselves but

possibly doorways to the articulation of a more integrated pneumatology. Missiology of the 21<sup>st</sup> century should take seriously the role played by pneumatology in its articulation of mission. The presentations by Ma and Kim raise key issues for further research if the role of the Holy Spirit in mission is going to be taken seriously. Their presentations both touched on the connection between pneumatology and the liberation of the poor. The liberation aspect in Kim's theology stressed that any Spirit-led Christian activity should benefit the interests of the poor. A similar thought is echoed in Ma's pneumatology when he talks of Pentecostalism as a religion of the poor. He sees the poor of the society as the recipients of the Messiah's message of hope. This connection between pneumatology and the holistic liberation of the poor is one of the reasons for the exponential growth of Pentecostal churches or contemporary prophetic ministries in this century particularly in the majority world context. This is one of the reasons why we could refer to Pentecostalism's emergence as essentially a Two-Thirds World phenomenon with massive growth in Asia, Africa and Latin America (Gyadu 2005:351). Samuel Escobar (2012:82) recounts that between 1980 and 1990 it became evident that poor masses in Latin America were opting for evangelical and Pentecostal churches which had been growing at a significant pace and becoming socially visible actors. Of the three questions he raised with regard to this phenomenon, one is a pneumatological one. Could such a phenomenon be a sign of God's Spirit moving within the social reality of the time?

This is significant, given that the theology of the preferential option for the poor had taken root by the 1980s having been in operation a decade earlier. The simultaneous orientation towards the Spirit-led liberation could have been an emergence of the shift towards a missiology of the Spirit which evangelical theologians then, had not taken note of as Escobar seems to say. Be that as it may, it serves to show that the poor saw such Pentecostal ministries as havens of escape because these ministries seemed to bring the desired answers in people's lives from a pneumatological hermeneutic. The pneumatology espoused in some of these churches or ministries addresses supernatural issues with particular hermeneutical reference to the worldviews of the people in question. This makes their theology more appealing and agreeable to the receivers of such ministry.

This brings in the question of spiritual worldview that different people hold and what role these cosmologies play in shaping theology. In her presentation, Kim talked about the presence of diverse spirits and powers in the world, whether they be regarded as supernatural forces, natural forces or metaphorically as socio-economic powers. She however was somewhat ambiguous in how Christian mission should relate to these. She suggests that there is need for wisdom to determine the good from the bad, who to work with and who to fight against. Seemingly this view seems to advocate a certain level of continuity seen in the possibility of cooperating with other spirits or forces. While Kim does not mention this in her paper, one is tempted to revive the Jerusalem 1928 debate about the use of positive aspects within non-Christian religions. Does Christian theology allow for cooperation with other spirits? How does the spirit realm relate to the everyday life of the general person and in what way should such a world be approached or addressed? Are there any spirits that deserve to be given the benefit of doubt and to be cooperated with as Kim suggests (2008:157)? Such questions seem to lie in the realm of contextual worldviews. Matthey (2008:340,) thinks that dealing with pneumatology presents us with a difficult question as to whether intercultural worldviews should play a role in influencing our theology. The core issue in Matthey's question is whether we can adhere to a 'one spirit' cosmology, in which every spirit is related to God, a 'non-spirit' cosmology which is fully secular or a 'many spirits' cosmology which is characterised by conflict between spiritual realms and forces. One way or another, cultural perspectives have a role to play in discerning and formulating our understanding of the Holy Spirit. The question of pneumatology could be viewed from a cultural perspective in which each region in the world would have its own view. It could also be viewed from a theological question in which biblical hermeneutics would be the main interlocutor or it could partake of both cultural and theological departure points. The question of the reality of spirit(s) "has immense consequences on mission strategy and on pastoral theology" (2008:340). In the book, *Mission in the Spirit: Towards Pentecostal/Charismatic Missiology*, (2010) Juliet Ma and Wonsuk Ma assert the missiological implications played by worldviews. Talking about their Asian context, Ma and Ma point out that an adequate comprehension of the worldview of a particular context is essential for effective mission because it affects people's thoughts, minds and behaviour (2010:2860). In the case of Asia, there is a general

belief that the world is filled with spirits in an animistic manner. So the different aspects of life, such as sickness would be attributed to the spirits which entails the need to invoke them in the healing process. Regardless of other beliefs that they may hold there is in Asian belief “a strong assumption that invisible beings are closely associated with visible beings and realities in the world.” This belief persists even among the modernized and urbanized in Asian societies to a point where this has been creatively adapted to modern development in the manner that some rituals are now being carried out as well as in the manner people tend to seek power and blessing on their families and businesses (2010:2860). Ma and Ma continue to point out that cross-cultural Christian workers will need not only to present an intellectual version of Christianity in order to make sense to such cultures but there is also need to present:

The message of the Supreme God, whose power surpasses not only natural forces, but also unseen and ye real, spiritual powers...The message of the power of the Holy Spirit upon believers will be a powerful and attractive aspect of the Christian gospel message. The key in this presentation is the experiential dimension of God’s power, be it healing, miracle, or even the powerful transformation one experiences through conversion. Such concrete experiences enable people to understand the extent of God’s power over the spiritual world (2010:2860).

Ma and Ma also outline some of what they see as a missiological challenge caused by the worldview and practice of ancestor worship which also is part and parcel of Asian culture. In what appears to be a discontinuity framework of missiology, Ma and Ma suggest that the Christian message must be presented with “a functional substitute for the ‘powerful’ ancestor spirits.” He points out that most times Evangelical Christianity has failed to bring a complete shift in the Asian’s allegiance to God because their presentation of the Christian message was done “without this critical and existential quest for spiritual ‘power’ (2010:2891). They say when Christianity fails to meet this ‘power-oriented’ worldview, the evangelism process ends up producing ‘split-level’ Christianity, a phenomenon which abounds in these cultures. The Pentecostal missiology on the other hand presents a worldview that is closer to the tribal worldview than the traditional Christian worldview hence it records more success (2010:2891). Much of what Ma and Ma have said with regards to Asia is also true of African cultures. The African cosmology, in broad strokes

includes belief in God, spirits, ancestors, man, animals and plants and lastly phenomena and objects without biological life in that order (James Kombo 2012:136-137). Proponents of incarnation/translation theology argue that; “If Christianity’s incarnation into the African nomenclature is to succeed then...our theologizing process must recognise African cosmology and engage in theological discourse along the lines of African categories of existence” (2012:137). While this argument is made in general terms in favour of incarnating the African faith, the point it makes with regards to engaging African cosmology in theological process is pertinent. It helps in formulating a theology that is akin to the context and a theology that appeals to the understanding of the people involved. Their cosmology is their frame of reference to which the Christian faith should not only incarnate but also speak from. Since “the African is notoriously religious” as John S. Mbiti (1969:1) puts it, this suggests that there should be an effort by evangelical theologians to formulate a Christian pneumatology that converses with and from within African cosmology since all of life is permeated by religion. There is need for an authentic African pneumatology in this regard.

Thus a good study and grasp of the worldviews in a given context plays a significant role in laying the ground for the formulation of a sound and engaged pneumatology. A missiology that puts priority on the theology of the Spirit within such cultures will bring about good results not only in terms of the liturgical aspects of ecclesiology but also in the diaconal aspects whether in the church or in the society. It is when the theology of the Spirit is formulated in a manner that engages the society at hand that it becomes a relevant liberating force in that society. With reference to issues of reconciliation, the contextual understanding of the role of the spirit-world would play a positive role in fostering meaningful reconciliation in communities of people. A passage like John 20 helps us to understand that forgiveness and reconciliation is only possible through the help of the Holy Spirit. African cosmology for instance, would benefit from such a pneumatology if it were well developed and applied onto a variety of existential issues including reconciliation and healing in specific communities particularly those communities that see a connection between their experience and the spirit world.

### 4.5.3 Healing as a Missiological Theme

The Athens conference is noted for attempting to develop a theology of wholeness in matters of healing. It is a conference which for the first time stressed the importance of healing as an essential part of mission (Dieter Becker 2005:361). It represented changes that were taking place in ecumenical thinking “in which the subjects of health, healing and wholeness” were very much discussed at the time (Becker 2005:361). Even though the WCC had put in place the Christian Medical Commission which subsequently did good work, “from the late 1960s to the end of 1990s, there has been hardly any intensive specifically missiological debate on the understanding of mission and healing” (Klaus Schäfer 2005:135-136). The focus was mainly on healing as the ‘diaconal and development services of the church’ an outlook based on the radical enlightenment or dualistic western logic which divided between spiritual and material things (Matthey (ed) 2008:336). It was with Athens that healing was afforded missiological reflection. The stories and experiences that were shared during the plenary on healing helped to bring an understanding of new dimensions that needed to be considered seriously in the process of healing. While these presentations were not conclusive in the manner they dealt with the subject of healing, they nevertheless acted as eye openers to the role that the church could play as a healing community. An examination of the plenary on healing will help shed light on this.

The second plenary dealt with the second part of the theme namely; ‘*Called in Christ to be Reconciling and Healing Communities*’. The first presentation in this plenary was a personal testimony by Rut Petrecca from a Pentecostal Church in Latin America. Her testimony highlighted the importance of a healing community around people that are in need of healing and acceptance. It looked at healing in terms of the support that people give others who are going through times of distress and trials. A key aspect in her testimony is the role that personal decision plays in the genesis of healing. A person has to want to be healed and when this is the case, a caring community will be most relevant.

The testimony was followed by an address by Samuel Kabue from Kenya, co-ordinator of the Ecumenical Disability Advocates Network (EDAN). His topic focused on “Addressing Disability in a Healing and Reconciling Community” (CWME Athens 2008:172-175).

The main thesis in Kabue's presentation had to do with the acceptance of the disabled people in the society. He identified that the differing teachings, doctrines and theologies of the disabled have led to a view that marginalises the disabled. This has consequentially resulted in some disabled people questioning the validity of the Christian faith in their own lives. He gave some vivid and moving examples of how some evangelistic strategies in Kenya had disappointed the disabled by promising healings which they were not able to deliver, a phenomenon which frustrated the faith of those in need of such healing.

Kabue called for the adoption of a more inclusive and empowering theology and interpretation of the Bible. From his survey of the instances in which Jesus healed the disabled, Kabue concluded that "healing as a means of reconciliation in respect to persons with disabilities had two complementary dimensions: cure and restoration" (Matthey (ed) 2008:175). All whom Jesus healed were restored to become active participants in the normal life of the society. They became absorbed in the mainstream life of the society and carried on with their lives in a manner they could not have done in their previous state. From this Kabue distinguished between healing and cure. While cure may refer to the physiological reconstruction, healing deals with the removal of oppressive social systems or the removal of social barriers. He thus argued that healing in the gospel was concerned primarily with the restoration of the persons to their communities. This is an attempt by Kabue to correct some Christian traditions that hold that miraculous healing should always be physiological in nature. Kabue holds that this is not always the case instead he argued for the wholeness of a person as a proper model of healing. Kabue's hermeneutic of wholeness in healing and his call for the church to inculcate a theology of healing and restoration within a communal setting is a significant contribution to the church. The church needs to be that community that fosters such a healing and restoring atmosphere even when physiological healings do not take place.

#### 4.5.3.1 The Role of the Christian Faith in Healing

The presentations above serve to hit home the point that healing should not always be looked at in terms of removing physical pain. In the years leading to Athens, there had

been intensive discussions within WCC circles with regards to what it is that constituted health. Athens was an attempt to recapture the ‘indispensable link between the mission of the church and its healing ministry in an effort to unite the mission aspect and the Christian Medical Commission (Matthey (ed) 2008:337). WCC in its 1990 formulation, understood health, not only as the absence of disease but as a “dynamic form of wellbeing of the individual and society”, “a dynamic state of complete physical, mental, social and spiritual wellbeing that is in harmony with others, with the material environment and with God” (Quoted in Schäfer 2005:149). According to Dieter Becker (2005:361):

Health is no longer considered primarily as the absence of physical disorders which can be dealt with by medical treatment. Today greater consideration is also being given to the spiritual-religious dimension, as well as to social and ecological components, with a view to reaching a holistic understanding of health and sickness, i.e. one which includes the physical, the mental and the spiritual.

There was an effort by Athens to try and avoid a narrow understanding of healing as a result the discussions at the conference were not confined to issues of social and political dimensions of health as was with theologies of previous CWME conferences. Athens tried to shift from a prophetic or messianic to a pastoral missiology in this regard. This can be detected in the theme, which was articulated as a confession, which makes healing and reconciliation lay not in the domain of human ability and capacity but on “God’s eschatological presence, intervention and gifts” (Matthey 2008:329). It is an exercise which accepts the role of the church and Christians in *missio Dei* and yet also admits human weakness and limitation in this role. Come Holy Spirit is a humble acknowledgment of our dependence on and our confession of our faith in God. Nalunnakkal describes this “pneumato-centric” theme as a “prayer of mutuality” in that we invite the Holy Spirit to come to us and to heal and reconcile while simultaneously the Spirit invites us to partner with God on his mission route. In this regard, it is not only a re-affirmation of the *missio Dei* paradigm but an acknowledgement that mission does not primarily belong to us but to the triune God (2005:9). Consequently there was a deliberate effort by the conference to bring out the fact that “the Christian faith unleashes a whole field of healing forces that have to be taken into consideration, particularly in a religious perspective and in relation

to the individual.” This is why Athens argued in “religious terms by looking particularly at the meaning of faith, gifts of the Spirit, the sacraments and pastoral care for the individual” (Becker 2005:362). This resonates well with Rut’s testimony of the role that the healing power of the Spirit and the church played in addressing brokenness in her life. The contribution of the Pentecostal church with regards to healing was considered helpful in further fostering this understanding of healing through faith. In this regard, Becker identifies that the conversation with the Pentecostals was enriching in that Athens went beyond simply looking at the Pentecostal healing experiences, but rather engaged “in discussion of the understanding of sin and health, demons and evil powers as the source of illness, and of mission as struggle against such powers” (2005:362). Commenting on Kabue’s presentation and the Pentecostal contribution to healing, Kwebana Asamoah Gyadu points out that the doctrine of the connectedness of sin and health or “worldviews of mystical causality”, stigmatization and how this produces ill-health needed to receive more attention at the conference. Gyadu acknowledges that at times sin may play a role in causing evil in the lives of people and this fact needs to be taken seriously. He however laments that mostly in African contexts “the world view that suffering is always the result of sin has been sustained in aspects of the Christian healing ministry in ways that make an already bad situation worse” (2005:350). This is particularly so in regards to people living with the HIV/AIDS. With regard to this Gyadu called for a proper Christian response and theological ‘healing’ of this worldview so that “it does not become a tool of exploitation and oppression... in our attempt to reconcile with victims of HIV/AIDS” (2005:350). He sees the contribution of the Pentecostal tradition as vital to mission and that more space and time should have been given to African and Latin American Christians to deal “with matters of divine healing and the related phenomena of miracles, signs and wonders that are essential to the missionary enterprise.” This in turn is connected to the growth of the church in Africa. He asserts that “Wherever Christianity is growing in Africa it is because traditional interpretations of sickness and the issues of healing and deliverance are taken seriously as essential elements of pastoral care” (2005:351). Thus faith healing is perhaps a dimension of healing that should be further pursued in ecumenical discussions with a view to articulating a comprehensive theology. As Nalunnakkal puts it, the Pentecostal

contribution on faith healing “offers fresh challenges for a new understanding of missiology vis-à-vis healing” (2005:18).

#### 4.5.3.2 Healing as Wholeness in an Ecclesiological Context

Kabue’s distinction between healing and cure represents a new dimension in the healing ministry of the church, which is also articulated in the Athens preparatory paper no. 11 on “The Healing Ministry of the Church”. The paper has the following quote from the LWF (2008:99):

‘Cure’ denotes restoring lost health and thus carries a protological view. Healing refers to the eschatological reality of abundant life that breaks in through the event of Jesus Christ, the wounded healer, who participates in all aspects of human suffering, dying, and living, and overcomes violation, suffering, and death by his resurrection.

The effort to relocate healing in a biblical framework is key to rediscovering the biblical mandate for “achieving human wholeness” since “the biblical stories of healing were not ultimately about restoring health, however, but about reconciliation and restoring communion” (Becker 2005:362), the restoration of the humanity of the individual by God (Schreiter 2008:80). Furthermore this restoration is looked at as working out in a community setting which brings us back to the importance of ecclesiology. The conference theme, “*Called to be healing Communities*” locates the healing processes envisaged as taking place within the context of the church. Whether the church is involved in medical services, spiritual/sacramental services of healing or it is through pastoral care or not, the church needs to play a key role in the holistic healing of individuals. Athens sees the church playing an important role in the working out of the missional themes of healing and reconciliation. Becker points out that the concept of a ‘healing church’ was founded in the 1960s in the Tübingen meetings of WCC and LWF where the congregation was seen as “the primary agent of healing”. Although the assertions of the Tübingen consultation were not expressly re-affirmed in Athens, Becker (2005:364), insists that:

Specific professional healing services and institutions are entirely justified, but they cannot take the place of the local congregation. The Christian

community as a whole must remember that it is called, with all its gifts, to create a healing atmosphere in its own place, to provide spaces for encounter where people can feel secure and talk freely and openly and experience something of God's concern for humanity.

Klaus Schäfer's comments on healing seem to capture quite well, Athens' theology of healing. He asserts (2005:149):

In the context of this understanding of healing and health...we are looking at manifold and multi-dimensional forms of healing. We are looking at both physical handicaps and existing diseases from which people suffer, and also at what we consider is an inner healing that gives people new strength, vitality and courage for their lives, and enables them to accept their physical disabilities or handicaps, to cope with them constructively and see them in a new perspective, thereby knowing themselves safe in God's hands. Services of healing and blessing taking place today in many congregations, diaconal institutions and church hospitals (and therefore, not only in charismatically-oriented churches) gain their strength not only through the actual healing of sickness that takes place, but also in that people learn to cope with their situation in a new way.

While Athens, was hailed for making a positive contribution in attaching ecclesiology to the mission aspect of healing, it is also critiqued for failure to provide, a deep "theological and social analysis of the theme" (Jesudas M. Athyal 2005:538). Those in the medical arena wanted to see more clarification on the role of medical healing in Christian ministry. Some called for a balance between spiritual healing and medical healing. Athyal, for instance, pointed out that "healing' has ramifications that go beyond spiritual practices" and involves "larger questions of health care and drug policy". While agreeing that healing services do bring about 'psychological and spiritual relief' to people, Athyal warned that such services should not be treated as "substitute for a deeper theological and social understanding of health and healing" (2005:538). Namsong Kang (2005:382), called on CWME to practice what she referred to as 'deep-justice' in a materialized reality. She argued that the concept of deep-justice when applied to healing and reconciliation starts by asking the root question as to why things are the way they are. In her view, mission conferences should learn to refuse certain things that perpetuate injustices in their era because the root questions asked by deep-justice are addressed to injustices in the society

with a view to reshaping and broadening epistemology in an on-going manner. By drawing her discussion to issues of HIV/AIDS she argued that deep-justice could have operated by asking the question “why poor people with HIV/AIDS cannot afford anti-retroviral drugs needed to treat the symptoms of HIV/AIDS and why the drugs are so expensive” (2005:382-383). Christian mission needed to address issues of international ‘intellectual property’ laws which make access to drugs very difficult for the global South. According to Kang, it is not enough to be nice to people with HIV/AIDS and simply show sympathy by including them in our communities. What is needed is to “deal with the root, the fundamental, structural issues so that we can be in solidarity with them, and being in solidarity with them starts in learning and knowing what to refuse and protest” (2005:383).

#### 4.5.3.3 The Church, Violence and Societal Healing

The third plenary which convened under the theme, ‘Mission and Violence – Building a culture of Peace further brought to the fore, the emphasis that Athens placed on the role of the church in societal healing. The timing of the conference marked a mid-point in the Decade to Overcome Violence which was initially launched in Berlin in 2001. This plenary was strategically placed to commemorate this mid-point event. Presentations were made by four people the last of whom presented concluding remarks. The first two testimonies related to how violence is being experienced today on a family as well as national level in the case of the presentation from Colombia. They also relate how the church, (Mennonite in this case) has been in the past complacent to take an active role in combating violence but also is, (in Colombia) assisting victims of violence and displacement. The two called for more involvement in fighting violence as a form of aligning with the mission of God in the world. The third presentation looked at the situation in Palestine and how a Lutheran congregation in Bethlehem took an active role in protesting the violence in their streets. The presenter called for the church to not only develop theoretic questions and answers to the problem of violence but to also come up with concrete proactive methodologies of non-violent involvement.

Tinyiko Maluleke concluded the plenary by giving “Ten Concluding Reflections” on the DOV and the challenges they present. His main concern was that the church be mobilised to understand the DOV as their mission and responsibility and not merely a project of Geneva. In order to do this, several changes needed to be made, starting with developing an awareness for new mutations of violence and stop them before they materialised. The best intervention is to deal with violence before it breaks out.

He also called for a redefinition of the Christian identity, nature and calling as Christians pointing out that at times it is the very sense of community and belonging that fosters violence. When definitions and markers of belonging seem to include and exclude others as in ‘insiders vs. outsiders’, ‘men vs. women’ and so forth then this has immense potential for violence.

In seriously engaging with violence there is also need to question “our understanding and practice of the Christian mission.” While there is an appreciation of what mission is, sometimes it is also misunderstood. Some mission endeavours have ended up taking a variety of violent forms, such as violence against culture, people, women, children and so forth most of which have been promoted on the basis of varied understandings of Christian mission.

A revisiting of those biblical texts that seem to promote violence, the ‘texts of terror’ is also an important aspect of combating violence from an ecclesiological angle. Equally important are the texts that also appear to promote acquiescence to violence because they tend to ‘promote and legitimize violence.’ Such texts need a re-examination as part of the process to address the terror they seem to approve.

Since profit, materialism and consumption are the main drivers of violence, Maluleke urged that there should be an analysis of the economic values that breed violence. Such an analysis should lead to a united search for economic motifs that “act as glue in the creation of a new society of human beings.

There is also need to locate ‘who and where God is in our violent world.’ This is mainly because in some Christian theologies and ecclesial practices their notions of God have caused them to “connive with the forces of violent and coercive power rather than subvert

them. This brings up to the need to remember that God manifests not in the powerful but in the poor. He is “located in spaces occupied by those at the receiving end of violence.”

Christians and churches need to admit their complicity in the violent systems of the world. This calls for the church to not only describe it but propose initiatives and ways to root out violence from its church life. This naming and description of violence should be followed by strategies to overcome it. Lastly Maluleke called for a reversal of the glamorization of violence that is characteristic of our societies today due to the influence of our globalized industry.

Maluleke’s presentation places a good degree of involvement of the church in the quest to deal with violence in the world. A redefining of violence has also been called on with a view to expanding it beyond what has normally been held as violence. The issue of violence has been taken as God’s mission to which Christians are to be committed. This understanding emphasises proactive involvement of Christians in developing methodologies of anticipating and dealing with mutations of violence. This plenary took violence seriously and tried to conscientize the church on the need for involvement in various ways appropriate to its setting and appropriate to the needs of people around it. Collective and structural dimension of justice are an ecclesial part of Christian witness Maluleke’s call for the church to face up to its complicity in violence was timely. The church had tended to forget about the need for justice and got to a place where it was used to injustice and violence (Steuernagel 2005:31). An appraisal of this presentation may even be more necessary particularly given the newer forms of violence that have emerged years after Athens. The church’s role in the issue of violence and justice needs continual appraisal if the church is going to be a healing community in this age.

#### **4.5.4 Reconciliation as a Missiological Paradigm**

The theology of reconciliation can be drawn from the several presentations that took place in the fifth plenary. Papers presented by Athanasios N. Papathanassiou and Robert Schreiter are of particular interest.

In his paper “Reconciliation: The Major Conflict in Post-Modernity Reconciliation: The Major Conflict in Post-Modernity An Orthodox Contribution to a Missiological Dialogue,” Papathanassiou appeals to the Trinitarian mode as a model for existence and reconciliation. He uses the logic of the relationship between things that are of ‘genuinely distinctive subjects’. The trinity is made up of persons who are distinct and yet are one/united. This means there can be authentic existence when one is part of otherness that is not necessarily opposite of one’s own identity but an element of his identity. As such the salvation of the world depends on the otherness of God and our communion with Him. Conversion to the Trinitarian God becomes a constant journey of reaffirming discipleship and a continued endeavour toward things that promote life and a removal of those things that distort it. This calls for a continued brotherly debate rather than imperialistic and or paternalistic approaches to other people.

Secondly Papathanassiou calls for an orientation toward the kingdom of God. Since the kingdom is a future event it follows that reconciliation also should carry a similar outlook. Reconciliation in this perspective, does not suggest that human beings look back to some lost paradise but it causes them to look forward to “the entire universe attaining to that future for which it was created, but which has yet to become a reality...where decay, evil and death will be abolished.” He argues that “the cause of the past (and of the present) is precisely the future”. The incarnation of Jesus was not only for the fall that happened in the past but for the sake of the future, the transformation of creation into the kingdom (Athens 2005:182). He points out that the character of the kingdom is to be of crucial importance due to the impact that different types of eschatologies have on missionary theory and practice. Papathanassiou proposes that the kingdom be understood as ‘meta-historical’ a reality that is not limited to one stage in history. Such a view disparages ‘an individualistic model of mission’, ‘an esoteric eschatology’ and a theology that is detached from the ‘vision of justice and peace on earth’. Quoting Georges Florosky he refers to the kingdom as having already been inaugurated but not yet fulfilled. The fulfilment, which is a post-historical event in the future should in the meantime inspires us to perform “historical action and struggle on the side of the victims and the oppressed, but, at the same time, it leaves the history open to the future, to human freedom and to God’s final

unpredictable initiatives” (Matthey (ed) 2008:182). This means that if the kingdom will be fulfilled in the future, the current time can, in anticipation of the future, be a time of struggle for justice and human freedom. This suggests that “reconciliation needs to be understood as an open-ended process of self-criticism and repentance on every level (personal, theological, social, economic etc.)” (2008:183).

In the third part of his paper Papathanassiou spoke about the transfiguration of the church by outlining the role of the church amidst a globalised and post-modern world. He argues that the church, as a servant of *missio Dei* first of all should be concerned with what *she is* rather than what she *does*. Secondly the church is to be concerned with restoring communion. This suggests that apostolic faith should permeate church life in such a way that it informs and transforms relations between churches as well as the inner life of the church. He identifies four things that are necessary for this endeavour: Experience of disunity as pain, willingness for encounter with the other, reluctance to minimize the importance of theology and readiness for repentance. With regards to the situation brought about by the globalised world, he suggests that the church needs to be involved through critical creativity – by getting involved in affairs that surround them. The church however needs to exercise caution in this creativity – lest the church be driven into secularisation. He warns that “the mission of the church is not to only embrace the realities of the world, but also to judge them” (2008:185). In all this the church needs to employ the notions of encounter, koinonia and partnership in the process of reconciliation.

In his presentation on reconciliation Schreiter discusses how reconciliation could be seen as an emerging paradigm or model of mission. He begins by emphasising that reconciliation is at the heart of the gospel/mission. He describes two dimensions of reconciliation that are at work in God’s plan, namely the vertical and horizontal dimensions of reconciliation. He identifies the third kind of reconciliation as cosmic reconciliation. Both the horizontal and cosmic reconciliation are only made possible by vertical reconciliation which is the starting point. This threefold dimension of mission is rooted in *missio Dei*.

Having established this view he goes on to discuss the ministry of reconciliation as a process. Truth telling is the starting point in this process. He asserts that the truth told must

resonate with one's (victim) experience of the events, told in the language that one understands conforming to what one understands of truthfulness and told by someone whom one can trust. Justice is the second step in the process. He mentions four types of justice namely; punitive, restorative, distributive and structural justice.

Thirdly reconciliation involves rebuilding relationships, a process that must include the healing of memories of victims, repentance and conversion on the part of those who did wrong. Having discussed the process of reconciliation Schreiter goes on to discuss reconciliation as a goal. In this regard the hope which comes from God plays a key role in that it is God who enables true reconciliation to take shape.

Schreiter concludes by pointing out that with regards to reconciliation the church is a community of memory, and a community of hope. Through the church's message of reconciliation in word and deed, it provides the world with a tangible experience of God. He gives guidelines on how the church can function effectively as a community of memory. The church needs to create safe spaces for memories to come out. The church needs to be concerned about the truthfulness of the memory and thirdly the church needs to keep the focus of the memory so as to make the pursuance of justice possible. Lastly the church needs to be concerned with the future of the memory i.e. the prospects of forgiveness and beyond.

#### 4.5.4.1 Analysis of the reconciliation paradigm

Up until Athens, the subject of reconciliation had not played a key role in ecumenical theology. In the past the subject of reconciliation often appeared in dogmatic theologies parallel to the subject of justification and it was mostly treated in theoretical and abstract language (Matthey (ed) 2008:331). In most theological literature it was understood in soteriological terms with emphasis on the 'vertical' reconciliation between God and sinful humanity (Schreiter 2005:79). In CWME previous conferences were occupied with issues of liberation and justice, and so developed theologies to this end. Reconciliation had played a marginal role in the CWME, as can be seen with the absence of this theme in the

1982 document, *“Mission and Evangelism: An Ecumenical Affirmation”* as well as the 1999 document on *“Mission In Unity Today”* (Schäfer 2005:135). The social and political realities in the 1990s leading to the millennium paved the way for the emergence of reconciliation to play a vital role in missiological deliberations. Outside of WCC this can be seen in efforts by various mission bodies to articulate the role of reconciliation in connection with mission. In 2003, The British and Irish Association of Mission studies devoted its biennial meeting to this theme, (Schreiter 2005:75-76). In the same year the Lutheran World Federation came up with the document *Mission in Context. Transformation – Reconciliation – Empowerment. An LWF contribution to the understanding and practice of mission* and made a contribution to the ecumenical efforts to articulate the mission of the church in view of the changing context. Just about the same time as Athens the Lausanne Committee for World Evangelization also came up with a document entitled *Reconciliation as the Mission of God: Faithful Christian Witness in a World of Destructive Conflicts and Divisions* (2004). The main argument of the paper is that in a deeply broken world, any faithful evangelism will need to be accompanied by biblical Christian peace making. It is an attempt to analyse, respond and engage with “the historical and social ground of brokenness on which Christians find themselves bearing witness for Christ.” Outside of the Christian domain, a year after Athens, the United Nations proclaimed 2009 as the International Year of Reconciliation (UN 2006). It is important to note that it was the political and social developments of the 1990s seen in the disintegration of hegemonic systems in some parts of the world. For instance, the end of communism as a governing ideology of the Soviet Union from 1989 weakened the ability to use Marxist thinking to critic capitalist societies. In Europe this caused a rebuilding of cultures and societies and this brought with it the language of reconciliation and healing (Schreiter 2008:78). In other places the processes of democratization for instance in Africa, the end of apartheid and many other developments brought changes in the social order and a growing awareness of past social injustices which needed appraisal and redressing. These changes, coupled with challenges of economic globalization, and the challenge brought by ecological crisis all set the stage for the emergence of this missiological theme. Schäfer (2005:136) summarises this by saying:

These developments raised new questions and brought new tasks for nations and the churches. In the face of a history of internal oppression within states that had created their own victims and had their own perpetrators, it was necessary to think about how to rebuild societies and initiate processes of national reconciliation...However, developments after 1989 neither meant that the old problems had gone away nor that the further development of the world would necessarily be positive. The question of economic justice remains one of the world's most serious problems, and one that in the age of globalization has increased in its explosiveness, drama and urgency.

Robert Schreiter (2005:76-77), in a pre-Athens article, points out that the historical developments from the last half of the century caused upheavals in both the Roman Catholic and Protestant churches. He suggests that these socio-political realities led to the emergence of theologies of liberation, preferential option for the poor, inter-faith dialogue and contextualization/inculturation. These theologies represented a shift in missiological thinking as well as a shift in the relationship between missionaries and the receivers of the mission. They were to a certain degree a reaction to the manner mission was perceived then as that of “giver and receiver” and wanted mission to be one of ‘mutuality and commitment.’ While these missiologies were still in operation, though not in the same strength as when they were introduced, they still are operational as the new paradigm of reconciliation and healing began to take shape. This agrees with what Kinnamon highlighted when he suggested that the theology of liberation was extended to include reconciliation. So the changes on the socio-political and missiological scene had an impact on the shift that began to take place in ecumenical missiology culminating in Athens articulating this shift in its plenary presentations (Becker 2005:358). Kinnamon echoes the same comment by pointing out that this shift seemed necessary given the socio-political milieu of nations that had gained freedom after a long time under repressive systems/regimes and or different forms of violence, i.e. South Africa, Rwanda etc. By bringing up this new missiological paradigm it seems Athens did not necessarily depose of liberation theology since the conference deliberations “generally affirmed the importance of liberation but coupled it with reconciliation. This implies involvement with perpetrators as well as victims and reconstruction of societies on the other side of the struggle against oppression” (Kinnamon 2005:391). Be that as it may, there seems to have been an ambivalence on the part of some participants with regards to shifting completely from

liberation oriented thinking to embracing reconciliation as a new and separate paradigm. Kinnamon points out that among the conference delegates there were some who advocated a complete move from theologies of liberation as could be detected in Christodoulos' call to move from "activist" and "messianic agendas" of previous conferences. This suggests that Athens seems to have had voices that on one hand, wanted a reconciliation that continued to "press for change in political and economic structures" i.e. liberation/justice, and those who "endorsed the shift away from the language of liberation" (Kinnamon 2005:391). This theological shift however was appropriate given the socio-political and ecological milieu of the time which necessitated the move to "reconciliation as the conceptual center of mission theology..." (2005:391). Reconciliation encompasses a broader spectrum of things than liberation theology because "while liberation theology focuses on human history, reconciliation, as the Pacific theologian, Iosua Pepine, observed – has to do with the whole creation" ( in Kinnamon 2005:392). Furthermore if liberation as a mission paradigm espoused solidarity with the oppressed, the reconciliation paradigm emphasizes truth-telling about atrocities of the past and seeking restorative justice for the oppressed. Luke 4:14-19 constituted biblical grounds for the liberation mission paradigm while Ephesians 2:12-20 is the warrant for mission as reconciliation and healing which stressed the inclusion in the community of God of those who were once alienated (Schreiter 2005:82).

The phenomenon of religion based violence is also another factor that necessitates the new paradigm of reconciliation. Such a missiological theme would act "as a much-needed counterpoint to the current preoccupation with the potential for violence in religions" (Becker 2005:358). While reconciliation, in this regard may not always refer to conversion of souls from other religions, it does however provide the space for dialogue towards tackling this perpetual phenomenon. Thus with Athens, we see the introduction of this new mission paradigm of reconciliation and healing which is to be understood as encompassing more dimensions of human lives than the general socio-political realms to which most people would normally confine it.

With regards to the treatment of the conference theme, Schreiter's theology resonates with the theology presented in the preparatory paper "*Mission as Ministry of Reconciliation*".

Firstly both theologies emphasize that reconciliation is rooted in the Trinitarian *missio-Dei*. There is seen in the preparatory document, interplay between Christology and Pneumatology and emphasis on God's acts of reconciliation in both the Old and the New Testament. Secondly, both documents discuss the three key dimensions of reconciliation, namely, reconciliation with God, with fellow humans and with the cosmos. Based on 2 Corinthians 5:18-21 it is emphasized that the work of reconciliation is only made possible through the empowerment and renewal of the Holy Spirit. Pneumatology plays a key role in this theology hence the thematic emphasis on the Holy Spirit. Thirdly there is in both papers an ecclesiological emphasis. The role of the church in the process of reconciliation is stressed. Schreiter emphasizes the role the church can play as a community of memory and hope while the study paper, while also articulating the importance of the community of memory goes further to emphasize a liturgical aspect that the church can play in order to create room for reconciliation. The Eucharist is taken as a symbol of reconciliation with God, consequentially; a reconciled community also ought to actively take part in acts of reconciliation, an act that it is to be taken as a missional imperative. Schreiter alludes to this aspect when he calls on the church to convey the message of reconciliation in word and deed. The complexity of the reconciliation process is also a factor that these documents discuss while at the same time emphasizing healing as the goal of reconciliation.

#### 4.5.4.2 Critique of the Reconciliation paradigm

Schreiter's paper was well received and appreciated by delegates but this does not mean that it was without its weaknesses. While there was a general acceptance of the paradigm shift, some further reflection on the subject was of course called for. Some looked at his presentation as being too deductive, highly theoretical and mostly theological in its analysis such that it did not point out real situations that needed healing or reconciliation (Namsoon Kang (2005:380; Pachau 2005:421). To Kang, the paper on reconciliation should have included concrete situations of healing and reconciliation because "without knowing what to heal and reconcile, and why such things happen, our proclamation for healing and reconciliation would become just an abstract act". While Kang appreciates all the efforts

that were made, in presentations and performances of healing that took place at the conference, she argues that there are other forms/perspectives of marginalization that the conference did not consider such as gender, race, social status etc. With such perspectives in mind, Kang argued that “there should have been more critical reflection on concrete scenarios of violence and injustice, which call for a holistic healing and reconciliation” (Kang 2005:380). In her view, the “‘ideal’ theory of justice, healing and reconciliation”, should not be limited to “theoretical articulation” but should include an analysis of “concrete practice of injustice in its multiple forms” as it is experienced today (2005:381).

Another criticism levelled against Schreiter’s paper had to do with little focus on vertical reconciliation. Engelsviken (2005:191), points out that delegates from the evangelical circles were somewhat disappointed because in their view no significant view was devoted to “vertical reconciliation...The ministry of reconciliation with God was simply assumed”.

Schreiter’s theology was also criticised for being limited in scope as it is mostly geared toward “post-traumatic reconciliation” and deals with reconciliation in “retrospective remedy”, a sort of healing after the event. In his analysis of Schreiter, Pachau points out that Athens lacked “a forward-looking theology of reconciliation that addresses the present ongoing turmoil created by clash of identities.” He further argues that while we most definitely need a theology of reconciliation “that addresses the restoration of humanity ‘after the event’”, as was experienced in South Africa in the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, “what is equally needed is a constructive theology of reconciliation which is both forward-looking and one that addresses reconciliation as a way of living even ‘before the event’, or ‘in the midst of the event’” (Pachau 2005:422). To illustrate the need for this forward looking theology of reconciliation, Athyal articulates a question that was repeatedly asked during the conference: “what theological and missiological resources do we need in order to counter the destructive capabilities of the hegemonic powers and build reconciled communities?” (Athyal 2005:538) This cry for a practical missiological orientation of reconciliation agrees well with Kang’s call for a study of reconciliation that includes both theoretical and concrete approaches to futuristic settings. In this regard perhaps a deeper study of the theme is called for.

## 4.5.5 Analysis of The Missiological Significance of Athens

### 4.5.5.1 Introduction of New Missiological Paradigms

The Athens conference was approached differently from the previous CWME conferences. While it did not have the section reports that brought out sense of official declaration of the conference on various issues it is however significant for some new paradigmatic themes it raised. Athens registered a shift in re-instating the role of the church in the mission of God. The connection of *missio Dei* and *missio ecclesiae* was a move that was seen as long overdue and was needed in order to show the role of the church as a reconciling and healing community. Another significant development was the re-appraisal of *pneumatology* as a missiological theme. While this theme obviously needs further research and dialogue, Athens played a significant role in placing it back on ecumenical missiological agenda. Pneumatology permeates all other aspects of mission. With regards to the theme at Athens, it was clear that the ministries of healing and reconciliation are only possible through the intervention of the Spirit. A discernment of other spiritual forces is only made possible by the Spirit. It follows that pneumatology as a missiological paradigm should be given more consideration. The third aspect has to do with the introduction of new paradigms of mission, namely *reconciliation and healing*. The introduction of these inter-related themes does not necessary entail a complete break with previous paradigms of mission, particularly liberation theology. Rather there is an amalgamation that sees liberation issues treated within the broader aspects of reconciliation, justice and healing. The reconciliation and healing paradigm is threefold, namely, it relates vertically to God, horizontally to others in the society and thirdly to ecological aspects. It is also both present and eschatological. These major themes were all grounded in the *missio Dei* concept of mission.

### 4.5.5.2 Ecumenical dialogical space

The main significance of Athens can be detected in the space it provided for dialogue. From the organizers' view point, Athens 2005 was meant to "create space for a dialogue on

mission which would include representatives of growing parts of world Christianity not always involved in ecumenical discussions and reflections on mission” (Matthey 2007:372). This is the main reason why the conference was said not to be “task-oriented but dialogue oriented” or as Thomas puts it, the conference was ‘person-centered rather than idea-centered’ (2005:453). As noted earlier in the chapter, the poly-vocal nature of the conference gave equal voice to ecclesial and confessional traditions that had previously been left outside and who had been opposed to WCC. This poly-vocality could be taken as a shift in ecumenical dialogue (Pachau 2005:416). The ecumenical space afforded all participants also resonates well with the theme on reconciliation which, while it was being introduced as a missiological dimension it was exemplified by the wideness of the Christian community that came together to deliberate openly on mission. Unlike previous conferences, Athens granted dialogical space to ‘major contemporary players in witness and church’ such that the Christian community gathered was like “an ecclesial United Nations” (Thomas 2005:452). It was in a way a recognition that at times convergence does not occur without efforts toward fostering intentional visible unity and reconciliation amongst ecclesial traditions. The meeting of ecclesial bodies, some of which hold opposing views, under the theme of reconciliation, was in itself an important message from Athens. If we talk of the possibilities of convergence in mission, then the experimental room for such convergence must be afforded to differing parties so that convergence-oriented dialogue can take place. Plenary presentations and synaxis discussions were led by people from diametrically different traditions and yet they were looked at as both challenging and enriching.

In the decade prior to Athens, an idea was mooted at Vancouver to hold conferences side by side between CMWE and evangelicals in 1989, in the hopes that some cooperation and convergence could possibly be fostered. While this did not materialise, Athens could be looked at as a foretaste of what a converge-oriented conference could look like. This is not to say there is no cost that comes with such dialogue. As could be seen in Athens, certain significant issues in mission and ecumenism, had to be left out in order to deal with sensitivities regarding some ecclesial traditions. It was also not “possible to envisage common formulations or decisions on priorities in witness and methods”. Rather than

focusing on how the diverse gathering hampered certain common approaches in ecumenism, this could be taken as a departure point for highlighting the real issues that divide and map a way of moving forward while acknowledging perhaps the need for creative tension in the dialogical process. While these are some of the limitations that Athens had, it nevertheless brought to light some of the issues that a pertinent to dialogue on convergence and visible unity needs to be aware of.

#### 4.5.5.3 Insufficient Discussion on Evangelism

Athens was criticised for not affording a prominent place to subject of evangelism on its agenda, especially bearing in mind that it was a conference on “mission and evangelism.” There are some who felt that CWME as a conference on evangelism should have done more on this very topic. From an evangelical perspective, there was a concern that “vertical dimension in reconciliation” should have received more attention in the plenary on reconciliation by pointing out the “apostolic ministry of witnessing to faith in a reconciling God” (Thomas 2005:456). This dimension is brought out quite well in the preparatory paper, ‘Mission as ministry of Reconciliation’. It seems evangelicals would have wanted an articulation that showed how indispensable evangelism is to the establishment of a meaningful vertical reconciliation. This should not be surprising given the fact that the Lausanne Covenant of 1974 ties reconciliation to salvation. Lausanne stresses that it is through evangelism that people are persuaded “to come to Him (Jesus) personally and so be reconciled to God” on the other hand, Lausanne clarifies that “reconciliation with other people is not necessarily reconciliation with God” (LC5). So while evangelicals endorse Christian commitment to reconciliation and social justice, “the final limiting statement shows that the subject of reconciliation has been drawn into the conflict on the understanding of salvation” (Schäfer 2005:150). There were also some British missiologists representing the Churches’ Commission on Mission who felt that Athens did not give enough room for evangelism. They wrote a letter in this regard to the moderator. Part of the letter as quoted by Tormod Engelsen (2005:191) reads as follows:

How will it [the WCC through the CWME] strengthen the *kerygma* (holistic evangelism) through which the nature, identity and call of Jesus Christ – the one who breaks down the world’s dividing walls - is made known? Evangelizing mission has not featured prominently on the agenda of our conference in Athens. Few of our *synaxeis* directly tackled the task of proclaiming God’s reconciling work in Christ by word and deed. The mentions of evangelism in the plenaries seemed primarily cautionary – in the sense that while they (rightly) draw attention to abuses of the Word and the problem of proselytism, no positive picture was offered of the possibilities of healing and reconciling evangelistic practices.

#### 4.5.5.4 Lack of Debate on Inter-Faith Dialogue

The other omission has to do with the lack of in-depth discussion on interfaith dialogue or the subject of other religions. Discussion of this topic was only limited to one synaxis with the title ‘Religious Plurality and Christian Self-understanding’ which generated so much debate that it was allocated more time by its presenters so as to respond to issues that were raised by participants, a point which Gyadu takes as significant to show “how close the issues of religious pluralism are to the hearts of people” (Gyadu 2005:374).

This important subject should have been put on the Athens agenda given the contemporary globalised world with the kind of challenges it brings due to “religious pluralism”, “intensified intercultural migration”, “religion based violence” challenges with “Christian-Muslim relations” and so on (Grundman 2005:551; Gyadu 2005:346). The subjects of healing, violence and reconciliation would have been enhanced by a discussion on inter-religious dialogue (Thomas 2005:456).

There is a school of thought that would have wanted to see Athens build on the theologies of former conferences such as San Antonio 1989 (Grundman 2005; Athyal 2005). Back then, San Antonio had declared that in that “We cannot point to any other way of salvation than Jesus Christ; at the same time we cannot set limits to the saving power of God...we appreciate this tension but do not attempt to resolve it”. There were some evangelicals who felt this did not go far enough but there are also others who felt that in Athens something more significant should have been added to this. Athyal suggests; “An understanding of

mission in relation to people of other faiths was the subject matter of several CWME conferences of the past; should this process not be continued, especially in the context of increasing religion-based violence and fundamentalism across the globe?" (2005:536). Perhaps it would have seemed appropriate for Athens to give a prominent place to issues of other faiths, particularly given the presence of the "wider constituency" at this conference. This would have perhaps generated the genesis of a healthy discussion on the matter since it is one of the key areas of divergence between the ecumenical movement and members of the "wider constituency" of which the evangelical movement is a part. However, there is reason to believe that issues of interfaith relations might have been deliberately left out due to the very presence of the "wider constituency" as Kinnamon puts it "I suspect that the issue of interfaith relations was not on the agenda because it is simply too sensitive in light of expanded participation" (Kinnamon 2005:392). The issue of dialogue with other faith has been a thorny issue between evangelicals and ecumenicals particularly when it comes to the "question of a more or less positive evaluation of religious convictions and ethical choices of people who do not confess Christ..." (Matthey 2001:433). Even within ecumenism, contrary to popular opinion there is no unanimity within WCC on this question (Matthey 2001:432). Bringing this question up in this wider constituency, given this background and that of Canberra would have been tantamount to fuelling unnecessary tension which probably would have gone counter the spirit of reconciliation which Athens was trying to cultivate. This suspicion may have been warranted given the nature of the debate that obtained in this synaxis such that it had to be repeated. Kinnamon seems to exhibit some discomfort in that the synaxis was not conclusive in its deliberations. It would seem that he understood this synaxis as an attempt to go beyond the San Antonio formulation but in his view, the wider constituency "was not ready to say anything more positive about the place of other faiths, in God's plan of salvation" and to this Kinnamon concluded that this is a "vivid reminder that, while new partners at the table can enrich conversation, they can also complicate it" (2005:393).

While there were those who had hoped to build on former theologies of religions, there was, as hinted by Kinnamon, those who did not seem keen to develop a positive outlook on other faiths. Commenting on the one synaxis that dealt, with religious pluralism,

Engelsviken says that this synaxis was marked by lively debate and yet at the same time the evangelicals were quite suspicious about the CWME's draft document entitled "Religious Plurality and Christian Understanding" which was presented as preparatory paper no.13. This paper, which was a product of study that had been carried out since 2002 at the proposal of the WCC central committee to the staff teams of Faith and Order, Interreligious Relations and Mission and Evangelism commissions (Matthey (ed) 2008:113). The document was making it for the first time onto the scene in Athens and seems to not have been made available before the conference (Engelsviken 2005:191). From the WCC's perspective the document was presented for purposes of discussion and debate and it was not "intended to contain a final or ecumenically agreed wisdom on the issue of Christian understanding in a religiously plural world" (Matthey (ed) 2008:113). This document raised the term hospitality as a hermeneutical key in developing its theology of religions (Matthey (ed) 2008:119).

The hospitality hermeneutic draws from the incarnation of Christ in that in the self-emptying of Christ, we see "God's deepest identification with our human condition, showing the unconditional grace of God that accepted humankind in its otherness and estrangement" (2008:120). It is from this grace of God shown in Christ that we should draw "an attitude of hospitality in our relationship to others." The document asserts that biblical hospitality is described "primarily as a radical openness to others based on the affirmation of the dignity of all." This is then connected to the work of the Holy Spirit, whose work is taken to be "present in the life and traditions of peoples of living faiths." (:121) which locates the presence and activity of God in other people outside of the Christian faith. Since other people testify of "having found wholeness, or enlightenment, or divine guidance, or rest, or liberation" and since this is similar to "the context in which we as Christians testify to the salvation we have experienced through Christ", it follows that "This ministry of witness among our neighbours of other faiths must presuppose an 'affirmation of what God has done and is doing among them' (CWME San Antonio 1989)" (:121). This preparatory paper seems to advise Christians to take a lenient view towards affirmations of other faiths and view them as containing germs of the will God with which Christians are to come to terms. Quoting the San Antonio statement, the paper admonishes Christians to affirm their

“openness to the possibility that the God we know in Jesus Christ may encounter us also in the lives of our neighbours of other faiths”, it then affirms that the Holy Spirit will “lead us to understand anew the deposit of the faith already given to us, and into fresh and unforeseen insight into the divine mystery, as we learn more from our neighbours of other faiths” (:121). The concept of hospitality comes with the possibility that as we love our neighbours as ourselves there is an opportunity that we might discover God anew. Hospitality is also taken as providing the possibility of mutual transformation between the Christian faith and other faiths. While one agrees that interaction with other faith enhances missiological approach by virtue of having learnt about the faith of one’s neighbour, the discussion in the papers seems to suggest that the Christian faith stands to benefit from such mutual exchange since, as the assumption goes, “God may talk to us through others to teach and transform us” (:122). Thus the document calls for ‘religious hospitality’ and the creation of a theology to this end which will work to help Christians “embrace the ‘other’ in their otherness”. Since we are limited as humans, “it is impossible for any community to have exhausted the mystery of the salvation God offers to humankind” and since we are limited by our experience “we cannot hope to deal with the scope of God’s work of mending the world” (:124).

The document’s proposal to hold hospitality as an essential element in a theology of religions to address issues of religious plurality did not go down well with conservative evangelical delegates. To this Engelsviken (:191) says, “Although the paper did not neatly fit into any preconceived category of theology of religion, evangelicals viewed it with some suspicion as possibly another expression of a pluralist theology.” Evangelicals were still not satisfied with the position that the CWME had reached back in 1989 in San Antonio in the statement, “We cannot point to any other way of salvation than Jesus Christ; at the same time we cannot set limits to the saving power of God”. Evangelicals wanted the CWME to come up with a stronger Christocentric pronouncement when it comes to matters of other religions. Engelsviken summarises the mood of the evangelicals in this regard when he says (2005:191):

From an evangelical, and indeed a world Christian, point of view, there is a strange reluctance within leading ecumenical mission circles to courageously and humbly witness to Jesus Christ as the only Savior, and to

accept confrontation with other religions when this confession is denied. Some wonder why the ecumenical movement's unapologetic application of ethical and political standards in its confrontation with economic and political evil and injustice is not reflected in equal measure in its application of biblical theological standards to evil or untruth in the religious realm.

The problem with the hospitality model is that it tends to baptise non-Christian socio-religious experiences as similar to authentic Christian experiences simply on the basis of similarity with Christianity or perceived uniqueness of such religions. Such a theological hermeneutic argues from experience to Christology and not the other way. The use of incarnation needs to be looked at closely to see if such a model is adequate to argue for hospitality. The incarnation of Christ should lead to incarnational ministry or theology but to say that it should lead to the hospitality of other religions seems to be stretching it. To identify with other people is agreeable as a missiological *modus operandi* but it should not necessarily lead to the identification of the religious experiences of such people with salvific aspects as they are known in Scripture or Christian theology. Furthermore the notion of mutual transformation needs to be qualified so that the sort of the transformation sought is clear. By emphasising that 'salvation belongs to God and the God alone knows the scope of salvation in the world' seems to give the impression that there might be salvific elements in other religions which we are yet to discover and might probably get to know them through the practice of "religious hospitality". Understood this way, this concept becomes detrimental to the evangelistic task as understood by evangelicals because it mars the absolute uniqueness of Jesus Christ.

#### 4.5.5.5 The Role of the Church from the South

One perception that came out of Athens was that the dynamic churches of the south were not quite at home in this conference. Steuernagel thinks that (2005:420) "CWME seemed unable to talk about mission with a sense of passion and enchantment". He felt that the conference was heavy and critical on mission; a phenomenon he thinks keeps CWME a prisoner of its own past. He argues that the old western style of criticism to mission which was still prevalent in CWME fails to interpret the church of the South and the missionary movement emerging from this community. It also generates a paralysis that affects the

impact and contribution of mission experiences that the church of the South could bring to CWME. While he acknowledges that there was room in the 'home groups' of the conference to interact and experience possibilities of paradigm shift in mission, he stresses that the church of the South needs a wider space within the tents of CWME to "allow for the freshness of that church and of the emerging mission movement to blow freely and unashamedly..." (2005:429). Steuernagel's concerns were also echoed by Kwabena Asamoah Gyadu who observed that Athens still relied a lot on western missionary expertise which to him boils down to reducing mission to an academic discipline "devoid of the deeply spiritual focus that African Christians usually bring in that endeavour" (2005:346).

#### 4.6 Conclusion

I have attempted to give an overview of the Athens conference with special reference to the missiological themes that emerged in the plenaries. The analytic contributions in the articles written by some of the participants at this conference have been used to give a balanced perspective of the mission theology of this conference. New mission paradigms were introduced while old ones were reinstated and expanded. *Missio Dei* was expanded to include *missio ecclesiae*, while pneumatology, healing and reconciliation were introduced as new paradigms relevant to the challenges of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Evangelism did not feature prominently at this conference, an issue that was highly criticized by the evangelical constituency. The notable absence of inter-faith dialogue on the plenary was due to the sensitivities of the participants and did not necessarily denote a change of missiological.

## Chapter Five

### The Cape Town Conference

#### 5.1 Introduction

This chapter will give an appraisal of the Lausanne conference that took place in Cape Town in 2010.” In the first part of this chapter, I attempt to give a critical overview of the affirmations of the *Cape Town Commitment* (hereafter the CTC), which is the official document that was produced in Cape Town. In the second part of the chapter, I attempt to give a critical assessment of the contemporary evangelical mission theology coming out of the CTC and some proceedings of the congress, though material covering the congress is quite scarce. In my analysis of the CTC and the congress, I will try to establish whether this congress registered any paradigm shift. I will discuss the role that the notion of the kingdom of God and *missio Dei* may have played Lausanne’s theology in assessing whether it contributed anything towards a paradigm shift. I will also argue that the evangelicalism we seen in Lausanne was endeavouring to set itself in continuity with both the spirit of 19<sup>th</sup> century evangelicalism as well as the Edinburgh World Missionary Convention and that it is this axis that keeps the proclamation aspect alive and central to the evangelistic missiology.

#### 5.2 Conference setting and background

This meeting took place from 16-25 October 2010 in Cape Town South Africa. The conference was attended by 4200 delegates from 198 countries. Its main goal was “to bring a fresh challenge to the global Church to bear witness to Jesus Christ and all his teaching – in every nation, every sphere of society, and in the realm of ideas” (CTC 2010:3). The *Cape Town Commitment* is the official document that came out of this conference. In its preparatory state, the first part of the document was initially drafted in Minneapolis in December 2009 by 18 theologians from all continents and the second part of the document was the result of a three year process before the 2010 congress. During this time the deputy directors of the Lausanne Movement held consultations with their regional Christian leaders in to “identify major challenges facing the church” (CTC 2010:3). The six key

issues that came out of these consultations formed the foundation upon which the congress programme was built as well as the basis for the “framework for the call to action.”(CTC 2010:3) During the conference, the Statement Working Group recorded the contributions of the delegates resulting in the final formulation of the CTC as an official document. This chapter will therefore carry out a study of this document since it represents the overall theological position of the congress.

### **5.3 The Cape Town Commitment**

The *Cape Town Commitment* was built on official documents from two major congresses preceding Cape Town, i.e. *Lausanne Covenant* of 1974 and the *Manila Manifesto* of 1989. Cape Town reaffirmed its commitment to these primary documents. In its preamble, the *Commitment* reaffirms Lausanne’s commitment to the evangelization task of “bearing worldwide witness to Jesus Christ and all his teaching.” This reaffirmed the importance of evangelism and conversion. It states that there are unchanging realities upon which the Commitment has based its threefold rationale for missional engagement. These unchanging realities maintain that, ‘*human beings are lost*’, ‘*the gospel is good news*’ and the ‘*Church’s mission goes on*’. (CTC 2010:5) The LC’s definition and catch phrase for evangelisation, “*the whole church taking the whole gospel to the whole world*” was renewed and reformulated in the language of love, which was the framework under which the whole statement was formulated. Under the CTC evangelisation became a commitment “*to be the whole Church, to believe, obey, and share the whole gospel and to go to the whole world to make disciple of all nations*” (CTC 2010:6).

The Commitment is in two major sections namely theory and praxis. Framed in the language of love the first part contains affirmations/confession of faith under the title ‘For the Lord we Love’. This part seems to bear much of the newer version of the theological undergirding of mission. The second part of the Statement is a call to action under the title ‘For the Lord we Serve’, and it outlines areas of activities to which churches should apply themselves.

### 5.3.1 Part I. The Cape Town Confession of Faith

The first part which is a Confession of Faith explores ten different aspects of the love of/for God and how it is the basis for all evangelisation.

It starts by affirming that God's mission flows directly from his love, "we love God because God first loved us." Our love for God in turn inspires our mission in world evangelisation. In framing the Statement in the language of love, the Lausanne was endeavouring to show the biblical nature, origin and extent of love by declaring love for God, neighbour, church and world. The love for the Trinity denounces greed, religious pluralism and philosophies and affirms to love God "above all rivals" while affirming the uniqueness of Christ. This love for God is motivated by the desire to see God glorified which is taken to be the main motivation for mission – the glory of God. This motivation for mission should drive people into proclaiming the name of Jesus so that this name does not remain "unknown", "ignored", "blasphemed" and so forth. Apologetics was given a significant role in the CTC missiology. In keeping with Lausanne's evangelistic thrust, the motivation for the glory of God in this world should not only result in witness but should include a "robust but gracious defence of the truth of the gospel of Christ, God's Son." The confession makes a connection between the love of God and motivation for mission, the glory of God.

The statement further affirms its theology on the Trinity. The "Fatherhood of God" is taken as a key confession that reveals the nature of God's relationship not only to his people but also in the giving of his Son to the whole world. Our mission can draw from the Father's acts in the Old Testaments, in the harmony of atonement between the Father and the Son as well as in his character which we are to reflect as taught in the Sermon on the Mount. This confession is tied to the love for the Son as the only "*Saviour, Lord and God.*" There is an affirmation on the uniqueness of Jesus from his birth, life, ministry, death, resurrection and ascension with a call to obey his commands and to "*bear witness to Jesus Christ and all his teaching.*" It is in "Christ alone that God has achieved salvation for the world". Love for the Holy Spirit is affirmed and he is taken as the "*missionary Spirit sent by the Father and the missionary Son, breathing life and power into God's missionary Church.*" The statement then explores the different roles that the Holy Spirit played in the Old

Testament, in the New Testament on the day of Pentecost and beyond as well as the Spirit's contemporary engagement in mission.

In the pneumatology of the CTC, the Holy Spirit is key in the process of witnessing Christ and in making proclamation effective. In language resembling that of ecumenical theological expatiations, there is a connection between the Spirit and works of 'liberation and justice' in the Old Testament. This is made with particular reference to servants who were filled with the Holy Spirit for service, in particular the prophets. The role of the Spirit in mission is multidimensional covering a whole range of activities encompassing evangelism, diverse forms of social engagement whether physical, spiritual, political, economic as well as environmental issues.

The Biblicist element characteristic of evangelical theology is seen in the section where the CTC expounds on the love for God's Word. The statement draws attention to the Bible's revelatory nature in that it reveals to us who God is, making it the primary witness to the Lord Jesus Christ. Furthermore the Bible also gives us the story of creation, fall, redemption in history and new creation. The CTC emphasizes that the Bible teaches the truth and the whole counsel of God and is trustworthy in all its affirmations. The Bible is affirmed as the absolute truth in contradistinction to theological approaches that display relativism. This claim should lead to the defence of the truths claims of the Bible. It is sufficient in salvific matters and Christian theology at large. While not mentioning the terms inerrancy or infallibility which had been a cause of great debate in 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> century evangelicalism, the confession stresses four key issues central to the Bible. These are the revelatory nature of the Bible in its revealing of God in Christ Jesus, the redemptive story contained in the Bible, the salvific truth it teaches and the ethics it requires.

The *CTC*'s confession (7) subtitled "We love God's World" portrays an expanded version of its missiology which is probably more comprehensive than any of its previous mission statements. This is perhaps the section that bears the current thinking of the Lausanne on issues of social concern. The terminology employed is characteristic of renewed social consciousness within the movement's mission theology. The love for the world, which is characteristic of the activist nature of evangelicalism is explicated in a fivefold manner.

### *Ecological Responsibility*

Firstly there is an emphasis on commitment to caring for creation as a demonstration of our love for God. “If Jesus is Lord of the earth, we cannot separate our relationship with Christ from how we act in relation to the earth” (:7a). This is referred to as our *prophetic ecological responsibility* which includes supporting of those Christians whose particular mission calling is to environmental advocacy and action. Caring for creation is a “gospel issue” and the gospel includes individual persons, society and creation at large, aspects that must be addressed in integral mission. These three aspects were all tainted by sin and thus stand “included in the redeeming love and mission of God; all three must be part of the comprehensive mission of God’s people” (CTC 7a). This can be seen as a maturing of the theology of ecology which had not yet found a concrete place in evangelical missiology, though it already existed in the theologies expounded by evangelical scholars such as John Stott, Christopher Wright and others whose works bore treatments on the ecological responsibility of Christian mission.

### *Cultural Diversity and Ethnicity*

Secondly, the love for the world deals with issues of *cultural diversity and ethnicity*. It calls for preservation and protection of the diversity of cultures and equally rejects racism and ethnocentrism. There however is emphasis on the fact that Godly love will “also include critical discernment” of these cultures since “all cultures show not only positive evidence of the image of God in human lives, but also the negative fingerprints of Satan and sin.” Because of this state, all cultures stand in need of evangelism as a result of which Lausanne renewed its commitment to “use every possible means to reach all peoples with the gospel” (CTC 7b). Lausanne here is careful to maintain consistency with the tradition established by previous congresses dating back to Wheaton and Berlin in which the role of evangelism is seen as crucial to any sort of social transformation. There is also, in this articulation, an endeavour to perhaps address relativism by pointing out the primacy of evangelism in the transformation of cultures regardless of how positive those cultures may seem.

### *The Poor and the Suffering*

The third aspect (*CTC 7c*) is in respect to the world's *poor and suffering*. This is the section in which the Lausanne articulates a missiology which to a great extent seemed to resonate with the theological idioms that had been crucial in missiological circles since 1980 in both ecumenical and evangelical movements. The 1980s saw a great articulation of the theology of the poor in Latin America by the Catholics in 1979 and by the evangelicals and among ecumenicals in Melbourne 1980. The same showed up in High Leigh 1980, CRESR 1982 and WEF Wheaton in 1982. The CTC seems to build on these theologies. The Commitment goes further than just emphasizing on philanthropic aspects of social responsibility, which had been the official position taken by the CRESR document of 1982, to involvement in issues of justice through “exposing and opposing all that oppresses and exploits the poor.” The Commitment affirms the “promotion of justice, including solidarity and advocacy on behalf of the marginalized and oppressed.” The struggle against evil is then given a spiritual dimension which requires spiritual warfare which can only be successfully carried out through the power of the Holy Spirit. There is in this case a connection between pneumatology and the poor. The church plays a role in advocacy and the waging of spiritual warfare. This is consistent with the language of *Manila Manifesto* where the church is seen as liberating the poor both spiritually and physically. The issue of denunciation of evil and injustice is found LC5, repeated in the *Manifesto* and re-affirmed in *CTC* with more detail. It seems that by 2010 the socio-political language had finally found a home in evangelical theological articulation of mission.

### *People of Other Faiths*

The fourth aspect of love for the world includes *love for neighbours* which is based on the “heart of the gospel”. This love for our enemies embraces “people of other faiths, and extends to those who hate us, slander and persecute us and even kills us” (*CTC 7d*). The article encourages the upholding of the Christ-like ethic of responding to lies with truth, and to carry out acts of kindness as a way of responding to those who are hostile.

### *Morality and Ethics*

Lastly the Commitment denounces love for what it terms “the world of sinful desire, greed and human pride.” Such a world and its transient desire will only be fully healed at the eschaton (:7e). This is to a certain extent in line with the persistent call for personal and social morality that had become characteristic of evangelical teaching. This was evident in the preaching of such evangelists as Moody in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century and was also noticeable among fundamentalists and the neo-evangelicals such as Billy Graham and others.

### *The Gospel*

Love for the Gospel is another dimension of love explicated in the first part of the Commitment. By emphasising the uniqueness of the good news of the gospel in a fallen world this rubric brings out the crucicentric aspect of evangelicalism, an aspect that conservative evangelicals remained eager to maintain in a relativistic world. There is affirmed the centrality of the salvation through Jesus Christ in the teaching of the gospel. The main point here is the uniqueness of Christ alone as the person through whom salvation and truth are obtained. Further emphasis is put on the ethical transforming work of the gospel in the world. This is explicated in Paul as the work of grace which is obtained by faith alone. This saving faith must be lived out through obedience.

### *Unity and Partnership in Mission*

This dimension is followed by the love for people of God (*CTC* 9a-c). Lausanne calls for *unity and partnership* in the gospel for the “sake of Christ and the mission of God in all the world.” It goes on to stress the importance of honesty and truth in guiding the people of God in areas where they exhibit “failure, idolatry and rebellion against their covenant Lord.” This love also calls for solidarity with those who are being persecuted for their faith and witness. The Commitment lays out different ways of standing with and supporting the people going through such persecution.

### 5.3.2 Part II. The Cape Town's Call to Action

The second part of the Commitment entitled, "For the World we Serve", outlines six missiological themes towards which churches are to focus their priorities and activities. These mission themes correspond to the ten affirmations of love for the Lord in part one and they are shaped in a Christocentric locus. Each theme has its axis in Christ and its mode of operation is formulated in such a way as to link it to or highlight how one of the attributes of Christ impacts/operates in a given service. The themes can be categorized as follows; pluralism in a globalized world, peace and reconciliation in the world, other faiths/religions, evangelisation, ecclesiology and lastly unity in mission. This section actually articulates much of *CTC*'s comprehensive theology which corresponds quite closely to affirmations 7 and 10 of the "confession of faith" summarised above. It will be seen through the appraisal of this theology that some of the statements of the *CTC* somewhat fit into some of Bebbington's characterization of evangelicalism.

#### *Witness in Pluralistic Globalised World*

The first theme (*CTC* IIA) deals with *bearing witness to the truth of Christ in a pluralistic globalized world* and this section bears the crucicentric emphasis of evangelical theology. In this case issues of pluralism, universalism and relativism are rejected in favour of the attribute of truth which is only found in Christ. The church is thus called upon to bear witness "to the truth of Christ in a pluralistic, globalized world" and in carrying out this task, "spoken proclamation of the truth of the gospel remains paramount in our mission." The person of Jesus Christ is asserted as the truth of the universe. This truth is not only personal and propositional but it is also universal, contextual, ultimate and present. The question of the truth of Christ in a postmodern relativist pluralistic world requires that the absolute truth be upheld and that "robust apologetics" be employed to withstand the challenges brought about by this relativist culture. This calls for the identification and equipment of those "who can engage at the highest intellectual and public level in arguing for and defending biblical truth in the public arena." The Bible provides an absolute standard of truth. Contrary to postmodernity which rejects the idea of absolute truth. This truth is to be proclaimed with prophetic relevance to the public and to culture in general.

In order for this truth to be embedded in the secular world, the *CTC* discards what it terms “the falsehood of a sacred-secular divide” and calls for “whole-life discipleship” which seeks to equip every lay-Christian to “live, think, work and speak from a biblical worldview and with missional effectiveness in every place or circumstance of daily life and work.” Whole life discipleship is extended to interact with public arenas, media, arts and technologies with the aim of social transformation. So Lausanne’s mission to the pluralised world is to bring Christ-centred truth through different means of proclamation available to it. There is a form of activism that can be seen in the proclamation of truth though this is different from the revivalist approach that was characteristic of modern evangelicalism.

### *Reconciliation as a Missiological Paradigm*

The second theme (*CTC* IIB) “Building the peace of Christ in our divided and broken world” can be treated under the general framework of *reconciliation as a missiological paradigm*. The starting point of peace is the reconciliation with God which must then issue in reconciliation with one another. Christ is the source of all peace and he made peace through the cross. This reconciliation extends even to the Jews who, even though they were not strangers to the covenants and promises yet also stand in need of being reconciled to God through the Messiah Jesus Christ. It follows that the locus of this reconciliation and peace is the good news of Jesus as Messiah, Lord and Saviour. This is the foundation upon which all other efforts of justice and peace need to be built. This makes it imperative to share the good news about Jesus to both Jews and Gentiles for true peace is realised through him. This biblical peace process involves an “acknowledgment of past and present sin, repentance before God, confession to the injured one, and seeking and receiving of forgiveness.” It also includes an active participation by the church in spearheading issues of justice or reparation for victims of violence or oppression.

The peace of Christ is then related to the context of *ethnic conflict*. The *CTC* affirms ethnic diversity and calls on church leaders to “teach biblical truth on ethnic diversity” while at the same time showing ethnic identity to be subordinate to the redeemed identity in Christ. Furthermore there is need to proactively root the gospel deeply in different social contexts so that the same will transform the underlying worldviews and systems of injustice so that

Christians will be better equipped to deal with conflict issues. The reconciliation propounded by *CTC* is *crucicentric* in nature. It is laid out in a threefold manner; firstly, there is a call to embrace and teach on the reconciling power of the gospel as drawn from the biblical understanding of the atonement of Jesus. Secondly Christians are encouraged to “adopt a lifestyle of reconciliation” by carrying out some practical steps such as “forgiving persecutors”, offering hospitality and “taking initiatives to cross barriers to seek reconciliation”, witnessing Christ in violent contexts and engaging in long-term healing of wounds. Thirdly the church is called to be “a beacon and bearer of hope” by proclaiming Christ through whom God is reconciling to the world to himself.

Other practical areas to which reconciliation and peace are directed in the *CTC* include the poor and the oppressed who stand in need of justice and peace and to be set free. People with disabilities and people with HIV/AIDS also feature in the *CTC* as ones who need not just medical care and social provisions but need people to stand in solidarity with them. The creation is also mentioned as one other area to which the missional call of the church should be directed. The church is urged to act responsibly and avoid lifestyles that promote environmental destruction and pollution. In line with the 7a above, the *CTC* called for the church to exercise its prophetic role in calling for climate change by exerting “legitimate means to persuade governments to put moral imperatives above political expediency on issues of environmental destruction and potential climate change.”

### *People of Other Faiths*

The third missiological theme pertains to *people of other faiths* *CTC* (IIC). The love of Christ is here highlighted as the virtue that needs to guide how Christians ought to live and work among people who do not share the Christian faith. As such the Commitment affirms that love for neighbours includes people of other faiths but this love should not hamper the evangelization of the non-Christian. Thus in relating to such there is need to be “gentle, but not naïve; to be discerning and not gullible, to be alert to whatever threats we may face, but not ruled by fear.” There is need to evangelize and share the gospel with people of other faiths as opposed to proselyting. In doing so the *CTC* affirms what it terms “the proper

place for dialogue” which “combines the confidence in the uniqueness of Christ and in the truth of the gospel with respectful listening to others” (IIC1).

### *World Evangelization*

The fourth thematic area is that of *world evangelization* (IID). It is to be carried out in accordance with Christ’s will. It is the will of God that all people have access to the knowledge of God’s love and his saving work in Christ Jesus. The *CTC* emphasizes the need to focus on the unreached and unengaged peoples. “These are people who are unreached, in the sense that there are no known believers and no churches among them.” There are also people who are said to be unengaged in the sense that there are no known “churches or agencies that are even trying to share the gospel with them.” As a result the *CTC* renewed its commitment to go and engage with those who have not heard the gospel. This takes different forms but the main emphasis was put on eradicating “Bible poverty”, “Bible ignorance”, and promoting Bible literacy. In a manner that is reminiscent of previous evangelical affirmations on evangelism, there is, in this rubric, an exhortation to “keep evangelism at the centre of the fully-integrated scope of all our mission, inasmuch as the gospel itself is the source, content and authority of all biblically-valid mission.”

### *Ecclesiology*

The fifth missiological theme is related to *ecclesiology* (IIE). The church is called to exhibit the humility, integrity and simplicity of Christ. The section calls on the church to establish its distinctiveness on issues of morality. The conduct of Christians is crucial to the message they carry to the world. There is a call to maintain a biblical framework of morality since biblical ‘mission’ is related to ‘biblical living’. The Commitment goes further to articulate its position on issues of marriage and sexuality. It asserts that marriage is a “faithful relationship between one man and one woman” which is the only arena through which sexual intercourse is to be enjoyed. This union, the *CTC* maintains, “reflects both Christ’s relationship with the Church and also the unity of Jew and Gentile in the new humanity.” This is contrasted with disordered sexuality which Paul discourages as being out of line

with the will of God. The Lausanne encourages open discussions about sexuality in the churches while at the same time teaching “biblical standards of sexual faithfulness.” There is strong emphasis on strengthening faithful marriages and family life. The church is encouraged to resist the different forms of disordered sexuality practised in the different cultures. With regards to homosexuality, the Lausanne urges the church to “seek to understand and address the deep heart issues of identity and experience which draw some people into homosexual practice...” Such people are to be reached with “love, justice and compassion for Christ...”

#### *Unity and Partnership in Mission*

The sixth theme has to do with *uniting and partnering for mission* within the body of Christ. Under this rubric, four areas are spelled out (IIF). Firstly, there is need for unity in the church so that a united church can face a divided world. Secondly there is need for partnership in global mission. This partnership is to be girded in the “supremacy and centrality of Christ”, a factor that should also “govern our strategy, practice and unity.” There is a rejection of the thinking that the baton of mission has now passed from the West to the rest of the world; rather mission needs to be done collectively. Thirdly the Lausanne touches on the partnership of men and women in ministry. This section seems to emphasize the equality of men and women in ministry particularly given the fact that both are endowed with the Spirit and gifts of grace to serve in the church. The last area has to do with theological education and mission. Just as the mission of the church is taken by Lausanne as having the purpose to serve the mission of God, “the mission of theological education is to strengthen and accompany the mission of the church.” Theological education is therefore taken as “intrinsically missional” and those who are involved in teaching it are called upon to make it “intentionally missional”.

#### **5.4 Analysis of the Mission Theology of Lausanne III**

The question “Has the Lausanne Movement Moved?” which Jonathan J. Bonk poses as the title of his introductory article in the *International Bulletin of Missionary Research* (35:2011) is a key question to ask in assessing the theological shifts that obtained in Lausanne since 1974. Having been raised by other theologians such as Robert Schreiter

2011:89 such a question in a way seeks to establish whether there has been any significant paradigm shift in Lausanne missiology. A paradigm shift, according to the Merriam-Webster dictionary is, “an important change that happens when the usual way of thinking about or doing something is replaced by a new and different way”. While this concept was introduced by the physicist Thomas Kuhn to be applied on natural sciences, Bosch, justifies its usage on theology and mission (Bosch 1991:185) arguing that theology of mission has gone through changes over time that warrant such a scientific probe. In so doing, Bosch, admits that paradigm shifts do not occur in the same manner within theological and missiological fields as they do in natural sciences. In natural sciences “the new paradigm usually replaces the old, definitely and irreversibly” while in theology ““old” paradigms can live on...in another sense, the old paradigm seldom disappears completely.’ (1991:186) It follows that the rationale for determining the possibility of a paradigm shift lies in the fact that Christian mission has over a period of time been confronted with challenging issues to which the church has tried to apply herself in responses that are relevant to the times and contexts involved and in line with the precepts of the Christian faith. The process of responding theologically to different contexts might have brought about shifts in missiological outlook and even practice. As contemporary Christians (1991:188-189):

We live in a world fundamentally different from that of the nineteenth century, let alone earlier times. The new situation challenges us, across the board, to an appropriate response...The contemporary world challenges us to practice a “transformational hermeneutics”, a theological response which transforms us first before we involve ourselves in mission to the world.

The use of the integral mission concept is considered by some as an introduction of a paradigm shift in evangelical missiology, (Ronsen 2016:9). In attempting to establish the shift in evangelical missiology the key question that Ronsen asks succinctly has to do with what “mission” is within the framework of ‘integrated mission’ concept expressed in the key documents of Lausanne (2016:10). This is to say in this endeavour, the *Cape Town Commitment* not only needs to be analysed from the viewpoint of the theology it produced in 2010 but also in view of the previous statements of the movement particularly the three major congresses and of the consultations which dealt with issues related to the subject at hand. Robert Schreiter (2011:88), in his theological assessment of the CTC, brings out the

idea that each genre of the official documents produced in the three major congresses of Lausanne, gives us something of a theological self-understanding of the Lausanne as well as the dynamics obtaining at each of these three congresses. A comparative study of them will thus, reveal not only missiological developments but also the intended self-understanding characterising the movement at each given time. This brings us back to our main question in this thesis in so far as how these documents and congress proceedings compare in how they defined the task of mission. Did the three congresses define mission primarily with reference to the proclamation of the gospel to the nations or did they move towards a broader definition in reference to the world (Ott et al. 2010:149). So as we look at the relationship between mission and social responsibility, we need to ask the question how the Lausanne has moved in defining, not only mission but this relationship as well. Given the place that evangelism held as an overarching missiological theme in the movement since its inauguration (Ronsen 2016:12), over the secondary role that social responsibility had been assigned, it warrants that Cape Town 2010 be appraised with a view to establishing any shifts or modifications in this regard. There had been a consistent dualism in this relationship, an aspect that had become the central area of criticism against Lausanne's missiological outlook. There is thus need to appraise the place of social responsibility vis-à-vis the previous place it was given in the preceding congresses and key consultations in Lausanne missiology.

#### **5.4.1 Lausanne III and a Paradigm shift**

That the Lausanne Movement was geared towards mission that was viewed predominantly in terms of evangelisation and church planting was clear from the start. This is a paradigm that was based on the quest to maintain continuity with the spirit of 19th century evangelicalism as well as Edinburgh 1910, and was maintained as the overarching theme in this movement.

This theme was reiterated at Cape Town, but at this congress it was articulated in the context of a comprehensive missiology. The term “integral mission” was adopted to convey the idea of a multi-dimensional missiology (5c) encompassing diverse mission aspects particularly the integration of “proclamation of the gospel and inviting people to

accept Christ as Lord and Saviour with subsequent social action leading to transformation of social structures and justice” (Ronsen 2016:32). As such, the concept of integral mission which made it into the official theology of *Cape Town Commitment* should be taken as a culmination of years of concerted effort to articulate the type of theology that encapsulates a missiology that is comprehensive. According to Ronsen (2010:9), “the integral mission concept signalled a paradigm shift in mission thinking within the evangelical church worldwide”. As discussed in chapter three, the itinerary of the concept of integral mission, started its course from the 1966 Wheaton Congress through to the 1983 Wheaton conference (Padilla). This journey as has been discussed, was by no means easy as it emerged out of a real tension-filled process of synthesising different schools of thought within the same movement particularly between 1974-1983 (Tizon 2010:69). The Lausanne Wheaton and Berlin Congresses in 1966 and the Thanksgiving Workshop on Evangelicals and Social Concern held in Chicago in 1973 acted as precursors to the 1974 International Congress on World Evangelization. It was because of these antecedents, Padilla holds, that Lausanne 1974 “turned out to be a definitive step in affirming integral mission as the mission of the church” (2003). Be that as it may, the concept did not come into much usage back then and it would take a few more years to try and get integral mission a permanent room in the evangelical theological house.

This is perhaps the place we could turn to Schreiter’s assessment of the three major congresses starting with 1974. Schreiter (2011:88) says that the genre of the document coming out this congress – “*the Covenant*”, has both a biblical basis and has roots in the Reformed Theology. The genre comes with an “implication of a chosen people setting out on a journey” and has significance in that “it marked the point where people from more than 150 nations, together for the first time, could make a common confession of their faith.” It thus reveals “the participants’ understanding of the theological significance of the event.” The movement had met together for the time and basically started on a journey before which they needed to covenant with God and themselves. As a result the first congress spoke more to the participants and to God than to those external to themselves. Its aim, Schreiter (:88), continues, was “self-understanding and self-motivation for mission” as a result of which it tended to be dichotomous in discourse as it aimed to point out “what should and what should not be believed or done.” This tone speaks to an in-

group which has deeply held tenets which became characteristic of the movement. This suggests that, even though Billy Graham had called for the discussion on evangelism and social responsibility, the one article (LC5) that dealt with this issue seemed enough for others who thought more time was needed to commit to self-description, i.e. a movement that is opposed to conciliar missiology in orthopraxis. A movement which had banded together on the basis of evangelism. So social concern might have been accepted in principle but not accepted enthusiastically, a fact that was evidenced by the radical discipleship's action to write an addendum to the *Covenant*.

With regards to Manila, the genre was the *Manifesto* which though not a biblical term was based on Luke 4:16-20, a scriptural passage which was at that period in time widely referred to as the "Nazareth Manifesto" in theological circles (Schreiter 2011:89). This moved from the inward looking approach to "an outward oriented message." This was a group which had consolidated itself and now geared to speak to an outward audience. It follows that the self-understanding displayed here was the proclamation and discipleship embodied in the Great Commission. Lausanne III came up with a genre, *The Cape Town Commitment* a genre which signified a group of people who have matured in their self-understanding and are now demonstrating a commitment to the people to whom they are sent in the mission field (2011:89). More on this will follow under section 5.4.2. Such a description of Lausanne III feeds into the assertion that this congress registered a shift from previous mission theologies. In the meantime it is worthwhile to explore and recapitulate the processes that led to the third congress's shift in mission theology.

After Lausanne 1974, the integral mission concept would find a lot of support particularly among the Two Thirds World theologians (2003). Ronald J. Sider says that early material on wholistic mission were produced by Rene Padilla, Samuel Escobar and some of their counterparts in the Latin American Theological Fraternity, as they sought to deal with liberation theology and the Marxist social analysis while articulating an understanding based on their own theological departure point (2010:33). As such, Two Thirds World theologians, had first-hand experiences of social injustice, poverty and deprivation, and they were aware of the need to propound a theology that went beyond the gospel of individualism to one that synthesised the commands to make disciples and love one's

neighbour (Ronsen 2016:32). According to Padilla, the bent towards individualism had in many cases obstructed the development of social ethics as it left aside the social dimensions of the gospel (2009:190). Doctrines based on the enlightenment idea of individualism had been focused on liberating the individual reason from dogmatism and authoritarianism or precisely they were concerned with – ‘orthodoxy’. Theology from Two Thirds World was focused on liberating people from ‘socio-economic misery’ in other words ‘orthopraxis’ (2009:190). Padilla bases his discussion on Jon Sobrino differentiation of European and Latin American theologies where he argues that even though, they both have some grounding in Enlightenment thinking, each one has a different noetic interest in that the one focuses on the individual and the other on the communal aspect. Thus, coming out of contexts of poverty and injustice, Two Thirds World advocates viewed spiritual solutions to mission as inadequate and argued for the intentional symbiosis of compassion and social action with proclamation (Ott et al. 2010:143).

The 1980s saw an increase in the efforts by evangelicals to further articulate this thinking and come up with terminologies that would indicate what it is that constituted a relevant integral missiology that was structured to address the whole person. Among the various terms used, ‘development’ was interrogated as to whether it was the right term to depict what the evangelicals were intending to do. Furthermore was ‘holism’ to be spelled with a ‘w’ or just an ‘h’ (Bryant L. Myers 2010:120). This led to the introduction of the term *transformation* or *transformative mission* since this term denoted that the gospel addressed both spiritual and physical change. At the heart of transformation mission is the idea that individuals come to Christ “challenging corrupt and sinful systems, structures and cultures and enabling individuals and communities to experience God’s transforming power” (Sider 2010:33). Christians were thus called upon to move beyond identifying sin in individuals only and identifying sin in social structures also. This understanding was carried into the subsequent formulations of holistic mission.

As noted in chapter three, Wheaton 1983 was quite significant in introducing the term ‘transformation’ as a useful missiological term. Padilla (2005), in the LOP 33 entitled ‘Holistic Mission’, asserts that Wheaton ’83 Statement marked a paradigm shift which had

taken place over the past decade prior to that consultation, hence the lack of significant advance regarding definition of holistic mission after this consultation. He points out that the lack of newer definitions was not due to lack of interest on the subject but was rather due to “the rise in Christian conscience” which led to the emergence of renewal movements in the church which saw a rise in the number of faith-based organisations engaging in actual mission work. The focus during this time was not so much on definitions as it was on praxis and what type of practice would properly characterise transformational mission (Myers 2010:120). People who were into holistic mission considered the matter a ‘case closed’ and began to “concentrate their efforts on social research of the impact of holistic mission” (Chris Sugden 2010:32).

As the evangelical community grew stronger and confident in its social consciousness in the late 80s and early 1990s, more labels surfaced and sort to refer to mission as, ‘holistic mission’, ‘wholistic development’, ‘integral development’, ‘transformational development’ and so forth (2010:120). Woolnough (2010:4) points out that among evangelicals, there had been interplay between the word holistic mission or integration mission since they both talk of the same thing and both sought to move away from the western patterns of thought which were informed by Greek dualism. Integral mission seems to have been preferred over holistic mission by the Micah challenge since the latter had been high-jacked by the New Age Movement by using is in terms such as holistic medicine. The term, continued to be used alongside the integral mission in most other evangelical treatments.

In 2001, a significant event took place when 140 evangelical leaders affiliated with the Micah Network converged in Oxford England to discuss holistic mission. This meeting adopted the Micah Declaration which officially defined biblical mission as ‘integral mission’ (Tulo Raistrick 2010:137). Contained in the concept of ‘integral mission’ is the idea that “proclamation and demonstration of the gospel” belong together. As contained in the LOP 33, Lausanne Movement, was, “seeking to identify the most significant issues in the world today which are of concern in our task to take the good news to the world.” Padilla was tasked with presenting the foundational paper on Holistic Mission, which was later endorsed as a biblical/theological foundation for the Issue Group and also for

Christian mission as a whole. This foundational paper endorsed the definition of mission which was adopted by the Micah Network which will be cited below in the ensuing discussion.

Elsewhere, Padilla (no date), defines integral mission, as “the means designed by God to carry out within history, his purpose of love and justice revealed in Jesus Christ, through church and in the power of the Holy Spirit.” He highlights that this concept, represented a paradigm shift when it was introduced by the FTL in an attempt to articulate Christian mission in a “more biblical theological framework than the traditional one”, which had been based on the influence of the modern missionary movement. Generally speaking, it could be asserted that the adoption of ‘integral mission’ in 2001 in the Micah Declaration and the subsequent usage of the term in the *CTC* in 2010, captured the general thinking of what the evangelical community had hitherto come to hold as mission in general terms. It articulated what evangelicals had been trying to do since 1974 or had started doing in practice starting the 80s. As such the *CTC*’s articulation of mission seems more elaborate, intentional and expanded. It is the view of this thesis that, the thinking present in *CTC* is reminiscent of the theological expositions by evangelicals from both the conservative and conciliar streams between the 80s and the first decade of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Much of the theology of the *CTC* seems to crystalize the general direction of mission propounded by these theologians with perhaps an emphasis on biblical footing or proof texting. It is such a theology that in a way represents a new paradigm, or as Padilla puts it, a paradigm that is not so new since it is in essence, “the recovery of the biblical concept of mission...faithful to the teaching of Scripture to the extent that is placed at the service of the Kingdom of God and justice.” The kingdom of God seems to have been one of the hermeneutical departure points that was used by some theologians to argue for evangelical integral mission which touched on sub-rubrics such as ecclesiology, ecology, social justice and reconciliation and so forth. Some of these sub rubrics would be in order.

#### **5.4.2 Integral Mission as Mission of God**

By the time of Lausanne III, the question no longer seemed to be whether Christians should be involved in social responsibility or not. Rather the controversy lay on how such responsibility “might appropriately be expressed and upon what theological basis it should

proceed” (Melvin Tinker 2009:148). Thus the theology contained in the *CTC* should be looked at as such an endeavour carried out on a congressional level. The theology of mission in the *CTC* is contained in the article 7 of the confession and article 10 of the practical section of the document. One particular section that is of significance to this thesis is the clause on ‘the mission of God’. The Lausanne did not necessarily use the term *missio Dei* in this document, neither did the term surface during the official congress proceedings, (Stanley Green 2011). Before the turn of the century, evangelical mission was characterised by strong Christology. In other words evangelicalism had been Christocentric in its spiritual life as well as its concept of mission. Evangelical scholars, such as Samuel Escobar, advocated for a new and biblical understanding of the Triune God in order that “we may look at our Lord the way Scripture presents him in relation to the Father and the Spirit” (2000:114). Escobar points out that due to the consensus of practitioners and missiologists in dialogue such a view became common in evangelical mission documents, such as the *Lausanne Covenant* and those produced by working groups and consultations with the WEF (:114). The view of mission as arising from the ‘self-giving love of the Triune God’ and the arrival of the messianic kingdom through Jesus Christ are common premises in such documents. Such an understanding of mission as emanating from God, though not defined in the classical fashion of *missio Dei*, led to the understanding of mission as “God’s mission” with a crucicentric locus in Cape Town. As the *CTC* puts it, “It is God’s mission...grounded at its centre in the redeeming victory of the cross” (*CTC* 10b). This mission is directed at the “the whole of God’s creation”. Furthermore, mission was propounded in a formulation similar to that of the *missio-Dei*:

Our participation in God’s mission. God calls his people to share his mission. The Church from all nations stands in continuity through the Messiah Jesus with God’s people in the Old Testament. With them we have been called through Abraham and commissioned to be a blessing and a light to the nations. With them, we are to be shaped and taught through the law and the prophets to be a community of holiness, compassion and justice in a world of sin and suffering. We have been redeemed through the cross and resurrection of Jesus Christ, and empowered by the Holy Spirit to bear witness to what God has done in Christ. The Church exists to worship and glorify God for all eternity and to participate in the transforming mission of God within history. Our mission is wholly derived from God’s mission, addresses the whole of God’s creation, and is grounded at its centre in the

redeeming victory of the cross. This is the people to whom we belong, whose faith we confess and whose mission we share.

The Lausanne explicates two aspects of mission as integral to its missiology. Firstly since the source of mission is rooted in the redemption that God brought to the world through Christ, it follows that there must be an evangelistic task whose aim is to make known this good news to the world. Secondly, since mission takes place in the context of the world in which we live “our mission must therefore reflect the integration of *evangelism and committed engagement* in the world, both being ordered and driven by the whole revelation of the gospel of God” (10b). The document further highlights that “Integral mission is the *proclamation and demonstration* of the gospel” (CTC10b). “Integral Mission” thus seems to have been the adopted operative theological nuance in Lausanne’s missional thinking. An effort was made to connect proclamation and demonstration - two aspects that in Lausanne’s view are consequences of each other. In doing this, parts of LC 4 and 5 are reiterated in this subsection to provide, the basic presuppositions and definitions of evangelism and social responsibility as they are maintained in the movement. By quoting the Micah Declaration, the CTC goes on to give a newer version on the relationship of these two by saying:

Integral mission is the proclamation and demonstration of the gospel. It is not simply that evangelism and social involvement are to be done alongside each other. Rather, in integral mission our proclamation has social consequences as we call people to love and repentance in all areas of life. And our social involvement has evangelistic consequences as we bear witness to the transforming grace of Jesus Christ. If we ignore the world, we betray the Word of God which sends us out to serve the world. If we ignore the Word of God, we have nothing to bring to the world.

This is a deliberate move from the concepts of priority and primacy that had been introduced by CRESR and in Manila. The *Covenant* in 1974 had settled for the primary nature of evangelism in evangelical mission. Eight years later the CRESR settled for the logical priority of evangelism over social concern while expanding the relationship in a threefold manner as bridge, consequence and partnership. The *Manila Manifesto* insisted on the primacy of evangelism by pointing out that the chief concern in mission is the

preaching of the gospel for the salvation of people. Schreiter highlights that the use of the Nazareth Manifesto of Luke 4 concerning justice for the poor, which had come into wide usage in the missiological circles in 1980s, was used by Manila as a motivation for holistic mission alongside the Great Commission. This Nazareth reference, Schreiter, asserts, provides the distinctive understanding of theology in Manila (2011:89). As noted in chapter three, it was at Manila that the theology of the poor was reiterated officially following, CRESR and High Leigh showing that a certain seriousness was taking root regarding social action. Now the *Cape Town Commitment*, while introducing the term ‘integration’ into the picture, postulated ‘proclamation and demonstration’ as definitive of this integral relationship while at the same time highlighting the positive reciprocal consequences of proclamation on social engagement. Though this definition is explicated in a manner reminiscent of previous statements, it however shows that the Lausanne had been working to address the dualism that had characterised its mission thinking. Schreiter (2011:89), comments that the term ‘commitment’ used by Lausanne III connotes “a long term investment in the peoples to whom the missionary is sent and an ongoing accompaniment of them... There is a certain matured quality here that reflects a movement that has become much more self-assured.” There is a maturity that goes with the *Commitment* after four decades of missional reflection. Cape Town, brought together “a more complete biblical basis for Christian mission”, it contains a “more comprehensive theology [which] allows for a more nuanced engagement with the world” (2011:89). Schreiter (2011:90), suggests that the theology in the *CTC* seems to present a shift from the Lausanne 1974 and Manila 1989 in that it deviates somewhat from the Reformed theology which he identifies as possibly having shaped the theological outlook of the first two congresses. He asserts that the stance towards the world maintained by these congresses is shaped by the Reformed theology of the fall of Adam and Eve which “emphasizes the utter separation between God and the world because of human sin and our present helplessness before God.” Schreiter argues that such a theology, developed during the Reformation in order to emphasize the power of God’s justification of humans by faith in Jesus Christ and not by works thus such a theology “says more about God’ power and mercy than it does about humanity and the world” hence a refracted view of the humanity. He argues that the quest to overcome the “sacred-secular divide” in II.I.3, could be taken as a shift from the Reformed reading about

sin to a more world affirming outlook though this is still approached with some ambivalence based on how Scripture depicts the world as both alienated from God while at the same time being an object of God's love (John 3:16). Be that as it may, Schreiter proposes that the dissonance between Reformed theological anthropology and Cape Town missiology should be reflected onto further perhaps with a view establishing the extent of the paradigm shift in the movement.

Lausanne understanding of the mission of God, cannot necessarily be put on par with the classic *missio Dei* which incorporates the world as location of God's activity. While the Lausanne III was set to move in the direction of integral mission, it still maintained a bent towards evangelism. This perhaps is in keeping with the world-grace ambivalence that Schreiter highlighted, (2011:90). The CTC emphatically maintained an equilibrium between soteriology and anthropology within its missiology. This is to say, the evangelistic aspect leading to the salvation of souls is stressed as crucial with the societal aspects of mission being held as important in mission. The CTC is unequivocal about the place of evangelism, it says (10b):

The source of all our mission is what God has done in Christ for the redemption of the whole world, as revealed in the Bible. Our evangelistic task is to make that good news known to all nations. The context of all our mission is the world in which we live, the world of sin, suffering, injustice, and creational disorder, into which God sends us to love and serve for Christ's sake. *All our mission must therefore reflect the integration of evangelism and committed engagement in the world*, both being ordered and driven by the whole biblical revelation of the gospel of God.

There is thus a sort of an oscillation emanating perhaps from the desire to see evangelism playing a central role in overall definition of mission of God. There is an imploration in the CTC that evangelism be kept at the "centre of the fully-integrated scope of mission" (11D.1.e). Evangelism is like the pivotal axis of Lausanne's missiology.

Proceedings at the conference seem to give evidence to the same vacillation towards prioritising evangelism or at least placing evangelism in a position of more prominence.

Critical comments from three participants at this congresses would be in order. According to Stanley Green, in his comments on the congress discussions, there were a lot of “injunctions...pressing for the urgency in completing the task of world evangelization.” He points out that this call was mostly due to the tension that exists between those who feel strongly about evangelism and keeping the “the legacy and the tenor of the past” and those who “focus on a future that encompasses the totality of God’s purposes” (2011:8-9). The one side, “tied to a position that predominated at Lausanne ‘74’, pressed for and accommodated activities that led to the success of evangelism while the other side, while not denying the evangelistic task, called for “a broader definition of mission that includes justice and freedom for the poor and oppressed, food for the hungry, and healing for the diseased...” (2011:8). Green points out that from time to time there were calls from the platform to “uphold the urgency and priority of evangelism” as it is contained in 1974 and 1989 (2011:8).

In his analysis of the missiology of Cape Town, Padilla, seems to assert that the congress maintained the congress continued with its earlier approach to mission. He acknowledges that the plenaries and the discussions in between the official programme gave room for serious and rich discussions on issues relating to “present day global problems” (2011:86). He felt however, in his own words, that, “Of the twenty-two multiplexes offered during the congress, three especially could be regarded as dealing with the most critical issues affecting life in the global South: globalization, the environmental crisis, and wealth and poverty”, factors which he felt needed to receive more attention. He echoed the same observations as Green by suggesting that the congress seemed to have been inclined towards maintaining the prominence of evangelism in the overall understanding of mission. In his view, Lausanne seemed to have maintained the long age dualism that characterised its missiology. In arguing his point towards this end, he identifies some flaws he felt were exhibited in the discussions in Cape Town.

The first flaw, he identified, lies in the very definition of the Lausanne’s self-understanding of mission which states that Lausanne exists, “to strengthen, inspire and equip the Church for world evangelization in our generation, and to exhort Christians in their duty to engage in issues of public and social concern.”(LC 1974) He argues that this definition of mission

presents a dichotomy that continues to influence some segments of evangelicalism into dividing mission between the sacred, i.e. world evangelization and the secular, social concern. He notes that this definition implies that the *primary* mission of the church is world evangelisation for which the church needs to be strengthened while the “*secondary* duty for which Christians do not need to be strengthened, inspired, or equipped but only exhorted” is the social responsibility. Padilla’s argument echoes what Bosch had remarked about CRESR and the Thailand Statement (1980) that the dichotomy in Lausanne suggested that each one of the missiological components had a life of its own and could exist apart from each other, and by using the terms primary and secondary to delineate between evangelism and social action, Lausanne was in fact saying one is essential and the other optional (1991:405). Basing his arguments on the Bible readings from Ephesians 2 and 3 that were done on the second and third day of the conference, Padilla asserted that this dual thinking persisted and could be seen in the sharp difference that was seen in the presenters of those readings. The first reading emphasised the *integral* nature of the church’s mission as rooted in the mission of God in Christ, a mission which “involves the whole person in community, the whole of God’s creation and every aspect of life” (2011:87). Padilla argues that the reader derived from Ephesians 2 the fact that Jesus is our peace (14), he made our peace (15) and preached peace (17). From this Padilla talks of being, doing and proclaiming peace. He employs the term *shalom* as referring to fullness of life (2011:11). The second reader called for the urgent need in the movement to “clarify theologically the content of the mission of God’s people...” and in contrast to the previous reader, he went on to emphasize that “although the church is concerned about every form of human suffering, it is especially concerned about eternal suffering and consequently is called to give priority to the evangelization of the lost” (2011:87).

It would thus seem that up until Lausanne III, the dichotomy seems to still have been active in the minds of some of its membership and the proverbial tag of war between these two continuums still enduring. This is not to say that Lausanne III did not acknowledge the place of social responsibility in its theology, rather the problem lies with the issue of prominence. There are those in Lausanne who, while not denying the place of social engagement, nevertheless felt somewhat that it should not eclipse the place of evangelism

in doing mission. This perhaps can be discerned from the manner in which the Lausanne leadership allotted time for the discussions centred on mission during the proceedings in Cape Town. It would seem, from Padilla's articulation of what he saw as the second flaw of the congress. That he regards the failure of Lausanne to give time to discuss what he refers to as the "rich theological content of the *Cape Town Commitment*" as an indicator the Lausanne was not yet serious about deliberating at length about social theology (2011:87). He laments that the document came late during the course of the conference and there was no time to reflect on it and give comments before the closing of the conference. Furthermore it seems that efforts and recommendations to secure some sort of time to discuss the document were not granted by the executive committee. To this Padilla writes:

The negative posture taken by the organizers with regard to a recommendation by senior participants that was intended to ensure the ownership of the document by all the participants is not only inimical to the common ownership of this particular document, but it is also a sign that the Lausanne movement is still very far from attaining the sort of partnership without which it can hardly claim to be a global movement (2011:87).

Padilla seems to criticise the Lausanne's allotment of time as having something to do with the evangelical contingency which seemingly had a proclivity towards discussing matters of evangelism strategies. He compares the treatment that the *CTC* (prepared by the Theology Working Group) got with the time allotted to the chart that was prepared by the Strategy Working Group on "the strategy for the evangelization of the world in this generation (made in U.S.A.)" (2011:87). The latter received a full plenary while the former was not afforded time. With reference to the chart he says it "reflected the obsession with numbers typical of the market mentality that characterizes a sector of evangelicalism in the United States" (2011:87). It is to such an approach that Green feels that Lausanne, failed to register a broader perspective on mission. He argues that this preoccupation with the calling for human urgency in evangelism, while crucial, tended to side-line God's Spirit and therefore diminished the possibility of *missio Dei* from taking root in the discussions. This was tantamount to opting for a narrower register rather than a comprehensive embrace of mission. (2011:9)

On a praxis level, Padilla brings out what he considers as the third flaw Lausanne III. He observes that there was no official mention, despite the efforts by the Interest Group on Reconciliation, that the Lausanne III was taking place “in a country that not long ago was under the grip of apartheid and still deeply affected by socio-economic injustice.” He felt that Lausanne’s failure to “reject the theological heresies which undergirded apartheid” was a betrayal of the Lausanne Covenant (LC para.5) which states that “the message of salvation implies also a message of judgement upon every form of alienation, oppression and discrimination, and we should not be afraid to denounce evil and injustice wherever they exist.” Due to the context under which Lausanne III was taking place, a statement regarding the historical struggles of the South African community due to issues of apartheid would have been an appropriate thing to do particularly by a mission movement which was endeavouring to a missiology of social involvement. The *CTC*, however has a cursory mention in the preamble when it says, “At the same time, we could not meet in South Africa without being mindful of the past years of suffering under apartheid. So we give thanks for the progress of the gospel and the sovereign righteousness of God at work in recent history, while wrestling still with the ongoing legacy of evil and injustice.” One feels that something more could have been said by the both the *CTC* and the proceedings.

Another participant, Knud Jorgensen, in his overview of the Lausanne III, took cognisance of the emerging of discipleship and the poor as a direction towards which a shift in missiological thinking was taking place. In his article, “The Inspiration and Challenges from Cape Town and Edinburgh to Church and Mission” writes about Cape Town from the perspective of both a participant and also a member of the theology working group of the Lausanne. His focus is not so much to critique the processes and the outcome of the congress, but rather to highlight the emerging shift in mission theology as defined by the terms ‘ discipleship’ and ‘ powerlessness’. He does this by commenting on parts of the *CTC* that seem to bring out these concepts. By comparing the *Common Call*, a document produced at Edinburgh 2010 with the *Cape Town Commitment* he also highlights what he sees to be areas of possible convergence between the ecumenical and the evangelical movement.

Jorgensen points out that Cape Town exhibited a shift from “strategy and doing towards being and witnessing”. He acknowledges that since 1974, the Lausanne has been heavy on “strategies of outreach and evangelism” but went on to note that such strategies are still in place “but are now viewed from the perspective of discipleship” (2012:294). He sees the CTC as calling people to a form of discipleship that “has to do with being a counter culture, confronting a secular world...” (2012:294). Commenting on the CTC’s declaration of love in the first part of confession, Jorgensen draws the point that “it is this love that characterises the identity of the disciples” since Christ’s call is to obedient discipleship. This obedient discipleship encompasses not only the usual Christian life that people are used to but is expanded to include “care for creation and for the suffering” which is an *integrated mission* or ‘whole-life discipleship’ (2012:295).

#### **5.4.3 Priority, Primacy or Ultimacy in Integral Mission?**

The above issues have been mentioned as an endeavour to highlight that, though Lausanne III had endeavoured to become of age in painstakingly articulating mission in terms of integration of evangelism and social responsibility, the vacillation between the two terms still seems evident in both the documents and congress discussions. This makes it rather difficult to ascertain whether the problem of duality has been successfully dealt with. Both aspects have been embraced but their precise relationship both in theory and praxis still seems unresolved and remain somewhat ambiguous. Initially Lausanne had to struggle with the problem of a narrowness or broadness of the view of mission. Earlier on, some evangelicals had advocated social responsibility insofar as it ‘pragmatically’ contributed to evangelism (Ott et al. 2010:142) while others like McGavran had called for societal transformation through personal conversation and church planting (1980:43 In Ott et al. 2010:142), advocating that saved people achieve a better life than do non-Christians and this is because the salvation that Christ brings affects all aspects of life making it more just, harmonious and peaceful (1983:110). Such an understanding goes on to call for an increase in church planting so that as the influence of the church increases so will the Christian values take root in the communities the church finds itself (in Ott et. al 2010:142). This does not deny the importance of both missional aspects but struggles with what the starting point of mission should be. It follows that once mission was broadened to include social

responsibility, the next problem became that of the precise relationship of the two aspects. Prior to the Cape Town Congress, some evangelicals who argued for the biblical basis of holistic mission still held to the idea of traditional prioritism which gave clear priority to evangelism and church planting (Hesslegrave 2005, In Ott et al. 2010:143).

While the primacy of evangelism was held by conservatives, “radicals questioned the very language of prioritization” (Tizon 2010:72). The language of *prioritization* took centre stage within Lausanne and it is one that seemed to perpetuate the appearance of duality or dichotomy. There have been, however some efforts made by some evangelicals to try and resolve this dichotomy or at least the appearance of it. Ronsen (2016:21), for instance, argues that Bosch’s argument against CRESR and the Pattaya Statement 1980 is legitimately questionable since it fails to give primacy to the proclamation of Christ, which is the *raison d’être* for social action. In doing so, Ronsen makes the point that within evangelicalism there is a general consensus that Christian mission requires proclamation and that while there is a consensus that mission involved both evangelism and social action, any attempts to equate the two could impair the concept of Christian mission and the Great commission. With this Ronsen stresses the concept of integral mission espoused in the CTC and emphasised the idea of ‘proclamation and demonstration’ as contained therein (:23).

In an attempt to show that Lausanne III sought to clarify the relationship between proclamation and social concern, Ronsen (2016:21), made reference to Christopher Wright’s proposal to replace the term priority with the term ‘primacy’. Wright explores the use of the term priority by making the argument that in an integral mission, evangelism can still be considered primary for the reason that Christian social responsibility presupposes the existence of socially active Christians which in turn presupposes such Christians would have come to faith through evangelism. Chronologically and theologically, evangelism would thus have primacy (Wright 2006:316). In an argument akin to that of Bosch (1991:405) and Padilla (2011), as noted above, Wright argues that the language of ‘priority’ or ‘primacy’ tends to be exclusivistic as it implies that all the other work in mission becomes secondary and only one is important. Furthermore, the word ‘priority’ gives the impression that something is a starting point and is of utmost

importance and urgency when applied to a local context (:317). Wright thus opts for the word ‘ultimacy’ instead of primacy, as a more appropriate term to depict that which must happen in integral mission. The argument here is that in carrying out mission:

*Ultimately* we must not rest content until we have included within our own missional response the wholeness of *God’s* missional response to the human predicament—and that of course includes the good news of Christ, the cross and resurrection, the forgiveness of sin, the gift of eternal life that is offered to men and women through our witness to the gospel and hope of God’s new creation...Mission may not always *begin* with evangelism. But mission that does not ultimately *include* declaring the Word and the name of Christ the call to repentance, and faith and obedience has not completed its task. It is defective mission, not holistic mission. (Wright 2006:318)

Wright argues that the concept of holistic mission works well in the context of the whole church, where each member of the body takes part in ministry. Basing his argument on Romans 13, and Acts 6, he reasons that not only do people have different gifts as members of one organism but also have different priorities according to their areas of gifting or calling. In this type of setting the question is no longer whether we need to prioritise any one aspect of mission over another but the question becomes whether the church is, “through the combined engagement of *all* its members applying the redemptive power of the cross of Christ to *all* the effects of sin and evil in the surrounding lives, society and environment?” (2006:322). This, according to Wright constitutes what it is means for ‘the whole church taking the whole gospel to the whole world’.

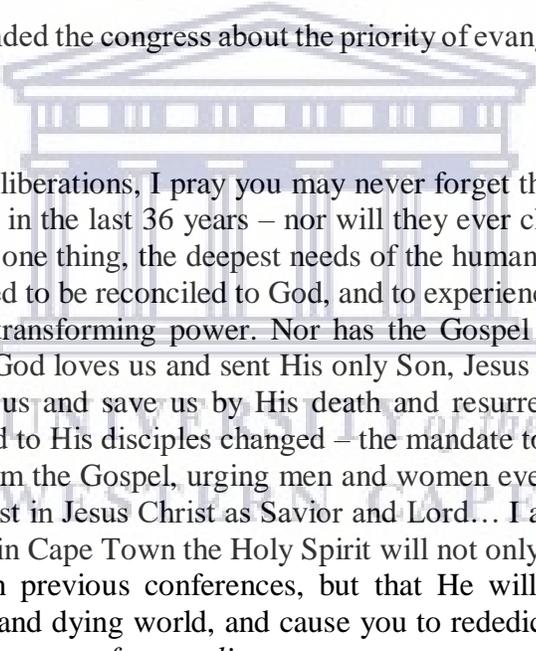
Ronsen (2016:24), seems to offer a modification of Wright’s arguments on priority and ultimacy by pointing out that firstly, priority, rather than being taken as suggesting importance, or singularity, “should be understood as something that in general should never be left undone at any time in Christian mission.” The idea is that evangelism must one way or the other be carried out even if it is not necessarily given the first chronological order in the missionary endeavour. Ronsen differentiates between ministry in the local context where the gospel should at least be shared on a personal level whereas evangelism on an institutionalized ministry would need to be adapted to an overall integral mission strategy along a time scale in which case social action might act as a bridge to evangelism at a later

stage. Furthermore, he reasons that, the word priority may be maintained simply because “deep spiritual needs will always exist whereas the extent, structure and content of other human and social needs at the level either of the individual or of society are not a priori definable as they tend to vary greatly from one social situation and country to another” (:24). With regards to ultimacy, Ronsen, proposes that this term “may ultimately be counterproductive to evangelism if it has no timeframe.” So for this concept to work well within integral mission, he advocates that it be given both a local context and a timescale within which to operate. He thinks that if the ultimacy of evangelism is broadened, this will provide “a better clarification of the relationship between proclamation and evangelism in integral mission” (:24) ) In a nutshell Ronsen argues for the incumbency of proclamation on every Christian social action whether in the context of ‘ultimacy’ or ‘primacy’ of evangelism within a given context and a timescale. His thought ties in to the idea of the apostolic approach to mission held by Lamin Sanneh (in Ott et. al 2010:146). He brings out the idea that even the best intentions of the social development as a missional approach “can smack of colonialism and culturally taint or even emasculate the gospel” but as the gospel is translated among people, “then personal, ecclesial and community change occurs in dramatic and unexpected ways.” It is upon this basis that the Ott, Strauss and Tennent reject the term *priority* and opt for the use of “ultimacy, [because of] the added weight or the center of gravity placed by the New Testament on the spiritual dimensions of the missionary task in this age” (:147). This, according to Ott et al., does not divert the task of mission from addressing human needs but simply centralizes the ministry of spiritual redemption and transformation.

Ronsen’s arguments though not very different in essence from those given by Wright, seem to represent the ongoing vacillation between evangelism and social action even though he is doing his level best to convey such an argument within the context of integral mission. While his modification of ‘ultimacy’ by including the local and broader context might be helpful on a praxis level, it tends to add more confusion than clarification on both a theoretical and practical level in using the term. First by introducing the term ultimacy and conditioning it with timeline within a given context does not necessarily change much of the bent towards evangelism, which had characterized Lausanne. It still perpetuates the

logical importance of proclamation within this relationship. Secondly it does maintain the binary relationship by talking about how the two aspects should relate when what is needed is the absolving of any language that seems to connote two-ness of these missional aspects. The efforts to modify these terminologies, while helpful still leads us more or less to the primacy of evangelism although the maxim behind this assertion is not necessarily the same as that which was widely held by the most conservative quarters of the evangelicalism back in the founding days of the movement. The perspectives depicted by both Wright and Ronsen are also found in the CTC and they seem to keep evangelism at the locus of mission lest it be eclipsed by social agendas. Ronsen cautions that however important the development of integral mission could be justified, it “tends to leave the church with downside possibility that proclamation is weakened” (:29), in other words “the evangelistic task is gradually eroded” as the social concern increases. Ronsen further notes that due to the need for highly specialized and professional personnel to take care of the needs raised by the social action side of mission, proclamation might gradually be weakened in those areas where such a phenomenon presents itself. This, he says, can even take place in places where a sound theology of integral mission might have already been laid. Ronsen, thus makes the point that in giving primacy to evangelism therefore, the Lausanne processes “established that the clearest defined need of the poor is to be reconciled to God...Social services, although valuable and able to demonstrate the gospel, may be like a signpost with no direction if there is no proclamation” (:29). His argument is so clear though he maintains that proclamation and evangelism should be seen as being at the core of Christian ministry. Such line of reason had been brought up in the past by Athur P. Johnston (1985:110-111) who argued that the equilibrium between evangelism and social action as mission “deflects our attention from world evangelism and blunts the verbal witness of the Church in evangelism...For the personal eternal destiny of the individual...evangelism as the mission of the Church represents the highest vindication of the reconciling work of the Cross and the greatest benefit to the world’s poor and oppressed.” This perspective was also echoed by J. Robertson McQuilkin (1993:177), when he brought up what he took to be a theological reason for giving priority to the evangelistic task. He argued, if people were to live under perfect ideal life settings with every need met, cessation of wars and social justice prevailed but people remain alienated from God, “His first priority for alienated

human beings is reconciliation...So God's priority is to bring lost sheep into the fold." Christopher Wright, arguing from the story of the exodus, points out that the exodus story would not have been complete had it ended with political, economic liberation as well as change of geographical landscape without at the same time addressing the spiritual goals of the exodus, precisely put, the establishment of the covenant relationship of Israel with God at Sinai. As such "to change people's economic and social status without leading them to a saving faith and obedience to God in Christ leads no further than the wilderness or the exile, both places of death" (2009:82). In his letter to the Cape Town Congress, Billy Graham urged the gathering to consider the changes that had taken place in the world since the inception of the Lausanne Movement in 1974. He called on the congress to "analyze those changes and to assess their impact on the mission to which God has called us in this generation." He then reminded the congress about the priority of evangelism in the following words:



But in all your deliberations, I pray you may never forget that some things have not changed in the last 36 years – nor will they ever change until our Lord returns. For one thing, the deepest needs of the human heart have not changed – the need to be reconciled to God, and to experience His love and forgiveness and transforming power. Nor has the Gospel changed – the Good News that God loves us and sent His only Son, Jesus Christ, into the world to forgive us and save us by His death and resurrection. Nor has Christ's command to His disciples changed – the mandate to go into all the world and proclaim the Gospel, urging men and women everywhere to put their faith and trust in Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord... I am praying that during your time in Cape Town the Holy Spirit will not only continue what has been done in previous conferences, but that He will increase your burden for a lost and dying world, and cause you to rededicate yourself to *the priority and urgency of evangelism.*

This is the kind of stance that is stated in IID.1.e, of the CTC which calls for evangelism to be kept "at the centre of the fully integrated scope of all our mission". This is the punch line of the Lausanne. This is very explicit as to the relationship between evangelism and social responsibility. Ronsen summarizes Lausanne's stance on evangelism by saying:

The priority given to evangelism in the Lausanne statement as well as at Grand Rapids, and affirmed by the Manila conference, implies that there is no mission without evangelism, and this forms the basis for the general

theological stance in evangelicalism on the relationship between social responsibility and evangelism...Social services and evangelism are intricately linked in the documents of the Lausanne process and social action should therefore have an element of proclamation of the gospel...in the Lausanne process nothing is mission without proclamation, it is warranted to pay more attention to the issue of how to preserve this aspect in integral mission (:28, 29).

For this reason Ronsen's arguments are consistent with the logic of the CRESR and are also consistent with the CTC which, as noted above has reiterated that the centrality of evangelism in the mission of the church. The CTC however did not attempt to delve into the issue of priority or ultimacy but tried to articulate this aspect within a holistic framework. While citing Ajith Fernando, Ott and others (2010:144), suggest that two positions Lausanne struggled with show a classic example termed "course corrections" which states positions in extreme terms in the endeavour to correct previously held ones and in the end come up with imbalanced positions. Kuzmic (1985:153), calls it "the tendency to combat heresy with another". The reality though seems to be that the positions in Lausanne, "are not as far apart in practice as they are in the rhetoric". Critics of holistic mission do not necessarily deny the involvement of Christians in social responsibility, they simply do not want evangelism to be eclipsed (McGavran 1983:110-111). Advocates of holistic mission do not jettison proclamation. With this in mind, Ott, Strauss and Tennent settle for the conclusion that this debate "seemingly revolves more around terminology than substance" (2010:144). The CTC thus marks a move to distance itself from defining the relationship by simply compounding the two aspects under the rubric of holistic and or integral mission. This perhaps helps to ameliorate the tension of perpetually explaining the importance of one aspect over the other.

### **5.5 Theology of the Kingdom**

While the CTC does not contain any explicit mission theology of the kingdom, it nevertheless has references to the kingdom and this provides reasons to suspect that perhaps the notion of the kingdom may have influenced the outcome of the CTC. Such a conclusion might be warranted given that, a good number of evangelical and conciliar theologians had over the past decades prior to Cape Town propounded theologies of the

kingdom which had implications for mission. The general feeling in this regard has been that “this concept of the kingdom must be reconsidered by each generation as serious biblical and theological research increases the depth of our knowledge of the Scripture and as new interpretations require consideration” (Johnston 1985:128). With this kind of perspective in their articulations it seems to show that a reappraisal of the hermeneutic of the kingdom seemed crucial in correcting former versions that stood at the center of divergence for a good part of the twentieth century. Kingdom theology is considered crucial for one’s understanding of the mission of the church regardless of the Christian tradition to which one may belong (Johnston 1985:110).

As noted in chapter one, the problem that led to the Great Reversal had largely to do with the hermeneutics that was applied to the idea of millennium and the kingdom of God. The millennium postulates that came from liberals and conservatives in this regard, led to the emergence of the Social Gospel and the fundamentalists respectively. For the Social Gospel movement who held the postmillennial view, the millennial kingdom of God was identified as “the entire world as presently in the process of becoming the consummated Kingdom without the second coming of Christ” (Johnston 1985:110-111). This necessitated the harnessing of human efforts to work towards the betterment of society in its various dimensions. On the other hand the premillennialists perceived the second coming of Christ occurring prior to the millennial kingdom hence the term pre-millennial. During the pre-millennial period, concerted efforts of evangelism should take place and save as many people as possible before Christ’s second advent. This view resulted in a non-involvement attitude in societal issues particularly in those issues pertaining to socio-political structures. This was born through the understanding that, since the world is getting worse and worse, and since there is no room for improving it or even reforming it through human effort, it follows that there is no need to be involved in world affairs (Kuzmic 1985:142). If postmillennialism was charged with being overly optimistic, premillennialism was too pessimistic about human history. It is this pessimism that constituted the main reason for non-involvement in social issues and shifted the focus to a futuristic vision of the coming of Christ and his thousand year rule on earth (:144). This vision was characterized by what Kuzmic calls, ‘apocalyptic terrorism’, which were eschatological perceptions drawn from apocalyptic literature in the Bible and used in such a way as to scare the nominal Christian

or the non-believer to the faith so as to “escape the coming horrors he has just heard or seen described in most graphic and terrifying ways...It is the scare of being ‘left behind’ more than the longing to see the Lord that underlies this eschatological scheme when applied to evangelism” (1985:145). Kuzmic critiques the premillennialists preoccupation with apocalypticism and shows that this postulation may not have been entirely biblically based as it was purported to be by most conservative evangelicals and he suggests that this apocalypticism (:146):

Owes more to certain prevalent Western Cultural moods and fads as well as American conservative politics than to the clear teaching of Scripture. It certainly employs very dubious hermeneutics and unbelievable exegetical gymnastics in its speculative guess-work as verses of Scripture or single phrases are plucked out of their context to prove certain points about developments in modern Russia, China, the European Common Market, World Council of Churches, etc. This sensational eschatology is made attractive and popular as it is often written in the form of science-fiction.

The foregoing description reveals that it is not postmillennialism alone that had veered off the biblical path to assume a socio-political hermeneutic but premillennialists had also partaken of similar approach by settling for a spiritualized apocalypticism based on western thought patterns and political perspectives. In fact, American evangelicalism was to a great extent influenced by American middle class values in its view of Christianity, the world and even mission, (Marsden 1980:37-38, 85, 91). Howard Snyder (1977:28), asserts that “the social gospelers secularized this kingdom vision and the conservatives spiritualized it. A polarization set in and the biblical balance was lost.” Arguing for the reappraisal of the kingdom notion, Kuzmic (1985:146), points out that, “the millennial question is basically the question of the kingdom of God.” He laments that evangelicals had by and large “taken a limited approach to this important and complex biblical subject” by focusing merely on contradictory interpretations of Revelation 20 and the sequence of events at the end of time. He however points out that evangelicals had begun to treat the subject of the kingdom more seriously. As such, both pre-and postmillennialism, though divergent in their view of mission, still stand in need of re-orientation towards the biblical path.

The 1960s increased divergence when the postmillennial interpretation of the kingdom as realized eschatology became the dominant motif. During this time this view was not necessarily operating under the title, 'Social Gospel' but was connected to the liberal idea of secularization which had become prevalent in conciliar mission. As such conciliar mission focused on the realization of the kingdom within history through the erection of human institutions to work in the struggle for justice and peace to establish what became known as *humanization* or *shalom*. This approach overshadowed the anticipation of the parousia and seemed to advocate the possibility of a utopia brought about by human effort (Ott et. al 2010:92; Bosch 1991:498). Thomas Kramm (1979; cited in Ott. et al. 2010.130) classified this as the historical- eschatological model since it identified salvation history with human history leaving the role of the church in ambiguity (:130). The conservative mission was characterized by emphasis on the depravity of the world with the return of Christ taken as the only hope that the world had for the realization of the kingdom (:92). Kramm classified this as salvation-historical, ecclesiological model which distinguished between the church and the world (:130). The emphasis was on internal and futuristic aspects of the kingdom of God that the advocates did not see any need to extend aspects of godliness beyond the personal and the churchly (J. Robertson McQuilkin 1993:172). Thus a re-orientation of the kingdom concept seemed to play an important role and some of its fruit seem to have found its way into the CTC.

Even though the kingdom notion has been used by many theologians on both sides of the divide to argue for integral mission there has not been unanimity of perspectives on the way the notion has been extrapolated. It nevertheless is the case that attempts had been made at tying the eschatological aspect in this concept to issues of social transformation. Commenting on Moltmann's theology of hope Tim Chester (2009:226), points out that "Moltmann's theology can be seen as the exposition of how eschatology serves the task of social transformation." He further asserts that this view has not only remained dominant in Moltmann's theology but has also become programmatic "for much modern theology." Though arguments from the kingdom concepts are varied, the kingdom theory however seemed to provide common ground for a holistic mission for theologians of both movements. Its use was not done arbitrarily but was chosen because of its central concern

on Jesus Christ himself, or rather, his Lordship. Furthermore, it helped to “provide the intellectual and inspirational categories that helped in mapping out the way to obedience in the missionary task (Emilio Castro 1985:38). According to Scherer (1987:131), the kingdom notion presents us with a special advantage in that “it is equally adapted to a discussion of the church’s relation to the missionary task, and to reflection on the worldly context of mission.” So, though the CTC did not necessarily propound a kingdom missiology, it bears some striking resonance with theological treatise of its time. This resemblance serves to show that, the Lausanne was paying attention to the currents of the time and was in a way gradually moving towards a newer biblically and socially relevant theology of mission. A few such areas of resonance will be juxtaposed here with some of the contemporary theologies.

While the kingdom notion has shown to have been helpful in arriving at a comprehensive understanding of mission, it is not without its challenges. One of the challenges that Tim Chester (2009:225-245) notes has to do with how we can draw transformative aspects from our understanding of eschatology. Arguing from the kingdom can result in any of the following perspectives of eschatology, i.e. discontinuity, continuity or conflation etc. Ron Sider (1993:55), points out that there are those who hold that the kingdom is entirely futuristic or entirely present and others think it is partially present and partially future. These would in turn affect the type of missiology developed. It cannot be taken for granted that the kingdom notion would inevitably result in the same theology of transformation. The key question to keep in mind is this; “What is the connection between our work now for social justice and freedom and the perfection of the coming kingdom that comes only at the end” (1993:31)? How can eschatology be successfully used in formulating a theology of social concern today?

According to Chester, eschatology is ambiguous in dealing with social involvement and this tends to live room for one’s view of social transformation to inform one’s hermeneutic of eschatology. We cannot all draw the same things from eschatology. Presuppositions can be fed into the eschatological discourse of a theologian thereby resulting in a missiology that is not entirely biblical. Chester illustrates this by using Moltmann’s adaptation of Marx’s philosophical assertions resulting in the idea that, “for Moltmann Christian hope

must not be ‘the opium of the people’, but ‘the power and ferment of emancipation here and now’.” This position, according to Chester, meant that Moltmann’s presupposition on social transformation led him to not only assume Marx’s philosophical assumption but also led him “to neglect the New Testament association of hope with patience, endurance and long suffering” for fear that this led to a quietist and escapist hope (:242). Such an assumption thus tended to replace some biblically held teaching in order to fit certain assumptions held by the theologian. This is not to say the kingdom theology does not work in arguing for an integral theology but what it does is that it highlights the need for caution and the need for a thorough biblical investigation so that arguments from the kingdom do not transport into its missiology, aspects that might actually be contrary to biblical eschatology. The efforts to relate kingdom to the King, ecclesiology and the biblical references of redemption and reconciliation would prove helpful in promulgating a sound, balanced and comprehensive theology of mission.

A rediscovery of the kingdom missiology is favoured by most evangelicals perhaps due to its Biblicist nature. As noted in previous discussions, this aspect makes one of the components that is characteristic of evangelicalism in Bebbington’s classification. This is to say, for, evangelicals, the starting point in theologizing is the Bible. Not only is the infallibility of the Bible held high, but for mission to be authentic it has to be based on biblical precepts hence the connection between ‘biblical mission’ and ‘biblical living’ as stated in CTC 6, in 11E1.b., and in the conclusion of the document. The Christian ethic and mission is based on the Bible so much so that the call to serve Christ is said to come to us “afresh from the pages of gospels”. Biblical mission tells us that; “This story of God’s mission defines our identity, drives our mission, and assures us the ending is in God’s hands. This story must shape the memory and hope of God’s people and govern the content of their evangelistic witness, as it is passed on from generation to generation” (6.b). Furthermore the kingdom is an overarching theme in the Bible, as seen in the acts of God in the Old Testament and the teachings of Jesus in the New Testament. The centrality of the kingdom of God in the teachings of Jesus is a fact that evangelicals are agreed upon (McQuilkin 1993:172). The New Testament emphasizes the work that Jesus came to do to fulfill the Old Testament prophecy and to show that in him the kingdom of God had come

in reality (Padilla 2010:199). Article 4.a.(2-3) refers to the mission of Christ, partly seen in announcing and teaching the kingdom as well as demonstrating the victory of the kingdom over evil and evil powers. .

#### 5.5.1 Comprehensive Nature – Salvation-historical Hermeneutic

One of the reasons for which the kingdom notion has been widely adopted by theologians is that it helps to propound a comprehensive missiology. Ott, Strauss and Tennent (2010:86) assert that “the kingdom of God is the center of mission in the sense that it is the orientation point for mission...From this center all mission activity and understanding emanates.” This is to say, the kingdom notion provides the basis upon which all the dimensions of mission can be included without the need to define their interconnectedness, priority or primacy. Howard Snyder (1977:22), in arguing for the kingdom notion (on the basis of C.H. Henry’s idea of the uneasy conscience of the fundamentalists) asserts that evangelicals needed to move beyond merely regaining social conscience to a biblical kingdom consciousness in order to create a more comprehensive and biblically penetrating truth about mission. The life and ministry of Jesus show that the kingdom covers a wide range of issues and cannot be limited to only two aspects as has been normally the case. According to Johannes Verkuyl (1993:72-73), a kingdom-centered theology “is concerned with every aspect of life and society...is a thoroughly Trinitarian one”. The theology of the kingdom is quite necessary in that it does not disregard the biblical message for the forgiveness of sins and thus calls for decision making in the inclusive process of conversion. The awareness of the Trinitarian notion helps us to find the “proper biblical place for every legitimate Christian emphasis, whether evangelism, social action, church renewal or discipleship...The question is not of adding a social dimension to an evangelistic gospel. Rather evangelism, conversion, social justice and other gospel emphases must be seen as part of God’s cosmic/historical redemptive plan” (Snyder 1977:26). This view is representative of the Christian witness viewed in light of the kingdom of God. Such a kingdom theology is also not opposed to the building up of the body of Christ throughout the world though it is not limited to the church. The kingdom or reign of God is crucial to use in arguing for mission because it gives mission its orientation by showing what God’s purpose in history is (Snyder 1977:26). In it we find

the “the divine intent to bring all things under his rule, to reconcile to himself, to restore that which is fallen and corrupted, and to overthrow all powers in opposition to him and his reign of peace, joy and righteousness.” So it values the proclamation of the gospel and at the same time it (Ott, et al. 2010:86):

Addresses itself to all immediate human need, both physical and mental. It aims to right what is wrong on earth. It enjoins engagement in the struggle for racial, social, cultural, economic and political justice. Kingdom-centered missiology frees us from the sham dilemmas responsible for much of historical and present evangelical-ecumenical divarication, delivers us from the theological zero-sum game involving false unbiblical dichotomies between individual and corporate shalom, vertical and horizontal reconciliation, word proclamation and comprehensive approach, witness and service, micro and macro-structural concerns and so forth.

So the breadth of issues covered under the kingdom approach make it a viable approach to use in constructing a theology that encapsulates all the aspects that evangelical theologians have been concerned about. This does not require that the hermeneutics be postmillennial nor does it call for a strict premillennial reading of the kingdom because the idea of the kingdom does not necessarily require a rigorous interpretation or calculation of the apocalyptic intricacies leading to the coming of Christ so as to decide what constitutes mission. By simply adhering to kingdom theology as exhibited by Jesus in the gospels, mission automatically includes holistic missiology within a sound biblical and Christocentric locus. Referring to the comprehensive locus of the kingdom notion, Padilla (2010:199) says that this concept includes speaking of God’s redemptive purpose for the whole creation as well as the “historical vocation that the church has with regard to that purpose here and now, ‘between the times’. It is also to speak of an eschatological reality that is both the starting point and the goal of the church.” To put this thinking in a formula, scholars make reference to Oscar Cullmann’s salvation-historical approach which balances out the present and the eschatological implications of the kingdom notion for mission work (Ott et. al 2010:90-91; Padilla 2010:200; Bosch 1991:504). This approach which, Cullmann refers to as ‘the new division of time’ (In Padilla 2010:200), shows that the same God who has already intervened in history, through Jesus Christ, will work through it to bring it to a desired end. It is in this case that the kingdom is “a present reality and a promise

to be fulfilled in the future". Jesus earthly ministry is taken as characteristic of the salvation-historical mission (Luke 4:18-19), in that through his coming, the kingdom of God broke into history and this kingdom will ultimately bring liberation to all aspects of life (Ott et. al 2010:148). The first coming of Jesus is the crucial event in the gospel because without it there would be no second coming because, (Kuzmic 1985:148-149):

The centre of gravity of Christian faith lies not in the events that come at the end of history, but in the events that have already taken place within history in the death and resurrection of Jesus and in the outpouring of the Holy Spirit. The decisive event of redemptive history has already taken place. The end-point has been predetermined by the mid-point. The future tense is predicated on the past perfect tense of God's activity in Christ...With Christ then, the future has already come, or at least begun.

The idea therefore is that, the first coming has implications for the church. The church is not meant to only think in futuristic terms without at the same time giving cognizance of the kingdom implication which had been brought by the first coming of Jesus. The call therefore in the salvation-historical hermeneutic is that, the church should live out its kingdom obligations in a comprehensive manner in the present. Arguing from the fall, Francis Schaeffer (In Snyder 1977:27), noted that people are alienated from God in a fourfold manner namely, From God, ourselves, others and nature. It follows that in view of these areas, God has been bringing about partial restoration and Christians are not called upon to only wait for eschatological healing, rather on the basis of the work of Christ, "substantial healing can be a reality here and now". In this view, Schaeffer places God's cosmic plan in its space-time totality and focuses on what God is doing through the church here and now" a view that Snyder believed moved "in the direction of a new consciousness of the kingdom of God" (Snyder 1977:27). Snyder (:30) himself, argues for the recovery of a sense of history, as one of the important ingredients needed in developing an evangelical kingdom consciousness. He notes that the kingdom of God is a historical fact which came into the world and related itself to history through the birth, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. While the definitive establishment of the kingdom will be experienced at the end of time, in the meantime, "evangelicals need to reaffirm the significance of human action within the historical process while neither dichotomizing nor deifying history." Such views on the kingdom suggest that the Bible contains a bipolarity

of teaching which had been lost in much of evangelicals' futuristic eschatology. This futuristic eschatology, according to Kuzmic (1985:149), "is determinative for the kind of, or absence of, Christian involvement and action." The same tends to promote a discontinuity view of history and eschatology by advocating a new earth through some form of *creation ex nihilo*. Such a view does not encourage meaningful engagement with the world since any work done in the world would be considered as worthless as it would be destroyed completely at the end of time. As such, re-orienting evangelical eschatology to a proper understanding of the millennial kingdom becomes paramount in order to regain the lost missiological impetus to engage with society on both spiritual and physical plains. To put it in Kuzmic's words (1985:153):

The Kingdom of God is the redemptive activity of God in history through the person of Jesus Christ. It does not arrive by human achievement. Humans are, however, invited to repentance and faith by which they enter the Kingdom, and are invited to both the responsible *participation* in the Kingdom-already arrived, and to watchful *expectation* of the Kingdom still to come.

Ott et al (2010:149-156; Snyder 1977:30), refer to the creation and the gospel mandates as comprehensive ways to describe God's concern for the totality of the human life and creation. They assert that this two mandate approach is desirable in that it describes well the relationship between evangelism and social responsibility.

The creation mandate, which can also be referred to as the cultural or social mandate, is used to argue for the social dimension of mission and it concerns "the divine intent for human life and culture as it applies to all peoples" on the basis of God's creation intention in Genesis 1:26-31. God had a creation intention for the whole world before the fall, and after sin came onto the scene we can discern in the issuance of the Ten Commandments, God's plan to continue with this intention by enacting a "creation ethic essential to well-being of all people." This is tied to the kingdom notion where Christians are called upon to draw upon the hope they have of the restoration of creation in the future where our current situation will be brought in alignment with the creation mandate. This eschatological aspect is commonly used to argue for social transformation in mission by a number of scholars.

The reasoning in this approach is different from the previously held view which stated that “what we do in the present or in time affects what happens in the future or in eternity. While some scholars, such as Moltmann emphasize the hope for the future affecting what we do in the present” (Chester 2009:226), this creation mandate approach could be connected to a proleptic understanding of the working of the power of the kingdom. This term refers to the act of taking from what is in the future and making it part of the present. It refers to something that “occurs before its time”. The proleptic view suggests that “the future makes demands of our living in the present”. In other words “the eschatological Kingdom is a radical critique of the present state of things in the world.” Proleptic living thus hinges on the practice of Christian ethics in the present day world with a view to bringing change and transformation. This means that in order for Christians to be eschatologically significant they must “regain the vision of both proclamation and action” because “Christian love that strives for transformation of the world needs to be engendered by Christian hope, by the promise of the future. We are called to continual realization of the eschatological values that are characteristic of the Kingdom...” (Kuzmic 1985:157-158). According to Ott et al, “Christians work in this age toward the realization of that hope as God’s grace provides opportunity.” As such, “the cultural mandate calls on Christians to responsible participation in human society, including working for social justice and healing and compassion ministries undertaken to foster human welfare”(2010:150). The church is considered in this view “a living sign of the kingdom” and is tasked with fulfilling the creation mandate “to embody and advocate such values as human dignity, family, just government, environmental stewardship, and creative expression” (:151). While the creation mandate is poised to address diverse aspects of human living, it “should not be confused with a realization of the kingdom of God to the extent that it does not include reconciliation with God and the lordship of Christ” (:152). While the cultural mandate pertains to obligations to be carried out by both Christians and non-Christians, the gospel mandate is given only to Christians (:152). It focuses on the redemptive aspects of mission and calls for the “realization of kingdom values in the church and the lives of believers.” It is described by Ott as being more comprehensive than mere evangelism or church planting in that it aims at presenting the message of restoring relationship with God and impacts all other relationships at all levels. It presents the basis

for carrying out the Great Commission as a result of which the Great Commandment can then be pursued. Snyder (1977:30), presents a similar view to this when he asserts that “the gospel concerns itself with all of society, not merely with the institutional church. And God’s sphere of action is not limited to the circle of believers but encompasses all of creation”. Elsewhere Snyder (:99), uses the terms “evangelistic and prophetic aspects to refer to the kingdom mandate. While his evangelistic mandate clearly refers to the proclamation side of mission, his prophetic, corresponds to Ott’s creation mandate, with the only qualification being that, this prophetic aspect seem to refer more to the voicing of social concerns by the church. As such the prophetic aspect is connected to the evangelistic aspect. As Snyder (1977:99) puts it:

The role of the Church is both evangelistic and prophetic, without being exclusively one or the other. Authentic evangelization is itself prophetic, and a truly prophetic voice is evangelistic. The Church is called to be prophetically evangelistic and evangelistically prophetic. In one sense evangelism is good news and prophecy is bad news. Evangelism and prophecy make up the positive and the negative charges of the Church’s spiritual power. Evangelism proclaims the offer of forgiveness, new life in Christ and new lifestyle in Christian community. Prophecy proclaims that even if this offer is rejected, God is still sovereign and will finally establish his kingdom in righteousness and judgment. Evangelism is the offer of present salvation; prophecy is the assurance of final judgment.

Evangelism and prophecy both have to do with the proclamation aspect of mission. Snyder brings out the idea that this two-pronged process of proclamation could be understood in integral terms. Evangelism, or the gospel mandate, is considered central in God’s cosmic plan (1977:100), since it centers on the redemptive plan of God in the world. If this is properly done, it should function in a threefold manner. It should be the priority of the church’s ministry in the world since “the Christian community exists and expands only as evangelism is carried out” (1977:101. Snyder holds that this type of evangelism is not one that simply focuses on souls but one that is radical in that it “calls people to Jesus Christ and his body and to identification with the people Jesus showed concern for...Evangelism must involve... ‘a reuniting of the personal and social aspects of Christian experience that emphasizes total obedience to Christ as Lord in every category of life’” (1977:102). This view of evangelism agrees with what Ott’s position mention above. Ott (2010:151) also

asserts that “humanitarian or philanthropic work may fall under the gospel mandate when it is explicitly linked” to these activities. Secondly Snyder points out that this type of evangelism is essentially a witness which means that, it emphasizes “both the preaching of the good news and the demonstration of the good news” (1977:102). Lastly it is the function of the Church-as-community which carries that the idea that the Christian community witnesses through its common life and its action in the world (1977:103). According to Snyder, such an authentic view of evangelism does not necessarily bring in the question of priority since it addresses holistic aspects in its operation.

Thus by employing the creation and gospel mandate approach within the parameters of the kingdom notion, a comprehensive missiology can be argued for by showing the importance of both aspects in mission. The only glitch that one might encounter with this approach is that, by using the two mandates, one can easily slide into the dualism that people have been trying to avoid. Ott et al (:153), seem to display this oscillation in their discussion on the relationship of the two concepts. They argue that it is important to keep a distinction of these concepts in mission because, firstly they maintain that there is value in specifying what the churches does so that the distinctive purpose of each might not be blurred. Both aspects should be given a validity of their own. Secondly, they argue that a distinction “helps to ensure that neither aspect is neglected in the overall responsibility of the church.” The third reason seems to bring us back into the usual evangelical quandary about priority. As the reasoning goes, “fulfilling the gospel mandate is a logical practical condition of rightly fulfilling the creation mandate. Only as men and women are reconciled with God, are empowered by the Holy Spirit, and live out the values of the kingdom will they become salt and light in society and be able to rightly live out the creation mandate” (2010:154). Lastly a distinction helps to differentiate the obligations of all members of the human race from responsibilities of the church. So even though Ott, Strauss and Tennent conclude by arguing for the intertwinedness of the two mandates, thereby presenting them as one, their idea of distinction throws us back onto some form of duality of mission or demarcation of mission elements. Their argument, however, insofar as it is connected to the kingdom notion works effectively in showing the importance and validity of social responsibility and the importance of evangelicals to be involved in such.

This kingdom is also tied to the idea of God's rule through Christ, a fact which makes the kingdom notion more appealing. The kingdom of God can simply be understood as "Jesus is Lord". This confession, (Ott, et al 2010:88) if rightly understood declares that all of life is under the all-embracing Lordship of Christ which at the same time is the center of mission. This view was also explicated by Paul Hiebert (1993:158-159), who argued that the kingdom notion should not stand alone but must be expanded to include the King of the kingdom. Hiebert argues that mission paradigms based on human activity are flawed, rather since mission is primarily what God does, it follows that *missio Dei* must be defined in triune terms, encompassing the work of the Father, the work of Christ and the work of the Holy Spirit. The rediscovery of the kingdom alone, without the King is considered a half discovery, as this would be a kingdom without a king. We cannot separate the King from the Kingdom because "Jesus Christ shows us what God is like and also shows us what the kingdom of God is like in operation. The kingdom of God is Christlikeness universalized" (Jones 1972:43 in Hiebert 1993:159). This is the basic premise brought out on the pages of the gospel of Matthew starting with the birth of Jesus the king in 2:2; the message of the kingdom of heaven that Jesus preached, 4:17, the appeal to pray for the kingdom in 6:9-10, and the parables of the kingdom, contained in most of chapter 13, and 22 and his death on the cross. Hiebert asserts that such an expansion of the concept of the King and the kingdom has far reaching implications for mission theology. Firstly it shows that God is at work in the affairs of the nations to bring his rule among them but he also is at work in the lives of people. Because of the King and kingdom, mission is pointed in the direction of the church where the king is worshipped. The Kingdom also gives motivation for evangelism (1993:159-161).

Secondly the King-kingdom notion is viable since it gives a sense of urgency because there is an eschatological dimension to this as we look forward to the returning of the King to set up his kingdom. This eschatological dimension, helps to keep the church from becoming too institutionalized and perhaps too at home in the world (:160). Thirdly, Hiebert asserts that the expanded notion "keeps us from becoming self-centered as individuals and as churches" but points us to the world which is outside the reign of Christ

(:160). Thus God's rule is not limited to the spiritual realm only nor it is limited to subjective aspects of the faith, but it operates in history and touches all of creation. It combines his justice and his grace. The former manifests in "his righteous standards revealed in His Word and his unwavering holiness" and the latter manifests in the cross of Christ, "where grace and justice meet, opening the way for his kingdom to be established through forgiveness, reconciliation and transformation in the power of the Spirit" (Ott et al. 2010:87).

The various dimensions of life drawn from the kingdom notion seem to point the church to doing the type of mission that is a mosaic of both spiritual and physical aspects of life without necessarily talking about these in a dichotomous way. From the foregoing the main idea is that since the kingdom has these diverse aspects associated with it, it becomes less demanding to discuss or even define the issues of priority as the missional aspects covered in this approach come as a unit in a comprehensive format. The crux of kingdom thinking is that, if God is concerned for the church and the world outside the church, it goes without saying that the church, in following the example of the King should be concerned about the same concerns he has and that by addressing any of these aspects the church can consider herself as fully carrying out mission as God wills. Carrying out one aspect of mission does not jeopardize nor negate the other because, in kingdom theology, all aspects fall under the sovereignty of God become missional objects for the church within a biblical framework of how they ought to be addressed.

In his essay, "Church, Kingdom and Missio Dei", James Scherer reasons along the same lines as Ott and Hiebert and advocates for the expanded notion of the kingdom. He suggests that many of the issues that Lausanne II intended to achieve through its theme, "Calling the Whole Church to Take the Whole Gospel to the Whole World" would have been better resolved through the "eschatologically grounded *kingdom* context of the mission of the Triune God." He argues that it is the pressure of the coming kingdom which causes the church to define the content and method of its gospel proclamation as well as to identify areas of service and to coordinate the various dimensions of its ministry in the time in between. He points out that by exclaiming "Proclaim Christ Until He comes" Lausanne II

was actually exercising the eschatological context which belongs to the very nature of mission, which if simply put, says that the gospel will be preached in the whole world as a witness and not of the basis of some sort of dispensational theory (1993:84-85). Since this gospel was neither created by the church nor its missionary enterprise but was actually based on what Jesus proclaimed at the start of his ministry, as “the gospel of God” about the approaching of the kingdom, it is therefore “impossible to speak of the *church’s* mission apart from the mission of the Triune God – *Missio Dei* – apart from a fully trinitarian theological standpoint” (:85). What he means by this is that, the *mission-Dei* and the eschatological character of the kingdom provide a proper theological undergirding for the mission of the church (:85). He argues that after Willingen, the church-centred theology would no longer deal with the problems that the church was facing in mission in, from and to six continents. Such problems called for “a *Missio Dei* response, with a clear understanding of the Trinitarian basis and nature of the church’s mission, and an openness and sensitivity to the eschatological character of the kingdom, and the church’s subordinate relationship to it” (:85). Scherer differentiates this Trinitarian missiology from one that obtained after Uppsala 1968. Describing the post-Uppsala *mission Dei*, he says, “The trinitarian *Missio-Dei* view was replaced by a theology about the transformation of the world and of history not through evangelization and church-planting but by means of a divinely guided immanent historical process, somewhat analogous to deistic views of the Enlightenment” (1993:86). Such a usage of the trinitarian formula led others to disregard the concept completely when in actual fact what was needed was to refute the flawed formulation and maintain the sound exposition of the initial formula as was done by the Lutheran World Federation who took the time to critique the *missio-Dei* in the *Church for Others* document theologically and practically prior to the Uppsala Assembly. The critique highlighted the one-sidedness of the document as well as its excessively negative attitude towards the church. Later in 1988 the LWF went on to state a more sound Trinitarian formula which had God as the foundation of all mission, the sending of Jesus Christ for salvation as the center point of God’s mission in history and the Holy Spirit as one who “sends and enables God’s people in every age for participation in mission” (In Scherer 1993:86).

The foregoing discussion attempted to show that, prior to Cape Town, some Lausanne evangelical theologians picked up this King–kingdom concept as a departure point for an inclusive missiology and began to work on formulations agreeable to their biblical hermeneutic. Thus theological treatments in some of the books by Lausanne theologians (starting in the 80s) and Lausanne consultations some directly prior to the Cape Town bear marks and resemblance of kingdom theology and perhaps some influence on the CTC. While neither the theology of kingdom nor that of *missio Dei* is explicitly stated in CTC, I argue here that the integral mission promulgated in the CTC bears the marks of a kingdom and *missio Dei* missiology (similar to those in earlier books/treatises) in so far as it relates kingdom ethics of change beyond individual repentance and extended it to “the area of social relationships and social structures” (Kuzmic 1985:158).

In view of the foregoing discussion, it would perhaps seem plausible to argue that the CTC has marks of the kingdom theology in it. It seems to bear signs of a revised form of kingdom theology that encompasses conservative understandings of the present reality and the eschatological hope. Approached in this way, it seems to amicably incorporate the evangelistic and social aspects in the present while envisioning and preparing for the coming of the new kingdom through evangelism and discipleship. The beauty and perfection of the envisioned eschatological kingdom, as extrapolated in the Scriptures, is used as the basis from which principles and values are drawn and applied on the contemporary social scene without any suggestion of creating a postmillennial utopia but impacting the society towards transformation. A re-orientation of the kingdom of God concept towards the right center shows that mission is not the success of human efforts as it is the final intervention of God through the return of Christ with the fullness of the kingdom (Ott. et al. 2010:89). What this does is that it corrects the concept of the utopia that had come through liberal postmillennial hermeneutics by accentuating the eschatological aspect which to a great extent had been omitted in this view. It also at the same time re-aligns the rightist premillennialism by recovering the ‘present’ or proleptic operational aspect of the kingdom to which the church needs to live as a sign. According to Padilla (2010:209):

The kingdom of God, is neither ‘the progressive social improvement of mankind whereby the task of the church is to transform earth like unto heaven and do it now’ nor ‘the present inner rule of God in the moral and spiritual dispositions of the soul with its seat in the heart.’ Rather it is God’s redemptive power released in history, bringing good news to the poor, freedom to prisoners, sight to the blind, and liberation to the oppressed.

Understood in this way, the kingdom does not necessarily become too politicized in its hermeneutic, and it does not lose the political thrust either since the imbueing of kingdom values onto the society is considered a Christian duty. Thus the CTC, emphasizes that God established his kingdom through Jesus Christ (8.b) and it is from Christ that kingdom principles need to be drawn. In (4.a.2&3), Christ “announced and demonstrated the kingdom of God over evil powers.”

God established his kingdom through Jesus, (8.b) – the story of the gospel. Moreover through its use of the Lord’s prayer (IID.6a.(4), reference is made to praying for the kingdom to come so as to bring about the “establishment of justice, the stewardship and care of creation, and the blessing of God’s peace in our communities.” In (10b), the CTC calls for the demonstration of kingdom values in matters of social concern be it, philanthropy, social action and creation care. It says, “God commands us to reflect his own character through compassionate care for the needy, and to demonstrate the values and the power of the kingdom of God in striving for justice and peace and in caring for God’s creation.” Furthermore in (10c), the CTC appeals to the values and power of the kingdom of God to be demonstrated in “striving for justice and peace and in caring for God’s creation.” This seems to be in reference to the imbuing of Christian values onto the communities that Christians find themselves. IIE.4 stresses ethics of truth in the kingdom since God is truth, the kingdom must be based on truth. So this is a present reality of the practical manifestation of kingdom ethics by the church. Here the coming of the kingdom is connected to some aspects of social responsibility particularly in the areas of justice, ecology and perhaps politics (i.e. peace in our communities). The CTC (11D5), calls for the church to pray, “For God’s kingdom to come, that God’s will may be done on earth as in heaven, in the establishment of justice, the stewardship and care of creation, and the blessing of God’s peace in our communities.” So Lausanne III ties the coming of the

kingdom to societal transformation. It calls to the spiritual values of the kingdom to be imbued upon the society through the church. This is similar to what Kuzmic (1985:158), had advocated, when he said, “As Christians proclaim and live out the universal values of the Kingdom and in obedience to the coming Lord actively love their neighbours, Christians surely can initiate some significant changes in the world.” This view presents a balanced view of the redemptive and societal aspects of mission under the same rubric of the kingdom. The same has been argued for by Ott, Strauss and Tennent who, through their creation and gospel mandate discussed above, argued for the use of kingdom values by the church and believers in the world.

The CTC also uses the term kingdom in spiritual and eschatological terms by referring to the continuing of the mission of the church until the “the kingdoms of the world become the kingdom of our God” hence the imploration to pray for the kingdom of God to come and to look forward to its coming in the eschaton (10a,b). This eschatological aspect is included also in the preamble and in (10), (IID.6b), it looks forward to the day “when the kingdom of this world will become the kingdom of our God and of his Christ.” The CTC takes serious cognizance of both the *penultimate hopes* and *ultimate hopes* in the kingdom notion. This is to say the document helps to give the understanding that Christian mission can focus on the penultimate mission in the present while looking forward to the ultimate hope when Christ is revealed in the future. The two do not negate each other and should not in any way lead to a utopian ministry nor another-worldly detachment (Kuzmic 1985:158). They are similar to the ‘meta-historical’ concept that Athanasios Papathanasiou argued for when he said when the kingdom is understood as such, it is taken “as a reality that is not identified with a stage in history.” He refers to this in George Florovsky’s words as “inaugurated eschatology” which connotes that the kingdom has already been inaugurated but is yet to be fulfilled. The time in-between should be used to engage in social work in anticipation of the future event (Matthey (ed) 2008:182-183).

### 5.5.2 Kingdom and Ecclesiology

The salvation-historical model of the kingdom is also connected to ecclesiology in the writings of a number of evangelical theologians. The church, while it is not the kingdom

in and of itself, it is an indispensable member of the kingdom on earth and cannot be separated from the kingdom. The church provides the channel through which the working of God's kingdom is realized on earth to a certain extent. In the foregoing discussion we talked about the need to extend the kingdom notion with the idea of the King. The flip side of this argument could also be taken as crucial to the kingdom concept, that is, any kingdom has to have kingdom subjects, people, who, in our case, are comprised of a community of the redeemed people of God who acknowledge Jesus as Lord of the universe – 'the church.' It is through the church that the kingdom is 'concretely made manifest in history' (Padilla 2010:202). The Lordship or Messianic concept, suggests that there should be a messianic community. Since these terms are correlative, it follows that Jesus "should surround himself with a community that recognized the validity of his claim" hence the reference to this messianic community as 'my church' in Matthew 16:18. Christ came with the reality of the kingdom of God in him and the church is the community that came into existence through Christ's kingly power (Padilla 2010:203). Christ laid the foundation for entering the kingdom so that men and women may be reconciled to God through faith in Christ. Thus the church as Christ community is the living *sign* of the kingdom and *instrument* of that kingdom. This kingdom is characterized by freedom as bondage to sin is broken, restoration and healing of relationship as people experience the compassion of God, and the sounding of the church's prophetic voice against injustices brought about by human kingdoms while pointing people to the values of a better kingdom (Ott et. al. 2010:87). As a sign of the kingdom, the church, as a kingdom community, they fulfill both the creation and the gospel mandate. Kingdom communities, "live as signs of the kingdom, hope in the coming kingdom, and advocate kingdom values wherever they might have influence, as a voice of truth, righteousness, justice and reconciliation" (:156). The church is described by Ott and others in a threefold manner, (cube analogy) in an attempt to hit home the comprehensive nature of mission. The three dimensions of the cube of mission are, the doxology – the Great Calling, evangelism and discipleship – the Great Commission, and compassion and social concern – The Great Commandment. Doxology refers to the worship life of the kingdom community which has been reconciled to God. Evangelism is described as the place where "missions must begin, or it does not start". With regards to the compassion and social concern a long quotation maybe be warranted (2010:159):

Kingdom communities become instruments of God's mercy and compassion to the poor, the suffering and the marginalized. They work not only to alleviate immediate need but also to help themselves, through development, education, and provision of opportunities. Just as Christ's earthly ministry not only redeemed from spiritual evil but also confronted evil in all its manifestations (sin, sickness, injustice, the demonic), so too kingdom communities confront evil in whatever forms it is manifested; personal, familial, social, economic. This may work to change structural evil in economic systems or in the social order that perpetuate poverty, oppress minorities, or even prevent people from full realization of their human potential. The task of missions is not to do all these things but to create local communities that do them among all people.

Apart from the definitive terms regarding how the church and kingdom correlate, scholars also make arguments concerning the implications of such theology on mission. The church exists to demonstrate the reality of the kingdom of God within human history. This way, the kingdom is not to be understood exclusively in eschatological terms as a future event but "a present reality manifested in the Christian community", which, though it is not the full embodiment of the kingdom, it is "a concrete result of the kingdom...It still bears the marks of the kingdom's historical existence, the marks of the *not yet* that characterize the present time...But the here and now participates in the *already* of the kingdom that Jesus has set in motion" (Padilla 2010:204). In this assertion, Padilla stresses that, while the church cannot be equated with the kingdom it is so connected to the kingdom that in the here and now, its role is to "reflect the values of the kingdom by the power of the Holy Spirit" (2010:204). Lesslie Newbigin points out that such a living community as the church provides a hermeneutic with which to understand the message of the gospel (In Padilla 2010:205). Thus as the argument goes, the mission of the church is grounded in the concept of the kingdom as the church gets involved in proclamation as a witness to the Lordship of Jesus Christ and also takes part in social service and action as the performance of good works which had been prepared in advance for it to do, as stated in Ephesians 2:10. It follows that "Good works are not therefore, a mere addendum to mission; rather, they are an integral part of the present manifestation of the kingdom: they point back to the kingdom that has already come and forward to the kingdom that is yet to come" (Padilla 2010:206).

The main argument seems to point in the direction of the important role of the local church as a kingdom agent from whom communities would imbibe the values of God's kingdom. The existence of these values, presupposes that there would be a Christian community to demonstrate them in a local context. This ecclesiological element is also contained in the integral mission promulgated by in the Micah Declaration. Tim Chester, asserts that, "at the heart of integral mission, is the local church...There cannot be sustainable Christian development that is distinctly Christian without sustainable Christian communities...the planting of churches that are committed to the inclusion of the poor must be at the heart of integral mission" (In Raistick 2010:137). Since the holistic mission is about the restoration of vertical and horizontal relationships, the local church becomes paramount in the role it plays in transforming these relationships. It is uniquely placed to bring about a radical holistic impact on people since it proclaims the gospel within the context of the community of faith (Raistick 2010:138,141).

The connection between the kingdom and ecclesiology can also be expanded to include the world in a manner that aims to show the comprehensive aspect of the church's mission. In this approach, an argument is made about the universality of the Lordship of Jesus whose sovereignty extends to the every aspect of creation. Padilla (2010:207-208), asserts that the whole creation is under the Lordship of Jesus, he has offered salvation to the whole world through the cross, Romans 5:18 and this fact needs to be proclaimed since it "affects the totality of human history." Since God is the God of justice and reconciliation, "His purpose for the church cannot be separated from his purpose for the world." The church cannot be separated from God's purpose for humanity and history and even though, not all men and women will participate in the kingdom, "the church will proclaim the kingdom to all men and women". Padilla thus ties the kingdom role of the church with its cosmic vocation. It is because God has a mission in the cosmos that he calls the church to exhibit his qualities in it. The church becomes a signpost of God's kingdom in the world carrying out his purposes in creation.

Johnston (1985:124) talks about the role of the church in relation to the kingdom, however his view seems to bear more spiritual overtones than a comprehensive approach. He seems to advocate a rather spiritualized form of the Kingdom which might be akin to the

ammillennialist point of view which according to Kuzmic's definition seems "inclined to spiritualize the kingdom and make it primarily other-worldly thus neglecting the this-worldly dimension of the kingdom of Christ" (1985:144). Drawing from the parables of the kingdom in Matthew 13, Mark 4, he emphasizes the here and now in Jesus' teachings but in a hidden form. Much of what Johnston says about the church's relation to the kingdom seems to be tied to the idea of evangelism through proclamation as the mission vocation of the church. The church exists to witness to the variety of aspects related to the kingdom of God. The church witnesses to the rule of Christ in people's lives as well as to the type of life the kingdom citizens are meant to live. The church as an instrument of the kingdom in the world is meant to exhibit the type of ministry that Jesus intended for the church to do as his body (:123). Since "Jesus works good in response to faith" and since his miracles became signs pointing men to faith in his word, it follows that the church is tasked to do the same as Jesus did through the power of the Spirit and point people to Jesus. The church becomes an instrument through which people are delivered from sin and brought into works of righteousness. It appears that Johnston subscribes to the ideology that individual moral uprightness leads to societal transformation. He says, "those cleansed, forgiven and transformed by the Spirit are equipped to bring healing and help to society in addition to verbal witness to others. Holiness of life and good works in society are always the fruit of justification" (:123). Verbal proclamation is thus tied to social transformation without necessarily showing the distinct nature of the kingdom theology in social issues. Thus what we see coming out of Johnston is an elevation of the proclamation aspect in the kingdom and the secret spiritual (:113) working of the kingdom in the hearts of people. He emphasizes the salvific aspect through faith so as to enter the kingdom (:118) but steers clear of suggesting the missional aspect of involvement with social structures. In his critique of Johnston's paper, Padilla argued that Johnston seemed to view social responsibility as a fruit of evangelism when in actual fact he needed to assert that both evangelism and social responsibility are the fruits of justification by faith since "we cannot expect a non-Christian to evangelize any more than we can expect him or her to do good works for which we are created in Christ Jesus". Padilla asserts that since the church is a sign of the Kingdom of God, it cannot be separated from God's purpose in the world. As a sign of the kingdom, the church is used by God to minister to diverse needs found in

concrete ministry settings and each situation provides the guidelines with which to define priorities. However “as long as evangelism and social responsibility are regarded as essential to mission the question of priorities becomes irrelevant” (Bruce Nicholls (ed) 1985:133).

The ecclesiology of the CTC seems to be somewhat linked to some of the kingdom ideas expounded above. Article 7 has affinity to the concept of ecclesiology and the world. Of particular interest in this article is the inclusion of creation under the lordship of Jesus Christ. The church is called upon to care for the earth and use its resources “not according to the rationale of the secular world, but for the Lord’s sake...If Jesus is Lord of all the earth, we cannot separate our relation to Christ from how we act in relation to the earth.” The proclamation of the gospel in relation to the Lordship of Jesus also includes the earth since he is Lord over all creation. This section identifies both the proclamation and ecological responsibility of the church as crucial aspects of integrated in mission. It does not raise issues of priority or primacy but talks of inseparability of these responsibilities as constituting the missional vocation of the church. It follows that “integral mission means discerning, proclaiming, and living out the biblical truth that the gospel is God’s good news, through the cross and resurrection of Jesus Christ, for individual persons, *and* for society, *and* for creation...all three must be part of the comprehensive mission of God’s people.” It is my contention here that such a coherent articulation of the comprehensive mission of the church, could have been informed by the kingdom notion because the syllogism involved in this argument tends to fit with what most evangelical theologians have shown in their arguments for a King-kingdom missiology. In article 9 which has the sub-rubric ‘love for God’s people’, there is a classic description of the church and how it relates to God’s kingdom.

Jesus calls all his disciples together to be one family among the nations, a reconciled fellowship in which all sinful barriers are broken down through his reconciling grace. This Church is a community of grace, obedience and love in the communion of the Holy Spirit, in which the glorious attributes of God and gracious characteristics of Christ are reflected and God’s multicoloured wisdom is displayed. As the most vivid present expression of the kingdom of God, the Church is the community of the reconciled who no

longer live for themselves, but for the Saviour who loved them and gave himself for them.

There is a King-kingdom connection made between the redeemed community and its subservience to the Lord. The community exists as an exhibition of the characteristics of the kingdom of God. It is in living for Christ that this community of grace displays to the world what God's character is like and what he expects of the world to be. The Trinitarian aspect which has been hinted at by Hiebert, Scherer and Padilla, seems present in this formulation. The church is not redeemed merely for its own sake, but it is redeemed unto obedience and reflection of the God's 'glorious attributes' and gracious characteristics of Christ and all this will be done through fellowship with the Holy Spirit. It is in this way that the church becomes a useful expression of the kingdom of God. Kingdom obedience and the display of God's characteristics are not be limited to salvific issues only but to all that God intends for the church to be in the world. As Padilla has argued, this puts the church in God's cosmic purpose as a kingdom instrument. This idea is better articulated by the succeeding article (10) which ties, the church's teleological existence to its participation in God mission. With reference to God's cosmic vision for the existence of the church, the article states that "The Church exists to worship and glorify God for all eternity and to participate in the transforming mission of God within history. Our mission is wholly derived from God's mission, addresses the whole of God's creation, and is grounded at its centre in the redeeming victory of the cross." In its articulation of the mission of God, this article also connects ecclesiology and eschatology an aspect which is characteristic of kingdom logic. The eschatological aspect provides for both the possibility of a present foretaste of the eschaton in history (Padilla 2010:2020) as well as the futuristic aspect at the parousia in what Ladd referred to as the 'an eschatological tension' (In Padilla 2010:200). This is brought out in article 10 as follows:

We are committed to world mission, because it is central to our understanding of God, the Bible, the Church, human history and the ultimate future. The whole Bible reveals the mission of God to bring all things in heaven and earth into unity under Christ, reconciling them through the blood of his cross. In fulfilling his mission, God will transform the creation broken by sin and evil into the new creation in which there is no more sin or curse...God will destroy the reign of death, corruption and

violence when Christ returns to establish his eternal reign of life, justice and peace. Then God, Immanuel, will dwell with us, and the kingdom of the world will become the kingdom of our Lord and of his Christ and he shall reign for ever and ever.

The role of the church is also raised with reference to morality, in 11e. As discussed in the first section of this chapter, the church is called upon to be an example in ethical matters facing the world today, The CTC drafts a variety of scenarios within which the church is expected to display ethical standards. Much of what is contained in IIE has to do with practical areas of morality through which the church is called upon to exhibit kingdom qualities which have societal implications. More could be said but the above can suffice to show that there is plausibility in assuming that the ecclesiology of the CTC may have, as its locus, a missiology drawn from the notion of the kingdom of God.

### 5.5.3 Kingdom and Reconciliation

This section can be read together with the sub-rubric on reconciliation in the first section of this chapter in which an overview of this theme was appraised. Article IIB1.(a) connects the church to the missiological task of reconciliation.

Reconciliation to God and to one another is also the foundation and motivation for seeking the justice that God requires, without which, God says, there can be no peace. True and lasting reconciliation requires acknowledgment of past and present sin, repentance before God, confession to the injured one, and the seeking and receiving of forgiveness. It also includes commitment by the Church to seeking justice or reparation, where appropriate, for those who have been harmed by violence and oppression.

On the basis of salvific reconciliation to God and to one another, the church should be motivated to extend God's just principles onto society. This is in tune with the logic of the kingdom notion, which suggests that the church should exhibit the same reconciling characteristic of God. One of the things that show that the church is a sign of the kingdom is that it must exhibit *horizontal reconciliation* in its fellowship (Ott et al. 2010:95, LOP 51:2005) and advocate for reconciliation and peace even outside of its community of faith. The work of reconciliation in the church and in the society is considered the mission oriented work of the church as a member of the kingdom of God. It is the church that ought

to commit herself to seeking justice for victims of violence because of its godly understanding of God's sense of justice. It follows that when the church is successful in its mission of reconciliation among hostile groups, God gets the glory and when the opposite takes place 'the name of Christ is dishonored' (2010:95-96). Thus there is need for vertical reconciliation to be pursued and established since this is the foundation for any sort of reconciliation that we might envisage. In IIB1, reconciliation to God is connected to reconciliation with one another a fact which includes the need for the redemptive gospel to be proclaimed to all people.

The importance of vertical reconciliation is in the fact that it is a qualitative type of reconciliation which is not satisfied with mere outcomes of outward reconciliation or peace but rather considers first the relationship with God as providing the spiritual and perpetual basis upon which horizontal relationships can be built. It guarantees that "the new humanity is no longer divided by race, ethnicity, social standing or gender (Gal.3:28), [but] finds its identity...in relationship to Christ" (Ott et. al 2010:97). So this is not just the seeking of peace, cessation of war and so forth, but a connectedness with the life of Christ that imbues his qualities into the communities that the church finds itself. Reconciliation thus, should not overlook the vertical aspect but must always keep it in focus. Such reconciliation, to be realized necessitates the proclamation of the gospel, which is the way through which peace with God is actualized through the blood of Christ. This is stressed in the conclusion part of the CTC where it calls for a "radical cross-centred reconciliation", without which no real reconciliation can take place horizontally. According to Ott et al. (2010:97):

Because vertical reconciliation is so foundational to horizontal reconciliation, to evangelism, to church planting, to philanthropy, and to justice, we maintain that reconciliation is more than merely a task of missions; it is central to the overarching purpose and nature of mission. The restored relationship with God, and its attendant restored human relations, is central to the message of the gospel. The kingdom of God is characterized not merely by an absence of evil, injustice, or alienation, but positively by the restoration of harmony and fullness in both the vertical and the horizontal dimensions of the human experience.

This understanding of reconciliation defines the crux of what it is for Christian missions to be involved in the ministry of reconciliation. It also differentiates Christian reconciliation from the secular approach. Its noetic point of reference is not merely the eradication of turmoil but establishment of restored relationships with God which ushers in restored relationships among people. It is an all-encompassing sort of reconciliation in that after addressing people's relationship with God, it goes on to touch all structures and institutions that affect human life, starting with the family institution going on to other socio-political structures which affect human existence. This inevitably includes the ecological dimension to which every existing person ought to practice responsibility. The kingdom-oriented missiology addresses all these areas, with its axis in the appropriation of the work Christ did on the cross and carried out in the power of the Holy Spirit. The CTC goes to great lengths in its various articles, to reflect this kingdom thinking, with regards to how the reconciliation through Christ can play out from the family level to the ecological level. In 4.(4), reconciliation involves the "reconciliation and redemption of creation", article 8.(b) points to the reconciliation of believers to God and the ultimate reconciliation of all creation" while IIB2 talks about the need for ethnic reconciliation. Thus the CTC has attempted a broad-based missiology of reconciliation to which the church should be committed.

The promulgation of the missiology of reconciliation was not an arbitrary theologizing from armchair missiologists, but, its emergence was due to a large interest that had developed in the church (Ott et. el, 2010:95, Schreiter 2011:89), in the 1990s on reconciliation as a subject of deep missiological concern. This was an endeavor to address socio-economic, and political challenges obtaining in the world. It was therefore no coincidence that both the Lausanne Occasional Paper 51 in 2004 (published in 2005) and CWME Athens (2005) began to address issues of reconciliation just about the same time culminating in the promulgation of reconciliation as a new mission paradigm in 2004 and 2005 respectively.

Chapter three gave a summary appraisal of the LOP 51, entitled 'Reconciliation as the Mission of God' conducted by the LCWE Forum for World Evangelization in Pattaya. This

LOP resonates with the CTC and there is a sense in which it has been recapitulated with slightly different but corresponding formulations/wording. A reading of the LOP shows that by 2004, the time during which the forum took place, Lausanne's social consciousness had become of age. This is even more convincing given the fact that, Pattaya was not conducted as a conference but a forum, a fact which shows that the participants were not mere recipients of thought processes completed elsewhere but actually deliberated and contributed on issues affecting the world and formulated theologies of mission deemed relevant to the contemporary situation. The Lausanne International Committee deliberately chose to settle for a forum which would "allow people to come and participate if they had something to contribute..." The 47 participants who worked on the LOP came from diverse backgrounds and came from 6 continents and 21 countries. This was made up of practitioners, pastors, theologians, missiologists and scholars from places that were rife with conflicts. The participants included, Protestant evangelicals, Pentecostals, and denominational leaders, two Catholic priests and one Orthodox priest. According to Chris Rice (2005), (the convener on issue group 22, the group that discussed Reconciliation), the aim of this group was to discuss "a challenge for placing biblically holistic reconciliation at the heart of Christian mission in the 21<sup>st</sup> century...Its urgent call is to both personal conversion and social transformation, beginning in a critical re-examination of the very meaning of mission, discipleship, evangelism, justice, and even church in relation to God's reconciling mission." The LOP also shows how the kingdom notion may have played a part in shaping Lausanne's understanding of reconciliation as the mission of God. In the extrapolation of such a mission theology, the LOP 51 says; "God's mission of reconciliation is holistic, including relationships with God, self, others and creation...to its fulfillment in the coming of Christ in the *eschaton*. God's reconciling mission involves the very in-breaking of the kingdom, as realized through Jesus' incarnation, His life and ministry and preaching, and through His death and resurrection." The mission of reconciliation is interpreted as the coming onto the world scene of the kingdom of God. It is "a sign of God's presence in the world, of the kingdom of God drawing near." (2005). When the kingdom comes onto the scene, redemptive reconciliation is the first and continual manifestation of such a kingdom. This manifestation is not limited to one aspect of human existence but encompasses a wide variety of issues to which God's mission is

applied according to the purposes of God in the wider universe and in the social and historical context the church finds itself. With regards to the local context, the kingdom missiology entails that the church should desist from holding a dichotomy between the evangelistic and the prophetic. Such a renunciation of dualistic theologies should issue in the pursuance of holistic theology of mission. Pattaya used the term *shalom* (John 14:27) to capture the wholeness of what God intends to do in the world. It defines *shalom* as follows:

*Shalom* as God's peace envisions the wholeness, well-being and flourishing of all people and the rest of creation both individually and corporately in their interrelatedness with God and with each other. *Shalom* as God's peace encompasses all dimensions of human life, including the spiritual, physical, cognitive, emotional, social, societal and economic. *Shalom* pursues mercy, truth, justice and peacefulness through both personal conversion in Christ and social transformation. Because God created all persons in God's image, reconciliation also proclaims God's love for every human being. One crucial implication is that Christians must stand against any destructive or dehumanizing barriers built up by one person or group of people against another, whether they are Christian or not. One theological implication of the above three paragraphs is this: God's mission of holistic reconciliation is the overall context for evangelism and making disciples. Reconciliation with God is essential and Christians must be agents of that restoration. However, to stress evangelism without also being agents of holistic reconciliation betrays the full truth of the gospel and the mission of God.

The quotation above shows an effort to steer clear of the tension between evangelism and social concern, which had become a common occurrence in Lausanne. It does not prioritize the importance of one aspect over another but asserts that reconciliation in and of itself, is all encompassing. This comprehensive nature of mission built on the axis of kingdom based reconciliation, resonates with articles in the CTC where the term *shalom* is also used in a similar sense as LOP 51 and in LOP 33. In LOP 33 *shalom* has been used to argue for holistic mission, thus carries with it the integral aspect which includes, evangelism, development and health. While the term is used in the LOP33 to support arguments for holistic mission, it has been used extrapolated in various ways, once by Padilla in the document "Holistic Mission" and several times by Evvy Hay Campbell in reference to health in the paper "The Church and Health" (2005). In the CTC, article IIB3 *shalom* is

connected to justice for the oppressed and the poor. Though article 7c does not mention the term *shalom*, it nevertheless gives a summative definition in which *shalom* is extrapolated as follows:

Such love for the poor demands that we not only love mercy and deeds of compassion, but also that we do justice through exposing and opposing all that oppresses and exploits the poor. ‘We must not be afraid to denounce evil and injustice wherever they exist.’ We confess with shame that on this matter we fail to share God’s passion, fail to embody God’s love, fail to reflect God’s character and fail to do God’s will. We give ourselves afresh to the promotion of justice, including solidarity and advocacy on behalf of the marginalized and oppressed. We recognize such struggle against evil as a dimension of spiritual warfare that can only be waged through the victory of the cross and resurrection, in the power of the Holy Spirit, and with constant prayer.

As noted in chapter three, the use of the term *shalom*, by Lausanne, starting in Pattaya, in LOP 33 and 51, seems to be a deliberate move with perfect memory of how the term had been at the center of missiological controversy in the 60s. The secularized usage of the 60s did not deter the Pattaya Forum from utilizing the same term and giving it a strict biblical orientation and grounding so that it could connote what evangelicals saw as fitting in their understanding of kingdom mission and “not in any nationalistic or politically partisan sense” (LOP51). *Shalom*, is a key concept in reconciliation and the kingdom of God. What the LOP 51 and CTC 7c have sought to do, seems to have been something that evangelical theologians had been working towards. Snyder (1977:113), for instance, connects the proclamation vocation of the church with the establishment of *shalom* when he says, “the weapon of the church is to preach good news about the *shalom* Christ brings – peace with God, reconciliation among persons and harmony throughout God’s creation.” It is therefore significant that the social consciousness obtaining after Pattaya 2004, became unequivocally defined in integral terms that included evangelism, proclamation, social justice, advocacy and so forth without feeling the need to explain how these aspects relate. This is a sign of change in missional thinking of the Lausanne. It seems to be a theological reflection of what had begun to take place on a praxis level. Writing in 2010 about the need for academic research for transformational development, Myers says, “for the last twenty years, evangelical holistic mission activists have acted. They’ve gone out and done

transformational development...But there is more to doing than just acting (Myers 2010:120). One such area is the move from a mission theology that emphasized the sin in the individual and the consequent need for the conversion of the individual as contained in the Reformed based theology of Lausanne and Manila, according to Schreiter's assessment (2011:90). This was tied to the thinking that the moral change of a converted individual will subsequently result in the transformation of the community in which such individuals increasingly become a part contingent on the success of the evangelistic task (McGavran 1985:100-111). This had consequences for the mission as the church became reluctant to address the powers in politics resolving to deal with the individual. In Pattaya, Cape Town and the in the writing of some evangelical theologians, the thinking had shifted. Melba Maggay (2010:178), in the essay, "Confronting the Powers", says, "It is not enough to have a critical mass of a do-gooding individuals who want change. It is naïve to assume that if we change individuals, we change society." Vinay Samuel refers to the same thinking when he points out that it was assumed in order for transformational mission to take place, individuals or communities equipped by an understanding of holistic mission and shaped by piety, discipleship and empowered by the Holy Spirit would take the lead in bringing about transformation in the world. This approach, according to Samuel, did not take into consideration the critical role played by cultural institutions in the process of cultural change a fact that he says was beginning to change as Christians were increasingly becoming aware of the role or institutions and cultural systems of power in their missiological reflections (2010:133). A theology of mission which seeks to embrace a holistic understanding of creation and humanity "must work with a radical and comprehensive understanding of sin and evil" (Wright 2009:69). This seems to be one aspect that most evangelicals have had to come to grips with in the process of trying to arrive at an inclusive missiology. Identification of sin with structures was becoming common place in evangelicalism as a prelude to articulation of social theology.

Maggay (2010:179), agrees that inward change is important but further argues that "for such change to impact society, it needs to have the force and the relative permanence of institutions." Reforming social institutions will also involve the "outer visible structure and inner spiritual reality" which brings the work into the realm of spiritual warfare to which Maggay says, the language of Ephesians 6, "suggests that the demonic manifests itself not

only in personalities, but also in subhuman forces – structures and institutions – that enslave or oppress people.” The point that is brought to the fore here is that, since institutions are manned by humans, it follows that when these structures exhibit evil, it is because humans have made them evil since the social institutions are “extensions of who we are collectively as people.” They are an embodiment of our collective identity and are extended and patterned into systems that become larger than the sum total of people who make them up and so, as powerful social structures they also get to shape individuals in society (Maggay 2010:179, Samuel 2010:131). As Wright (2009:70) puts it, “although structures may not sin in the personal sense, structures do embody myriad personal choices, many of them sinful, that we have come to accept within our cultural patterns.” As such structures and institutions, like individual humans, “are as much battlegrounds between good and evil as the human soul” (Maggay 2010:179). Maggay’s arguments have some affinity to what we see in CTC 7c and IIB2.e. In 7c above we see that the CTC identifies evil and injustice as issues that need to be treated both in advocacy and spiritual warfare. In IIB2.e the root cause of human conflict and suffering is not found in individuals but in “demonic powers of evil that aggravate human conflict”, and these need to be confronted through the victory of the cross and with power to minister Christ’s reconciling love and peace to people affected. Ron Sider looks at the work of the kingdom in terms of battling with darkness. Referring to Jesus’ ministry, Ron (1993:60) says, “Jesus saw the work of Satan and his demonic forces. At the heart of his announcement of the kingdom is total warfare with the Evil One who has introduced devastation into the good creation.” Jesus battled with Satan in the wilderness at the start of his ministry, (Luke 4:1-13), and each time Jesus cast out an evil spirit he “cited his victory over the demonic forces as a sign that the messianic kingdom had broken in (Luke 11:20.” Howard Snyder (1977:108), holds that one of the prophetic roles of the church is to recognize and identify the true enemy. He argues that the church needs not to accept Satan’s definition of who the enemy is, because by doing so, “she also readily adopts Satan’s tactics...False enemies call forth false solutions”. The church needs to discern how Satan is working through social structures, ideologies, movements and persons. If the church sees the enemy behind the enemy it avoids false alternatives and false definitions of problems the world faces (:109). If the church is clear on its definitions of the enemy she will then need to employ biblical warfare and struggle for victory. If the

church acts faithfully in this regard “it will share Christ’s victory over literal, physical death and will also win many kingdom victories along the way” (:110).

In keeping with the kingdom notion, Maggay (2010:181-182) asserts that the coming of the kingdom of God is involved with ‘the overthrowing of the mighty and the lifting of the lowly’, which meant the activity of the church in redressing social ills whether through social action or philanthropy. Evangelicals pressed for the church to reject the world’s practice of power and pursue justice defined in biblical terms while rejecting any sort of oppressive manipulation of justice and any sort of violence and in those instances where evil persists, the church might have to move progressively from active involvement to a counterculture stance (Snyder 1977:113,115). It follows that the church should not shy away from participating in social action as stated in CTC 7c, “We must not be afraid to denounce evil and injustice wherever they exist.” The church, thus must work towards radical reversal of certain power relations where necessary. What differentiates the church’s approach from that of popular movements is the manner through which change is brought into the society. The operation of the kingdom Jesus brought in place, is different from the operation of social and political activists in that his kingdom (2010:181):

Turns the world upside down, but quietly and no less effectively, inviting those who would be subject to it to become not so much revolutionaries as subversives. This new social order demands that its citizens cross borders of ethnicity, gender, and economic status and demonstrate that in Christ, equality is possible between Jew and Greek, male and female, rich and poor. They are to see to it that in their dealings, the first should be last and the last first.

In the quest to challenge political powers, the church should maintain its moral and ethical agency while at the same time, remaining subordinate to the government for purposes of social organization (2010:182). With regards to slavery and human trafficking, the CTC (IIB3.a) says, “Let us rise up as the Church worldwide to fight the evil of human trafficking, and to speak and act prophetically to ‘set the prisoners free’. This must include addressing the social, economic and political factors that feed the trade.” The church has a prophetic role in addressing social and political problems around it.

One can assert on the basis of the foregoing that the implicit theology of the kingdom could be responsible for the shift towards a stronger social outlook in the LOPs 33, and 51 and ultimately in the CTC. The theology of the kingdom may have informed the Trinitarian, salvation-historical approach to mission, ecclesiology and the emergence of reconciliation as a paradigm of mission. It could at the same time be taken as a move by the Lausanne to redefine the very concept that had stood at the center of divergence between the evangelicals and the conciliar streams of mission. An reappraisal of this term meant that evangelical mission theology would no longer be approached in terms typical of Ajith Ferdinando's 'course corrections' with its potential for perpetuating an unending circle of contradictory theological positions. Rather, through this notion, mission would be approached in an integral manner, addressing the totality of things involved in mission without the need to compare the importance of one aspect over another. Furthermore, through the kingdom approach, evangelicals can carry out both the spiritual and physical aspects of mission without feeling any tension between them since the same are fully covered as duties to which the church needs to be involved.

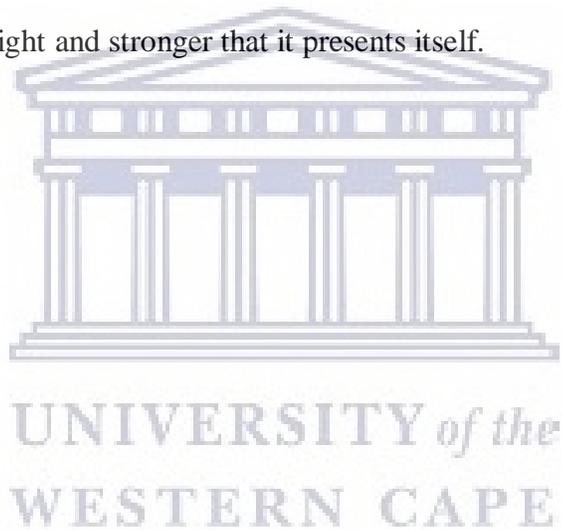
## 5.6 Conclusion

In the foregoing, I have attempted to give an appraisal of Lausanne III and the *Cape Town Commitment*, with a view to establishing the theology contained therein. I have also tried to establish whether this congress and its pursuant official document show any sort of a paradigm shift in missiological thinking. I have attempted to show that even though the *mission Dei* concept was not specifically adopted in the document, it may have been alluded to by simply using the term 'mission of God' in conjunction with integral mission. The article in which this is contained shows that the mission of God is comprehensive in nature. I also argue that through the use of the kingdom notion of mission, Lausanne has moved towards a holistic missiology which the CTC has officially termed integral mission. It is through this integral missiology that scholars have discerned a paradigm shift, which has taken over four decades to come of age. Lausanne may have mellowed from its usual individualistic view of mission to one that opened up to a broader view of ministry. This has been due to the participation of broader base of evangelicals, some of whom did not carry the historical baggage that came with the Enlightenment's philosophy of both

dualism and individualism. One detects a growing move from identifying sin simply with individuals to identifying sin in social structures as one of the areas in which evangelicals saw the need to develop a comprehensive spiritual and social ministry. Such an identification may have helped the Lausanne to take a renewed appreciation of the world and the various ways in which the church could engage with the world in holistic mission. The LOP 33 and 51 read together with the CTC displayed a deliberate effort to deal with dualism and used the integral mission approach to refer to the comprehensive nature of things that need to be done in mission. This meant the perennial discussion of dichotomy between evangelism and social responsibility was not repeated in the CTC. It deliberately “moves away from the preference for dichotomous expression and public proclamation to a more essay-like mode...it leaves a more propositional approach behind to embrace a more nuanced presentation of its confession and commitments” (Schreiter 2011:89). Thus by orienting mission theology to *mission Dei* and kingdom theology, Lausanne turned its focus from the language of priority which is conspicuously absent in the CTC. With regards to the kingdom notion, it seems, its connotation might have played a key role in the formulation of the CTC. It would seem that the Theology Working Group responsible for formulating this official document was well aware of the theological and missiological developments of the time hence some of the theological nuances found in the CTC resemble what had been taking place in missiological circles in the decades leading to Lausanne III. The realigning of the pre-and postmillennial notions of the kingdom seem to have been an influential key in reorienting the fundamentalist and liberal divide that had occurred earlier in the twentieth century. With such a reorientation it became possible to come up with an integral missiology which did not require a delineation of the priority of one aspect of mission over another. While the *CTC* has rich integral mission content and thereby representing a paradigm shift, the proceedings of the congress revealed that some quarters of the Lausanne still called for the urgency of evangelism so much so that the official document itself was not given much time for reflection during the congress. This suggests that Lausanne may have moved in its official theology but there are still undercurrents about the special place that evangelism occupies or should occupy as an important component of mission. It has to be admitted that from both the CTC and the few reports we have from the proceedings that evangelism holds a crucial and decisive place in

Lausanne missiology though the same is no longer defined as mission on its own as has been the case when the movement came into being. As Schreier (2011:89) observed, the CTC has “a certain matured quality here that reflects a movement that has become much more self-assured.”

When reading the CTC, one gets the impression that the document is presented in a sort of a devotional or hortatory manner with some sort of a spiritual bent in its language. This is not negative in itself but this approach seems to blur the force with which certain statements needed to have been put forward. While it has gone to great lengths in articulating a holistic missiology, there are points at which one gets the feeling that the CTC is somewhat too cautious in its wording on social issues. There are areas where one feels the CTC needed to be a little more forthright and stronger than it presents itself.



**Chapter Six**  
**Comparison of Mission Theologies in CWME and LCWE:**  
**Convergence or Divergence**

**6.1. Introduction**

The purpose of this chapter is to compare the official theologies of the Athens conference (2005) and the Cape Town Congress (2010) with a view to establishing the similarities and differences of these theologies. In order to follow the contours of this discussion, the first part of this chapter will attempt to give an analytic recapitulation and comparison of some the mission themes that took place between Lausanne and CWME before Athens and Cape Town. This recapitulation is purposely done to see at what stages the mission theologies came close to each other and if these developments built up to what we see in 2005 and 2010. Such will help to assess Athens and Cape Town as theologies which are not detached from these historical developments. The second part of the chapter will discuss the similarities and differences between Athens and Cape Town's theologies of mission. The third and last part of the chapter will be devoted to concluding remarks and recommendations.

**6.2. Period of Divergence and the Main Causes of Divergence, 1960-1973**

The period between 1960 to 1973 have been described as the years of confrontation between ecumenical and evangelical constituencies) notwithstanding the initial fundamentalist-modernist debates characteristic of the 1920s which laid the basis for a hermeneutic of suspicion that ensued in the future relationship between the two movements (Bosch 1988:462. Central to this problem was the interpretation of the millennial passage in Revelation 20:1-6 which is connected to the eschatological kingdom of God. This resulted in the two opposed hermeneutical departure points namely the pre- and post-millennial perspectives of the eschatological kingdom. While the postmillennial understanding during the period of the Puritans, Pietists and of the eighteenth and nineteenth century Great Awakening was Biblicist in approach (Marsden 1980; Kuzmic 1985:138), the version that

underpinned the Social Gospel was quite liberal and lacked the forward looking cosmic aspect of the second coming of Christ. Instead, believing that humans would bring the millennial kingdom on earth, it centred its efforts on creating a utopia on earth through socio-economic and political means. The premillennialists, who held fundamentalistic views of biblical doctrine, insisted that the world was getting worse and worse and no human effort would work in improving it. Therefore the only mission that was left for the church to do was to evangelise and save people and prepare them for the second coming of Christ, after whose coming the millennial kingdom would be ushered in. These two understandings brew conditions of divergence that would take decades to address. The one focused on social work as mission while the other emphasised evangelism as mission. Among other key theological developments that precipitated this decline in relationship, was first and foremost the merger of IMC with the WCC, which was seen by most evangelicals as having detrimental effects to the evangelistic task. Over a decade after the merger, Stott would say (Stott 1974:30):

The modern ecumenical movement was born of missionary passion, and an assurance was given at New Delhi that the work of the International Missionary Council would henceforth become central to the concerns of the whole WCC. Yet it seems to many of us that evangelism has now become largely eclipsed by the quest for social and political liberation.

Stott's comment is indicative of the general feeling among conservative evangelicals and it also defines the contours of the problem. His query was not only directed at the merger but at the implications of the merger, that is, it would result in the eclipsing of evangelism. Conservatives understood mission as evangelism hence the concern that since WCC had a strong social and political liberation bent, it would inevitably deem the IMC's evangelistic thrust. This shows that by 1961, WCC was already associated with liberalism and with the socio-political agenda as its missiological orientation. According to Scherer (1987:106-107), subsequent events proved that the fears of conservative evangelicals might have been warranted. He asserts that due to the merger:

The missionary activity was now drawn into the orbit of ecumenical policy formation, priority setting, and allocation of resources...the entire agenda of the world church in all six continents suddenly seemed to invade the serene world of mission with its former priority of completing the

unfinished task...Bangkok meeting of the CWME moved to eliminate any reference to the “unfinished evangelistic task,” possibly on the assumption that the task itself was a never-ending one. Certainly the task was now enormously broadened, and constantly changing...The distinction between a specific missionary *intention* and a broader missionary *dimension*, and the claim that crossing the frontier between faith and unbelief constituted the unique *differentium* of mission activity, proved incapable of being maintained in practice. The older and narrower definition of mission was imperiled by a growing tendency to label virtually everything the church does—above all, its urgent priority tasks—its “mission.” The more specific missionary understanding of the old IMC with its well-defined functional parameters was absorbed into the WCC’s increasingly holistic definition of mission...the actual benefits flowing from the act of integration did not appear to match the promises. Some of the consequences, moreover, were potentially disastrous for mission work in the ensuing period.

The second theological development had to do with the liberal version of the *missio Dei* that was developed in tune with Hoekendijk’s secularistic theology. In this theology the world was taken as setting the agenda for the mission because God was considered to be at work in the world first and not the church. This approach established humanization and *shalom* as missiological paradigms. This approach had adverse effects on ecclesiology and it went directly against the evangelical ethos of mission causing a decisive separation between the two movements.

The third theological development took place in 1973. The Bangkok conference sealed the separation when it defined salvation in socio-political terms of liberation and social justice and lacked a clear biblical exposition of salvation as a working basis and associated “biblical salvation more or less indiscriminately with salvific themes and personalities in contemporary social and political movements and in other religions” (Scherer 1987:121-122). The real underlying theme at this conference ended up being ‘not so much “Salvation Today” as it was “Liberation in Christ” – Liberation from various forms of captivity’ (:122). Such theology was parallel theological development seen in conciliar theology; liberation theology which was based on the notion and conviction that “the kingdom of God is realized within history through the struggle for justice and liberation of the oppressed...Such theological developments deepened the breach between evangelical and conciliar missions” (Ott et al. 2010:131).

The main charge during these years of divergence was that WCC exhibited much theological liberalism, loss of evangelical conviction, a universalistic theology, substitution of evangelism with the social gospel and the search for unity at the expense of truth, (Eugene L Smith 1966:481). This warranted the evangelicals to establish their own movement in Berlin 1966 and which later came to fruition through the efforts of Billy Graham and others in 1974 at Lausanne.

When the evangelicals began to organize themselves between 1960 and 1966, they made sure they emphasised the very doctrines that they felt were distorted or missing in the WCC. From this time however there was a general preparedness among some evangelicals to consider restating an orthodox yet comprehensive theology of mission (Stanley 2013:535). Thus starting with Wheaton, Berlin, Lausanne and then Manila, there was a deliberate articulation of conservative theology, priority of the evangelistic task, Christocentric soteriology, primacy of evangelism over social orientation and an emphasis on the Bible as the basis for all theology and cooperation. This line of reasoning was not only seen as an antithesis of the WCC, but also as a faithful revival of the evangelical heritage which was presumably lost in Edinburgh (Efiong Utuk 1986:207). It was an attempt to correct the error of Edinburgh as was indicated by Hesselgrave (2007:124) who advocated the doctrine was to be a test for inclusion and fellowship in the missionary enterprise. The divergence at this stage was marked by attacks on the ecumenical movement whether in conference papers as in Wheaton (Eugene Smith 1966:480-481), or anti-ecumenical publications outside of conferences in the public area (Norman Laing 2012:125). These all aimed to juxtapose that which seemed to be the worst in 'ecumenism' and the best in 'evangelicalism' (Smith 1966:481). Uppsala and Bangkok only served to increase the gap between the movements. During the years leading to the Bangkok assembly the relationship became "characterised by strident altercations between evangelicals and ecumenicals, by attacks and counter-attacks, and by a steady worsening of whatever relations had existed before." (Bosch 1988: 463) The Bangkok conference sealed the divergence and the difference in theology and praxis became even more evident. In a letter written in response to Bishop Arias, John Stott summarises the relationship and the main problem between two movements as follows (1976:33):

We are conscious, I think, of the wide gap of confidence and credibility which exists today between ecumenical leaders and evangelicals, between Geneva and Lausanne. What can be done about this gap? Ecumenical leaders genuinely question whether evangelicals have a heartfelt commitment of social action. We evangelicals say we have, but I personally recognize we have got to supply more evidence than we have. On the other hand, evangelicals question whether the WCC has a heartfelt commitment to world-wide evangelism. They say they have, but I beg this Assembly to supply more evidence that this is so.

### **6.3. Convergence, 1974 - 1996**

The period starting from 1974 onwards has been widely described as marking a considerable degree of movement towards convergence on certain missiological themes than the preceding decade (Bosch 1988:464, Scherer 1987:40). These signs of convergence could not immediately be taken for granted since there were also some marked differences on certain missiological doctrines that were developed during this period which seemed quite divergent. Nevertheless, it is fair to assert that there were certain points on which some agreement of missiology occurred either simply on theological formulations or irenic efforts from either side for cooperation on some key issues.

#### **6.3.1. Irenic Calls for the Amelioration of Negativity**

When the Lausanne Movement was formed, there were fears that the evangelical community might establish a movement that would be directly in opposition to the WCC. Contrary to this misapprehension, some of the first irenic voices started reaching out from the Lausanne in 1974 perhaps in an endeavour to break the ambivalence that was built by the previous experiences particularly during the formative years of evangelicalism in the 60s. Key leaders from the movement began to sound irenic tones towards the ecumenical movement with the hope that perhaps their tensions could be changed into constructive mutual influence. According to Bosch (1988:464) Arthur Glasser emerged as one of the bridge builders between the two movements who advocated the need for constructive dialogue despite his 'uncompromisingly evangelical tone' of criticism of Bangkok. In his address to the American Society of Missiology Glasser said:

I feel that as an evangelical I should not speak darkly of ecumenical plots, of conspiracies to sow seeds of doubt, stab at true faith, and sabotage all those who accept the Bible as the Word of God. I should be willing to initiate efforts to bridge those gulfs that separate Evangelicals from the conciliar movement. I should seek to listen and learn as well as bear witness and serve...

Following Bangkok, Glasser would write:

Let us face it: at their best, churches throughout the world today represent light and darkness, truth and error, wheat and tares... If we accept one another and seek to express, wherever possible, our unity in Christ, the gospel of reconciliation will be proclaimed to this generation and social justice will be furthered. However, only by exercising a pastoral care for one another can this task be accomplished. There is a sense in which Lausanne '74 can build upon Bangkok '73.

In Glasser's view, convergence was not to be taken for granted, given the context of severe separation that had characterised the two groups. It was a process involving the cessation of negative propaganda, willingness to dialogue, self-introspection and working towards unity. The two movements needed to be prepared to mutually and positively learn from each other through constructive dialogue as well as to exercise pastoral care over each other. It is interesting to note that Glasser sees bridge building between the two movements as bringing the possibilities of more effectiveness to both proclamation of the gospel and issues of social justice, the very two issues upon which the movements had been divided.

John Stott's opening remarks in the plenary paper he gave at Lausanne I, are worthy of a long quote here (Douglas 1975: 65):

I do not propose to put up a few ecumenical skittles in order to knock them down with well-aimed evangelical balls, so that we can all applaud our easy victory! We all know that during the last few years, especially between Uppsala and Bangkok, ecumenical-evangelical relations hardened into something like a confrontation. I have no wish to worsen this situation. Mind you, I believe some ecumenical thinking is mistaken. But then frankly, I believe some of our evangelical formulations are mistaken also. Many ecumenical Christians seem hardly to have begun to learn to live under the authority of Scripture. We evangelicals think we have – and there

is no doubt we sincerely want to – but at times we are very selective in our submission, and the traditions of the evangelical elders sometimes owe more to culture than to Scripture. So I hope in my paper to strike a note of evangelical repentance and indeed I hope we shall continue to hear this note throughout the Congress. Both our profession and our performance are far from perfect. We have some important lessons to learn from our ecumenical critics. Some of their rejection of our position is not a repudiation of biblical truth, but rather of our evangelical caricatures of it.

The significance of Stott's remarks can be seen in several things. Firstly, his remarks contain a degree of penitence with regards to the manner in which evangelicals had related to the ecumenical counterparts in the preceding years. Like Glasser, he advocates a cessation of uncalled for and unnecessary criticism of the ecumenicals and self-praise of the evangelicals which had been characteristic of their relationship up to this stage. Such a tone of penitence at this early stage of the movement was very crucial for future relationships and when he said he "did not want to worsen the situation", this could only be taken positively as referring to desire to improve relations. Secondly, Stott made it clear that his call for the cessation of uncalled for criticism of the ecumenical movement does not necessarily mean that he agrees with their theology. In fact Stott points out that both camps have theological problems but it is interesting here to note that he makes specific mention of one of the key areas which lie at the heart of evangelicals, 'the authority of Scripture'. There is an assertion that ecumenicals have not fully appropriated the authority of Scripture while the evangelicals, who think they have, need to be more introspective about their use of the same. In other words, evangelicals have problems in the same area they think they are strong. However, Stott's cursory assertion here that ecumenicals seem not to have learned to live under the authority of Scripture needs to be taken seriously because it is the very point upon which evangelicals had been wary about the ecumenicals since Edinburgh 1910 deliberately omitted the question of doctrine at the conference. The third issue arises from the foregoing, Stott's call for 'note of evangelical repentance' is connected to the fact that both the WCC and the Lausanne needed to re-evaluate their own theologies because none of them exhibited formulations that were perfect. Repentance is thus irenic because, in this case, the Lausanne would have to be willing to learn from their ecumenical critics while at the same time admitting where they could have been going wrong.

I have selected Glasser and Stott's quotations at length here in an endeavour to try and show that one of the ways the Lausanne was going to institute an effective social agenda in their missiology had to be through mutual influence with the WCC. This influence would also affect WCC's theology of evangelism. The role played by these two theologians in calling for a cooling of attitudes and hostilities between the two movements is in itself a sign that convergence may have started. These convergences were based on the call for reciprocity of ideas and cooperation. These irenic calls for reciprocity of ideas did not necessarily come from the official promulgation of the Lausanne, but they are nevertheless noteworthy in that they were made by leaders who played key roles in the movement and one of whom was deeply entrenched in the church growth movement at Fuller Seminary.

### 6.3.2. Theological Similarities

The process of convergence was slow and intermittent. It was marked by periods of thematic similarity on some issues as well as divergent views on others. This suggests that similarity in one area does not necessarily mean theological convergence on a broad scale. The aim of this discussion is to show that there were in fact some efforts and points of theological convergence on some themes as the mission theologies of these organisations developed alongside each other since 1974. A study of the processes leading to these similarities shows that they came about due to some mutual influence between the two bodies as well as through some internal tensions and influences in the case of Lausanne. Starting with the heated debate at Lausanne in 1974 and the concomitant document by the Radical discipleship, through to the High Leigh and Pattaya tensions, one can deduce that some changes towards the adoption of a socially inclusive missiology in Lausanne came through tensions between differing views within the movement.

The WCC assembly that took place in Nairobi in 1975 has been heralded as an important conference for the role it played in providing a theological bridge of similarity with the Lausanne. As discussed in 2.3.2.6, Nairobi marked efforts by the WCC to “distance itself from radical politicizing of mission and started to recover a place for evangelism without abandoning the social agenda” (Ott et al. 2010:131). Because of its moderate theology,

Nairobi has been considered a “consolidating assembly” (John Kromminga 1976:150). The two years leading to Nairobi were marked by signs that things were heading toward moderation in the two camps. In 1973, WCC sponsored a symposium on evangelism and invited two prominent evangelical theologians, Orlando Costas and Michael Cassidy to participate (Bosch 1988:466). In Nairobi a conservative evangelical, David Hubbard, helped formulate the document that dealt with the subject of evangelism. Though Harold Lindsel, who was also present at Nairobi, suggests that Hubbard’s evangelical contribution was “clearly offset by other statements in that and other documents” (1979:41), it nevertheless is significant that Nairobi was able to offer such space to evangelicals from the Lausanne. Be that as it may, a narrowing of the gap began to occur through improved communication signalling that there may have occurred considerable change or mellowing of attitudes in both camps. This may bear witness to the type of change that the irenic voices in both camps had been calling for. With regards to the role of these irenic voices, Kromminga (1976:158) asserts that “there was evidence on both sides, at least among prominent spokesmen, of significant progress at crucial points. Neither side was unwilling to speak of repentance for lack of attention to important matters” Nairobi marked a renewed appeal to the tradition of Edinburgh 1910 (Scherer 1987:40).

The *Lausanne Covenant* bears witness to mitigation of hostility and the change that began to take place. The implementation of a paragraph on social responsibility, alone was a positive indication of change. This is further evidenced by a remark of penitence in which the Lausanne admitted that sometimes they “regarded evangelism and social concern as mutually exclusive” (LC5). With regards to visible unity the *Covenant* states in article 7 that “our testimony has sometimes been marred by sinful individualism and needless duplication.” Kromminga points out that the willingness of Lausanne to confess these shortcomings in the areas of social concern and visible unity should not be taken lightly because, at this stage in time, this type of confession was a relatively new note for evangelicals (1976:158). While the confession on social responsibility does not necessarily entail the adoption of the ecumenical hermeneutic of the same, it nevertheless is important because it is “a new recognition by a representative group of a closer connection between evangelism and social concern than had been previously acknowledged, and a confession

of error...” This type of change is considered to be very significant in the development of evangelical and ecumenical missiology from this point on because it opened the door to more fruitful discussions with Christians who held different persuasions (1976:158-159). It also serves to show that while Bangkok had presented the worse of an antithesis to evangelical theology of mission; it could have nevertheless prompted evangelicals to consider a serious articulation of their own understanding or version of social concern. Whether this is the case or not one can only speculate but the fact that Billy Graham voiced the concern to define the relationship of the two entities a little over a year after Bangkok could point to the possibility that mutual influence was at work though not in official terms. My argument is that, though Lausanne might not have been pleased with Bangkok, it bears signs that it nevertheless took the subject of that conference seriously and sought to address it from its own hermeneutic. Glasser’s comments above show that Bangkok had an impact on some evangelicals so much so that he suggested that Lausanne could build on it.

### 6.3.3. Evangelism in the Ecumenical Movement

On its side, the WCC made positive strides towards emphasising evangelism in its missiology. Prior to the Nairobi assembly WCC provided space for debate and contribution of different perspectives on the subject of evangelism in its journal *International Missionary Review*. Evangelical spokesmen also got space to offer their view points and the topic of evangelism was given much space in the assembly programme. The preparatory papers though did not give much indication of this, causing the evangelical constituency to view the Nairobi assembly with a certain degree of foreboding (Bailey 1996:493). During the conference, the topic of evangelism was given much treatment. The presentation by Bishop Mortimer Arias on the subject “That the World May Believe” and the deliberations on the Section I brought out some positive assertions on evangelism that bore many similarities to evangelical understanding of evangelism. Both are described as producing balanced addresses to the questions of evangelism and social concern while at the same time trying to restore the evangelistic stress which had fallen into eclipse (Kromminga 1976:168). Bishop Arias’ major emphasis was on the need for WCC to connect word and deed in the area of proclamation. He pointed out that, while everything

that the ecumenicals did had evangelistic intentions, there was need to connect all evangelistic deeds with naming the 'Name above all names' (Arias 1976:17). The naming of Christ is consistent with Lausanne's insistence on evangelism as the proclamation "of the historical, biblical Christ as Saviour and Lord..." (LC4). The wording in Section I bears a very close affinity to the *Lausanne Covenant*. Its emphasis on "the whole gospel, the whole person, the whole world, and the whole church' is akin to the Covenant's affirmation that "World evangelization requires the whole church to take the whole gospel to the whole world" (LC6). A further point of contact from Section I had to do with the connectedness between evangelism and social concern:

As the royal priesthood, Christians are therefore called to engage in both evangelism and social action. We are commissioned to proclaim the gospel of Christ to the ends of the earth. Simultaneously we are commanded to struggle to realize God's will for peace, justice, and freedom throughout society.

The emphasis on both evangelism and social responsibility is the main subject of article 5 in the *Covenant*. As a result this terminology on evangelism was very welcome by most evangelicals as indicating a turning of the tide in the WCC. McGavran would comment at Section I concerning the changes that had taken place by saying, "a commitment to evangelism...[and] the strong clear statements about evangelism are good" (In Bailey: 1996:493).

Such theological affinities suggest that the possibility of mutual influence in both the Lausanne and Nairobi. Harvey Hoekstra suggested that it was clear the Nairobi was influenced by the Lausanne conference on evangelism (Bailey 1996:49). He makes reference to how M. M. Thomas, moderator of the Central Committee of the WCC spoke about the church's need to be involved in evangelism and in the process, made reference to statements from Lausanne I. From this he drew the conclusion that WCC leaders were being influenced by Lausanne in matters of evangelism. Nairobi (Ott et. al. 2010:131) marked a difference from Bangkok in that it distanced itself from the "radical politicizing of mission and started to recover a place for evangelism without abandoning the social agenda." Its new definition of evangelism radically steers away from what had become the

socially oriented view of evangelism in conciliar mission where the same had been redefined as “good news in the form of good works” (Ott et. al. 2010:129). Section I of the Nairobi report states that (Scherer and Bevans (eds) 1992:10):

The gospel includes: the announcement of God’s kingdom and love through Jesus Christ, the offer of grace and forgiveness of sins, the invitation to repentance and faith in him, the summons to fellowship in God’s church, the command to witness to God’s saving words and deeds, the responsibility to participate in the struggle for justice and human dignity, the obligation to denounce all that hinders human wholeness, and a commitment to risk life itself.

Kromminga cites two reasons as to why Lausanne could in fact present such a formidable influence on the WCC. Firstly he notes that Lausanne carried with it a certain weight of numbers in that it “represented the convictions of a large number of Christians throughout the world.” Secondly he points out that Lausanne “spoke soberly and responsibly to well-defined issues” (1976:163). This however needs to be combined with internal trends within the ecumenical movement which contributed towards the prominence of the evangelism in Nairobi. This probably could give reason to believe that the Lausanne had influence on the articulation of the final declaration of Section I because their response to this section turned out to be quite favourable (1976:170). Thus Nairobi marked a degree of convergence with the Lausanne statements in the issue of evangelism (Bosch 1988: 467; Bailey 1996: 494, Scherer 1987:41).

The CWME conference held in Melbourne in 1980 and the Lausanne COWE conference held in Pattaya in the same year, did not register much convergence as was expected given the ground that was gained in Nairobi. Melbourne’s emphasis on the radical missiology of the poor stood in contrast to the conversionist missiology that came out of Pattaya. The planning of these meetings to take place in the same year, though not planned “served to highlight the continuing tension” (Stott 1984:21). Bosch characterised the polarization between these two conferences as follows: “one heard the cry of the poor, the other the cry of the lost; the one emphasized human disorder, the other God’s design, the one regarded sin as being also corporate, the other saw it as exclusively individual, the one stressed liberation and humanization, the other justification and redemption...” He qualifies this

characterisation by pointing out that the “the strength of Melbourne was the weakness of Pattaya, and vice versa” (1988: 467).

One would have hoped that Pattaya would perhaps have taken cognisance of changes in other evangelical circles to incorporate issues of social responsibility to mission. One of the papers presented at the Consultation on Theology and Mission at Trinity Evangelical Divinity School of World Mission and Evangelism in 1979 discussed the issue of evangelical response to the poor. In the paper, “Community Development and an Evangelical Response to the Poor”, John F. Robinson (1979:164) pointed out that those church agencies which had traditionally been associated with world evangelization were now “being forced to take a position with respect to poverty and development of the Third World.” He called on the church and mission agencies to construct a comprehensive analysis of the subject of poverty in the Bible as well as ideal responses to the same. In his view, “without biblical studies of this sort, we will be reduced to building a theology of development assistance that is based on a number of inadequately understood proof texts” (1979:165). Robinson was not refuting the idea of mission to the poor, rather he simply wanted it to be based on biblical exegetical studies. This view had taken cognisance of the context of poverty and was thus endeavouring to connect scripture to this context. This consultation, though not of Lausanne nevertheless showed that there was a convergence as far as formulating theologies of development that were being propounded in separate camps both ecumenical and evangelical.

Needless to say, the High Leigh conference on “Simple Lifestyle” held in 1980 in London, could have provided grounds for similarity on the theology of the poor had Pattaya not reversed it. At this consultation, the evangelicals who had gathered propounded the theology that had taken a step further than the traditional evangelical theologies of the time. They had in fact framed their theology in a similar manner to that of Melbourne. According to Scherer, the consultation “touched on God’s preferential option for the poor, divine judgement on oppressors, the pattern of Christ’s own identification with the poor...Christ’s support for changes in the political structures...” (Scherer 1987:180). The consultation had not only appropriated ecumenical language but had also tackled the prevailing topic in missiology at the time and such an endeavour could have become grounds for convergence.

While what had appeared to be a possible convergence did not materialise at this juncture (and subject), a point of convergence can still be drawn in principle between Melbourne and Lausanne. The Central Committee of the WCC adopted the document *Mission and Evangelism: An Ecumenical Affirmation* whose early draft was submitted at Melbourne and the final document came out in 1982. It is in this regard that Melbourne bears marks of congruence with the Lausanne. From the time of Nairobi, “the indispensability to the church’s life and ministry of the evangelistic dimension proved to be a permanent feature of ecumenical thinking and practice” (Bosch 1982:468). The reaffirmation of evangelism through Melbourne proves this commitment. The *EA* affirms, evangelism as an integral part of the church’s life, it upholds proclamation of the Good News and connects this proclamation to conversion, all of which are terms peculiar to the *Lausanne Covenant*. Furthermore, the *EA* is described as a document which avoids one-sidedness on many essential points on missiological debates, a feature which qualifies it as a genuine convergence document (Matthey 1999:296). According to Bailey, “What the Lausanne Covenant was to the evangelical world, the *Mission and Evangelism: an Ecumenical Affirmation* (1982) was to the ecumenical world.

In March 1987, WCC made another effort to build another bridge with the evangelical constituency and called for a consultation on evangelism in Stuttgart. The *Stuttgart Consultation* as it came to be called was a statement that both evangelicals and ecumenicals could identify with. Needless to say the consultation did not fully work out as it was originally intended by the WCC. Initially it had been suggested that the WCC, the LCWE and the WEF form a joint group to work on and publish a “biblically faithful and culturally contextualized” evangelism (Van Elderen and Michalson 1992:411). Eventually it was not possible to convene such a group save some individuals who participated but not in an official capacity. It is important to note however that the participants at this meeting agreed that evangelism, involves explication of the gospel and calling people to the faith (Bailey 1996:495).

The development of the missiology which equates evangelism and social concern in the Consultation on the Relationship between Evangelism and Social Responsibility and the World Evangelical Fellowship consultation on the “The Church in Human Need”, show

some marked effort to bring about an integral theology of mission among evangelicals. While CRESR was significant to point out that the two entities were separate but equal, the Wheaton 83 consultation went a step further and refused “to talk about the primacy of either evangelism or social responsibility”, but affirmed the ‘pervasiveness of both personal and societal sin’ and talked of mission as including both proclamation of the gospel and its demonstration” (Bosch 1988:469). It also included themes that had not been dealt with at length in previous Lausanne meetings. It dealt with issues such as development and transformation, stewardship of creation, cultural transformation and issues of social justice and mercy. All these themes were grounded on certain biblical texts which provided the basis upon which they could be understood. This development could be taken as a significant step toward convergence in that the evangelical community was at this stage making efforts to formulate a theology that was deliberately intended to address the social dimension of church life. It marks a significant step towards creating a church-cosmos theology that had not existed before in the evangelical movement. Such a theology would later find its more developed expression in the *Manila Manifesto*, which had more elaborate affirmations on the relationship between the church and the society and how best the church could study and understand the society in order to have relevant ministry in it.

In between Wheaton 83 and Manila was the Vancouver Assembly of the WCC which was held from 24 July to 10 August in 1983. This Assembly did not make any significant advances over the former assemblies; it was “celebrative rather than deliberative” in content and tone (Bosch 1988:470; Bailey 1996:495). Its contribution to convergence, however, was in the space it afforded evangelical participants in the assembly. Such evangelicals as Donald Dayton and Arthur Glasser saw Vancouver as playing a significant role in fostering the relationship between the ecumenical and evangelical movements (1988:470). It was at this assembly that Glasser and other evangelicals drafted what came to be known as the “Open Letter” which explicitly endorsed the *Ecumenical Affirmation* on mission and evangelism while at the same time striking a reconciliatory tone by lamenting the action of a few zealous Christians who were spreading negative propaganda against the WCC (Bosch 1988:470). While this letter marked a positive move by some of

these irenic evangelical to improve relations with the WCC, there were however other evangelicals who did not share the same view. This group went on to publish a separate statement attacking the WCC. This serves to show that while there were efforts to bridge the relationship between the two camps, evangelicals had to deal with their own divergences in their camp.

In developing an integral theology of mission within the framework of an evangelical tradition, CRESR and Wheaton 83, also touch on some themes that were close to the missiology of the WCC. Much of the theology of the two documents showed that the social aspect of mission had from now on been taken seriously and it would appear in most key meetings of the Lausanne as a pertinent missiological issue. In this regard we could posit that the two consultations contributed towards more convergence with their ecumenical counterparts, though it needs to be clearly stated here that these consultations tried to articulate their theologies from a traditional/biblicist hermeneutic. This means the type of convergence which we can talk of here lies in the understanding or even agreement that there is a cosmic scenario to which mission theology must relevantly speak whether ecumenical or evangelical. Up to this point in 1983, the two groups were in agreement as far as how they both delineated the diverse missional aspects of the world around them.

The CWME convened another conference in San Antonio in 1989 at the same time that LCWE was holding its second congress in Manila. Both camps basically reiterated and expanded on some of the major themes from their preceding conferences or consultations. Evangelism was given a prominent place in both gatherings. In San Antonio, Christian solidarity with human suffering was pinpointed as prerequisite to proclamation in evangelism. The conference also upheld the ecumenical commitment to both evangelism and social concern and called for “concern for the fullness of the gospel, namely to hold in creative tension spiritual and material needs, prayer and action, evangelism and social responsibility, dialogue and witness...”(1990:20). Similar views were echoed the Manila Congress which encouraged the local congregation to “turn itself outward to its local community in evangelistic witness and compassionate service”(Affirmation16) and called

on Christian organisations to “cooperate in evangelism and social action...”(Affirmation 17).

While there are considerable points of convergence in the area of evangelism and even conversion the two have diametrically different perceptions when it comes to the issue of dialogue and evangelism. San Antonio’s discussion on “Turning to the Living God” in Section I re-affirmed the ideas of *presence* and *sensitivity* to people of other faiths which were introduced in New Delhi and Mexico City. It raised a two-pronged approach of *witness* and *dialogue* in which the latter’s purpose was to “listen in openness to the possibility that the God we know in Jesus Christ may encounter us also in the lives of our neighbours of other faiths...” (1990:33). This dialogue was further connected to issues of justice, peace and environment, issues about which there should be mutual sharing with people of other faiths in what was described as “the dialogue of life”. The main question at this conference was whether Jesus Christ was the only way (Günther 2003:533) or whether God is present in other faiths to which the conference responded by saying: “...we cannot point to any other way of salvation than Jesus Christ; at the same time we cannot set limits to the saving power of God” (SA 1990:32). This oscillation stands in sharp contrast to Manila’s affirmation which says “We, therefore have no warrant for saying that salvation can be found outside Christ or apart from an explicit acceptance of his work through faith...We therefore reject both relativism which regards all religions and spiritualities as equally valid approaches to God, and the syncretism which tries to mix faith in Christ with other faiths.” With reference to issues of witness and dialogue the *Manifesto* emphasised the goal to “bear a positive and uncompromising *witness* to the uniqueness of our Lord, in his life, death, and resurrection, in all aspects of our evangelistic work including *inter-faith dialogue*”, (my emphasis) (MM3).

The two conferences also address issues of justice, peace and participation with the suffering. Affirmation 9 of the *Manifesto* connects the proclamation of God’s kingdom of justice and peace to the denunciation of injustice and oppression. Its discussion of the materially poor is also connected to solidarity in struggling with them “for their liberation from everything which demeans or oppresses them” (MM2). This language is akin to San Antonio’s section on “Participation in Suffering and Struggle” which is built on Bangkok

and Melbourne. The difference between the San Antonio and Manila lie in the fact that while Manila acknowledged the church's role in liberation and alleviation of suffering, San Antonio took a more radical approach which took its departure point from God's creative power and applied this power "in working for 'the good of the poor and their liberation from oppression'" (1990:38). This power which is to be understood in the context of suffering would use different forms of resistance as a form of witness when it is a "refusal to accept the vision of society imposed by the oppressor; it is the envisioning of an alternative society, with equality, justice and love" (1990:41). So while the similarity here lies in the acknowledgement of the need to identify and struggle with the suffering, the one elevates struggle and liberation of the poor as a missional element or a form of witness, while the other simply affirms the role of the church in participating with suffering communities. But this sameness of language and approach could actually be used to argue for a convergence as Engelsviken (2007:209), suggests: "There has since been a certain convergence between the ecumenical and evangelical mission movements in this area".

Apart from the theological statements, there were efforts by some participants at San Antonio to reach out to the organisers in Manila with a proposal for frequent and formal dialogue over theological differences within the two camps. A proposal holding joint meetings was also mooted for the future (Matthey 1996:297). None of these things materialised but this efforts however show there were people who were concerned about dealing with issues of divergence between the two bodies.

Up until Manila 1989 and Salvador 1996, in there were times in the relationship between WCC and Lausanne where their relationship seemed far apart and at variance with each other. There have been however, certain points at which the two movements could be said to have come together significantly in some areas of theological formulation. Lausanne 74 and Nairobi 75 were pivotal gatherings because in them was found the possibility for convergence. History has shown that the irenic voices and acts from key spokespersons from both camps went a long way to ameliorate tensions and attitudes. The re-adoption of ecclesiology and evangelism in Nairobi as prominent aspects of mission helped the WCC to regain a degree of trust which had waned on the evangelical side. With evangelism fully

back on board in the ecumenical movement the cry of the evangelicals for the previous decade had now been realised and the enduring nature of the theme from Nairobi to San Antonio showed that it had been taken seriously. Thus we could conclude with a degree of caution that by Salvador1996 there was considerable convergence with regard to evangelism.

The same can be said of the social responsibility in the evangelical camp. The processes that started in Lausanne in 74 and worked its way up to Manila 1989, showed a remarkable degree of change that took place in formulating a comprehensive missiology that suited some of its membership in the movement but also agreed with their ecumenical counterparts to a certain degree. While the Lausanne formulation is not as radical and deeply cosmic as that of the WCC, it nevertheless is addressed to those issues that the former had been actively involved in. Nairobi insisted on word and deed, and the similar language is also present in Manila. The language of justice, peace and liberation of the oppressed had by this time become common possession in the two bodies. The only difference lay in the hermeneutical departure points with the WCC still bearing aspects of a cosmic rationale in its theology while the evangelical camp took a Biblicist hermeneutic in its formulations.

Three forces of change could be attributed to the changes we have seen in the issues discussed above. We could talk of internal forces within each organisation as being instrumental to paradigm shifts in mission theology. For instance, the changes towards a radical formulation of missiology we see in some sections of Manila would not have happened without the role of Latin American theologians whose context informed their theological focus on liberation. The same could be said of WCC as well, when we look at the role that people like Philip Potter played in calling for the re-instatement of evangelism as a key component of mission. The second force could be attributed to mutual influence of the organisations. This took the form official conference statements as well as key people as mentioned above. Participation in conference by individual members of both camps played a key role as well. Be that as it may the 80s closed with divergence still persisting

in certain areas. Some of these include, issues of witness and dialogue, and the view on gospel and culture that was addressed in CWME 1996 in Salvador.

#### **6.4. Comparison of Athens and Cape Town**

The ways in which mission and social responsibility was understood in both Athens and Cape Town exhibit signs of marked changes from the way in which it was understood in the previous conferences. Towards the close of the twentieth century moderation and rapprochement of missiological positions between evangelicals and conciliarists seemed to show signs of gradual increase (Ott et al 2010:137). This is the time when terms such as integral or transformative mission as discussed in the previous chapter began to emerge with a view to establishing the interrelatedness of evangelism and social concern within mission. These approaches, according to Ott (2010:137), represented efforts towards achieving “a convergence of the traditional evangelical concern for proclamation and church planting with a more comprehensive view of mission including social action and compassion ministries.” This makes Athens and Cape Town quite significant in the history of missions. They both represented efforts at formulating relevant contemporary theologies that did not deviate from the biblical teaching while at the same time correcting areas in their theologies which seemed to need reappraisal.

A comparison of Athens and Cape Town needs to take cognisance of a few factors that inform the comparative process. Firstly, as noted in chapter four, Athens did not produce an official theological document as was the case with Cape Town. It simply produced a letter which did not contain extensive theological content. As such theology had to be ‘distilled’ (Kinnamon 2005) from the conference proceedings and the preparatory papers. Furthermore, the key preparatory papers that laid the basis for Athens had not been officially adopted by any governing body of the WCC by the time the conference took place and worse still they were not afforded time for reflection during the conference. This meant that while, the documents contained rich theological content, their theology was on one hand not discussed during the conference and on another hand, in its unofficial capacity, it did not carry official weight and was therefore not binding. This point also

stands partially true for Cape Town, in that it did not afford time for reflecting on the CTC, although the document enjoys official status as a roadmap for mission in the Lausanne. Secondly, there seems to be scarcity of material covering these two conferences in depth, an issue which made it rather difficult to reflect extensively on the subject under discussion. The third aspect is more on the positive side. Both conferences are associated with a move towards new paradigms in mission some of which bear some resemblances. It is to these that we now turn.

#### **6.4.1. Areas of Similarity and Convergence**

The key question addressed in this thesis aims to highlight the perceived similarities and differences in mission theology between Athens and Cape Town. Simply stated the question is:

*What are the similarities and differences in the ways in which the relationship between mission and social responsibility is understood in the official reports on / proceedings of the Athens conference of CWME (2005) and the Cape Town conference of the Lausanne Movement (2010)?*

While the above discussion attempted to follow the contours of similarities and differences over a certain period of time, the main issue at hand zooms in on the comparison of the two conferences in the area of mission and social responsibility while trying to establish what Athens has to do with Cape Town in the same vein. Thus in order to do this comparison, a few themes have been selected to highlight the perceived areas of similarity and difference in both conference papers and official proceedings.

##### **6.4.1.1 Mutual Acknowledgement**

This first area of similarity is drawn more from conference proceedings in Cape Town. It lays, not in the area of theological formulation but in the area of theological praxis and rapprochement. It is possible to detect that the two organisations were open to the idea of mutual theological edification and possibly cooperation. As a sign of a warm gesture, the leadership of the Cape Town Congress, for the first time, gave space to the WCC's

secretary general Rev. Olav Fykse Tveit, to address the congress, a gesture that showed a significant amelioration of historical hostilities (WCC-Delegates). In his address Tveit hinted at the convergence of understanding regarding the pursuance of holistic mission in both organizations. He also saw the possibility of continued dialogue and cooperation. He said:

This historic invitation is a sign that God has called all of us to the ministry of reconciliation and to evangelism. I am honoured to be here with a delegation from the World Council of Churches and to greet you on behalf of this global fellowship of Orthodox, Protestant, Old Catholic, Anglican and Pentecostal member churches. Many of you belong to these churches... All churches need a strong commitment to the ethos of the Lausanne movement in order to stand together in this constant sharing of the gifts of the cross and the resurrection... In this country and this town where reconciliation has become a reality far beyond what could ever have been imaginable some years ago, we are reminded what it is all about. We are all created in the image of God; we have been reconciled by Christ; we can be empowered by the same Holy Spirit to love, to work for justice, to make peace and to care for the creation... The needs of the world for reconciliation with God, with one another, and with nature are too big for a divided church... I can see how much we share a common vision of the holistic mission of God. I am very encouraged by how evangelicals, churches and individuals share our calling as the WCC to address the needs of the whole human being and the whole of creation... The distance between Lausanne and Geneva is not very far, and it should *not* be. Let us keep the road open, and the dialogue going, so that we learn from one another how we can participate in God's mission together with respect to others as one Body of Christ. In this common journey it is important to share the gospel in Christ's way without humiliating people of other faiths. (WCC-Documents)

Whereas some conservative evangelicals, such as ES Williams (2014:1241) writing from a vantage point of disapproval, see this as a sign that Lausanne was moving towards ecumenism, one chooses to differ and interprets this move as a good gesture meant to demonstrate oneness of purpose within the Christian church. The Lausanne had come to the decision that event though they adhere to the evangelical tradition, they still affirmed "the oneness of the Body of Christ, and gladly recognized that there are many followed of the Lord Jesus Christ within other traditions." Due to this recognition Lausanne "welcomed senior representatives from several historic churches of other traditions as observers in

Cape Town” and expressed hope that the congress would be helpful to other church traditions (Foreword in the CTC).

This is the feeling that we get from the interview held with the moderator for the CWME at the side-lines of the congress, Metropolitan Geevarghese Mor Coorilos when he said; “that in a historical context that requires greater unity among Christians, the participation of the WCC in this congress of the Lausanne movement would go a long way toward bridging the gap between evangelicals and the ecumenical movement, ‘a distinction that we need to overcome’” (WCC 2010).

Secondly, Cape Town was intentional in aiming for a wider gathering of delegates, a move which further confirms that idea that the movement had decided to get out of its ecclesiastical ghettos to a broader participation of people outside of its walls. With the representatives from 198 countries, Doug Birdsall (2010) describes it as “the most globally representative assembly of evangelicals in history. Representing a broad spectrum of denominations, organizations, academic institutions, and the worlds of business, government, and the arts.” The congress was held “through the prism of ‘God in Christ, reconciling the world to himself’” (2 Corinthians 5:19), a prism which interestingly sounds similar to the Athens’ theme. A further indicator of this intention is recorded in CTC 9(a) which portrays the idea that the congress was positioning for wider cooperation beyond its usual constituency. In this article Cape Town called for unity and advocated for global cooperation in the Christian body. The CTC asserts:

We urgently seek a new global partnership within the body of Christ across all continents, rooted in profound mutual love, mutual submission, and dramatic economic sharing without paternalism or unhealthy dependency. And we seek this not only as a demonstration of our unity in the gospel, but also for the sake of the name of Christ and the mission of God in all the world.

Such a declaration, when combined with the invitation of the WCC senior leadership marks intentional convergence, which needs to be applauded on the part of the Cape Town Congress. It shows a preparedness on the part of the Lausanne to not only embrace and

integral mission as recorded in its official document but it opens the doors of cooperation on a practical level. It acknowledges that other Christian bodies are also involved in the mission of God that Lausanne is willing to acknowledge as it is rooted in the gospel and for the sake of the name of Christ. This article marks a change from the parochial and narrow views of mission characteristic of evangelical mission in the early 1980s such as those expressed in the *Thailand Statement* to a broader and holistic missional outlook that other quarters in the movement had been working towards since the genesis of the movement.

Athens also exhibited intentionality at converging with the other traditions of which the evangelical Lausanne is one. While the CWME's track record on cooperation with other traditions has been consistent historically, Athens went a step further in intentionally broadening the wider constituency, a fact that has been discussed in chapter four of this thesis. The act of giving key space to Pentecostal, Orthodox, Roman Catholic, and evangelical scholars was not only a move towards creating opportunities for cooperation but it also made theological convergence a possibility. The plenary papers were thus from diverse traditions and most of the arguments presented in those papers contained theological reflections that in a way oriented the conference towards theological renewal if not change. The synaxis format also gave space for open discussions through which some theological assumptions pertaining to specific missiological themes were debated. This presented opportunities for a challenging and yet enriching interchange of perspectives on themes discussed. Thus Athens was intentionally planned so as to create "safe spaces for sharing in an almost 'liturgical' setting for confidence to be built among participants" (Matthey (ed) 2008:125). The style with which the conference was conducted, was meant to augur with the theme of healing and reconciliation with a pneumatological emphasis (:125).

These are two important areas of similarity relating to conference/congress proceedings. Though this similarity does not necessarily contain any theological formulation, it does however exhibit theological significance. The concept of reconciliation which was articulated both in Pattaya 2004 and Athens 2005 was now exemplified in Cape Town 2010, a fact that served to show that indeed, reconciliation had become a missiological paradigm in its own right. By holding the meeting in Athens, the CWME was also acting

out a remarkable degree of reconciliation on an ecclesiological level (with the Orthodox included) hence the wide representation and participation of diverse church traditions. In a nutshell both bodies endeavoured to use the principle of inclusivity participation though the inclusive nature is obviously different in each organisation. This attitude marks a good degree of converge in as far as official mutual respect and recognition is concerned.

#### 6.4.1.2 Reconciliation as mission paradigm

As noted in the previous chapter, reconciliation had become a subject of great concern in missiology in the late twentieth century. This and the effects of contemporary developments, such as September 11 and others are some of the reasons that lead to the treatment of reconciliation as a new missiological paradigm at the turn of the century (Schreiter 2005; LOP 51:2005, Peter Vassiliadis 2005:33). This is the point at which the Lausanne and CWME registered a significant amount of convergence. The LCWE's Forum for World Evangelization that met in Pattaya in 2004 produced the Lausanne Occasion Paper No.51 entitled "Reconciliation as the Mission of God" which advocated the need to present a "biblically holistic reconciliation at the heart of Christian mission in the 21<sup>st</sup> century" (LOP 51 2005). The LOP 51 which is to be read together with the CTC was significant for convergence not only in the theology it propounded but also in the timing the paper was produced as being coterminous with Athens' preparatory paper on reconciliation and more so with the Athens conference whose main theme was on healing and reconciliation. In other words, by 2004 and 2005 there seems to have been a convergence already which was in a sense implicitly ratified by the CTC five years later by the re-enacting of the same issue as a missiological issue. That both conferences were able to raise the same theme as a missiological paradigm at the same time suggests that the two groups may have been in tune with each other. They were seeing the same needs in the society and were in their efforts to address these societal challenges seemed to arrive at similar conclusions. The CWME noted the discernment of the reconciliation as a new paradigm at the heart of the Christian mission was taking place "both in ecumenical and evangelical mission thinking" (2005:92). A few similarities with regards to how the two organization extrapolated on this missiological theme are in order.

Athens and Cape Town both acknowledge the holistic nature of reconciliation. They start by acknowledging that the mission of God through reconciliation is holistic in that it includes both vertical and horizontal reconciliation (LOP 51, WCC 2005:98). The former is redemptive while the latter talks of relationship with self, others/different groups of human beings and creation. On the basis of God's work of redemptive reconciliation through Jesus Christ both Athens and Cape Town promulgated a missiology encompassing evangelism and social responsibility. The Commitment (IIB1.a) states that "reconciliation to God and to one another is also the foundation and motivation for seeking the justice that God requires" while Athens asserts that we are called to "a ministry of reconciliation and to express this in both spirituality and strategies of our mission and evangelism" (WCC 2005:92). As illustrated in chapter five, reconciliation seems to have assumed a kingdom hermeneutic in the Lausanne and thus it is seen as the "very breaking in of the Kingdom of God" (LOP 51). It is from this type of approach that the Lausanne, in both the CTC and LOP 51 argue for a holistic understanding of reconciliation. Both documents connect reconciliation to issues of peace and justice and both seem to emphasise the process and endeavours to establish peace, justice, inclusion and harmony within communities. This includes the ability of people from different ethnic backgrounds to coexist within same communities amicably and peaceably without violence (WCC 2005:105, CTC IIB1). More examples could be cited but the key thing is that, in essence Athens and Cape Town by denoting reconciliation as holistic, they both agree to identifying mission as both evangelism and social responsibility. Perhaps a long quote from Athens' preparatory paper would be helpful in articulating this (WCC 2005:105):

The powerful convergence of a new interest in reconciliation and healing within the churches, and a parallel new quest for healing and reconciliation in many societies around the world, have prompted us to rethink what God is calling us to in mission today. Remembering that the reconciliation we have received in Jesus Christ is to be shared in the world, we have come to see reconciliation as part of mission. Mission, as ministry of reconciliation involves the obligation to share the gospel of Jesus Christ in all its fullness, the good news of him who through his incarnation, death and resurrection has once and for all provided the basis for reconciliation with God, forgiveness of sins and new life in the power of the Holy Spirit. This ministry invites people to accept God's offer of reconciliation in Christ, and to become his disciples in the communion of his church. It promises the

hope of fullness of life in God, both in this age and in God's future, eternal kingdom.

The above quotation helps us to see that the CWME had up to this time reappraised this theology of mission within the hermeneutic that was in tune with the of Lausanne. One sees this quotation, an endeavour to develop a missiology that is not only relevant to the contemporary context but also one that was aware of developments and reflections on the same within other societies or missiological groupings. Furthermore, it is comprehensive in nature in that it locates mission within the arena of proclamation and spiritual salvation as well as within the social sphere of the world as well as the eschatological sphere in the future. Such a theology is akin to the evangelicals' thinking and certainly bears similarity. The reconciliation paradigm was quite noteworthy from these conferences. Documents in Athens and in Lausanne all bear evidence of detailed reflection on this theme. Both conferences did not limit, reconciliation to dogmatic or soteriological approaches but expanded the theme to various holistic dimensions of human experience. While the wording and formulation are not the same, the content in both conferences do converge on certain points. There is a great amount of similarity in their explanation of the processes involved in reconciliation. While Athens is explicit in identifying reconciliation with the *missio Dei*, CTC and LOP 51 simply refer to reconciliation as the mission of God.

#### 6.4.1.3 Role of Ecclesiology in Mission

A second similarity between the two conferences has to do with ecclesiology. The church plays a key role in the Commitment. It is described in (9b) as having been called 'to the service of God's mission' like Israel was. As a community of grace, obedience and love in the Holy Spirit, the church is to be "the most vivid present expression of the kingdom of God...the community of the reconciled who no longer live for themselves, but for the Saviour who loved them and gave himself for them" (9c). The existence of the church is tied to the operation of the kingdom and bears some liturgical and eschatological aspects. It "exists to worship and glorify God for all eternity and to participate in the transforming mission of God within history" (10a). The church here seems to be connected to the salvation-historical model of the kingdom of God discussed in chapter five. Lausanne's

understanding of the church has affinity to CWME paper on “Mission and Evangelism In Unity Today” and with Athens’s preparatory paper no.10 (WCC 2005). Mission and Evangelism Today affirms that the role of the church is to discern the signs of the times and join God in the endeavour to bring shalom and humanization in the world. The departure point here for the ministry of the church includes an explicit kingdom model as alluded to in the CTC and LOP 51. In the synaxis on “New Ways of Being Church”, Desmond van der Water (Matthey (ed) 2008:232), asserts that “the church’s presence should be transforming presence within the community, witnessing within its internal and external life to the values and standards of the Kingdom of God.” This agrees with the CTC’s call for the church to “demonstrate the values and the power of the kingdom of God” (10b). Athens also bases the ministry of the church on the *missio Dei* concept which more or less carried the same connotations carried within the kingdom theology. This concept is taken in “Mission and Evangelism in Unity Today” as the basis for the ministry of the church, the body of Christ. Engelsviken (2001:203), points out that the understanding of *missio Dei* could be taken in a twofold manner. There is one that is based on John 20:21 in which mission is primarily carried out through the church and there is the second one in which God is seen as being active in the secular and social events of the world which the church has to discern and participate in. Engelsviken says that a reading of paragraph 10 and 14 of this document seems to suggest that the location of mission in the world seems to hold sway (2001:203). The document however still shows how the church participates with God in mission. Through the indwelling presence of God in the church, its members are energised for mission. As such “mission becomes for Christians an urgent inner compulsion, even for authentic life in Christ, rooted in the profound demands of Christ’s love to invite others to share in the fullness of life Jesus came to bring (John 10:10)...the church is sent into the world to call people and nations...” (2005:65-66). During the conference proceedings in Athens, the *missio Dei* was expanded to include *missio ecclesiae* something which marks a deliberate correction of the secularised Trinitarian version of the sixties, which had excluded the church but is now reoriented back to operate in creative tension with ecclesiology. Athens was consistent with the efforts that were started at Nairobi in the restatement of the church as an important player in mission. As highlighted in chapter two, the CWME Melbourne conference of 1980 continued with the church focus

and connected this to *missio Dei*. In doing so, the conference distinguished between the church and kingdom. The kingdom was taken as “a coordinate term for expressing the goal of *missio Dei*” (Scherer 1987:131). The document, *Mission and Evangelism: An Ecumenical Affirmation* from Melbourne also reiterated the role of the church in mission. Subsequent WCC assemblies and CWME conferences affirmed the role of the church in mission. The Vancouver assembly of 1983 spoke about the crucial place of the church in mission and linked the church to evangelism (Bosch 1991:389). The CWME San Antonio conference not only endorsed *missio Dei* but also referred to the mission of God and the proclamation of the kingdom of God as the vocation of the church. It also talked about the bringing of the future into the present as serving the purpose of God’s reign (Wilson 1990:26). This deliberate formulation suggests an intentional move to not only emphasize the role of the church in the Trinitarian missiology but also suggests a narrowing of the theological gap with the evangelicals – in other words, a convergence. As noted in chapter four, the very conference theme, “Called in Christ to be reconciling *communities*” shows that Athens, came geared towards strengthening the role of the church in mission, a fact that Kobia pointed out in his opening remarks as a ‘modest exercise in ecclesiology’ which helps us in “defining the sort of church that our world needs” (Matthey (ed) 2008:149). The synaxis on the “New Ways of Being Church” presented by Desmond van der Water (2008:229-234), argued for the ways in which the church could practice an existence different from the old institutional format so as to be relevant in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Athens attempted to put theological weight on *missio ecclesiae* so as to strike a balance between ‘the wide and the specifically church-related approaches to mission’. It was an attempt to address “in a creative way the best insights gained in earlier decades” so much so that this emphasis “allows for a certain convergence in ecumenical theology” (2008:331).

The two conferences also registered similarity in connecting reconciliation to ecclesiology. It is through the concept of reconciliation that the church is called upon to work for peace in its communities. The church as a redeemed community of God is in a better position to live out the demands of reconciliation from a kingdom perspective. The CTC (IIB1.b.) says, “We long to see the worldwide Church of Christ, those who have been reconciled to God, living out our reconciliation with one another and committed to the task and struggle

of biblical peace-making in the name of Christ.” In preparatory paper no.10 of Athens the church’s role is connected to reconciliation. It is identified as the first fruit of the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ and has been entrusted with the ministry of reconciliation (:101). The church is playing a very significant role in theologies of both conferences.

#### 6.4.1.4 The Approach to Comprehensive Theology

Athens’ social orientation is clearly identified as rooted on the *missio Dei* concept from which all the other missional themes such as reconciliation, healing and pneumatology are drawn. Its significance to the CWME’s mission theology was reiterated in the preparatory documents as well as by the plenary presenters during the conference. The CWME decided to keep the *missio Dei* concept as expressing the conviction that “God has a holistic and global vision and purpose for humanity and creation” as is contained in the first part of the conference theme (CWME, Athens 2008:330). The concept does not at this time contain rigid secular overtones as before although it still does apply itself to strong socio-political issues. The difference at this stage is that, after the Nairobi, the secular notion contained therein has been conditioned by the spiritual aspect which addresses itself not only to the church but also to issues of worship, and pneumatology as was hinted at by Bishop Christodoulos (2008:143), as liturgy after liturgy. The same is also extrapolated in preparatory paper no.10 (2005:103) which says, “Mission is the liturgy after the Liturgy. Because reconciliation is a prerequisite of the Eucharist (the act that actually constitutes the church) it becomes a primary of mission in that perspective.” While the *missio Dei* had been toned down and given a biblical anchorage, it nevertheless carried stronger emphasis on issues of social justice in Athens a fact that shows that within WCC the idea of the world setting the agenda for mission still informed ecumenical mission.

Lausanne III shows that the movement had deliberately chosen to espouse a theology of broader engagement with the world, one that was not parochial as before but one that sought to interact with the world with a view to furthering the kingdom of God by both spiritual and physical means. This is to say, in Cape Town’s integral approach to the world, the evangelization aspect remained central though it was not presented in juxtaposition

with social responsibility. As noted in chapter five, Cape Town did not necessarily officially mention the kingdom of God as a theological departure point for its integral mission. It does contain some intermittent references to the kingdom and the connotations drawn from some of these references seem to suggest that a kingdom theology may have been implied in the background. The major issue that seem to come out of Cape Town's use of the kingdom is related to the demonstration of the kingdom in the world by the church. I attempted to relate this approach to the salvation-historical model of the eschatological kingdom, propounded by Cullmann (argued for by other prominent theologians both conciliar and conservative) and argued that the CTC was advocating for the transformation of the world through a twofold process of evangelisation and the imbueing of kingdom values into the society by the church.

Cape Town's approach to the world is formulated in the language of the love of God. Such love is directed at several dimensions of the world such as the creation, to which Christians should commit themselves to "urgent and prophetic ecological responsibility" (7a.). Another dimension pertains to the nations and cultures where ethnic diversity is celebrated and call is made to reject "the evils of racism and ethnocentrism and treat every ethnic and cultural groups with dignity and respect on the grounds of their value to God in creation and redemption" (7b). The CTC connects this to the need to carry out evangelism among 'every people and culture everywhere'. It affirms, "We renew the commitment that has inspired the Lausanne Movement from its beginning, to use every means possible to reach all peoples with the gospel." The third aspect of the world is the poor and the oppressed to which the Lausanne makes commitment to not only carry out "love mercy and deeds of compassion, but also that we do justice through exposing all that oppresses exploits the poor...We give ourselves afresh to the promotion of justice, including solidarity and advocacy on behalf of the marginalized and oppressed" (7c).

Adoption of the word *shalom* in the CTC and LOP 33 and LOP 51 could be indicative of a move to show how the holistic mission as perceived by evangelicals could be realised in the world. It is clear though that this term is not given the same meaning as the one given by the European group back in the 60s. The main point however is that, Lausanne picks

this term up with full knowledge of how it had been used in the past and gives it its biblical orientation. Such a move seems to point to the fact that the three documents mentioned here envisaged a redefinition of the term and appropriated it for evangelical usage.

Given this kingdom hermeneutic, which denotes God's action in the world, this term becomes in a way, a point of convergence with the ecumenical missiology which not only had used this term in its extreme sense but have, since 1975 mellowed this extremity to a more nuanced form in Athens' *missio Dei* concept. This *missio Dei*, seems to have encapsulated issues that are contained in the kingdom concept. A proper understanding of the Trinitarian *missio Dei* re-navigates the church back to its proper mission since the church cannot be in its own mission apart from God's mission that operates with an eschatological dimension in view (Scherer 1993:85). The *Cape Town Commitment* does not contain the term *missio Dei*, but it does have an implicit Trinitarian theology. Article 10 talks about the mission of God and extrapolates that the church "exists to worship and glorify God...to participate in the transforming mission of God within history. Our mission is wholly derived from God's mission, addresses the whole creation, and is grounded at its centre in the redeeming victory of the cross." Article 5 of the CTC contains a statement that bears closer affinity to the classical formulation of the Trinitarian formula for mission, it states, "*We love the Holy Spirit within the unity of the Trinity, along with God the Father and God the Son. He is the missionary Spirit sent by the missionary Father and the missionary Son, breathing life and power into God's missionary Church.*" A combination of these two articles gives us the sense that though Cape Town did not espouse an official *missio Dei*, it nevertheless has a formulation that is similar to the classic definition. The Lausanne would later adopt a *missio Dei* formulation in 2014. In retrospect one could perhaps posit that in 2010 Lausanne was being cautious about adopting a term which might have come with some historical baggage which perhaps Lausanne was still wary about. Be that as it may, I propose here that the use of the phrase "mission of God" contained in article 10 and the notion contained in article 5 provides grounds for the possibility of a biblically rooted Trinitarian grounding of mission. This could be grounds for convergence in general terms. A further point is that in article 10, there is a connection between the mission of God and the coming of the eschatological kingdom of God, where "the kingdom

of the world will become the kingdom of our Lord and of his Christ and he shall reign for ever and ever.” This is a fact which perhaps could be linked to the kingdom theology – and *missio Dei* connection that scholars such as Scherer were talking about.

The same idea seems to have been raised in Athens by Athanasios N. Papathanassiou who in his plenary presentation discussed in chapter four, appealed to the Trinitarian mode for both reconciliation and also for an orientation towards the kingdom of God. In his argument, he pointed out that the character of the kingdom is of importance to mission theory and practice because if the kingdom is understood as, ‘meta-historical’ then it partakes of a reality in this present which at the same time is not limited to one stage in history (Matthew (ed) 2008:182). From this he drew a correlation between the fulfilment of the kingdom in the future, and the current time of anticipation as being the time to struggle for justice and human freedom all inspired by the forward looking anticipation of the futuristic event.

One can therefore detect that in both Athens and Cape Town there is a formulation of the holistic mission theology. This theology is based on a clear *missio Dei* in Athens with a kingdom orientation. In Cape Town the theology is based on God’s mission and is formulated in such a way that it is integral in its vision. I have argued that it might have been informed by an implicit eschatological orientation which carries both present and future connotations.

#### 6.4.1.5 Pneumatology in Mission

Pneumatology is another area in which both conferences registered similarity of Missiology. The person of the Holy Spirit was discussed in their official proceeding or documents in connection with Trinitarian missiology. He was considered the grounding of mission, without whom mission could not be carried out.

The pneumatology of the CTC is contained in article 5 under the title “We love God the Holy Spirit.” The Holy Spirit is described in Trinitarian format as “the missionary Spirit.

Sent by the Father and the missionary Son”. The language of mission is applied to the three persons of the Trinity a point that can perhaps be used to argue for an implicit evangelical form of *mission Dei*. The Holy Spirit’s role is presented as active in cosmic affairs, that is, in creation, works of liberation and justice, salvation and empowerment for Christian ministry. This view of the Holy Spirit provides some convergence with Athens which also promulgated a pneumatologically oriented approach to mission.

Athens’ treatment of the pneumatological theme ‘Come Holy Spirit’ at the conference was in a way an effort to not only bring pneumatology to the fore of mission but also to correct the controversy that had taken place earlier in the Canberra Assembly of 1991, as mentioned in chapter four. Back then the pneumatology was presented in a liberal and syncretistic form by Chung Hyun Kyung. The contributions from Orthodox and Pentecostal perspectives as well as Kirsteen Kim helped to navigate Athens theology towards a biblical and Christological grounding. Furthermore Plenary paper no. 10 on reconciliation discusses pneumatology by mentioning that the work of reconciliation is only made possible by the Holy Spirit through Christ (2 Cor 5:18-19). In this paper, two understandings of pneumatology have been pointed out as coming out of the New Testament. There is emphasis on the Holy Spirit “as fully dependant on Christ, as being the agent of Christ to fulfil the task of mission, and has led to a missiology focusing on *sending* and *going forth*.” Secondly there is an understanding of “the Holy Spirit as the source of Christ and the church as the eschatological synaxis (coming together) of the people of God in God’s kingdom” (2005:102-103).

Like the CTC proceedings Athens insisted on linking the Spirit with the Son (Kinnamon 2005:390). It follows that the missiology of Athens, as presented by Christodoulos is rooted in the initiative role of the Holy Spirit and this in turn is conditioned by Christology and vice versa. Such a missiology is located in a Trinitarian framework within which both Christology and pneumatology are relocated (Matthey (ed) 2008:144). The emphasis is on the interconnectedness of the operations of the persons of the Trinity. Kim also raises the centrality of Christ in discerning the Spirit thereby pivoting the work of the Holy Spirit in Christology. This represents not only her position on the matter but one that had been

advocated by the WCC who after receiving concerns in the Open Letter they received from evangelicals and Orthodox participants in Canberra, noted these concerns in the Statement on Mission and Unity in Evangelism Today, produced in 1982. As such a Trinitarian approach was used in article 12 and showed the inseparability of the Father, Son and the Holy Spirit. Evangelicals and Orthodox participants had highlighted that in the theology of the Spirit there should be an inseparable link between Christ and the Spirit in other words, Pneumatology is inseparable from Christology (Matthey (ed) 2008:431, 441). The efforts by the WCC committee to act on the Open Letter which led to the articulation of Christocentric pneumatology is very good grounds for similarity and convergence. The WCC specifically addressed and incorporated the issues that their counterparts brought to their attention. The WCC's efforts were not only evident in the official document of 2001 but was also evident in the proceedings of the conference through the papers and plenaries.

The comprehensive nature of the pneumatologies of the two conferences also bear some similarities. They both talk about the work of the Spirit, in giving of gifts and power for service, in equipping people for mission and in enabling people to discern the truth, participate in spiritual warfare and so forth. They also talk of the central role of the Holy Spirit in carrying out all dimensions of mission such as, evangelism, bearing witness to the truth, discipling, peace-making, social engagement, ethical transformation, caring for creation, overcoming evil powers..." (CTC 5c).

They both connect the Holy Spirit to social justice and liberation. The CTC (5a) talks about the role of the Spirit in liberation and justice. The same thought is contained in Kim's paper and talks about liberation as one of the criteria used in the discernment of the Spirit. This aspect is seen to be in connection with being on the side of the poor and is based on the Luke 4:18. Reconciliation through the Spirit is also connected to justice and peace. Wonsuk Ma, in his plenary paper, connected the pneumatology with the uplifting of the poor particularly seen in the Pentecostal churches. Because the coming of the Spirit resulted in social mobility upwards, Pentecostalism, in a sense brought liberation. Pachau (2005:418) notices that Ma's usage of terms such as 'liberation', 'holistic' and 'ecumenical' to describe Pentecostal spiritual phenomena serves "as a bridge as well as interpretive tools". This

helps to bring some form of common ground between the Pentecostal and ecumenical. Such language also occurs in the *CTC* providing for meaningful similarity. A pneumatology presented by theologians from three church traditions was a move that helped to present a balanced ecumenical theology that was at the same time similar hence agreeable to the evangelicals. One could actually posit that the participation of the Pentecostal involvement in both movements might have played a bridge building role in this thematic aspect. The move towards Trinitarian missiology that many evangelical missiologists advocated emphasized the work of the Holy Spirit in mission. Escobar points out that “the understanding of the initiative of the Holy Spirit has been enriched by several evangelical scholars” (2000:119). He points out that that the many Pentecostal ranks in both WEF and Lausanne had been responsible for shaping evangelicalism’s pneumatology though “their specific contributions as movements inspired and empowered by the Holy Spirit was not easy to accept by other evangelicals” (2000:119). The inclusion of the Pentecostal variety in both Lausanne and Athens is in a sense a bridge of convergence with regards to the role of the Holy Spirit in mission. This is not to say that both movement did not have pneumatologies of their own, but by including the Pentecostal hermeneutic in both movements, a stroke of similarity was achieved through such contribution.

When it comes to the kingdom of God and the Spirit, one cannot help but notice that both conferences did not give depth as to how the Spirit of God operates in the salvation-historical model. This is to say, while the Spirit has been acknowledged as noted in the discussion, perhaps a further extrapolation of how the Spirit is connected theologically to the kingdom notion would have been helpful. I argue here on the basis of Kärkkäinen’s view of the Spirit in creation and eschatology (2002:221). He points out that theological treatments of the Holy Spirit had mostly been limited to the Trinitarian doctrine of the Holy Spirit and his role therein but little to none was done to connect the Holy Spirit to mission *per se*. Even Pentecostals took a while to create missiologies of the Spirit, because perhaps they had depended on evangelical missiology for some time (2002:219, 221). While eschatology was not lost in theological treatments, the role of the Spirit in the eschaton seemed to have faded in the memory of the church. Kärkkäinen uses arguments from several scholars to argue for the role of pneumatology in mission. The arguments he uses,

augment very well with the discussion on the kingdom of God touched on in chapter five as well as the pneumatology theme in Athens.

While Athens points out that Christ is the determinant factor in discerning and defining the Spirit, one sees the possibility of divergent and even conflicting interpretations of the work of the Spirit in the world. For instance, article number 25 in preparatory paper no.10 seems to leave room for a sort of open interpretation. It says (WCC 2005:102):

The Spirit knows no limits and reaches out to people of all faiths as well as those without any religious commitment – a growing number in this time of secularization. The Church is called to discern the signs of the Spirit in the world and witness to Christ in the power of the Spirit (Acts 1:8) as well as engage in all forms of liberation a reconciliation (2 Cor. 5:18-19).

Such a perspective, while well intended could create room for some kind of flawed hermeneutic of what the Spirit of God is doing in the world. It brings up the question as to whether the Spirit of God could work apart from the church, whereupon the church would have to discern what the Spirit would be up to outside of its life. While the working of the Spirit is not limited to the church only, when it comes to mission in a kingdom perspective such a view as the discerning of the Spirit in a secular world, might present us with some danger of identifying some worldly agendas with the presence of the Holy Spirit.

When it comes to the kingdom of God and the Spirit, one cannot help but notice that both conferences did not give depth as to how the Spirit of God operates in the salvation-historical model. This is to say, while the Spirit has been acknowledged as noted in the discussion, perhaps a further extrapolation of how the Spirit is connected theologically to the kingdom notion would have been helpful. I argue here on the basis of Kärkkäinen's view of the Spirit in creation and eschatology (2002:221). He points out that theological treatments of the Holy Spirit had mostly been limited to the Trinitarian doctrine of the Holy Spirit and his role therein but little to none was done to connect the Holy Spirit to mission per se. Even Pentecostals took a while to create missiologies of the Spirit, because perhaps they had followed in the paths of evangelical missiology (2002:219, 221). While

eschatology was not lost in theological treatments, the role of the Spirit in the eschaton seemed to have faded in the memory of the church.

In arguing from the eschatological viewpoint, he brings out the idea that pneumatic manifestations as experienced in Pentecostal and charismatic spirituality can serve as grounds for eschatological expectation. This is taken from Gerhard Ebeling's (1979; in 2002:222) contention of a convergence of pneumatology and eschatology from the standpoint of "experienced transcendence" in which it is argued that "The present that is filled with the Spirit can experience the eternal as present (pneumatology); eschatologically, the present that is oriented to the eschaton grasps the eternal as future (eschatology)". This is to say, pneumatology makes possible the proleptic experience of the futuristic elements in this present. In Ebeling's thought, Christology is the main meeting point between "transcendental experience". Jesus is the person in whom the kingdom of God is both present and future. Kärkkäinen takes this thought further and stresses that "Jesus Christ, the content of the message of the Kingdom of God, is an expression of the dynamic of the Spirit of God...the relation between the future and the present of God's kingdom in the person of Jesus was itself already mediated pneumatologically" (2002:222). This thought is what one could say was lacking in earlier extrapolations on the Kingdom which seemed to focus mostly on the connection between the King and the kingdom. So the idea of proleptic experience of kingdom values, finds even a stronger basis if it is built on pneumatology conditioned by Christology and vice versa.

Another thought that Kärkkäinen brings out has to do with his discussion of Pannenberg's pneumatology "the Consummation of the Kingdom" (1998). Kärkkäinen discusses that the eschatological role of the Spirit is connected to creation and the kingdom of God as the consummation of creation. This consummation work is integral in nature if looked at from the vantage point of Romans 8:11, 19-22, which shows that the Spirit is at work in both individuals and society at large in creation. As such, "the consummating work of the Spirit integrates individual and social aspects of eschatological hope, 'which on the one side aims at the totality of individual life and on the other side the consummation of fellowship

through peace in righteousness. In this way the redemptive work of the Spirit overcomes the antagonism between individuals and society” (2002:223). Again in this discussion, the proleptic role of the Spirit in bringing the future into the present is reiterated from the perspective of creation and consummation. By virtue of the indwelling presence of the Spirit in the hearts of believers, one can see that the eschatological future is already in the present since “the eschatological consummation itself is ascribed to the Spirit, who as an end time gift already governs the historical present of believers.” (2002:223). Thus the role of the Spirit in the present can be viewed as a “proleptic manifestation, of the Spirit who in eschatological future will transform believers, and with them all creation” (Pannenberg, in Kärkkäinen 2002:223). Kärkkäinen uses Jurgen Moltmann’s argument concerning salvific terms such as regeneration, new birth through which both individualistic and pietistic connotations of transformation are drawn together with the universal transformation which Moltmann advocates. In this regard, Moltmann comments on passages such as, Romans 8:11, Titus 3:5-7 and 1 Peter 1:3 and asserts that the meaning of regeneration or rebirth as new creation is christologically based, pneumatologically accomplished and eschatologically oriented” (In Kärkkäinen 2002:223). Such a view, according to Kärkkäinen’s has implications for Trinitarian mission as well as eschatology since the consummation of the world is grounded in God.

The last aspect that Kärkkäinen discusses is the link between pneumatology and eschatology in which the church is understood to be God’s eschatological new creation whose gathering is grounded in the coming of the kingdom through the Holy Spirit which started on the day of Pentecost (2002:224). It was after the Spirit came that the church’s mission started and as recorded in the book of Acts, “it is the gift of the Spirit that determines and regulates the expansion of the church’s mission” (2002:224). In this sense the church works under the Spirit to consummate God’s work in creation. Thus in the church we see not only the historical community of Christ but also “the eschatological creation of the Spirit...the meeting point between pneumatology and eschatology...[the tangibility] of the ‘already’ and ‘not yet’...With regard to the church...not only eschatology but also history is included within pneumatology” (2002:225).

Kärkkäinen's arguments are insightful in arguing for a pneumatological missiology. It is clearly through the Holy Spirit that the possibility of drawing from the future into the present is possible. It is through a pneumatologically conditioned Christology and ecclesiology that mission can best be understood as operating as kingdom instruments. Comprehensive mission needs to partake of a comprehensive operation of the *missio Dei* in which the work of the Holy Spirit, as the custodian of the church and mission is neither overlooked nor minimised. It is in this regard the Athens needs to be applauded for giving the floor to both the Pentecostal and Orthodox contributions, traditions which have strong basis of pneumatology in their doctrines. While their theologies of the Spirit do not play out the same way, their contribution nevertheless were helpful in getting the CWME to rethink and relook at the place of the Spirit in mission. While the Holy Spirit is acknowledged in Lausanne, more work is perhaps needed in articulating in depth a pneumatological mission.

Having looked at the four themes I have discussed above, I want to suggest that in principle convergence had taken place between Athens and Cape Town. In fact one could say that meaningful convergence had taken place right about the time that Athens, and Pattaya had taken place through the LOP 33 and 51 as well as preparatory paper no.10. Themes affirmed by both conferences are similar in many ways and the efforts that lead to these affirmations were not arbitrary and forced by one cultural group over another but was a result of wide study, research and consultation through representative groups of people with diverse experience and expertise. Between 2004 and 2010, i.e. between Pattaya and Cape Town, the themes were not discarded but were actually enhanced so much so that the concept of integral or holistic mission in the Lausanne became the accepted view of mission. Such an accepted view augurs well with Athens or at least what Athens had intended to accomplish as seen in its proceedings and the preparatory papers. The themes raised in Athens and Pattaya were timely and well rooted in their theological departure points. Thus there was not simply missional sameness but also theological agreement to a good degree in the noetic presuppositions of some of the missiological themes discussed. Furthermore, the agreement in arriving at a new missiological paradigm is worth noting. As noted in chapter five, paradigm shifts are not arbitrary and drastic. They are a slow

development if not an evolution of missiological experiences from one form to another on the basis of the experiences and milieu the church finds itself in. That both movements were able to unequivocally come up with reconciliation as a mission paradigm is neither a coincidence nor an afterthought but is evidence of years of reflection on text and context as well as a struggle to intentionally arrive at biblically sound missiological approaches given our contemporary situation. It also represents some level of mutual enrichment which must have involved a process of correction of older or flawed mission understandings or approaches of mission and an adoption of workable and more contemporary missionary approaches.

#### **6.4.2. Areas of Differences**

While some remarkable similarities could be detected between Athens and Cape Town, some differences are also noticeable.

##### **6.4.2.1 Nature of Meetings**

The nature of the meetings had implications on the type of mission that was produced. Athens was, in the words of Matthey (2008:328) “an open discussion on mission, and less as a body with its own programmatic and ideological identity, planning new options and concrete steps in world mission.” While this point is meant to present the strength of CWME in this conference it nevertheless presents a contradistinction to the modus operandi of the Cape Town congress. Lausanne III stated goal was “to bring a fresh challenge to the global Church to bear witness to Jesus Christ and all his teaching – in every nation, in every sphere of society, and in the realm of ideas.” The rest of the CTC bears evidence of this goal as well as some of the congress proceedings that have been hinted at in chapter five. The CTC was prepared intentionally as a pragmatic document to “act as a roadmap for the Lausanne Movement” with the hope that it would be used as a guide in diverse ministerial settings in which evangelicals find themselves, such as church, mission agencies seminaries etc. This is why it contained both “belief and praxis”. And this also accounts for the efforts to give the Strategy working Group more space to discuss issues of

praxis at the congress. The pressing for urgency, that took place in the congress proceedings bear marks of Lausanne's self-understanding – that they exist to evangelise, hence the calls to enhance evangelism.

So in Athens, we have a sort of an open-ended process of mission dialogue that was initiated with the goal to foster unity in mission and common understanding in the same. So while Athens' quest to seek relevance in contemporary mission is to be applauded, some of its affirmations were not conclusive and were left somewhat hanging or left to one's own discretion. Matthey (Matthey (ed) 2008:328) points out that there was a price to pay in the planning of such a wide forum, that is, "some significant issues in mission and ecumenism were not highlighted, nor was it possible to envisage common formulations or decisions on priorities in witness and methods." So while this limitation might have worked to get the conference to work, it would have long term effects on mission as some of the key issues were omitted so as to create space for important partners to take part in the conference. This has been one of the weaknesses in the ecumenical movement which differentiated it from evangelicals since Edinburgh. One is reminded here of Rowdon and Hesselgrave's criticism of the Edinburgh's omission of doctrinal matters to gain the participation of Anglo-Catholics at the conference, an issue that was not well received by some evangelicals and perhaps attracted the rougher element from fundamentalists who accused the World Missionary Conference for allowing liberal elements in the conference.

So the structural difference I mentioned in chapter one is connected to this point here. Lausanne is a tightly organised movement with a somewhat tightly and consistently managed missiology since its inception in 1974. In the quest to remain true to Edinburgh, Lausanne 1974 inaugurated an evangelism oriented missiology and stated in its introduction:

We are deeply stirred by what God is doing in our day, moved to penitence by our failures and challenged by the unfinished task of evangelization. We believe the Gospel is God's good news for the whole world, and we are determined by his grace to obey Christ's commission to proclaim it to all mankind and to make disciples of every nation.

This is the affirmation with which the movement introduced itself and its purpose for existence in the world, which is the pursuance of the ‘unfinished task’ – “to obey Christ’s commission to proclaim [the gospel] to all mankind and to make disciples”. All consultations, forums and congresses after this would uphold this missiological affirmation as the core of the movement’s missional ethos. There is consistence in this regard and the leadership of the Lausanne insisted on upholding this type of missiology. Furthermore, there is in Lausanne an insistence on doctrine as the basis of cooperation mission and from this is drawn the evangelistic activism which seems to inform the missional approach of evangelicals.

The CWME, on the other hand, is rather inclusive in terms of participation and hermeneutical constituency. By virtue of being a commission under the umbrella of the WCC, it has a wider constituency of membership whose contributions need to find a place of expression within the wider ecumenical world, a fact which makes its approach rather liberal and makes doctrinal pre-conditions less necessary/binding as they are in the more conservative Lausanne. The more or less fluid scenario in the CWME makes it rather difficult to maintain thematic consistence and even control as seems to be the case in Lausanne. It needs to be reiterated however that the CWME as part of the WCC, is a huge organization with bigger systems and structures which makes it less comparable to the Lausanne, which is a small movement with less rigid structures. This is one key area of difficulty in comparing Lausanne and CWME. In the same vein that one embarks on comparing the Lausanne with the CWME, one finds oneself comparing the Lausanne with the wider WCC as well which is a huge organisation with many departments and a wide/diverse hermeneutical community. We can however compare them in what they both say about mission and on this basis establish their similarities and differences in that very regard. This is why this thesis limited its focus to specific issues of mission and social responsibility and even after doing so, the two organisations did not seem to stand on the same footing for an easy comparison to take place.

It is therefore an observation here that the Cape Town Commitment and proceedings at the congress defined mission which put evangelism at the centre of an integral mission together

with social responsibility. The implications for mission work coming out of Cape Town were promulgated under the second section of the document entitled “a call to action” which laid out areas of missionary activity. In Athens, there were some milestones made regarding establishment of new missiological paradigms but nothing was said in terms of official affirmations as well as the practical things that its membership was to do as a follow-up. Athens was open-ended and Lausanne was tightly-closed and praxis-oriented.

#### 6.4.2.2 Emphasis on Evangelism and Discipleship

As a praxis oriented movement Lausanne was quite intentional in its articulation on evangelism and discipleship. Preaching the gospel remains central in Lausanne. As noted above, the Lausanne maintained an activist approach to evangelism and most of its meetings contain imploration on carrying out the evangelistic task. This position is seen as central to mission in the CTC (7b) which says:

Such love also demands that we seek to make the gospel known among every people and culture everywhere...Evangelism is the outflow of hearts that are filled with the love of God for those who do not yet know him. We confess with shame that there are still very many peoples in the world who have never yet heard the message of God's love in Jesus Christ. We renew the commitment that has inspired The Lausanne Movement from its beginning, to use every means possible to reach all peoples with the gospel.

In the CTC mission is the integration of evangelism and engagement in the world. This evangelism is carried out through intentional proclamation of the gospel which should lead to church planting and service in the world:

Evangelism itself is the proclamation of the historical, biblical Christ as Saviour and Lord, with a view to persuading people to come to him personally and so be reconciled to God...The results of evangelism include obedience to Christ, incorporation into his Church and responsible service in the world (CTC 10b).

In CTC IIF.4 evangelism is connected to church planting as a teaching of the New Testament

Lausanne is strong on the evangelisation mandate. It is the centre of mission in Lausanne. World evangelization is at the heart of Lausanne. All its missiology is centred around this vision. Hence the inclusion of the rubric “discerning the will of Christ for world evangelisation” (IID). This article addresses evangelism to the unreached people groups, a theme that has been a recurring in Lausanne’s mission. In an endeavour to maintain balance, it emphasises the place of evangelism in relation to the overall integral mission:

Let us keep evangelism at the centre of the fully-integrated scope of all our mission, inasmuch as the gospel itself is the source, content and authority of all biblically-valid mission. All we do should be both an embodiment and a declaration of the love and grace of God and his saving work through Jesus Christ (IID1e).

In the Athens proceedings, evangelism did not feature strongly. It may have been touched on in some cursory way but it was not given a prominent place and its urgency was not emphasised. Therein lies one of the main differences between the two conferences. Some evangelicals criticised Athens for focusing more on the horizontal dimension of reconciliation than on the vertical dimension. As noted in chapter four, complaints were raised about the little room that was given to evangelism by those who wanted to see the conference articulate the importance of evangelism to meaningful vertical reconciliation. The British missiologists at the conference lamented the cautionary approach that was used on issues of evangelism and proclamation.

While the conference had little discussion on evangelism, the preparatory paper on Mission as ministry of Reconciliation contains some articles that pertain to evangelism. In article 31 (2005:104) the document connects the ecclesiology to evangelism by noting that the manifestations of the kingdom in the community is the starting point for Christian mission the springboard of the church’s witness in the world. Since the church consists of reconciled believers (a reconciled community) this acts as the imperative for them to be witnesses of reconciliation to the world. This included “a commitment to the proclamation of the gospel...In ecumenical perspective such evangelism ‘aims to build up a reconciling and reconciled community...that will point to the fullness of God’s reign...’”. Much of the document however contains a missiology that is stronger in the area of horizontal

reconciliation and issues of liberation and social justice. This is where its praxis seems stronger than that of evangelism. Most of the evangelism that is touched on in this document is referenced in the study document, “Mission and Evangelism in Unity Today” which was produced in 2000. Athens’ missiology is sort of a flip-side of Cape Town when it comes to areas of emphasis. Cape Town presents an integral mission but it is unequivocal about the centrality of evangelism, and Athens holds the importance of evangelism but is much stronger on social issues in the language it uses in both the preparatory paper 10 and some of its plenaries and synaxis. This one-sided strength of Athens eclipses the little evangelistic information it had. The CTC on the other hand endeavours to give a comprehensive operation of its missiology, it still could have come out a little stronger and forthright in its social language. Some of its formulations seem a little blurry due to the hortatory sort of language used therein.

#### 6.4.2.3 Approach to Religious Pluralism

Another difference has to do with the approach to people of other religions. While Athens was criticised for affording little space to this topic, the one synaxis that dealt with this topic was the subject of a great amount of controversy. Evangelicals who took part in the synaxis suspected the CWME of wanting to promote a pluralistic theology (Engelsviken 2005:191). This came as a result of holding discussions on the document entitled “Religious Plurality and Christian Understanding” which was presented as preparatory paper no.13 for purposes of discussion and debate but not as an officially endorsed document (Matthey (ed) 2008:113). The evangelical constituency protested the proposition of ‘hospitality’ as a ‘hermeneutical key’ in discussing the church’s engagement with the other religions. This was taken as a clever introduction of a theology of religions in the context of religious plurality.

Evangelicals were still not satisfied with the position that the CWME had reached back in 1989 in San Antonio in the statement, “We cannot point to any other way of salvation than Jesus Christ; at the same time we cannot set limits to the saving power of God”. Evangelicals wanted the CWME to come up with a stronger Christocentric pronouncement

in matters of other religions. In a view that is consistent with the general stance on this issue Engelsviken (:191) criticises:

A strange reluctance within leading ecumenical mission circles to courageously and humbly witness to Jesus Christ as the only Savior, and to accept confrontation with other religions when this confession is denied. Some wonder why the ecumenical movement's unapologetic application of ethical and political standards in its confrontation with economic and political evil and injustice is not reflected in equal measure in its application of biblical theological standards to evil or untruth in the religious realm.

Engelsviken's view resonated with what Cape Town declared as its position on pluralism. In IIA Cape Town, emphasises the proclamation of the gospel as a paramount in a world of pluralism. The church is called upon to bear witness "to the truth of Christ in a pluralistic, globalized world" In doing so, the gospel must be presented "not merely as offering individual salvation, or a better solution to needs than other gods can provide, but as God's plan for the whole universe in Christ." Spoken proclamation plays a crucial role.

Lausanne III, holds to the idea of absolute truth when it comes addressing pluralism. Its theological stance is quite contrary to the one proposed in the Athens synaxis, i.e. "religious hospitality" which was proposed as a viable way to interact with other faiths'. As noted in chapter four this notion was raised with a view to getting mutual transformation and enrichment when interacting among people of different religious traditions. Lausanne's view in this regard is contained in the following quotation:

Cultural and religious plurality is a fact and Christians in Asia, for example, have lived with it for centuries. Different religions each affirm that theirs is the way of truth. Most will seek to respect competing truth claims of other faiths and live alongside them. However postmodern, relativist pluralism is different. Its ideology allows for no absolute or universal truth. While tolerating truth claims, it views them as no more than cultural constructs. (This position is logically self-destroying for it affirms as a single absolute truth that there is no single absolute truth.) Such pluralism asserts 'tolerance' as an ultimate value, but it can take oppressive forms in countries where secularism or aggressive atheism govern the public arena.

### *Apologetics or Hospitality*

In view of the foregoing, Cape Town seemed to propose a two-pronged approach to people of the other faiths. In (CTC 7d) there is a call to love our neighbours. A love which embraces other people of other faiths. In doing so however, the CTC cautiously points out that this love should not hamper the evangelization of the non-Christian. The evangelization of people of other faiths has been encouraged in CTC IIC. In the process however, the CTC called for “robust apologetics” to counter the ideology of pluralism instead of opting to affirm the beliefs other religions as truth. Apologetics would operate in two ways (IIA.2): firstly by identifying and equipping “those who can engage at the highest intellectual and public level in arguing for and defending biblical truth in the public arena.” Secondly the church was called upon to “equip all believers with the courage and the tools to relate the truth with prophetic relevance to everyday public conversation, and so to engage every aspect of the culture we live in”. In matters of dialogue, the CTC calls for the confidence in the uniqueness of Christ and the truth of the gospel.

Thus, where Athens was raising, “religious hospitality”, Cape Town was encouraging love and “robust apologetics”. In other words, where the former was proposing opening up space for discussion and giving room for the possibility of discovering unknown God’s mystery in other cultures/religions, the latter was approaching the same as a closed matter needing intellectual and theological defence not mutual reflection nor investigation. Where Athens was affirming what God was doing in other religions, Cape Town was calling for the discarding of tolerating of truth claims from other cultures/religions.

The proposal in Athens seems ambiguous and does not seem to have a way to regulate the truth to which one might arrive in the mutual transformation process. Without clear guidelines on how the end-game should look like in the hospitality process, the then presentation of the Christian faith becomes next to impossible. Athens does not point out at what stage, the presentation of Christ should be done in the process. This is perhaps where Engelviken’s criticism needs to be re-ignited. Athens should unequivocally state a Christocentric approach to salvation rather than try to propose the possibility of salvation in other religions. Not clearly affirming the crucicentric nature of salvation in such dialogues defeats the whole purpose of Christian mission.

#### 6.4.2.4 Healing

Healing was dealt with at length in Athens, through plenaries, synaxis and other presentations. Athens discussed a variety of approaches to healing, which included, medical, spiritual, emotional and psychological healing. As noted in chapter four, Athens marked the first move to develop a theology of healing and wholeness as an aspect of missiological reflection. Athens proposed pneumatological approach to healing by emphasizing dependence on the Holy Spirit, as contained in the theme “Come Holy Spirit, Heal and Reconcile”. This was taken to be a humble acknowledgment of human weaknesses. Such a call on the Spirit is looked at as a re-affirmation of the *mission Dei* paradigm of mission.

Cape Town does not seem to have an extensive treatment on the subject of healing. While there are some intermittent references to issues of healing in the CTC, more discussion on healing is contained in the Pattaya LOP 33. In this paper, there is a section on “The Church and Health” by Evvy Hay Campbell which contains an extensive discussion on the subject of healing built on an in-depth biblical hermeneutic and applied to various dimensions of human suffering. There is a proposal to hold comprehensive holistic approaches to healing some of which need to take place on an ecclesial level and others through para-church medical ministries. In the CTC, article 5 healing is discussed in connection with the Holy Spirit's holistic work in a variety of mission dimensions. here it is connected to healing the sick, casting out demons and so forth. In IIB2d(4), healing is associated with reconciliation and it is looked at as something that Christians should be engaged in on a long term basis so as to heal wounds after conflict and making the church a safe place for refuge and healing. In this case, healing is addressed to more emotional, spiritual and perhaps psychological aspects of recovery.

As alluded to above, if one were to compare LOP 33 with Athens, then convergence had already taken place by then. The only reason that this theme is used here is because, it was not articulated in-depth in Cape Town. The difference is perhaps not in the content but more in the emphasis or lack of it. Cape Town did not seem to have in-depth emphasis

even though what it has is still holistic in nature. The lack of emphasis may perhaps be because the subject was already addressed back in 2004. The concerns in Athens and Pattaya were quite similar although their approaches were slightly different. Pattaya was working intentionally on creating a holistic mission on healing while Athens was tying the concept of healing to the reconciliation and the Holy Spirit and to some extent retrospectively dealing with Canberra and some unfinished business from San Antonio.

### **6.4.3 Summative Analysis of similarities and differences**

In comparing these two bodies one can conclude that some of the major themes leading to convergence, had started appearing onto the scene as far back as 1975 in theoretical form and these themes, particularly in conciliar missiology, persisted all the way up to Athens. The reconditioned *missio Dei* and ecclesiology that was reinstated at Nairobi found its way through Melbourne, Vancouver, San Antonio, Salvador, Harare and finally made it to Athens. Matthey would say, in his editorial comments on Athens that the conference was built on the theologies of San Antonio and Vancouver meetings, a fact which, in my view, may have confined Athens to dealing with unfinished business and thus failed to come up with clearly pronounced official positions on the new theologies it discussed.

The kingdom concept that was started in Mexico and reinstated at Melbourne seemed to have ignited more theological reflection in the decades that followed, so much so that it may have helped to rediscover helpful biblical orientations of eschatology and how such could be used to argue for missiologies of transformation in the present. Readings in both conciliar and conservative evangelical theologies (though not similar in every respect) on the subject of the kingdom showed some growing convergence in the usage of the salvation-historical principles of the kingdom to show that while the kingdom is futuristic, it is nevertheless present because of the birth, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ who brought God's kingdom into being and will bring it to fulfilment in the future. An orthodox presentation at Athens by Papathanasiou (in Matthey (ed) 2008:182-183), actually proposed such a meta-historical kingdom view by advocating that if the kingdom is understood in this way, the forward looking aspect of the coming kingdom should in the

meantime inspire us to struggle for justice and peace on earth. The concept of the future inspires us to envision the good that lies ahead of us in the future and that vision lays demands on how we ought to act in the present for purposes of social transformation.

The focus, thus is not so much on the interpretation of the apocalyptic events of eschatology but on drawing an application of kingdom values on our present situation. Such a view, with its *pros* and *cons* seemed to have paved the way for the integral mission which in the CTC seemed to implicitly refer to the imbuelement of kingdom values in our society as part of the church's mission. The kingdom notion seems to have been connected to *missio Dei* in both bodies. Such was done to give it a Trinitarian pivot from which the mission of God would be drawn.

Thus having studied Athens and Cape Town one can conclude that there are similarities in the way that both organisations defined mission and social responsibility. In both organisations mission is comprehensive. This is to say, mission is seen to be of God and God is concerned with the totality of human life and creation. This view shows that mission in both movements is related to social responsibility in all its dimensions. The arguments made from gospel and creation mandates to argue for holistic mission by evangelical scholars agree in principle with conciliar arguments on mission. Both conferences had references to what the church could do in the areas of reconciliation, social justice, ecology and other dimensions that affect humanity. The mission of God is comprehensive and not one sided. While Athens has a clear *missio Dei* articulation which was somewhat revised to include the mission of the church, the Lausanne chose to use the term mission of God but would in the following years adopt *missio Dei* and give it an in-depth biblical definition. Be that as it may. The mission in both conferences includes social responsibility as an integral part of what mission is. Social responsibility is viewed as a necessity for its own sake and it is viewed as the duty of Christians whether or not it leads to winning of souls.

Mission is grounded in the kingdom of God. As noted earlier, Lausanne III did not expound on the kingdom of God but Lausanne sees the role of churches as communities of the kingdom of God in modelling the values of the kingdom of God so as to effect social transformation. This explication in Lausanne is quite detailed on how the church should

play such a role in every strata of society. In the CTC the mission field is everywhere and it is carried out by everyone, clergy and laity. This is not only in reference to proclamation, although this plays a central role in Lausanne missiology. Lausanne III is highly pragmatic and it connects its theology to pragmatism. Athens refers to the role of the ecclesial communities in carrying kingdom work. One would say though that Melbourne seems closer to Lausanne than Athens in relating mission to every sphere of human existence with both proclamation and social transformation. Both Lausanne III and Athens see mission as being carried out by the church with a view to bringing about the desired penultimate scenario.

Lausanne contains a fairly developed theology of the poor. In this regard it seems more akin to Melbourne than it is to Athens. Lausanne shows that mission should include advocacy for the poor and marginalised. The church is called upon to go beyond the usual philanthropic approach that had characterised most evangelicals to a more radical advocacy for social justice. “We give ourselves afresh to the promotion of justice, including solidarity and advocacy on behalf of the marginalized and oppressed.” So in Lausanne III mission is related to social responsibility in a variety of ways through which the CTC not only gives theological basis for such but also gives guidelines on pragmatic approach to the same.

## **6.5 Concluding Remarks and Recommendations**

The study on the comparison of Athens and Cape Town has been very enlightening and insightful in grasping the vicissitudes that the mission history and mission theology went through up to 2010. Mission theology does not happen arbitrarily or abruptly but it is a result of years of ministry as church in its diversity interacted with society and tried to grapple with the challenges it faced in the process. From observing the manner in which the church forged through the decades from 1910 to 2010 a few concluding observations and recommendations could be made.

### 6.5.1 Evangelism as Crucial to Integral Mission

Evangelism has been an enduring theme which spilled over from the late 18<sup>th</sup> century evangelicalism into the twentieth century and carried on through to the twenty-first century. Though the debate on priority seems to have been avoided officially in Cape Town, the calls for the urgency of evangelism that were made by some of the delegates at the congress and the tone of the Cape Town Commitment suggests that there is still a great degree of ultimacy placed on evangelism or the proclamation of the gospel in the broad scheme of mission. The efforts to come up with such terms as primacy, ultimacy or anticipation all seem to feed into the thinking that evangelism should be kept at the center of mission. Perhaps one could agree with this thinking if one were to take the gospel (whether proclaimed or demonstrated) as the departure point for all Christian mission. As the argument goes, without evangelization, there would not be a Christian community, thus evangelism, in the words of the CTC, must be kept “at the centre of the fully-integrated scope of our mission in as much as the gospel itself is the source, content and authority of all biblically-valid mission” (IIDE). The importance of proclamation is also highlighted in the Ecumenical Affirmation in its call on proclamation and witness when it asserts that, “at the heart of the church’s vocation in the world is the proclamation of the kingdom of God inaugurated in Jesus the Lord” (WCC 2005:8). Protagonists of holistic ministry in evangelical circles have, in the process of arguing for social concern argued for the crucial role for evangelism in the same vein. The words of Escobar (1975:308), at the 1974 Lausanne ring a bell when he asserted:

Evangelism has been defined as the offering of whole Christ for the whole man by the whole church to the whole world...there must be the *declaration*; there must be the *illustration* of the Gospel; and finally the products of the Gospel must be able to stand the closest *examination*...The Individual and the world in which he lives cannot be the same after the Gospel has entered in (II Cor. 5:17).

This suggests that the case for evangelism that the Lausanne has been so consistent on from the beginning is crucial because it makes certain that the gospel is planted within our communities. As asserted in the WCC in Nairobi, evangelization should be holistic and

thus it must not only be proclaimed but demonstrated. When this happens, there is hope for possible transformation of both individuals and social systems. So while this does not necessarily suggest that we fall back into the discussion of priority, it is simply an acknowledgement that any authentic existence of the church in any society should involve an evangelistic existence which inculcates social concern. It is an acknowledgment that the word of God, which has the power to change lives (Heb. 12:4, John 15:8) has to be planted into the soil of our society so that it can bring about its transformative effects (Matthew 13:8). Effective evangelism, if followed by effective discipleship places the Christian community in a position where, by its quality of life, it positions itself to positively transform the society in which it exists. Mission must therefore of necessity have in it the centrality of evangelism and discipleship at the core of its community life.

Sober discussions in both sides of the divide have revealed that while each side had exhibited some extremist elements, (either fundamentalist or liberalist in form), there has been sound calls for a balanced holistic missiology on both sides during the period of time covered in this thesis. Starting in the very 60s the time during which divergence was at its pick, evangelicals had started rediscovering their social conscience as has been highlighted in the persons of Carl F. Henry, Rene Padilla, Samuel Escobar and others who called for the re-instating of social concern within evangelicalism. On the ecumenical side, several calls for mission that encompassed evangelism were made by prominent ecumenists such as Visser't Hooft, Philip Porter and others who called for the balance of the vertical and horizontal aspects of reconciliation to inform a comprehensive ecumenical missiology. In principle, both ecumenicals and evangelicals see mission as related to social responsibility. The only difference perhaps, lays in the point of emphasis in which one movement is stronger than the other. Evangelism comes out more in the Lausanne while strong social orientation characterizes the CWME. Such emphasis in these groups, may have led to mutual edification and readjustments of missiological understanding. One can thus recommend a continual mutual edification by the two movements. Since it cannot be denied that the Lausanne is strong on evangelism and the CWME strong on social responsibility perhaps due to the 'world sets the agenda' residue that seems to still inform aspects of the organization's missiology. If intentional interaction is continued this might

help one organization to counteract the deficiencies or weak points of the other in carrying out relevant mission at this stage in history. The rediscovery of the comprehensive nature of God's mission in ecumenical and evangelical missiology is crucial for our times and the strengths of each of these two movements and other traditions need to be harnessed in forming a united effort towards social transformation.

### **6.5.2 The Role of the Kingdom, *Missio Dei* and *Missio Ecclesiae***

The emphasis on the kingdom notion has played an important role in promoting a comprehensive missiology. The connection of *missio Dei* and *Missio Ecclesiae* treated under this concept needs further reflection. What Athens did in emphasizing a connection between the church and the mission of God and thereby strengthening the role of the local church in mission, is consistent with what theologians have done in highlighting the place of the church as the signpost of the kingdom. What this suggests is that when the church sees itself as a community of the Kingdom of God, it will also understand, as argued in chapter five, that the subjects of the kingdom have a duty to obey the king of the Kingdom who sends them into the world as a sign of that kingdom to proclaim it and demonstrate its values. The recommendation here lies with the denomination and the local church. One is led to posit here that, if the local churches were to understand the implications of their role as kingdom agents perhaps this would minimize denominational competition and foster a united and cooperative approach to mission in the communities in which they find themselves. In other words, while institutional identity is necessary, we are not called into institutionalism but into the proclamation and propagation of ethos of the Kingdom of God. A proper understanding of the mission of the church, on a local level will probably lead to effective evangelism and social responsibility. In order for this to happen, one might recommend that the findings of the CTC and CWME on the involvement of the laity be narrowed down to the local church. Desmond van der Water's proposal for new ways of being church will need to be explored further so that as such ways are researched and established, this might lead to an effective existence of the church in mission. New ways of being church might probably release the church to be what God has called it to be and probably carry out the mission task of the kingdom effectively. It is the suggestion of this

thesis therefore that appropriate forms of sensitization be carried out through these two bodies so that what these conferences established as mission theology can be precipitated to the local church and not remain in the domain of professional theologians only.

### **6.5.3 Implications of convergence and divergence**

In the efforts to develop a relevant missiology in this century, this thesis recommends that there be a concerted effort towards mutual enrichment in mission. As noted in the foregoing, the widening of the hermeneutical community in mission has played an important role in correcting flawed missional perspectives which were conditioned or determined by dominant cultures in the mission and or circumstances in some historical epochs. With regards to the Lausanne, there had to be a convergence within Lausanne itself before the same could take place with the ecumenical. It is in this role that the internal influence brought mostly Two Thirds World theologians played a significant role. Prior to their involvement mission, as was described by Escobar, (2000:107-112), was either mostly post-imperial missiology or managerial missiology. After the entrance onto the scene of the missiology from the periphery, holistic mission defined in more broad terms began to go through its birth pains up until it attained a certain level of maturity in Cape Town. As a result of this internal convergence, the integral mission concept in the CTC, moved from the individualistic view of sin to one that combined both individual and structural sin. Thus Cape Town decidedly moved towards dealing with social structures in an endeavor to bring about social transformation. This maturation of missiology became a point of meaningful convergence with the CWME which already exhibited a strong orientation in this direction.

With convergence taking place not only between these two organizations but also internally in their systems, possible ways of cooperation should perhaps be pursued in the areas where the organizations share similar perspectives and approaches. Convergence should not remain a theoretical topic for intellectual reflection only but its occurrence suggests further action be it participation or any acceptable forms of cooperation. Convergence turns the

guns away from one another and onto the evils that the church should face with a united front.

Talk of possible convergence should not be taken simplistically though, because a significant amount of divergence still exists. It follows that with regards to divergence, the goal is not go for further separation but there should be constructive reflection with a humble preparedness to listen and adjust views where necessary. Obviously all such reflections should be based on a biblical foundation so that whatever conclusions are drawn, they remain consistent within God's plan for mission. Divergences are opportunities for self-introspection and if properly approached might lead to constructive reappraisal of previously held views that stand in need of transformation. This is to say, whatever are the differences between the Lausanne and the CWME, these should not be used to drive a wedge between the two as was done in the past, but should be used as areas of further discussion in an endeavor to find common ground perhaps. An appreciation of the epistemological *a priori* held by the two organizations might be helpful in approaching divisive issues with tact and maturity. Those areas of differences that can be amended should, by the grace of God be amended while those that seem rigid should perhaps not be allowed to affect areas of congruity that will have by now been established. Thus, divergence should not entail enmity. It follows that the differences that brought about the divergence are not to be ignored. Christian unity is needed more at this time given the scenario of the world. The emergence of the reconciliation theme in Pattaya and Athens needs to be taken seriously. What the world needs at this hour, is a church which demonstrates unity in its God-given and Kingdom oriented mission. The Lausanne indeed has moved and could move even further. CWME Athens indeed came up with important missiological themes which are very crucial for our time, reconciliation and healing as well as the pneumatological emphasis. Because both conferences emphasize the role of the ecclesial community in mission, it is the recommendation of this thesis that concerted efforts are made to reach the local congregations to be involved in the form of witness and engagement that will help foster a spirit of reconciliation and healing among our communities.

#### 6.5.4 Implications of Pneumatology On Mission

The raising of pneumatology as a missiological theme needs not to have ended in Athens. As noted in Kärkkäinen's argumentation above, there is need for more work in studying the missiological implications of pneumatology. Discussions in Athens zeroed in on the role of the Spirit in mission and these brought to the fore the fact that, when mission is approached pneumatologically it will not only be Trinitarian in nature but also comprehensive in outlook. These discussions connected the Holy Spirit not only to salvific aspects of his operation but also to issues of liberation and social uplift. The growth of the church in Latin America between 1980–1990 was partly attributed to the pneumatology (Escobar 2012:82). The same can be said of Asian and African churches (Gyadu 2005:351). It follows that the doctrine of the Holy Spirit that started in Athens should be pursued further to see how the Spirit relates to the overall working out of mission. Given the biblical teaching which states that the Holy Spirit is the custodian of the church, John 14, 16 it makes a lot of sense to pivot mission in Christologically conditioned pneumatology. Jesus pronounced that he would send another counsellor, one who would come and lead/teach his disciples in carrying out the kingdom work. Scholars have referred to the period after the inauguration of the church on Pentecost up to now as the age of the Spirit. This suggests that the main interlocutor between Pentecost and the parousia, is the Holy Spirit who, beginning in the book of Acts has been shown to lead the church into new frontiers of mission. The Holy Spirit is indispensable to mission in that not only does he guide the church in mission today but also makes it possible for the church to realize some of the penultimate goals of mission while also preparing the church for the eschatological finality. It is perhaps time that all Christian traditions, reappraise their pneumatology and connect it to the overall life and existence of the church. Indeed, one cannot emphasize enough the need we have for the Spirit today in mission. The church should implore the Holy Spirit and join Athens in saying, *"Come Holy Spirit Heal and Reconcile!"*



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