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► THEME: Mission in a Secularizing World



Secularization and Laïcité in France: What Cross-Cultural Workers Should Know About French Resistance to the Gospel

Stephen M. Davis

In his book *Le château de ma mère*, Marcel Pagnol recounts the childhood story of young Marcel (b. 1896) who debated with himself the existence of God. This event took place upon his uncle's return from midnight mass one Christmas Eve. During the service the uncle had prayed that God would send the family faith. "Of course," Marcel told himself, "I knew that God didn't exist, but I was not completely sure. There are lots of people who attend mass, and even people who are serious. My uncle himself speaks to him often yet he's not crazy." Upon further reflection, he arrives at a conclusion which he admits is not really rational: "God, who does not exist for us, certainly exists for others; like the king of England, who exists only for the English."¹

This quaint story about a young French boy illustrates what many French people in fact believed at the turn of the twentieth century. It also sheds light on the contemporary conflict in French society concerning the place of

religion in a constitutionally secular nation. During this period of Pagnol's childhood, and after hundreds of years of religious turmoil, France enacted the Law of Separation on December 9, 1905, which formalized the separation of

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Word from the Editor

This issue's theme is "Mission in a Secularizing World." This is following the same theme as last Fall's (2018) annual EMS National Conference held at the newly-named Dallas International University (formerly GIAL—the Graduate Institute of Applied Linguistics). Unlike the previous year's (2017) conference which focused on "Majority World Theologies" from Africa, Asia, and Latin America, the "secularizing world" in question here often evokes the West, namely Europe and North America, which have become largely post-Christian.

Within this issue you will find five excellent peer-reviewed articles on the theme, most of which were presented at the National Conference. There will also be—later this year—a companion volume of a dozen or so papers, edited by Jay Moon and Craig Ott, on the same theme. The five papers here cover a representative sample of some of the various features of a secularizing landscape.

Two articles are focused on Europe: One is about France (one of the most secular countries in that continent), and how the term "laïcité" is instrumental in understanding the shift away from their Roman Catholic heritage to the influx of Islam today. The other is about a

particularly influential missiologist from the Netherlands, Johannes C. Hoekendijk, and an analysis of his missiology in how it has impacted (and continues to impact) the Church's ministry to the secular world today.

Two articles are regarding the United States: One is about the upcoming younger generation, namely Gen Z (who chronologically follow the Millennials) and what are the most effective touch points in ministering to them. The other article examines the rise of shame (rather than guilt) in increasingly secular Western societies, in many ways making the ministry milieu of the West parallel that of the Majority World.

Finally, we round out the articles with a surprising one about African Pentecostalism. Though sub-Saharan Africa seems to be the place on earth with the most Christian revival today, Europe should serve as a cautionary tale to those places in the world which seem most alive right now, that one day their fate may be the same as the post-Christian West. No one should become arrogant, thinking about the biblical injunction of Paul to the Gentiles in Romans 11:17-21. Nor should Africa let down its guard, as secularism is already setting in in some ways.

In addition, there is a book review of *White Awake: An Honest Look at What It Means to Be White* (IVP 2017), by Daniel Hill. This book is a helpful look into the concept of "whiteness" today, and whether or not this "normativity" or "neutrality" is a helpful or harmful thing in today's diverse world. An incisive look into this topic is necessary as white American culture often seems to just be assumed in—or even equated with—Christianity, and that begs the question of whether white culture is contributing to the secularizing of Christianity in the West. This book relies on narrative to further its cause, which would appeal to a postmodern younger generation who are not necessarily convinced simply with propositional truth but whose hearts are often transformed by emotional engagement.

We hope you will enjoy this issue. Much thanks are due to Fred Lewis for his work on the "book review" section of this issue, and Dona Diehl for the formatting. If anybody is interested in reviewing a book for future issues of the OB, please contact Fred Lewis at <flewis.ecmna@gmail.com>. In addition, if you have any feedback on any of the content herein, please connect with the EMS Vice President for Publications, Anthony Casey, at: <acasey@wmcarey.edu>.

—**Allen Yeh**, Associate Professor of Intercultural Studies at Biola University, and editor of the Occasional Bulletin.

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Churches and the State (*Loi du 9 décembre 1905 concernant la séparation des Églises et de l'État*). The law abrogated the 1801 Napoleonic Concordat. Liberty of conscience and the free exercise of religion were guaranteed and protected by law. Under the law's stipulation, the State would no longer provide subsidies for four recognized concordataire religions (Catholic, Lutheran, Reformed, Jewish), and would practice neutrality in order that no religion be favored above another. Decades later the French Constitutions of 1946 and 1958 reinforced the substance of the Law of 1905 in the first article: "France is an indivisible, secular, democratic and social Republic. It ensures the equality of all citizens before the law without distinction of origin, race or religion. It respects all beliefs. Its organization is decentralized."²

This essay seeks to understand the human dimensions of history and culture in the development of secularization and *laïcité*. *Laïcité* is usually translated as "secularism" in English but fails to capture the French nuances. In French, the word broadly refers to principle of the separation of civil and religious society, the State not exercising

From the Desk of EMS President

Mission to the secular. Is that even a thing? If we define mission as crossing barriers from faith to non-faith (among all peoples), then mission is broader and deeper than simply being focused on a particular place, cultural group, or a religious movement. Mission to secular people is undoubtedly a legitimate mission field.

But what do we mean by secular? Is it merely the absence of religion? Do secular people lack spirituality or spiritual sensitivities? Part of the aim of this edition is to first define secularism and secularization and consider these meanings in various contexts. Building on that, our authors propose new ways of thinking about mission and approaches to mission within these times. While some of our authors will focus on Africa and Europe, others will explore aspects of mission to the secular in the North America context. As we reflect, let us prayerfully consider what 21st century-mission ought to look like in our secular times.

any religious power nor churches any political power.³ These dimensions contribute to understanding religious indifference and resistance to the gospel among French people. A major outcome of France's religious history is a highly secularized society which intensified following the disestablishment of the Roman Catholic Church in 1905. In recent years the issue of *laïcité* has resurfaced with the emergence of Islam as the second-largest religion in France. The same questions regarding the compatibility of Catholicism with Republican values are being raised today regarding Islam. Catholicism adapted to the *laïque* Republic in the twentieth century. It remains to be seen whether the same will be true of Islam in the twenty-first century.

Historical Contours

French religious history provides a lens to understand the unsurprising skepticism and hostility toward religion in general and toward the gospel in particular. According to Catholic historian Jean Delumeau, from the time of the conversion of Roman emperors to Christianity until the forced, official separation of Church and State early in the twentieth century, the Catholic Church held or sought political power and declared itself as the only true religion as found in Holy Scriptures.⁴

The Law of Separation of 1905 was a pivotal historical point which set in motion a particular French conception of separation of Church and State (or in this case separation of the Church from the State). The law was enacted in the context of centuries of Roman Catholic domination, the sixteenth-century Reformation and Wars of Religion, the French Revolution of 1789, the rise to power of Napoleon Bonaparte and his 1801 Concordat with the Vatican, the restoration of the monarchy (1814-1830), and the intense struggle between clerical and anticlerical forces in the Third Republic (1870-1940) highlighted in the Dreyfus Affair at the end of the nineteenth century. The Vatican vigorously protested this law in a nation once considered the eldest daughter of the Church. Catholics in France, both clergy and laity, were themselves divided in their acceptance of the law's provisions.

Over the past century, France has become one of the most thoroughly secularized European democracies. The resistance of many French people to all things religious is legendary. After decades of evangelical missionary activity, the percentage of evangelical Christians in France remains disturbingly small. France has become known in some mission circles as a graveyard for missionaries. For those sent to evangelize and plant churches among the French

people, and who experience meager results, the weight of discouragement often leads to premature departure from the field.

Patrick Cabanel advances a significant hypothesis in his understanding of French history through five secular thresholds. He asserts that once a century, over the last five hundred years, "France has changed the solution for dealing with the religious question which was opened by the definitive implantation of the Protestant Reformation."⁵ His starting point is the Edict of Nantes in 1598 to address the Protestant question. He argues that Protestantism was authorized and protected, a temporary situation, yet still trapped as a minority in what he labels a "co-existence in intolerance."⁶ The first four secular thresholds, at intervals of approximately 100 years, correspond to the Edict of Nantes (1598), the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes (1685), the French Revolution (1789), and the Law of Separation (1905). He

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views France entering a fifth secular model beginning in the 1980s and continuing to this day in relations between the State and religions. This fifth secular threshold corresponds with the rise of Islam in France.⁷

Professor of anthropology John Bowen narrates an interview with a high-ranking official in the Central Bureau of Religion in France. The interview took place in 2004 following a law which banned Islamic headscarves and other religiously identifying clothing in public schools. The French official commented on the differences between religion in France and the United States. He recounted complaints received along the spectrum from Scientologists to evangelical ministers who felt that the system of *laïcité* should be changed. His response sums up a prevalent French perspective: "They do not understand French history (emphasis added). Even the French Scientologists with whom I meet, even if they

understand it some, say that they cannot explain it to their American colleagues. So are we supposed to change our laws because you have trouble explaining France?"⁸

Jean-Michel Gaillard asserts that the specificity of French *laïcité* cannot be understood apart from the memory of the Edict of Nantes in 1598 under Henry IV and the Edict's later Revocation under Louis XIV, *le roi très-chrétien*, in 1685. He considers this the period of "embryonic *laïcité*."⁹ The Catholic Church welcomed the Revocation, realigned itself with the Royal State, and instituted the Counter-Reformation with the "rejection of religious liberty and freedom of thought."¹⁰ André Chamson's book *Suite Camisarde* treats the Revocation as a foundational event shedding light on the religious, regional, and historic collective memory of the Cévenol region of France, the Huguenots,¹¹ and the war of the Camisards.¹² The war was "triggered by the desire of Louis XIV to impose one law and one faith (*un roi, une foi, une loi*) which tore apart the Cévennes from 1702-1705. Thousands of men were imprisoned, deported, sent to the galleys, tortured, and more than five hundred villages were destroyed by fire."¹³ Yet, according to Xavier de Montclos, the "idea of tolerance was born."¹⁴

One of the distinguishing factors of French *laïcité* is that it resulted from a break with the past and from a dominant religious power structure. French philosopher Jean-Claude Monod explains that "*laïcité* was initially announced by the Reformation, intellectually prepared by the Renaissance, truly initiated by the French Revolution, and was founded largely on autonomous Reason essentially independent of religious postulates."¹⁵ Jean-Michel Ducomte likewise considers that the French Revolution marks the starting point of the *laïcisation* of French society and her institutions. The term *laïcité* was not yet in use at the time. However, *laïcité* "gave a name to a reality which already long existed" and to the attempts to "free the State from all confessional control."¹⁶

The Revolution initially was well received in many Protestant quarters, in its ideals if not in its later excesses. Michel Vovelle writes that "Protestants welcomed with favor the Revolution which brought about their emancipation" from the intolerance and persecution at the hands of the Church.¹⁷ In 1787 Protestants received limited civil status rights and in 1789 they were granted "equal rights and the liberty of worship . . . The Assembly tacitly authorized them to organize at their discretion, which they did notably in opening places of worship in cities where that had been previously forbidden."¹⁸

Shortly after the Revolution, the Concordat signed in

1801 between Napoleon and Pope Pius VII ruled “the relations between France and the papacy for more than a century.”¹⁹ The Concordat recognized that Catholicism was the religion of the majority of French citizens but no longer the religion of the State. Three other confessions were recognized – Lutheran, Reformed, and later Jewish – and also brought into the service of the State.²⁰ Although the Concordat offered a level of religious pluralism, Napoleon’s objective was the control of religion for societal submission. Officially recognized religions were considered a public service and on equal footing. To further strengthen ties with Rome, Napoleon Bonaparte was crowned as Emperor in Notre-Dame Cathedral in the presence of Pope Pius VII in December 1804.²¹

The restoration of the Bourbon dynasty followed the fall of Napoleon in 1814 and was accompanied by a spirit of retaliation and the return of exiled supporters of the monarchy. Louis XVIII (1755-1824) made it known that he did not want to be king of two peoples and the Charter of 1814 reestablished Catholicism as the State religion. The Concordat remained in force, but the throne and altar were once again united. Later, under the reign of Louis-Philippe (1830-1848), the kingdom again experienced counterrevolutionary pressures yet “the Church and the diffusion of her truths were seen as useful instruments favoring the docility of the people.”²² Despite numerous tensions, the Concordat survived for over one hundred years. “The Church believed in an alliance with the State on principle, and the anticlericals and many other Frenchmen were glad to see the ecclesiastics bridled by specific agreements.”²³

French history had seen a clash between two forms of the French Catholic Church in relation to Rome. Gallicanism looked to the State and enjoyed a measure of independence from Rome. Ultramontanism supported the traditional position of the Italian Church concerning the absolute power of the Pope.²⁴ Under Napoleon I and the terms of the Concordat, the French Gallican Church had looked to the State to defend the Church from the Holy See and had increased in influence. After 1815, with Napoleon no longer in power, Ultramontanism, which looked to the Holy See rather than the State as its authority, began a “slow, sure, implacable progression which led to its triumph in the 1870 papal proclamation.”²⁵ Napoleon III, the nephew of Emperor Napoleon I, elected president of France in 1850, declared himself emperor in 1852 with the support of both the papacy and the majority of French Catholics. The Church’s support for Emperor Louis-Napoleon was to haunt the

Church for years to come. McManners cites Montalembert who said that the Church operated on this principle: “When I am the weakest I ask you for liberty because it is your principle: when I am the strongest I take it away from you because it is my principle.”²⁶

The year 1870 has been called “a year of decisive and paradoxical events.”²⁷ On July 18, bishops of the Church from around the world gathered at Saint Peter’s Basilica in Rome to vote their approval of the dogma of the infallibility of the Pope. On July 19, one day after the proclamation of papal infallibility, France declared war on Prussia and suffered a humiliating defeat in a mere six weeks. From a religious viewpoint, according to Adrien Dansette, the defeat in 1870 and the constitutional uncertainty provoked by the fall of the Second Empire resulted in a crisis of conscience. Many were nostalgic for the *Ancien Régime* which was idealized by the image of a legendary Middle Ages. They looked for a “form of government more favorable to the Church [and] a spirit of mysticism was born.”²⁸

The Third Republic (1870-1940) followed the Second

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Empire and witnessed a Protestant influence which had been minimal until this time. With minority status, Protestants had been largely excluded from national life. They held grudges against both the Church and the monarchy. Dansette states, “Protestants obtained tolerance at the end of the *Ancien Régime*, liberty at the beginning of the Revolution, the same status for the Reformed Church as the Roman Church under the Concordat but without total equality.”²⁹ Since religious instruction in the schools was Catholic, laws of *laïcité* regarding education were favorably viewed by Protestants. They advocated educational reform, the separation of Church and State, and social action.³⁰

Monod reminds us that *laïcité* arose in opposition to clericalism.³¹ Ten years into the Third Republic, the Republicans arrived in power with a majority to undertake their agenda. In the euphoria of taking power,

the Republicans began to retaliate against the Roman Church. Anticlericalism would link itself with the ideals of the Revolution to revive the struggle against the Church, an important dimension to laïcité in denying the Church political influence.³² According to secularist Richard Rorty, “Anticlericalism is a political view, not an epistemological or metaphysical one. It is the view that ecclesiastical institutions, despite all the good they do – despite all the comfort they provide to those in need or in despair – are dangerous to the health of democratic societies.”³³ Ducomte maintains that anticlericalism was a natural response to the Church’s resistance to the idea of a world detached from religious certitudes. Under the pontificates of Gregory XVI (1831-1846) and Pius IX (1846-1878) the Church “revealed its incapacity to accept the modern world.”³⁴

According to Robert Gildea, the Republicans “founded a liberal Republic, in which power was concentrated in

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the hands of the elected representatives of the people. And they had resurrected the counter-revolutionary myth in order to legitimate their monopoly of power. The symbolism of the Revolution was duly annexed to the Republic.”³⁵ However, not all anticlericalism was antireligious in nature and some of the opposition to the Church came from Protestants. Jérôme Grévy maintains that authors connected to Protestantism, including the philosopher Charles Bernard Renouvier and the historians Edgar Quinet and Ferdinand Buisson, considered that “it was their duty to demonstrate that it was not a matter of an accident of history, but the very nature of Catholicism which made it incompatible with liberty.”³⁶ Grévy quotes Quinet from his 1857 *La Révolution religieuse au XIX siècle*: “I have the honor to have never ceased, for forty years, not even for one day, to show the radical and absolute incompatibility of this form of religion with modern civilization, with the emancipation of nationalities, or with political and civil liberties.”³⁷

Ideological Influences

Throughout French history there were other factors at work to undermine the teaching and authority of the Church and further advance the secularization of society. In the sixteenth century France experienced what Ducomte calls a “laïcisation of thought” with the influences of diverse Renaissance thinkers like Erasmus, François Rabelais, and Giovanni Pico della Mirandola.³⁸ The Enlightenment (1685-1815) cried out for the autonomy of the individual, equality, and tolerance. The publication of *l’Encyclopédie* (1751-1780) with 150 scholars, philosophers and specialists from a multitude of disciplines pushed the quest for knowledge and was condemned by the Catholic Church. Gaillard argues that “when Enlightenment philosophy imprinted its mark on the movement of ideas, there was a clash with a specific intensity in France against the all-powerful Church in its total alliance with the absolute monarchy.”³⁹ He describes these times as a “blast of knowledge in constant movement shaking things up, like a steady tide against the cliffs of dogma. And when the insatiable thirst of change met the aspirations of the enlightened nobility, of the dynamic bourgeoisie, and of the miserable commoners, the result was the Revolution.”⁴⁰

Darwin’s *Origin of Species*, originally published in 1859, was translated and published in French in 1862 and undermined the biblical account of creation. Scientific knowledge was no longer beholden to theology. Monod calls this the “secularization of knowledge” which consisted in liberating knowledge from sacred writings. He sees this redefinition of knowledge beginning during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries with the affirmation of what he calls a “triple right.” There was the “right to freely exercise theoretic curiosity, the right of the spirit to submit all opinions to doubt, and the right of experience or of the ‘Book of nature’ with its value opposed to the authority of the divine Book on those points which did not touch at the heart of Revelation.”⁴¹

Relationship of Secularization and Laïcité

The historical process of secularization in France is best understood alongside the concept of laïcité/laïcisation. Together they present an intertwined specificity in definition and development which arise from a unique socio-historical context. The process of secularization in France is inseparable from the perceived incompatibility of the marriage of politico-ecclesiastic authority in modern society. The development of the concept of laïcité is a controversial and complex ideological construction.

There exists some disagreement about the term *laïcité* and its relationship with English quasi-equivalents *secularism* or *secularization*. The word *laïcité* appeared for the first time in Ferdinand Buisson's *Dictionnaire de pédagogie et d'instruction primaire* (1887). Over twenty years later, in his *Nouveau dictionnaire de pédagogie et d'instruction primaire* (1911), he gave this explanation for the word: "This word is new, and although correctly formed, it is not yet in general use. However, the neologism is necessary. No other term allows, without periphrasis, to express the same idea in its fullness."⁴²

The concept of secularization has evolved in meaning since first used in the 16th century. Historically speaking, according to Jean Baubérot, "the origin of the term 'secularization' is the process by which a monk leaves the convent (prefiguration of eternity) in order to live in the present age."⁴³ Monod asserts that "linguistically, in French, the term and the notion of secularization preceded the use of *laïcité*."⁴⁴ He notes that the term 'secularization' was born as a French neologism (1553) in the legal field and was later used in relation to the confiscation of Church possessions by the State during the French Revolution. When speaking of secularization, he notes the "semantic plasticity and the variety of its levels of application."⁴⁵ In distinguishing *laïcité* and secularization, he arrives at the conclusion that "*laïcité* can therefore be understood as the complete secularization of institutions."⁴⁶

Marik Fetouh describes the "confusion between *laïcité*, which is the separation of the State and religion, and secularization which is the natural and progressive detachment of society from religiosity."⁴⁷ Solange Lefebvre speaks of "the project of *laïcité* in France which rendered reason sovereign and freed it from transcendent authority."⁴⁸ He views secularization as "another concept which signifies the emancipation of societies from religious guardianship . . . Christianity ceases to be the source of a common world vision . . . society is freed from religious legitimization for the definition of its values."⁴⁹ Luc Ferry associates *laïcisation* and secularization and observes that "these expressions, more or less controlled and controversial, symbolize multiple interpretations of the same reality: the arrival of a *laïque* universe in the midst of which belief in the existence of God no longer structures our political space."⁵⁰

Olivier Roy distinguishes between secularization "as a phenomenon of society that does not require any political implementation," and *laïcité* as "a political choice which defines the place of religion in society in an

authoritative and legal manner."⁵¹ This is echoed by Luc Moyères. "*Laïcité à la française* is therefore the product of French history . . . It is the local fruit of a local evolution."⁵² Monod argues for three elements in the relation between secularization and *laïcité*. He writes that "*laïcité* is the political product of the historical process of secularization; *laïcité* is a variant of secularization as the general form of modern western societies; and that French *laïcité* has its specificities, written in a unique history."⁵³

Marcel Gauchet prefers to speak of the "*sortie de la religion*" (departure of religion) in order to avoid the terms *laïcisation* and secularization.⁵⁴ He views these two terms as a process which has affected all Western societies

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in different forms. However, he argues that the form in France is unique and the word *laïcité* "well summarizes its specificity which needs to be appreciated today if one wants to understand the relativisation it is undergoing today."⁵⁵ He describes this *sortie de la religion* as "a change in a world where religions continue to exist, but at the interior of a political form and collective order that they no longer determine."⁵⁶ He does not challenge the descriptive relevance of the terms *laïcisation* and secularization but asserts that they find their origins in the ecclesiastical world and do not go to the heart of the upheaval brought about by the elimination of religious dominance and the present disassociation of civil society from the State.⁵⁷ He makes an interesting distinction between "a Europe of *laïcisation* in Catholic countries characterized by a confessional unicity," requiring political intervention to release society from the grip of the Catholic church, and "a Europe of secularization which prevailed in Protestant lands, where following a break with Rome, national churches continued their influence in the political sphere."⁵⁸

French Exceptionalism

There is some debate as to whether *laïcité* is a French exception. Gaillard asserts that "this Copernican revolu-

tion took place in all of Europe and on the American continent. But it took on a particular form in France.”⁵⁹ He also maintains that “there is truly a French exception in the process of exiting the wars of religion which bloodied Europe of the 16th century and marked the end of Christian unity.”⁶⁰ He cites the Edict of Nantes (1598) as the historical reference which allowed the cohabitation of two religions, Catholic and Protestant. He further sees a “French exception in the matter of the separation of Churches and State since our *laïcité*, of which the fundamental text is the law of December 9, 1905, leads not only to the disassociation of citizenship and religion . . . but also to the negation of any official role of churches in civil society.”⁶¹ Roy argues that *laïcité* is “a specificity very French, incomprehensible in Great Britain, where customs agents can wear the veil . . . as well in the United States, where no president can be elected without speaking of God.”⁶²

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Reformation**

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Anne Rinnert asserts that since the Law of 1905 settled chaotic historical relationships which led to the violent wars of the two Frances, “there are therefore real reasons for this French specificity” and that “the word *laïcité* itself is not translatable into other languages where one speaks instead of secularization.”⁶³ Jean-Pierre Machelon reminds us that “the word ‘*laïcité*’ seems in effect literally untranslatable without a false sense in any foreign language relatively close to French.”⁶⁴ Bowen affirms that “the history of relations between the state and religions in France is one of frequent conflicts and temporary resolutions, but to the extent that the historian can discern underlying continuities, he or she can claim to find a distinctive French approach to the issue, that because it is part of French history, should be maintained.”⁶⁵ Jean-Jacques Queyranne, regional president of Rhône-Alpes since 2002, prefers *singularité française* (French singularity) to *exception française* (French exception). He sees the

Edict of Nantes as the origin of the Law of 1905 and the law itself as “the crowning of a movement of *laïcisation* begun long before” and “today a law of pacification and serenity.”⁶⁶

There seems to be a general consensus among these writers that, even if *laïcité* as a concept is found in other societies, there is a sense in which the form it takes is particular to France, that linguistically *laïcité* captures a specificity inseparable from its historical context, and in some ways distinct from secularization. However these two concepts may be viewed, sociologist Jean Baubérot makes a stunning observation: “Contrary to the fears of many, secularization and *laïcisation* have not led to the disappearance of Christianity.”⁶⁷

1905 Law of Separation

The Law of Separation was the outcome of the long processes of secularization and *laïcisation* initiated by the sixteenth-century Protestant Reformation. France experienced a clear progression from one officially recognized religion before 1789, then to four recognized religious confessions under the 1801 Napoleonic Concordat, and finally leading to religious plurality and liberty of conscience in 1905. The law was enacted after a spirited parliamentary debate and political turmoil. Two grand governing principles emerged in the law’s first two articles under the section “Principles:” 1) liberty of conscience and the free exercise of religion; 2) the removal of a State funding for religious purposes, except for chaplains, with churches responsible for maintaining their own edifices.

French society accommodated itself to religious changes in the twentieth century following the disestablishment of concordataire state churches. Jacques Soppelsa writes that the arrival of the Law of 1905 ended “decades of rude combats between political and *laïque* powers.”⁶⁸ The law was both a law of rupture and a law of conciliation. The rupture was considered justified by many since the Church was a threat to the Republic. The conciliation was a guarantee of the free exercise of religion and liberty of conscience.⁶⁹ Jean-Michel Bêlorgey aptly describes the necessity of the separation:

French *laïcité* constitutes a response to at least a century of confrontations between the Catholic Church and political powers, and to several centuries of religious quarrels which profoundly marked, bloodied, and struck French society. . . . French *laïcité* is thus a *laïcité* with a Christian background, conceived to fight against the imperialism of the Catholic Church, while reckoning with a Christian past, and more precisely the Catholic past of our nation France, the eldest daughter of the Church.⁷⁰

This new state of affairs would encounter opposition from the Catholic Church until 1924 while issues were addressed and resolved. Pena-Ruiz reminds us that “the Catholic Church waited until the twentieth century to recognize the freedom of conscience, the autonomy of scientific inquiry, and the equality of all people, believers or not: all the things that Pope Pius IX still anathematized in his 1864 *Syllabus*.”⁷¹ The *Syllabus* was a document issued under Pope Pius IX in 1864 “condemning propositions which seemed self-evidently true to liberally minded men.”⁷² This change of status for the Church and its political defeat left wounds that many believe began healing during World War I (1914-1918) in what has been called the “brotherhood of the trenches.”⁷³ Dusseau likewise asserts, “It is the war of 1914 which marks the change . . . because of the position of the French clergy in support of the sacred Union.”⁷⁴ The time in the trenches also opened the eyes of priests who discovered the religious ignorance of soldiers who did not understand even basic religious concepts. Jacques Prévotat claims that “for the first time, the phenomenon of dechristianization appeared to [the priests] in all its magnitude.”⁷⁵

There was no explicit reference to the word *laïcité* in the 1905 Law of Separation, although the concept informed the content in the quest for a *laïque* Republic. In the French constitutions of 1946 and 1958 the term *laïque* was formally and legally introduced to describe the French Republic. *Laïcité* was not legally defined and left the door open to various ideologies and interpretations of the Law. In Bowen’s opinion, “In France’s very recent history, *laïcité* has become one of those ‘essentially contested concepts’ such as ‘freedom’ and ‘equality,’ that provide resources for arguments, not starting points of agreement.”⁷⁶

Over the past century the Law of 1905 itself “has been modified multiple times” to address new challenges.⁷⁷ The twentieth century experienced challenges in the application of the Law of 1905 as French society became less homogeneous with the arrival of immigrants of religions other than those expressly considered in the law. Jean Boussinesq observes that “the legislators of 1905 did not foresee the sociological upheavals which transformed France over eighty years.”⁷⁸ Yet the Law of 1905 continues to “occupy a fundamental place in our [nation’s] public law.”⁷⁹

The various ways in which *laïcité* is used requires knowledge of the context and the perspective of those using the term. Machelon comments that “references to *laïcité* are used with ambivalence which corresponds to a fundamental ambiguity.”⁸⁰ The complexity and the

confusion cannot be completely avoided, especially by those looking in on French society from the outside. The concept of *laïcité* over time has been associated with various adjectives with different nuances according to the speaker’s perspective. These include *latitudinaire*, *globalisée*, *apaisée*, *ouverte*, *de combat*, *républicaine*, and *antalgique*.

For our purposes, these adjectives might be reduced to two adjectives which encompass the rest—*laïcité libérale* and *laïcité anticléricale*. The first, *laïcité libérale*, seeks a peaceful (*apaisée*) coexistence between believers and non-believers, liberty of conscience, tolerance of all systems of belief or unbelief, the neutrality of the State in religious matters, and the exclusion of religious influence in State matters. The second, *laïcité anticléricale*, is more aggressive (*de combat*), does not claim neutrality, views religion as oppressive, and seeks to remove all religious influence in society. Both perspectives were proposed and debated leading up to the Law of 1905. The second more



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combative and anticlerical perspective has vigorously reentered the debate with the emergence of Islam as the second-largest religion in France.

The definition of *laïcité* remains blurred with multiple interpretations. The original juridical sense of *laïcité* in the separation of Churches and the State has been enlarged. Meaning often depends on the agenda and ideology of the speaker, and its application is part of the larger debate to this day. Queyranne exemplifies those who understand *laïcité* in an enlarged sense, stating that “in our eyes *laïcité* is not a simple legal and constitutional principle but a value of civilization supported by a ‘living together’ ethic.”⁸¹ Others like Jean Baudérot argue for a broad application of *laïcité* and liberty of conscience which “also concerns homosexuals who want to marry and citizens who want to die in dignity.”⁸² As a legal and constitutional principle, *laïcité* was primarily concerned with liberty of conscience and freedom of religion or non-religion, with the State and the Church occupying

separate spaces without interference or control. Once *laïcité* became a value of democracy or civilization, it began to be applied to a host of issues unrelated to its origin and perhaps even unrelated to religion.

American Evangelical Ministry in Secular France

How might the nature of secularization/*laïcité* in France affect gospel ministry? Allen Koop provides a sobering contribution to our understanding of the American evangelical involvement in France between World War II and 1975. His observations should be taken seriously by anyone seeking to avoid the mistakes of the last century. In his opinion, "Until the Second World War, most American Christians assumed that European churches were capable of carrying out the task of evangelism in their respective countries."⁸³ He argues that "secular America still left plenty of room for religion. Twentieth century France, however, threatened Christianity with a harsh climate."⁸⁴ This climate took its toll on eager but unprepared missionaries who were viewed by the French "as part of the new American invasion."⁸⁵

American missionaries established a post-war presence in France but the unenthusiastic welcome by the French "saddled the missionary enterprise in France with a continuing problem of confused identity and purpose."⁸⁶ In addition, "most French Protestants resented the evangelical implication that France was a mission field, and they were amazed to find missionaries among them."⁸⁷ The difficulty of engaging in ministry was complicated by the backgrounds and unpreparedness of the missionaries. Koop observes that "while their work in France took them to urban areas, most missionaries had been raised in a rural or small-town environment . . . Only a very few of the missionaries to nominally Catholic France had made their own conversion from a Catholic religious background in America."⁸⁸ He further notes that "aside from their general education, most missionaries received little specific preparation for their work in France."⁸⁹ Many of these "missionaries, often young and inexperienced, arrived with visionary goals of evangelizing France, only to find how poorly prepared they were for living in a new culture where even ordinary activities like taking the metro to language study could be trying experiences."⁹⁰

Koop describes the dramatic growth of the American evangelical movement in finances and personnel. Yet missionaries experienced limited success and minimal impact on French society. American missionaries also learned to their dismay that the Catholic church con-

tinued to dominate society. The lack of outward success contributed to high rates of attrition. Finally, according to Koop,

Most missionaries never overcame their linguistic handicap, and many encountered difficulty in adapting to French culture. The concentration of their efforts on the lower middle class, and their reluctance or inability to penetrate the upper and the lower classes, lessened further their influence . . . The missionaries often imparted the traditions and trappings of midwestern Fundamentalism with little concern for the French religious heritage. American evangelistic strategies pressed for immediate 'decisions for Christ,' and their church membership policies often insisted upon high standards of social behavior.⁹¹

Twenty-first Century Challenges

After decades of accommodation and relative calm, the end of the twentieth century was marked by ancient, unresolved questions on the relation between religion and the State. The changed landscape of France during the twentieth century, and specifically the issues of the 1980s and 1990s, contributed to the revival of interest in *laïcité*. The relatively homogeneous France of the early twentieth century was replaced with the pluralistic, heterogeneous France of the early twenty-first century.

The resurgence of interest in *laïcité* is unquestionably linked with the emergence of Islam. Anne Rinnert notes that issues surrounding Islam were the catalyst for the renewed debate on *laïcité*. She writes, "To speak of Islam when it is a question of *laïcité* is neither islamophobic nor stigmatizing. It is important to remember that. From young girls wearing veils in Creil in 1989 to the wearing of burkinis on French beaches in the summer of 2016, there is no need to deny that essentially it was these manifestations that crystallized the debate."⁹² Maurice Barbier, writing in 1993, identifies the timeframe. "For the last ten years, *laïcité* has become the object of new debates, which are in no way artificial, since they are raised by real problems which await an adequate solution."⁹³ Several years later he wrote, "The centenary celebration of this law [1905] and the presence of a large Muslim community in France combined to relaunch the debate on *laïcité* in a pressing manner."⁹⁴ Baubérot adds that "the transfer of the presence of Islam, at a moment when European secularization disenchant, generates tensions in all of Europe."⁹⁵

Professor Jacques Viguier presents an interesting contrast between Catholicism a century ago and Islam today. He affirms that a major religion has appeared in the twenty-first century making claims similar to those

of twentieth-century Catholicism.⁹⁶ He further notes that due to the confrontation between Islam and a *laïque* Republic, “a combative *laïcité* might reappear today. We find ourselves facing a religion whose ideological position corresponds to that of Catholicism under the Third Republic. . . . Is not the imam similar to the priest of the past with a message to get across which might contradict Republican ideals?”⁹⁷

Émile Poulat captures the essence of French society in words that anyone called to ministry in France should take to heart:

If the influence of churches in [French] society is diminished it is not because the law excludes them from public life, but is above everything else a matter of society and culture. Science is *laïque*, the economy is *laïque*, the media, leisure activities, sports are *laïque*, and they are what shapes the mind not only more but also differently than catechism. . . . Churches still have authority but no longer have power.⁹⁸

Conclusion

This brief historical sketch hopes to provide insight to those called to minister in a French context. It must be asked what gospel-centered ministry looks like in France and what part non-native French speakers might have in ministry there. There are no easy answers and those proposed must respect the religious history of France in a context of sympathy for the wounds the nation bears in the name of religion. A better understanding of the turbulent, *laïcité*-shaped history of secularized France may contribute as a first step in building communicative and relational bridges for strategic and fruitful ministry in a challenging context. France remains a nation in need of the gospel and requires well-prepared cross-cultural workers, in partnership with French nationals, to evangelize the unconverted and plant churches. As Guy Coq notes, “secular society, even disillusioned, seems more favorable to the discovery of the good news than a religious society which constrains consciences.”⁹⁹ Above all, we must keep in mind this truth:

From a human standpoint, the missionary proclamation of the gospel is a communicative impossibility: the message of a crucified Savior is a stumbling block for Jews and nonsense to Gentiles. This is why it is impossible to ‘force’ a decision or to ‘argue’ an unbeliever into the kingdom of God, even if the rhetoric is brilliant and the arguments are theologically compelling—only the power of God can convince people of the truth of the gospel.¹⁰⁰

The great need of French people today, indeed of all people everywhere, is to hear the good news of salvation

in a resurrected Savior proclaimed prayerfully, boldly, clearly, confidently, and compassionately. For those engaged in gospel proclamation in France, as in any foreign context, all five elements are essential: prayer in intercession for those who need a Savior, boldness through the empowerment of the Holy Spirit, clarity through a mastery of the language and theological concepts, confidence in the power of God to bring new life, and compassion toward those who need to hear the truth and see the truth in the lives of those who bear witness to it. The history of France is rich and complex. The contributions of France to the world are undeniable. The future of France remains humanly unknowable. Through the proclamation of God’s Word, the presence of faithful Christian communities throughout the great nation, and trust in a sovereign God, all things will arrive at their intended end. To those who have the privilege to serve God and the people of France, the message of the Apostle Paul sounds forth: “Be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that in the Lord your labor is not in vain” (I Cor 15:58).

Endnotes

1. Marcel Pagnol, *Le château de ma mère* (Paris: Éditions de Fallois, 1988), 127. All translations are my own.

2. “La France est une République indivisible, *laïque*, démocratique et sociale. Elle assure l’égalité devant la loi de tous les citoyens sans distinction d’origine, de race ou de religion. Elle respecte toutes les croyances. Son organisation est décentralisée.” http://www.assemblee-nationale.fr/connaissance/constitution.asp#titre_1.

3. *Le Nouveau Petit Robert de la Langue Française*, nouvelle édition (Paris: Le Robert, 2007), 1420.

4. Jean Delumeau, *Le Christianisme va-t-il mourir?* (Paris: Éditions Hachette, 1977), 21-22.

5. Patrick Cabanel, “La ‘question religieuse’ et les solutions en France (XVI-XXI siècle),” in *La Laïcité, une question au présent, sous la direction de Jean Birnbaum et Frédéric Viguière* (Nantes: Éditions Cécile Defaut, 2006), 167.

6. Ibid.

7. Ibid., 172.

8. John R. Bowen, *Why the French Don’t Like Headscarves: Islam, the State, and Public Space* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2007), 17.

9. Jean-Michel Gaillard, “L’invention de la *laïcité* (1598-1905),” in 1905, *la séparation des Églises et de l’État: Les textes fondateurs, sous la direction d’Yves Bruley* (Paris: Éditions Perrin, 2004), 21-22.

10. Ibid.

11. “The origin of the term ‘Huguenot’ has been long debated. The present consensus is that it derives from the word for the resisting Swiss confederations (Eidgenossen), but it seems to have emerged during the conspiracy of Amboise, and opponents of the ‘foreign house’ of Guise construed it as designating their allegiance to the descendants of the royal dynasty of ‘Hughes’ Capet” (Kelley 1981, 257).

12. *Le Nouveau Petit Robert* defines “Camisards” as “Calvinist Cévenol insurgents during the persecutions which followed the

Continued on page 49

The Being-ness and Doing-ness of the Church's Mission in a Secular World:

A Critical Assessment of Johannes C. Hoekendijk's Missional Ecclesiology from a Perspective of Missional Hermeneutics

Banseok Cho

This paper intends to critically assess Johannes Christian Hoekendijk's missional ecclesiology, which engages with a secular world. In the history of mission theology, Hoekendijk was very influential, whether positively or negatively, in shaping the trend of mission theology in the middle of the twentieth century. Among evangelicals, he has been known as a missiologist who seriously critiqued the traditional view of mission, and his missiological suggestions seemed too radical to traditionalists. On the ecumenical side, he significantly impacted the shape of ecumenical missiology, particularly in the 1960s. In spite of his theological influence in the history of mission theology, an in-depth study of a missional ecclesiology, which he proposed for the church's mission in a secular world, has been rarely attempted in both ecumenical and evangelical circles.¹

In brief, this paper intends to comprehensively explore Hoekendijk's missional ecclesiology to critically assess his theological proposal for the church's mission in a secular world from a perspective of missional hermeneutics. This paper demonstrates that, while Hoekendijk made a missiological contribution to the church's mission in a secular world by suggesting the missionary nature of the church and by seriously taking a secular world as both the context and object of the church's mission, his missional ecclesiology was one-sided, particularly failing to balance two dimensions—*being* (centripetal) and *doing* (centrifugal) of the church's mission. This paper concludes



that, from a perspective of missional hermeneutics, an ecclesiology, which missionally engages with a secular world, suggests that both the being and doing aspects of the church's mission are essential if the church is to faithfully fulfill its missional vocation in a secular world.

Johannes C. Hoekendijk's Missional Ecclesiology

In order to comprehensively understand Hoekendijk's missional ecclesiology, at least four components about the way that he constructed a missional ecclesiology need to be looked at: (1) the missiological concern he had

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regarding the church's mission, (2) the missiological root problem he identified, (3) the missiological remedy he looked into, and (4) five major characteristics of the missionary nature of the church he proposed. Then, based on the overall view of Hoekendijk's missional ecclesiology, both his missiological contribution and weakness will be addressed.

1. Concern: The Church in Isolation from Mission. What brought Hoekendijk into a rethinking of the relationship of the church and mission is his missiological concern about the church's isolation from mission. He observed that churches had become so institutionalized that they had no longer actively been committed to the advancement of the gospel. He found this phenomenon from both the home churches and the young churches.² The church's lack of interest in mission was obvious in three trends he observed: "the independent indigenous Church, the autochthonous people's Church, and the oecumenical world Church."³ All of these trends emerged as a consequence of mission or in a mission context, but ended up in the church being isolated from mission. Once the church was established, the church became institutionalized, ending up focused on itself, rather than continuing to advance the gospel all over the world. Thus, Hoekendijk mourned the phenomenon that, while the twentieth century celebrated the global expansion of Christianity as the result of the nineteenth century's modern missionary movement, churches in the twentieth century had become isolated from mission and had lost their commitment to advancing the gospel all over the world.

2. Root Problem: Tendency toward Churchism in Missionary Thinking. For Hoekendijk, the church's isolation from mission results not from factors outside the church, but fundamentally from factors within the church, particularly the church's self-understanding of its mission. Hoekendijk contends that the fundamental problem of the church's isolation from mission is *theological*.⁴ More specifically, he is convinced that the root problem behind the trend of the church's isolation from mission is the "tendency towards churchism in missionary thinking."⁵ Hoekendijk agrees with J. Dürr who, critical of the traditional view of mission, states, "the many fundamental and practical problems which are dealt with in missiology all revolve round the problem of the Church. Mission is the road from the Church to the Church."⁶ Because he concluded that church-centeredness is the root problem which caused the church to be isolated from mission, Hoekendijk con-

tends, "Evangelism and churchification are not identical, and very often they are each other's bitterest enemies."⁷ Because the root problem that isolated the church from mission, Hoekendijk is radically critical of church-centric mission. Another and more significant problem caused by church-centric mission is that it distorts biblical concepts significant for mission,⁸ and, as a result, it leads the church to being unprepared for a biblical meaning of mission.⁹

Furthermore, Hoekendijk identifies three characteristics of church-centric mission: (1) mission is nothing less than the expansion of Christendom,¹⁰ (2) the planting and strengthening of the church in an unevangelized region is the ultimate goal of mission,¹¹ and (3) mission is merely one of the things the church does.¹²

3. Remedy: The Excentric Position of the Church in Mission. Because Hoekendijk is convinced that the root problem of the church's being isolated from mission is church-centeredness in understanding mission, he suggests a way to rethink the relationship between church and mission in such a way that mission is not centered on the church but, rather, *the church is centered on mission*. Thus, as a theological remedy for the church-centric conception of mission, he proposes a paradigm shift toward church-excentric mission. Hoekendijk is straightforward on this point when he bluntly states, "Church-centric missionary thinking is bound to go astray because it revolves around an *illegitimate centre*."¹³

4. The Missionary Nature of the Church. Hoekendijk's intention in suggesting the church-excentric mission paradigm is not to marginalize or exclude the church from mission, but to bring mission back into the very heart of the church, into the totality of the church's life. This intention is found in the following statement that he made:

We reach here a crucial issue. It is common to think of evangelism, to think of the apostolate, as a function of the Church. *Credo ecclesiam apostolicam* is often interpreted as: "I believe in the Church, which has an apostolic function." Would it not be truer to make a complete turn-over here, and to say that this means: I believe in the Church, which is a function of the Apostolate, that is, an instrument of God's redemptive action in this world.¹⁴

Attempting to bring mission into the heart of the church, Hoekendijk conceives of what the church's mission in the world should look like if the church is centered on mission. His theological proposal for the missionary nature of the church has at least five characteristics, each of which is briefly addressed in the follow-

(1) The Whole World as a Mission Field. Hoekendijk relocates the church back into a missional context by viewing the whole world as a mission field.¹⁵ According to him, it is theologically untenable to divide the world into two categories, namely Western non-Christian and non-Western pagan worlds.¹⁶ One implication of this view of the world is that wherever the church exists is a mission field. This point is clearly illustrated when Hoekendijk calls the church in the West to engage with a western modern mass society in such a way that the church is relevant to the life situation of modern people.¹⁷

(2) Theocentric Missional Eschatology. Hoekendijk does not begin with ecclesiology to theologically conceive the missionary nature of the church. Instead, he constructs a *theocentric missional eschatology*, within which the missionary nature of the church is to be understood. He proposes to “re-think our ecclesiology within [the] frame-

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work of kingdom-gospel-apostolate-world.”¹⁸ For Hoekendijk, “Kingdom and world belong together,” and the gospel and the apostolate (mission), which are intrinsically related to each other, make the kingdom and the world inseparably and intimately related to each other.¹⁹

As an eschatological reality, the inseparable and intimate relationship between the kingdom and the world has three characteristics. First, this relationship between the kingdom and the world is the consequence and reality of the messianic fulfillment.²⁰ Second, mission is the “postulate of eschatology” in the New Testament.²¹ Third, drawing on prophecy by the Old Testament prophets, Hoekendijk understands mission primarily as the act of God. Thus, based on theocentric missional eschatology, the kingdom, mission (primarily as the act of God), and the world are intrinsically, intimately, and inseparably related to one another.²²

Based on theocentric missional eschatology, Hoekendijk constructs and devises *the order of kingdom—mission (as the act of God)—world.*²³ In light of this missional eschatology,

he proposes to rethink the traditional centric position of the church. Hoekendijk suggests that, in the new order, the church cannot be regarded as the center of mission. The church is called to participate in the reality of this theocentric missional eschatology. He puts it this way:

It is true that the context Kingdom—apostolate—oikoumene does not leave much room for the church. Ecclesiology does not fit here. When one desires to speak about God’s dealing with the world, the church can be mentioned only in passing and without strong emphasis. Ecclesiology cannot be more than a single paragraph from Christology (the messianic dealings with the world) and a few sentences from eschatology (the Messianic dealings with the World). The church is only the church to the extent that she lets herself be used as a part of God’s dealings with the oikoumene.²⁴

Thus, Hoekendijk theologically establishes the missionary nature and excentric position of the church by locating the church within the context of the theocentric missional eschatology.

(3) Messianic, Secular Shalom. The central biblical concept for Hoekendijk’s definition of the nature of the church’s mission is *shalom*. By using this concept as the theological foundation of the nature of the church’s mission, he suggests a way for the church to overcome reductionism of understanding its mission merely as the planting or strengthening of the church in an unevangelized area. Hoekendijk strongly suggests, “the substance of the apostolate is the setting up of signs of kingdom-salvation, i.e. shalom.”²⁵ For him, the establishment of shalom in the world is the *goal* and *motive* of mission.²⁶

Hoekendijk highlights two aspects of the concept of shalom: *messianic* and *secular*. First, for Hoekendijk, shalom is a *messianic* concept. Shalom is patterned by the ministry of the Messiah.²⁷ Second, Hoekendijk strongly emphasizes shalom as a *secular* concept,²⁸ defining it as a “*secularized . . . concept*, taken out of the religious sphere . . . and commonly used to indicate all aspects of the restored and cured human condition.”²⁹ The shalom “must be found and worked out in actual situations”³⁰ which is his definition of “secular.” Hoekendijk’s secular view of shalom is juxtaposed with his criticism of the church’s being a *religious* institutionalization. Hoekendijk warns about understanding the church as a religious community because, in doing so, the church makes God who is universally present, a Baal-like, local, residential deity.³¹ In light of the secular concept of shalom, “religion is once and for all outdated and superseded. Without residential gods, there is no need for a fanum, and consequently, nothing can be pro-fane.”³² Thus, Hoekendijk suggests

that the church stop being religious and become secular.

Hoekendijk's secular view of shalom and, by extension, of the church's mission is rooted in his secular view of *missio Dei*. For Hoekendijk, God is a missionary God who is present at work in the actual life context of people. Hoekendijk is a strong advocate of the concept of *missio Dei* as indicated when he states, "Before anything else, the apostolate/Mission is a predicate of God (cf. in ecumenical documents: 'Our God is a Missionary God'). He operates and makes Himself known through an all-encompassing sending-economy."³³ The church is called to join the sending-economy of God in the form of the messianic pattern.³⁴ The key idea in his secular interpretation of the *missio Dei* is the meaning of what he calls "the sending-economy of God." He states, "This sending-economy is the expression of God's 'philanthropy,' evidence of His concern to be *present in the actual life situation of man*, there to deliver man out of every form of 'establishment' and to involve him in history."³⁵

In his secular interpretation of the *missio Dei*, "the Mission begins beyond religion."³⁶ He insists that, being modeled on the messianic and secular aspect of shalom, the church's mission be profoundly *secularized*. Hoekendijk is straightforward on this point when he states, "in trying to define the purpose of the Mission, we must discard all religious categories."³⁷ For him, the church's becoming a religious community, in which its members can cultivate their personal religious and spiritual life, means the church's failure to "become mission in the totality of her being."³⁸ Based on the messianic, secular concept of shalom, Hoekendijk challenges the church to "identify [itself] fully with the things and the people of the world."³⁹

(4) Radical Identification with the World. Hoekendijk sums up his view of the church's missionary nature by stating, "The church is a function of the apostolate."⁴⁰ For Hoekendijk, the understanding of the church as "a function of the apostolate" has two implications: (1) the church should be *identified with the world*, and (2) the church's mission is *primarily centrifugal* (mission by outward engagement with the world), not centripetal (mission by attraction).

First, the church should be *identified with the world* to the extent that "it becomes impossible to distinguish in principle between mission and oikoumene."⁴¹ Any attempt to make a distinction between the church and the world is harmful to the church's being a function of the apostolate, making mission merely as one part of the church's totality. Hoekendijk explicitly brings out this

point regarding the meaning of *koinonia*.⁴² If *koinonia* is understood merely as a fellowship of believers, it results in a distinction between the church and the world. For Hoekendijk, this way of the church's pursuit of and understanding of *koinonia* is "a refusal of the church to be nothing except an apostolic instrument" because, in doing so, the church "is seeking something besides, which is not consumed in self-denying service to the world; something which has a 'meaning' in addition to this."⁴³ Thus, the church should not have any characteristics distinct from the world.

Second, derived from the first implication, the church's mission should be primarily a centrifugal movement into the world. For Hoekendijk, any biblical concept of centripetal mission, which characterizes mission in the Old Testament, is not relevant for the church's mission in

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the post-resurrection period, as indicated when he states, "the Jewish (as well as any other variety of) proselytism is the opposite of Christian mission."⁴⁴ Mission should not be done by attraction toward the church, nor should it produce a church which copies an existent church such as a denominational church. Thus, the church's mission is always a centrifugal movement into the world.⁴⁵ For the church's mission to be fully centrifugal, the church should have nothing to attract the world toward it. The church is to empty itself in order to fully identify itself with the world to the extent that the church even becomes almost a segment of a street "without form or comeliness."⁴⁶

(5) The Threefold Mission of the Church: Kerygma, Koinonia, and Diakonia. Hoekendijk suggests three ways in which the church can participate in God's mission of establishing *shalom* in the world: *kerygma*, *koinonia*, and *diakonia*. He states, "The shalom is proclaimed (*kerygma*), lived corporately (*koinonia*) and demonstrated

in humble service (*diakonia*).⁴⁷ *Kerygma* is the verbal proclamation about shalom as the salvation of the Messiah.⁴⁸ Hoekendijk emphasizes liberty and flexibility for a culturally-relevant communication.⁴⁹ *Diakonia* is the demonstration of shalom in deeds and is characterized by humble service.⁵⁰ However, it is not merely charity nor the proclamation of a divine judgment, but “living in a concrete situation, and serving each other and their environment by reforming the structure of a segment of society.”⁵¹ *Koinonia* is an open fellowship of partakers of the shalom, primarily for corporate participation in establishing shalom.⁵² This fellowship should be open to anyone who is a partaker of the shalom. Churches such as national churches, denominational churches, or class-churches are examples which do not demonstrate the meaning of *koinonia*. Hoekendijk is very careful in explaining how *koinonia* is related to *kerygma* and

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NO OTHER THAN**
participation in God's mission
of establishing shalom
in the world.

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diakonia. For Hoekendijk, *koinonia* is defined “mainly and all-decisively as ‘kerygmatic and diakonic unit’ in such a way that *koinonia* should never be emphasized more than *kerygma* and *diakonia*.⁵³ Thus, to Hoekendijk, *koinonia* exists to support *kerygma* and *diakonia*, and must not hinder them. The three dimensions of the church’s mission should be integrated in the church’s mission to establish shalom in the world.⁵⁴

5. Hoekendijk's Missiological Contribution.

Hoekendijk's missional ecclesiology is contributive in understanding and practicing the church's mission at least in two ways. He assiduously attempted to theologize conceptualize the missionary nature of the church and seriously sought to promote mission in a secular world.

(1) Hoekendijk as a Pioneer of Missional Ecclesiology

While the theological recognition of the missionary nature of the church began to be shaped in the late 1930s, particularly at the Tambaram Conference of the International Missionary Council (IMC), held in 1938,

the finalization of the theological integration of the church and mission was anchored on the basis of the concept of *missio Dei*, which was proposed and accepted at the Willingen Conference of the International Missionary Council, held in 1952.⁵⁵

However, Hoekendijk had already brought out the idea of the missionary nature of the church before the Willingen IMC Conference, so he attempted to bring his theological proposal for the missionary nature of the church into the discussion at the Willingen conference.⁵⁶ In this regard, Hoekendijk might be regarded as a *pioneer* of missional ecclesiology. While his proposal of the excentric position of the church in mission seems too radical to the traditional view of mission, his intention in rethinking the church's mission was not to exclude the church from mission, but to revitalize the church's mission. He sought not only to bring mission into the total life of the church, but also to prevent the church from any possibility of its being in isolation from mission. Furthermore, by employing the concept of shalom and suggesting the threefold dimension of the church's mission, Hoekendijk attempted to provide a theological corrective to reductionism in understanding mission too narrowly. In this sense, Hoekendijk made a missiological contribution to the shape of missional ecclesiology by theologizing suggesting two missiological integrations: the theological integrations (1) of the church and mission and (2) of different aspects of the church's mission.

(2) Hoekendijk as a Precursor of Mission in a Secular World

Hoekendijk defined the nature of the church's mission in light of the concept of shalom. The church's mission is nothing other than participation in God's mission of establishing shalom in the world. However, he interpreted shalom as a secular concept. Shalom is to be established in the secular world, which, for Hoekendijk, is the actual life context of people. This concept is rooted in his secular view of *missio Dei*: God is a God who is present and acts in the secular life of people, and who acts in the secular world. Based on his secular emphasis on shalom and *missio Dei*, Hoekendijk urges the church to radically and fully engage with the secular world. Hoekendijk even encouraged the church to be *secularized* in its total life, to stop being a religious community where people pursue and enjoy their religious piety. The church should not shape its religious character, which, according to Hoekendijk, will hinder the totality of the church becoming secularized. In its secular mission, the church is radically identified with the world. In this regard, Hoekendijk can be called as a *promoter* of

the church's mission in a secular world.

6. One-sidedness of Hoekendijk's Missional Ecclesiology. One unique characteristic of Hoekendijk's proposal for the church's mission in a secular is that his missional ecclesiology is *one-sided*. For Hoekendijk, the church-centric mission paradigm was problematic in several ways. It caused the church to be isolated from mission. Its view of the church's mission is reductionistic; it leads the church to be unprepared for a biblical sense of mission. His remedy to the church-centric view of mission was a radical rejection of the traditional mission paradigm. By doing so, his missional ecclesiology, by which he provided a way to bring mission back to the heart of the church, became one-sided, conceptualizing the missionary nature of the church not in a *both-and* manner, but *either-or*. In his missional ecclesiology explored above, at least three areas where his missional ecclesiology is one-sided are identified as listed below:

- Mission in the New Testament without mission in the Old Testament;
- Being secular without being religious; and
- Centrifugal mission without centripetal mission⁵⁷

Overall, Hoekendijk's missional ecclesiology is characterized by *doing* without *being*.

The Missionary Call of God's People from a Perspective of Missional Hermeneutics

Hoekendijk's uneasiness with the traditional view of mission makes his missional ecclesiology one-sided. He employs a biblical approach to construct his one-sided missional ecclesiology, but one question remains: *Is Hoekendijk's one-sided missional ecclesiology biblically supported when the Bible is read missionally?* As a way to approach the question, what missional hermeneutics suggests about the missionary nature of the church will be looked into by tracing the missional call of God's people in the Bible,⁵⁸ and then the three areas identified above, where Hoekendijk's missional ecclesiology is one-sided, will be critically assessed by being compared with the missionary nature of God's people identified from a perspective of missional hermeneutics.

1. The Missionary Call of God's People in the Old Testament. The missional purpose God had for the people of Israel as the descendants of Abraham is implied when God calls Abraham in Genesis 12:1-3.⁵⁹ The way that they fulfill their missionary call is revealed in the Sinai covenant in Exodus 19:5-6, in which three

identity-defining images are mentioned: "my treasured possession," "kingdom of priests," and "holy nation." If the phrase "my treasured possession" defines the relationship between God and Israel, the other two phrases define Israel's missionary call, namely what the people of Israel would look like in the world if they are God's treasured possession.⁶⁰

(1) "Kingdom of Priests." The phrase "kingdom of priests" reveals a *corporate priesthood* given to the whole people of Israel.⁶¹ One way to help understand the meaning of Israel's priesthood is by comparing it with the identity and role of individual priests among Israelites. With this approach, Israel's priesthood means that, "What priests are for a people, Israel as a people is for the world."⁶² More specifically, as the kingdom of priests, Israel is called to do "a mediatorial role between God and other kingdoms,"⁶³ and "to represent him to the nations."⁶⁴ Consequent to Israel's priestly role among the nations, God is brought to the nations, and the nations to God.⁶⁵

(2) "Holy Nation." The phrase "holy nation" shows another aspect of Israel's missionary call. A proper understanding of holiness from a biblical perspective begins with the relationship between God and holiness because holiness is "exclusive" to God in the Bible.⁶⁶ As J. E. Hartley states, "there is nothing either within humans or on earth that is inherently holy, and no Scripture attempts to define 'holy.'"⁶⁷ In this sense, God can be viewed as the original source of holiness. This theocentric view of holiness implies that holiness is, first and foremost, the concept that describes the essential nature of God.⁶⁸

Israel's holiness is related to God's holiness as in Leviticus 19:2 in which God speaks to the people of Israel, "You shall be holy, for I the Lord your God am holy." In light of the theocentric understanding of holiness, at least three aspects of the relationship between Israel's holiness and God's holiness can be identified:

- Israel's holiness is, at best, derived or reflected holiness.⁶⁹
- Israel's holiness requires its constant relationship with God who is the original source of holiness.⁷⁰
- Israel's holiness has a missional dimension because, through their derived holiness, Israel presents the holiness of God—the presence and character of God—to the world.⁷¹

In this sense, the people of Israel are called to be a people who present the holiness of God to the world through their distinctive life that reflects the holiness of God.

(3) Israel's Mission Primarily as Being rather than

Doing⁷² Given the relationship between the law and Israel's holiness, Israel's mission in the Old Testament was not a cross-cultural mission, namely intentionally reaching out to the nations in order to convert them to God.⁷³ As defined in the Sinai covenant, *the people of Israel are called to be a contrast people who presents the holiness of God to the world through their distinctive life, which reflects the holiness of God, in order to draw the nations to God.* In this sense, Israel's mission is primarily not about *doing*, but *being*.

2. The Missionary Call of God's People in the New Testament. While the two divided kingdoms of Israel ended up with God's punishment for unfaithfulness to their covenant relationship with God, being destroyed by the Gentile nations, God did not give up on Israel and its missionary call. Through the Old Testament prophets, God promised that He would restore Israel back to Him through the work of the Suffering Servant of God in the Book of Israel (Israel 49:1-6), and would renew the covenant by establishing a new covenant.⁷⁴

(1) The Essential Nature of Israel's Mission Continues with the Disciples. In the New Testament, the

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essential nature of Israel's mission is not replaced but continues as indicated in the three images that Jesus used in Matthew 5:13-16 to describe the identity of the disciples: “the salt of the earth,” “the light of the world,” and “a city set on a hill.” As Daniel J. Harrington remarks, “That identity is firmly rooted in Israel's identity as God's people.”⁷⁵ Like the identity defined in the Sinai covenant, the identity defined by the three images has a missional dimension in that the three images are associated with universal motifs.⁷⁶ Recognizing the missionary nature of the disciples' identity defined in the images, George M. Soares-Prabhu calls Matthew 13-16 a “largely neglected mission command.”⁷⁷

Particularly, two aspects of Israel's mission are empha-

sized in the three images: *being-ness* and *theocentricity*. First, like Israel's mission, the images accentuate the distinctiveness of the disciples' life. The disciples are called to “be different” and to “act differently.”⁷⁸ In this sense, they are called to be “contrast-society.”⁷⁹ Soares-Prabhu perceives the significance of the *being-ness* in the church's mission in light of the images when he states, “Unless the Church lives as Church, . . . it cannot engage in authentic mission.”⁸⁰ Second, like Israel's mission in the Old Testament, the ultimate goal of the disciples' mission is theocentric: to have the world “give glory to your Father in heaven” (Matthew 5:16). Their mission is ultimately to *make God known to the world*. Thus, as Soares-Prabhu states, the identity defined by the images “reminds us, is not just Christocentric (making disciples of the risen Lord) but theocentric (giving glory to God by building up God's Kingdom).”⁸¹

The two aspects of mission highlighted in the images show that, as in Israel's mission, the primary mode of the disciples' mission is centripetal (mission by attraction). On the image of a city on a hill, Driver notes, “Like a mountaintop city which others will see, it will be a powerful *attraction*. . . . The restoration of a people who walk in the paths of the Lord and the fulfillment of the life envisioned in the law and the prophets will be a *magnet which attracts the peoples of the earth*.”⁸² As in Israel's mission, Jesus expected the disciples to be a “visible and tangible” embodiment of the kingdom of God “even though it is not yet perfected.”⁸³

(2) Israel's Mission Is Expanded. Israel's mission not just continues with the disciples but is *expanded* as Jesus revealed the inclusive nature of the kingdom of God throughout his life, death and resurrection. Carroll Stuhlmueller points out, Jesus's solidarity with outcasts such as sinners and tax collectors signified the “expansive concept of God's people.”⁸⁴ After his death and resurrection, Jesus sent the disciples to all nations, entrusting the disciples with the global-sized disciple-making mission (Matthew 28:15-20) and with the message of repentance for forgiveness of sins (Luke 24:47). The death and resurrection of Jesus provides the historical and theological basis for the *inclusive* nature of the kingdom of God, which is open to all, regardless of ethnic identity. By the death of Jesus, God proved His love for *all* (Romans 5:8). By the resurrection of Jesus, God revealed the *universal* lordship of Jesus.⁸⁵ In this eschatological era inaugurated by the death and resurrection of Jesus, the disciples are sent to all nations to invite them into the kingdom of God. Thus, the disciples are not only a *showcase* of what the kingdom

of God in the world would look like, but also agents who are sent to invite all nations into the kingdom of God. In this sense, the disciples' mission is expanded, involving not only *being* (living a distinctive life) but also *doing* (reaching out to the world).

(3) The Disciples' New Missionary Identity as Witnesses of Jesus. In Luke's two-volume work, the disciples are given a new identity for their mission in the post-resurrection period: *witnesses of Jesus* (Luke 24:48; Acts 1:8). As N. T. Wright points out, this identity defines "the pattern of life to which Jesus's followers are now committed."⁸⁶ As indicated in Acts 1:8, the disciples' mission profoundly shaped by the Holy Spirit was that of "witnessing" to the world.⁸⁷ As the consequence of Jesus's whole ministry, the missionary call of the disciples became *Christocentric*. Two aspects of the disciples' mission as being witnesses of Jesus indicates that Israel's mission both continues and is expanded in the disciples' Christocentric mission: (1) the ultimate goal of their mission is theocentric, and (2) their mission involves both *being* and *doing*.

First the disciples' mission is *thoroughly Christocentric, but ultimately theocentric*. Goheen well sums up the Christocentric aspect of the earthly church's identity when he states, "God's people are a messianic people.... The people of God are characterized by their allegiance to Jesus, exemplified in the will to follow, love, and obey him."⁸⁸ While, through the whole ministry of Jesus, the kingdom of God has been made thoroughly Christocentric, what Jesus ultimately reveals through his earthly ministry is God the Father. Guder articulates, "These events [the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus] reveal the nature and purpose of God; they are events God is carrying out within our human history, in which he is the subject, the initiator and doer of that which happens."⁸⁹ This theocentricity in Jesus's earthly ministry is made the most obvious in the Gospel of John, in which Jesus's ministry is depicted as revealing God, rooted in his intimate relationship with God.⁹⁰ What Jesus ultimately represents through his earthly ministry is God the Father. Köstenberger makes this point, viewing the disciples' mission as "theocentric by being Christocentric."⁹¹ Thus, like Israel's mission, the disciples are theocentric, while the way they present God to the world is Christocentric. *The disciples are called to present God by presenting Jesus to the world. In other words, the disciples' mission is to witness to God in the world by witnessing to Jesus in the world.*

Second, the disciples' mission of witnessing to Jesus involves both *being* and *doing*. Guder makes this point

clear when he states, "*Being* a witness and *saying* the witness are inseparable aspects of the one calling."⁹² Christological events—the life, death and resurrection of Jesus—are the events that already transformed those who witnessed them. They testified to the events, not merely as those who knew about the events, but primarily as those who were profoundly transformed by the events. Thus, the disciples' distinctive life shaped by Jesus and their message about Jesus to the world are *inseparable* in such a way that, as Guder rightly points out, "The message comes from messengers whose own identity has really been transformed by the One who is the theme of that message."⁹³ This inseparable relationship between the message and the messenger implies that the faithful and authentic witnessing to Jesus in the world involves both *being* and *doing*. *Doing-without-being* makes the disciples' witnessing *untrustworthy*. *Being-without-doing* makes their witnessing *unfaithful*.

Critical Assessment of One-sidedness of Hoekendijk's Missional Ecclesiology

Two views of the missionary nature of the church have been explored—one proposed by Hoekendijk and one suggested from a perspective of missional hermeneutics. As mentioned above, Hoekendijk's missional ecclesiology is one-sided in three areas. In the following, each of the three aspects will be critically assessed, by being compared with the missionary nature of the church discovered by missional hermeneutics.

1. Mission in the Old Testament without Mission in the New Testament? Hoekendijk does not see the missionary call of the church as rooted in the missionary call of Israel. To him, the missionary call of the church began with the New Testament. He suggests rethinking the church's mission within the framework of the eschatological reality of the kingdom-mission-world, which is established by the messianic fulfillment. This point is clearly presented when he strongly suggests that the church's mission should not follow Jewish proselytism (and any variants of it), which characterizes mission in the Old Testament.

From a perspective of missional hermeneutics, the missionary call of the church as the people of God is traced back to and rooted in Israel as defined in the Sinai covenant, while a missional ecclesiology suggested by missional hermeneutics acknowledges that the missionary call of God's people is fully expanded in the New Testament. The missionary nature of the church is not something that suddenly developed in the New

Testament, but finds its origin in the missional purpose God had for them in the Abrahamic covenant (Genesis 12:1-3) and in the missionary call of Israel as defined by the Sinai covenant (Exodus 18:5-6).

2. Religious without being Secular? Hoekendijk is intolerant of the religious aspect of the church's life and mission because he believed that the church's being a religious organization results in the distinction between the church and the world. The church's being religious is dangerous to the missionary nature of the church because it causes *mission by attraction* to the church, not *mission by going to the world*. Thus, he strongly suggests that the church stop being religious but become secular in its total life and mission, based on his secular interpretation of shalom. He bluntly urges the church to be as much secularized until it is fully identified with the world.

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Unlike Hoekendijk's rejection of the religious aspect of the church, a missional ecclesiology suggested by missional hermeneutics does not see the church's being religious as harmful to its missionary vocation. Rather, the missionary nature of the church in light of missional hermeneutics is not only social but also profoundly religious (or spiritual). Israel's missionary vocation was fundamentally religious and spiritual. Israel's call to be holy requires its constant relationship with God who is the original source of its holiness. Israel's life is expected to display God to the nations. The ultimate goal of Israel's mission is to mediate between God and the nations, drawing the nations to God. This religious aspect of Israel's missionary vocation continues in the disciples' post-resurrection mission of being witnesses of Jesus. Like Israel, the disciples are called to present God to the nations by witnessing to Jesus who fully and authentically represents God.

3. Centripetal without being Centrifugal?

Lastly—as indicated in the two areas where Hoekendijk's missional ecclesiology is one-sided—for him, the church's mission should be primarily to reach out to the world, instead of attracting the world to the church. Thus, the church's mission is always a centrifugal movement, not a centripetal one. Mission by attraction is harmful to the church's commitment to its outward mission. The church should not have anything that would attract the world toward it, being fully identified with the world.

From a perspective of missional hermeneutics, Israel's mission is centripetal, drawing the world to God through their distinctive life that reflects the holiness of God. The centripetal nature of Israel's mission continues, with the disciples of Jesus, while the centrifugal aspect of the disciples' mission develops newly as Jesus reveals the inclusive nature of the kingdom of God throughout his life, death, and resurrection. The three images Jesus used in Matthew 5 to define the disciples' missionary identity highlights their distinctiveness, by which the world is drawn to God. The disciples' missionary call as being witnesses of Jesus in the post-resurrection period is both centripetal and centrifugal. Their witnessing involves both their distinctive life shaped by Jesus, and their outward task of witnessing to Jesus. Their life and message are inseparable because Jesus, the one they are called to witness to, is the one who shaped their life.

Overall, Hoekendijk's missional ecclesiology is one-sided, characterized by *being*, which results in mission by attraction, without *doing*, which refers to outward activities of reaching out to the world. However, from a perspective of missional hermeneutics, the church's faithful mission requires both *being* and *doing*.

Conclusion

This article explored Johannes C. Hoekendijk's missional ecclesiology in order to critically assess it from a perspective of missional hermeneutics. His missiological contribution to the church's mission to a secular world is twofold. First, he deserves to be recognized as a pioneer of missional ecclesiology. He proposed church-excentric mission, but his intention was not to marginalize or exclude the church from mission. Rather, concerned about the church's isolation from mission, he sought to bring mission back into the heart of mission. Church-excentric mission was the theological solution he found as a way to bring mission back to the heart of the church. With this intention, Hoekendijk theologically proposed the missionary nature of the church, seeking to integrate the

church and mission in such a way that the church is centered on mission. His idea of the missionary nature of the church was presented in published writings even before and in preparation for the Willingen IMC Conference (1952), which theologically anchored the integration of church and mission, based on the concept of *missio Dei*.

Second, Hoekendijk deserves to be recognized as a genuine promoter or precursor of mission in a secular world. As a way to help the church overcome reductionism in understanding its mission as merely a planting or a strengthening of the church in an unevangelized region, Hoekendijk re-defined the nature of the church's mission in light of the concept of messianic, secular shalom, which is rooted in the secular view of *missio Dei*. In this way, he seriously viewed a secular world as both the context and object of the church's mission. He strongly and radically urged the church to engage with the secular world to the extent that the church is fully identified with the secular world.

However, for Hoekendijk, because the root problem of the church's isolation from mission was a tendency towards church-ism in understanding mission, he was radically critical of church-centric mission, which he viewed as the product of church-ism in mission thought. Hoekendijk's missional ecclesiology for the secular world became one-sided, failing to balance two dimensions—*being* (centripetal) and *doing* (centrifugal)—of the church's mission.

Unlikely Hoekendijk's one-sided view of the church's mission, missional hermeneutics suggests that the church's mission essentially involves both *being* and *doing* if the church is to faithfully fulfill its missionary call in a secular world. On the one hand, the *being*-ness of the church is an essential part of its mission in the secular world. The church is called to be a *radical* people who display what the kingdom of God should look like in the secular world by embodying the countercultural nature of the kingdom of God in its inward life. On the other hand, the *doing*-ness of the church's mission is absolutely necessary for its mission in the secular world. The church is called to be an *inclusive* people who demonstrate the holistic nature of the kingdom of God through outwardly engagement with the world in words and deeds. Both *being*-without-*doing* and *doing*-without-*being* makes unfaithful the church's mission in a secular world.

Endnotes

1. Bert Hoedemaker wrote one short article about Hoekendijk's missiology. See Bert Hoedemaker, "The Legacy of J. C. Hoekendijk," *International Bulletin of Missionary Research* 19, no. 4 (1995): 166-

170. Two dissertations have been written about Hoekendijk's theology each by G. Coffele, an Italian Roman Catholic and P. van Gorp, a Dutch right-wing Protestant. For the full citation information about these two dissertations, see *Ibid.*, 170n4.

2. Johannes C. Hoekendijk, "The Call to Evangelism," *International Review of Mission* 39, no. 154 (1950), 163. Home churches refer to the churches in the West which sent missionaries. Young churches refer to the churches which were planted and grew in the non-Western world.

3. Johannes C. Hoekendijk, "The Church in Missionary Thinking," *International Review of Mission* 41, no. 3 (1952), 326-331.

4. Johannes C. Hoekendijk, "The Evangelisation of Man in Modern Mass Society," *Ecumenical Review* 3, no. 2 (1950), 133-134.

5. Hoekendijk, "The Church in Missionary Thinking," 324. Emphasis added.

6. Johannes Dürr, *Sendende Und Werdende Kirche in Der Missionstheologie Gustav Warneck* (Basel: Basler Missionsbuchhandlung, 1947), 34.

7. Hoekendijk, "The Call to Evangelism," 171.

8. *Ibid.*, 163; Hoekendijk, "The Church in Missionary Thinking," 324.

9. Hoekendijk, "The Call to Evangelism," 166-167.

10. *Ibid.*, 163.

11. Johannes C. Hoekendijk, "Notes on the Meaning of Mission(-ary)," in *Planning for Mission*, ed. T. Wieser, (London, U.K.: Epworth Press, 1966), 39-40.

12. *Ibid.*, 40.

13. Hoekendijk, "The Church in Missionary Thinking," 332. Emphasis added.

14. Hoekendijk, "The Call to Evangelism," 175. Italics in original.

15. Hoekendijk, "The Church in Missionary Thinking," 333.

16. *Ibid.*

17. Hoekendijk, "Mission and Evangelism," 135.

18. Hoekendijk, "The Church in Missionary Thinking," 333. Emphasis added.

19. *Ibid.* The term apostolate is the term Hoekendijk uses to refer to mission.

20. Johannes C. Hoekendijk, *The Church Inside Out*, trans. Isaac C. Rottenberg (Philadelphia, PN: Westminster Press, 1966), 32.

21. *Ibid.*

22. *Ibid.*, 34-38.

23. *Ibid.*, 39-40.

24. *Ibid.*, 40. Italics in original.

25. Hoekendijk, "The Church in Missionary Thinking," 334.

26. Hoekendijk, "The Call to Evangelism," 188.

27. *Ibid.*, 168, 171.

28. Hoekendijk strongly accentuates the secular aspect of shalom to the extent that his messianic interpretation of shalom is profoundly conditioned by his secular interpretation of shalom.

29. Hoekendijk, "Notes on the Meaning of Mission(-ary)," 43. Emphasis added.

30. *Ibid.*

31. *Ibid.*, 42; Hoekendijk, *The Church Inside Out*, 70.

32. Hoekendijk, "Notes on the Meaning of Mission(-ary)," 43.

33. *Ibid.*, 41. In his writings, Hoekendijk does not use the term *missio Dei*, but, his understanding of mission is strongly theocentric.

34. *Ibid.*, 41-42.

35. *Ibid.*, 42. Emphasis added.

36. *Ibid.*, 43.

37. *Ibid.*

38. Hoekendijk, *The Church Inside Out*, 43-44.

39. Hoekendijk, "Notes on the Meaning of Mission(-ary)," 47.

40. Hoekendijk, *The Church Inside Out*, 43. Italics in original.
41. Ibid. Hoekendijk uses the term *oikoumene* to refer to the whole humanity or the world. For Hoekendijk's definition of *oikoumene*, see Hoekendijk, "The Church in Missionary Thinking," 333.
42. Hoekendijk, *The Church Inside Out*, 44.
43. Ibid. Hoekendijk's concern about koinonia is not only about a local church but also the ecumenical movement. He is critical of the ecumenical movement's preoccupation with unity, rather than with mission. See Ibid.
44. Ibid., 46.
45. Ibid.
46. Hoekendijk, "Notes on the Meaning of Mission(-ary)," 44.
47. Hoekendijk, "The Call to Evangelism," 171.
48. Ibid.
49. Ibid., 173.
50. Ibid., 171.
51. Ibid., 175.
52. Ibid., 171.
53. Ibid., 174-175.
54. Ibid., 171-172.
55. Craig Ott, Stephen J. Strauss, and Timothy C. Tennent, *Encountering Theology of Mission: Biblical Foundations, Historical Developments, and Contemporary Issues* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2010), 198.
56. For example, he published three articles in which he presents the missionary nature of the church before the IMC Willingen Conference or in preparation for the conference. The three articles are Hoekendijk, "The Call to Evangelism"; Hoekendijk, "Mission and Evangelism"; Hoekendijk, "The Church in Missionary Thinking."
57. Each of these three one-sided aspects of Hoekendijk's missional ecclesiology will be critically assessed later in this paper.
58. From a perspective of missional hermeneutics, the biblical narrative is viewed as the story of God's mission or the theme of mission is regarded as a coherent theme that runs throughout the Bible. In reading the Bible from that perspective, the people of God are called to participate in God's mission. Thus, missional hermeneutics traces the missionary nature of God's people in the Bible as a whole. For some representative examples of literature of reading the Bible with a missional angle includes, see Donald Senior and Carroll Stuhlmueller, *The Biblical Foundations for Mission* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 1983); Andreas J. Köstenberger and Peter T. O'Brien, *Salvation to the Ends of the Earth* (Leicester, England; Downers Grove, IL: Apollos; InterVarsity Press, 2001); Christopher J. H. Wright, *The Mission of God: Unlocking the Bible's Grand Narrative* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2006); Michael W. Goheen, *A Light to the Nations: The Missional Church and the Biblical Story* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2011).
59. Köstenberger and O'Brien, *Salvation to the Ends of the Earth*, 30; Wright, *The Mission of God*, 222.
60. Jo Bailey Wells, *God's Holy People: A Theme in Biblical Theology* (Sheffield, United Kingdom: Sheffield Academic Press, 2000), 45; Wright, *The Mission of God*, 255-256.
61. W. Ross Blackburn, *The God Who Makes Himself Known: The Missionary Heart of the Book of Exodus* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2012), 89-90.
62. Johannes Blauw, *The Missionary Nature of the Church: A Survey of the Biblical Theology of Mission* (London: Lutterworth Press, 1962), 24. Also see Wright, *The Mission of God*, 330.
63. Terence E. Fretheim, *Exodus* (Louisville: John Knox Press, 1991), 212. Italics in original.
64. Blackburn, *The God Who Makes Himself Known*, 92.
65. James Okoye, *Israel and the Nations: A Mission Theology of the Old Testament* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 2006), 62; Christopher J. H. Wright, *The Mission of God's People: A Biblical Theology of the Church's Mission* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2010), 121.
66. J. E. Hartley, "Holy and Holiness, Clean and Unclean," in *Dictionary of the Old Testament: Pentateuch*, ed. T. Desmond Alexander and David W. Baker, (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2003), 420. Also see Allan Coppedge, *Portraits of God: A Biblical Theology of Holiness* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2001), 16.
67. Hartley, "Holy and Holiness, Clean and Unclean," 420.
68. Norman H. Snaith, *The Distinctive Ideas of the Old Testament* (London: Epworth, 1944), 46; W. T. Purkiser, *Exploring Christian Holiness, Volume 1: The Biblical Foundations* (Kansas City, MO: Beacon Hill Press of Kansas City, 1983), 27; Robin Routledge, *Old Testament Theology: A Thematic Approach* (Westmont, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2013), 105.
69. Coppedge, *Portraits of God: A Biblical Theology of Holiness*, 49.
70. Judy Yates Siker, "Holiness," in *The Oxford Encyclopedia of the Bible and Theology*, Vol. 1, ed. Samuel E. Balentine, (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2015), 447.
71. Wells, *God's Holy People*, 56-57; Blackburn, *The God Who Makes Himself Known*, 95.
72. In this paper, the two terms being and doing are used to refer to two ways of embodying the kingdom of God. By being is meant an inward aspect of a community. By doing is meant a community's engagement with the world. Flemming divides the mission of the church into three parts: being, doing, and telling. However, in this study, telling is viewed as part of doing in order to give more clarity to the understanding of the mission of the people of God. For Dean Flemming's threefold view of the church's mission, see Dean Flemming, *Recovering the Full Mission of God: A Biblical Perspective on Being, Doing and Telling* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2013).
73. Ferdinand Hahn, *Mission in the New Testament* (Naperville, IL: Alec R. Allenson, 1965), 20; David J. Bosch, *Transforming Mission: Paradigm Shifts in Theology of Mission* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 1991), 17.
74. Peter John Gentry and Stephen J. Wellum, *Kingdom Through Covenant: A Biblical-Theological Understanding of the Covenants* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2012), 433-434; Mark J. Boda, "Prophets," in *T&T Clark Companion to the Doctrine of Sin*, ed. Keith L. Johnson and David Lauber, (London and New York: Bloomsbury T&T Clark, 2016), 42-43.
75. Daniel J. Harrington, *The Gospel of Matthew* (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 1991), 83. Emphasis added.
76. David E. Garland, *Reading Matthew: A Literary and Theological Commentary on the First Gospel* (New York, New York: Crossroad, 1993), 60-61; Grant R. Osborne, *Matthew* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2010), 177.
77. George M. Soares-Prabhu, "The Church as Mission," in *The Dharma of Jesus*, ed. Francis X. D'Sa, (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 2003), 259.
78. Osborne, *Matthew*, 177.
79. John Driver, *Images of the Church in Mission* (Scottsdale, PN and Waterloo, ON: Herald Press, 1997), 171-173. Also see Gerhard Lohfink, *Jesus and Community: The Social Dimension of Christian Faith* (Philadelphia, PN: Fortress Press, 1982), 66.
80. Soares-Prabhu, "The Church as Mission," 259.
81. Ibid.
82. Driver, *Images of the Church in Mission*, 173. Emphasis added.
83. Ibid.
84. Senior and Stuhlmueller, *The Biblical Foundations for Mission*, 154.
85. Bosch, *Transforming Mission*, 78.
86. N. T. Wright, *Resurrection of the Son of God* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2003), 649.
87. Darrell L. Guder, *Be My Witnesses: The Church's Mission, Mes-*

sage, and Messengers (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1985), 40.

88. Goheen, *A Light to the Nations*, 197.

89. Guder, *Be My Witnesses*, 41.

90. C. K. Barrett, *Essays on John* (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1982), 16. According to C. K. Barrett, the unique relationship between Jesus and God in the Gospel of John is characterized by two passages: John 10:30, in which Jesus says, "The Father and I are one," and John 14:28, in which Jesus says, "the Father is greater than I." See *Ibid.*, 19-36.

91. Andreas J. Köstenberger, "The Challenge of a Systematized Biblical Theology of Mission: Missiological Insights from the Gospel of John," *Missiology: An International Review* 23, no. 4 (1995), 453.

92. Guder, *Be My Witnesses*, 47. Italics in original.

93. *Ibid.*

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Generation Z

An Increasingly Secularizing Generation: Positive Implications To and For Missions

David Beine



“Designed by rawpixel.com / Freepik”

In my Introduction to Linguistics class, taught at Great Northern University, I start the semester by reading Dr. Seuss’ children’s book titled *Beyond Zebra*¹ to allow students to begin to look for what they cannot see (the etic within the emic). In this paper I want to look beyond the surface, at those who belong to Generation Z¹ (Gen Zers are those born between the years of 1995 and 2010). I want to examine the variety of characteristics attributed to this upcoming cohort and discuss the implications (both negative and positive) as Gen Zers become givers and receivers of mission. These characteristics include a new resourcefulness (including a strong sense of independence and entrepreneurial spirit), even more technology-native abilities than Millennials, a growing honor/shame-influenced perspective, and a growing orality preference.

Many of these characteristics, if understood and fully engaged, could be useful for effectively activating Gen Z into worldwide mission service. Likewise, an understanding of the wider generational features suggests that our at-home-missionization of this generation of “nones,” those who claim no affiliation with any religion, may require Christian apologetics that differ radically from

those of previous eras. And those wishing to employ Generation Z in their mission, or reach Generation Z with their message, would do well to take notice.²

Before I get to the heart of the matter, I should first offer five very important caveats. First, when it comes to defining exact dates for each generation, the lines drawn are quite arbitrary and there is much discrepancy in the

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literature about when certain generations begin and end.ⁱⁱ Those interested in the topic would do well to understand the generational concept as more of a fluid continuum of approximation rather than hard fast dates that divide generations. The closer one is to a line the more alike they are likely to be with the preceding or next generation and the more dislike they are likely to be with members of their own generation at the other end of the pole.

Second, there are those anomalies in each generation who, although they match in generational age, they actually live and think more like the preceding generation than like their own age mates. I call these people “olders.”³

Third, there is an ethnocentric tendency in all of us (generationally as well) to think favorably upon preceding generations and to look judgmentally upon younger generations. I will concede that our culture may be getting worse; however, peoples’ hearts are the same—we just practice different sins. I once heard it said that whatever the sin of the wider culture is becomes the sin of the church. I think the same is true about generational sin as well. The sins of the current generation have implications, but so do the sins of our generation.⁴ People are the same; there are negative and positive characteristics within each generation. It is always easy to see the sin in others and hard to see the sin in oneself. I will focus both on the positive and negative aspects of Generation Z as it relates to world evangelization (both to and from Gen Z), but I caution the reader to first remove the log from your own eye before judging the generational speck in your offspring’s eye.

Fourth, generational analysis such as this must be understood as descriptive rather than predictive. As we saw with the Millennial generation, in response to the unexpected recession that began in 2008, outlook on life can change radically in a way that could not have been predicted in advance.⁵ Lastly, while the generation concept is universal, this particular rendering I am presenting (e.g. Boosters, Boomers, Busters, Millennials, and Gen Z6) is culturally bound; Wikipedia⁷ demonstrates that while multiple countries exhibit a variety of generational characteristics, these characteristics (and years associated with different generational shifts) are a product of unique political and cultural influences in various places around the world that differ radically from the United States.

With these caveats accepted and understood, I will now move ahead to talk about who Gen Z is and introduce you to various characteristics of their generation, focusing on those elements that might have the most impact upon

World evangelization, both from (as missionaries) and to (as missionized within our own borders) members of this unique generation.

Who is Generation Z?

I have already stated that Generation Z is now roughly understood to describe those born between 1995 and 2010. The astute observer will notice, however, that the early part of this designation covers the latter part of what some have previously classed as Millennials.ⁱⁱⁱ These late Millennials have now been reclassified by some authors^{iv} on the basis that this earlier wide classification of Millennials is just too broad (and has seen too much cultural change) to describe as a single generation.

Tulgan^v has suggested that if we stick to this earlier classification, we would lump a current 13-year-old with a current 35-year-old. Obviously, there is great generational difference between these two individuals in our

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**Gen Z is known as the
'INTERNET-IN-THEIR-POCKET'
generation who live in a
world that is 'always on.'**

”

society today. Thus, the truncation of the Millennial generation dates and the creation of a new generation (Gen Z) was proposed and has been well accepted. With this delineation made, this new group makes up 26% of the American population and they are expected to account for 1/3 of the US population by 2020.^{vi} They have been defined as “recession marked,” “Wi-Fi-enabled,” “multi-racial,” “sexually fluid,” and as “post-Christian.”^{vii}

Mining from these definitions I suggest several characteristics that I feel could both foster and hinder missionaries raised from within this generation and that will both further and hamper (if not understood and adapted for) the receptivity of the Gospel by this next generation. For the purpose of this paper, I will only focus on those characteristics that would seem most germane to the conversation at hand.

Generation Z Characteristics

According to White,^{viii} the combination of the impact of being raised by “under protective” Gen X parents,⁸ in

response to the 2008 recession and in reaction against the fear of terrorism, Gen Z has developed a variety of coping mechanisms and a certain “resourcefulness.”^{ix} The result is a set of generational traits that, if understood and encouraged by mission agencies, could be beneficial. Among these are a strong sense of self-direction,^x an entrepreneurial spirit,^{xi} wanting to make a difference and thinking they can—i.e. hopefulness,^{xii} and the desire to be “founders” of a new world—think Hunger Games and Divergent.^{xiii} Below (Figure 1) is a list of other associated characteristics that could also be useful to those who want to “tap into” the positive potential of Generation Z for the sake of world mission.

According to Beall,^{xiv} there are a number of other (or

Figure 1. Potential positive characteristics of Gen Z (for missionary application)

- *Eager to start working*
- *Mature in control*
- *Intend to change the world*
- *Seek education and knowledge and use soccial media as a research tool*
- *Multi-taskers*
- *Social circles are global*
- *Live stream and co-created*

Adapted from White 2017 (p. 48)

related features) that would be important to know “in order to prepare your business, shift marketing, adjust leadership, and adapt recruiting efforts to stay relevant for the future.” Among the potential positive characteristics are that they are better multi-taskers than the preceding generations, they are “early starters,” and they are more global. While focused mainly on business implications, several of these factors are relevant for mission agencies in their endeavors to recruit, fully-utilize and retain quality candidates. Their ability to multi-task at a higher capacity, for instance, means that “Gen Z can quickly and efficiently shift between work and play,” which could be very valuable in an environment where the importance of relationality is ever growing. Like White, Beall^{xv} focuses on their independence as self-starters, capable of learning by themselves, which means they require less hand-holding. And he identifies them as more globally networked, which is certainly an advantage in our growing partnership with the Majority World in our remaining missionary endeavors. On the negative side (or perhaps

positive side if understood and accommodated for), Beall notes that they expect loyalty from those they do business with; if they don’t feel appreciated, they’re going to move on. Mission agencies would do well to understand this if they desire to retain the best from this generation for the long term.

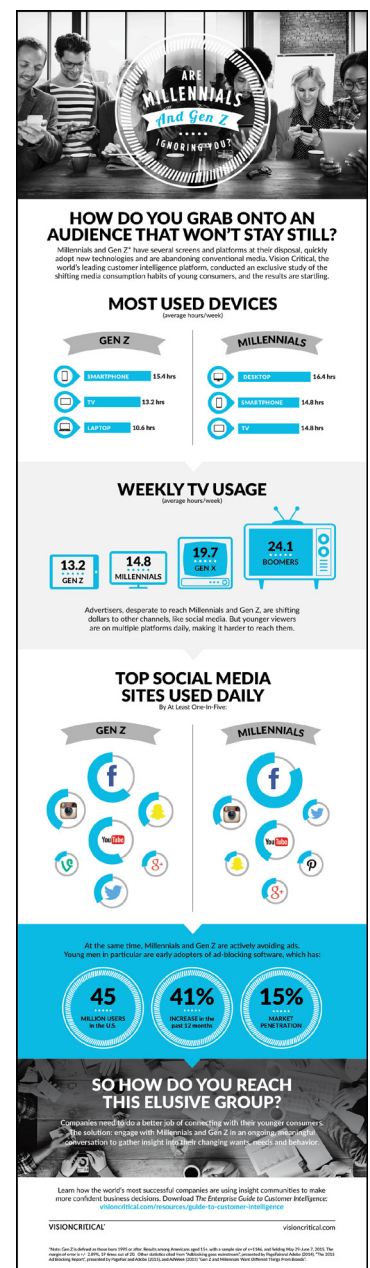
I want to make one last elaboration on one of White’s points noted above (“wanting to make a difference...”). Danielle^{xvi} notes that Gen Z “recognize[s] the need to make most of their educational opportunities... they want to make the most of their opportunities and see a purpose for existing beyond themselves.” Missionary agencies would do well to tap into this desire for purpose and to present opportunities that show this generation how they can capitalize on their personalities and talents in ways that provide great pupose.

In regard to media and missions, while the Millennial generation has been called “digital natives,” Gen Z is known as the “Internet-in-their-pocket” generation^{xvii} who live in a world that is “always on.”^{xviii} The implications of this could be both good and bad for future missionaries and missions. The infographics shown in Figure 2 suggests the best media formats and platforms that missions marketers should use to attract Gen Z.

Increasingly Post-Christian and Postmodern

Perhaps the most noticeable characteristic of Generation Z is that they are growing less religious than the generations preceding them. While it may be that younger

Figure 2.



people have always been less religious than the elderly, it seems that the number of those who would now consider themselves having no religion (“nones”) is growing within each subsequent generation. According to White,^{xix} 23% of current adults consider themselves “nones” and 19% would call themselves former Christians. White^{xx} also notes the growth of functional atheism within the current era, which he calls “the heart of secularism” where “rather than rejecting the idea of God, our culture simply ignores him.” He concludes that, “they’re not thinking about religion and rejecting it; they’re not thinking about it at all.” White claims that 44% of the nation’s adult population now qualifies as post-Christian^{xxi} and he suggests that Gen Z might even be considered beyond post-Christian. Picking up on this theme, Danielle^{xxii} concludes that, because a large number of their parents were post-Christian, they [Gen Z] don’t have even a memory of the gospel as part of their lives.” And since “they have not been given the tools to fill the spiritual needs that remain,” we have much pre-evangelism work to do with this generation. She says, “It is like taking a child who never had a book in their home, but has been successful in life, and now telling them at 15, 16, 18, or 21 that it is important for them to read. In order for them to agree with you, you would need to show them the need.” This certainly has implications for evangelism to this generation, as I will discuss later in this paper. And while this may appear as bad news for American mission agencies trying to recruit new members from Generation Z (i.e. declining numbers of Christians), there may be some good news hidden in this as well. White claims that while “nones” are growing more secular, the true believers among their generation are becoming more devout^{xxiii}—a more serious missionary workforce.⁹

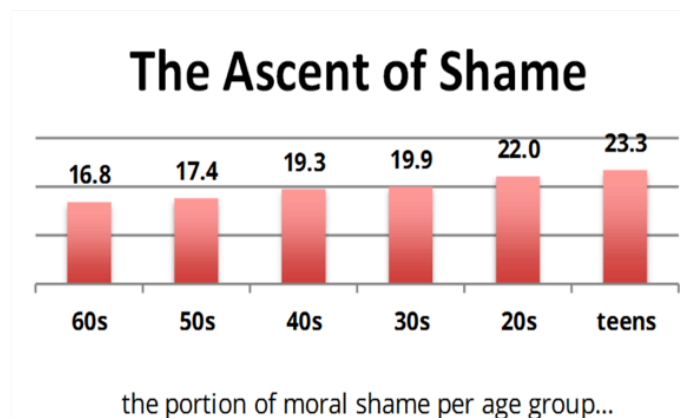
The wider society is not only growing increasingly post-Christian (as the number of “nones” in each generation increases), it is also growing more philosophically postmodern. White refers to this as the time of “post-empirical science.”^{xxiv} While some worry that postmodernism is dangerous to Christianity, other authors^{xxv} see great evangelistic opportunity among post-moderns. Regarding the philosophical paradigm shift that accompanies Generation Z, White^{xxvi} notes that it is “sweet irony that it is science (postmodern) itself that is bringing the consideration of God back into play...making him intellectually sound” and that it is the “blending of the supernatural and science that provides the apologetic opening to Generation Z... making them open to supernatural explanations of the universe.” He reflects on

the possibilities of comments from current intellectuals such as NASA’s Robert Jastrow who has concluded that “for the scientist who has lived by his faith in the power of reason, the story ends like a bad dream. He has scaled the mountains of ignorance; he is about to conquer the highest peak; as he pulls himself over the final rock, he is greeted by a band of theologians who has been sitting there for centuries.”^{xxvii} White concludes that this new era of “post-empirical science” (which he characterizes as being the leading philosophy for Generation Z) “may just lead to God. And may lead others to him as well.”^{xxviii} This last observation leads me into my final section regarding missiological implications.

Missiological Implications

I shift now to missiological implications of missions to Generation Z (some of these same characteristics may have wider missiological implications as well). The first important thing to note is the growing honor/shame cultural perspective among this generation. According to Andy Crouch,^{xxix} editor of *Christianity Today*, “Social media is leaving us more ashamed than ever—and more ready to hear the gospel.” In the same article, Crouch comments, “So instead of evolving into a traditional honor-shame culture, large parts of our culture are starting to look something like a postmodern fame-shame culture. Like honor, fame is a public estimation of worth, a powerful currency of status. But fame is bestowed by a broad audience, with only the loosest of bonds to those they acclaim... Some of the most powerful artifacts of contemporary culture—especially youth culture—are pre-occupied with the dynamics of fame and shame.”^{xxx} This “rise of shame in America” has been confirmed more recently by others and can be seen in figure 3.^{xxxi}

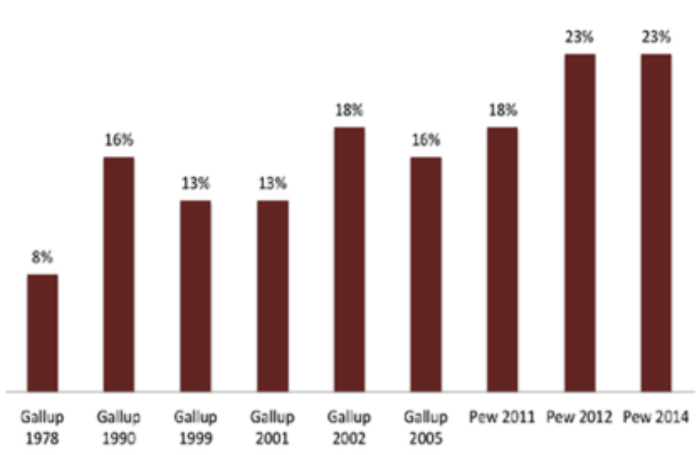
Figure 3. The rise of “shame” in America



Crouch, quoting Kara Powell of the Fuller Youth Institute, concludes that “on Facebook, others’ perceptions of us are both public and relatively permanent... People tag you, people talk about you. And if no one comments, that can be just as much a source of shame.”^{xxxii} While the immense value of understanding and employing honor/shame perspectives in our missions internationally has been well documented, these observations would suggest that similar approaches might fit Generation Z better than propositional approaches that use guilt/innocence as their main apologetic platform.

Likewise, Tom Steffen has suggested that there seems to be a shift toward preferred orality as well.^{xxxiii} In a lecture on orality he demonstrates this graphically (figure 4).

Figure 4. Percentage of Americans who did not read a book in the past year



Knowing your audience and modifying your communication to reach them are two key principles of intercultural communication as I teach it. White^{xxxiv} suggests that Generation Z is “highly influenced by word of mouth,” and that a significant percentage of the generation “receive their information primarily through word of mouth.” Further White suggests Gen Z is not only spiritually illiterate, but very visually oriented and informed,^{xxxv} relationship oriented,^{xxxvi} and always online.^{xxxvii}

The main implications are that the same things we are learning and using to communicate worldwide may be profitable for reaching our own Generation Z in the near future. To do so, we may need to change our apologetics away from Western theological models, such as propositional evangelism, systematic theologies, etc., and pursue honor/shame presentations told orally (oral preference) that are postmodern friendly. White suggests that this new apologetic should include word, deed and

power. He suggests that today “we live in a world that is more open than ever to spiritual things. Not defined religion, mind you, but spirituality. And specifically, the supernatural. A keenly felt emptiness, resulting from a secularized, materialistic world, has led to a hunger for something more.”^{xxxviii} He says there “is one aspect of this turn to the supernatural that works in our favor—namely, that Christianity is very much a faith in the supernatural.”^{xxxix} White suggests that tapping into their interest in the supernatural could strategically help us better reach a post-Christian Generation Z.^{xl} This should come as no surprise to missiologists who have long been teaching about the strategic role of power encounters in the history of world missions. White suggests the same and asks, “Might not the case be the same in cultures that are increasingly post-Christian yet wildly interested in the supernatural? All I know is that in many pockets of the Western world that are the most advanced in their post-Christian status, people are finding that signs and wonders, in their proper biblical place, penetrate deeply secular minds.”^{xli}

These same generational features may have positive ramifications for Gen Z missionary relationships with international mission partners in the future. Generation Z’s growing perspective of honor/shame, shared preference for orality, and expectation of the supernatural could make them more culturally aligned with Majority World missionaries, reducing normal cultural conflict, making them more useful servants to our international partners. Likewise, White suggests that Gen Zers are more multicultural and globally connected,^{xlii} also making them better mission partners.

White suggests that another productive apologetic focus with Generation Z is discussion about the wonder of the universe. He concludes this section of his treatise by stating, “I have found that discussing the awe and wonder of the universe, openly raising the many questions surrounding the universe, and then positing the existence of God, is one of the most valuable apologetic/pre-evangelism¹⁰ approaches that can be pursued. The existence of human life, the complexity of the universe, and even the starting point of a Big Bang resonate deeply with nonbelievers and provide numerous opportunities to present a compelling case for God.”^{xliii} I have found the same within my highly postmodern anthropology circles. White concludes his treatise suggesting that “it is abundantly clear that approaches to evangelism used in the past must be ruthlessly reevaluated in light of the nature of a post-Christian culture and the generation it

has spawned.”^{xliv} Likewise, he suggests that our communication with Generation Z will need to be winsome^{xlv} and will need to include many stages of pre-evangelism (which will affect our church styles). Another author^{xlvi} with a focus on reaching Generation Z has offered a wonderful conclusion to the topic, suggesting that to do so, “we must understand that their social outlook is wider than our generation. We must be willing to capture their attention quickly, answer their questions purposefully and succinctly, and then present the grace of the gospel with language that doesn’t require biblical knowledge. We must be willing to walk alongside the members of Gen Z and embrace their drive for purpose, and their inquisitive questions without quickly judging and condemning their actions. They will find Christ through relationship that has cared enough to meet them where they are.” These ideas should garner our attention.

Conclusion

Generation Zers are now entering the wider world. They represent, if we can understand them and employ their strengths, a major force in the future of world missions. They will also be a major missional challenge for the American church in the near future, unless we adapt evangelism models to be more effective at reaching this post-Christian generation. In this paper, I have attempted to share what I have learned about reaching them as a generation. We have seen that they express a new resourcefulness (including a strong sense of independence and entrepreneurial spirit), even more technology-native abilities than Millennials, and a growing orality preference and growing honor/shame-influenced perspective. Those wishing to employ Generation Z in their mission, or to reach Generation Z with their message, would do well to take notice.

As a final caveat, I must suggest that these are preliminary findings. I must concede that the literature on Generation Z is just emerging and growing quickly. I have culled these conclusions from a number of sources, but the research has not been exhaustive. I have just begun to scratch the surface of my understanding on the issue. Any conclusions drawn here must, therefore be considered as tentative. Likewise, just as the Millennial predictions (and characteristics) changed with major historic events, so is Gen Z (in fact, all generations) susceptible to historical and cultural influences. What will Gen Z be like in ten years, and what will be beyond Gen Z? Only time will tell.

Endnotes

1. Over the past few years, a number of different names have been proposed for this generational cohort such as the Homeland Generation, Post-Millennials, the iGeneration, Founders, Centennials, and Plurals (Beall 2017). Generation Z seems to be the one gaining the most traction.

2. While referring to why understanding generational differences between Gen Z and earlier generations was important, the astute observations of Donovan and Moyers (1997:42) remind us that “of today’s missionaries, the difference in generations are so significant...that I can’t see the younger generations being incorporated with just a few minor adjustments... Fundamental changes are required in the mission industry if we are to attract, harness and release their contribution. Can the majority of agencies today make sufficient adjustments soon enough to capture the potential of the younger generations?” While the era has changed, these words seem just as true today and should apply to our application of understanding Gen Z as well.

3. This may be due to urban/rural cultural divides or particular individual family cultures within the wider culture that match closer to earlier eras.

4. Howe and Strauss (1992) suggest that the characteristics of the generations are cyclical and repeat about every four generations. This might suggest more of a spiraling type of decline rather than a quick and consistent decline in the same direction.

5. I think the same can be said about all generations living within a particular historical period. Major events shape all of the living generations’ perspectives, not just the young.

6. While there is no exact agreement on when particular generational cohorts begin and end, a generally agreed upon sequencing for recent generations is, Boosters (aka. The Silent Generation) (1927-1945), Baby Boomers (1946-1964), Busters (aka Gen X) 1965-1983), Millennials (aka Gen Y) (1984-1994) and Gen Z (1995-2010). The first three of these designations were proposed by Tom Sine (1991) and for an explanation of the justifications for the names given to each cohort see Donovan and Moyers (1997).

7. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Generation#Other_areas.

8. White (2017:51) refers to this as “free-range” parenting.

9. I come from the Pacific Northwest, the least-churched region of the USA. When working for Wycliffe in South Asia, although we were the least-churched region we represented the largest regional contingency from Wycliffe USA. Perhaps this was the same phenomenon at work?

10. White (2017) suggests that in a post-Christian world, several stages of pre-evangelism may be prerequisite to a decision for Christ.

i. Geisel, Theodor. 1955. *Beyond Zebra*. New York: Random House

ii. Bump 2014

iii. Ibid.

iv. Tulgan (2013) and White (2017)

v. Tulgan (2013)

vi. Beall (2016)

vii. White (2017)

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ix. Ibid., 40

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Continued on page 51

Shame and Secularization:

A Concurrent Rise in American Society
with Implications for Evangelism



Bud Walter Simon

God and guilt: These two concepts go hand in hand in the history of the American evangelical church.¹ This is especially true when the church reflects on its past relationship with evangelism, a history where phrases such as “sinners in the hands of an angry God” or “Jesus will pay the penalty for our sin” stir up graphic word pictures and emotional reactions in the collective memory.² For many years, the concepts conjured by these images were also familiar to people in society at large, a familiarity that has faded with each passing year.

The ongoing cultural change in American society impacts the life of the church, and the changes addressed in this paper are in inimical relationship to God and guilt. People observe cultural change in both monumental events, such as Abraham Lincoln and the Emancipation Proclamation, and as a slow, ongoing process that becomes clearer with the passing of years and even decades.³ Academics cast these changes in a variety of paradigms and nuanced perspectives to better explore their impact. This paper addresses societal shifts through the paradigms of honor-shame culture and secularization, shifts which have a profound influence on American

society with implications for evangelism.

This paradigm shift—the concurrent coalescence of shame and secularization in American society—is overlooked in the life of the church. The purpose of this paper is to show that these parallel societal shifts indicate the need to reevaluate evangelism and interaction with pre-believers. This paper will discuss secularization as an ongoing process in American culture resulting in a diminished influence in society of traditional religious forms as these are pushed to the margins in the cultural mind of Americans. This will be followed by a description of the rise of shame as a moral imperative with an explanation

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of the contrast between guilt and shame orientation. The final section will explore examples of honor-shame culture in the biblical narrative and conclude with implications for contemporary evangelism.

Secularization

Secularization as a social force was introduced in the mid-nineteenth century to define the trend of replacing societal values established by the church with values from alternative sources.⁴ Since the mid-twentieth century, the precise definition of the word has varied in a growing range of discussions as the concept has been applied anachronistically to explain societal shifts in a number of contexts.⁵ Not least among efforts to define the notion with precision is the work of Charles Taylor who explores secularization in depth in his landmark work, *A Secular Age*.⁶ Much of mid-twentieth century research in this area focused on the decline of religious beliefs and practices in the general population as the primary secularizing force, locating the concept of religious decline as the fundamental attribute of the trend.⁷ But challenges to this perception in the late twentieth century pointed to alternatives in the theory of secularization, which created a variety of lenses through which to define the theory.⁸ Here we will resist the temptation to wade into this conflicted discussion that attempts to precisely define what secularization is.

Leaving the debate concerning a specific definition among the various opinions, it seems helpful to emphasize where there is consensus concerning secularization, primarily about the outcome of this trend. In this vein, Herbert de Vriese and Gary Gabor state "... Western scholars have generally concurred that, with the onset of modern life, the basic functions and structural conditions of society previously supplied by religion have been increasingly replaced by a variety of other cultural forces."⁹ While de Vriese and Gabor reference religion, the reality is more accurately portrayed as organized or traditional religion. As mentioned above, many initial theories of secularization declared a decline in religion as a causal phenomenon; however, these theories have mostly been abandoned in light of the reality that the world is "furiously religious."¹⁰ The idea that secularization necessitates the decline of religion is no longer seen as true within society.¹¹ In fact, to the contrary, it seems that those who neglect religion in their assessment of the contemporary state of affairs in the world will inevitably reach erroneous conclusions concerning the reasons behind attrition in organized religion.¹²

Harold Netland affirms that secularization hasn't brought about the collapse of religion but rather made it difficult for people to be "religious in traditional ways." Here I would add that we can understand these traditional forms of religion to include organized religion.¹³ Recent data concerning American millennials reveals that spirituality is growing among this sector of society while interest in organized religion continues to decline.¹⁴ In light of this evidence, we can affirm de Vriese and Gabor's statement while nuancing their quote so that religion is understood as a reference to organized religion, which provides a clearer picture of the contemporary American cultural landscape. With this insight, we also see that in the American context organized religion



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predominately refers to Christianity in its various forms.¹⁵ Thus we interpret that the historical forms of organized religion, specifically Christianity, have been exchanged for other societal powers and that this decline of organized Christianity as an influence in public sectors of society is an increasing trend which can be understood as the result of secularization.¹⁶

Taylor locates the birth of secularization near the beginning of the eighteenth century and portrays it as a process that has gained momentum in the Western world through a cascading effect, like a stream that gathers force as it moves along.¹⁷ While the exact historical point at which secularization started in American society and what that beginning precisely entailed is an ongoing discussion, a general consensus regarding Taylor's assessment is that the process has accelerated throughout the twentieth century.¹⁸ For Western society, the image of secularization appears as constantly-dripping water that creates erosion over time rather than a blast from a firehose; the effect is more noticeable in retrospect rather than observed in the moment. The infiltration of secu-

larization into society has increased with the passing of time, creating an effect that has grown with an amplified impact on public policy and decisions, establishing an ongoing direction. In spite of this trend of secularization, nothing indicates that it is irreversible or what the outcomes will be.¹⁹ Experts should take precautions against making too many presumptions concerning secularization in light of the erroneous prediction concerning the inevitable decline of religion.²⁰

Yet even so, the trend of secularization has consequences. If secularization means that organized religion is pushed to the margins of society, then one result is that societal understanding of religion becomes privatized. This is affirmed by recent data that shows rising spirituality among millennials occurring in unison with declining affiliation with organized religion, indicating that millennials understand spirituality as a private practice.²¹ This privatization of religion creates a second consequence

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**The defining characteristic
OF SECULARIZATION**
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in which the church hesitates to interact with society in concrete ways, generating a gap where the church is reticent about addressing life issues and, in some cases, abdicates the discussion completely to other forums. This distancing from life issues becomes a self-perpetuating cycle in which society rejects the involvement of the organized church in discussing social values, resulting in tentativeness on the part of the church to address societal issues in meaningful ways, creating a disconnect between the church and life's intimate issues.²²

Privatization of religious experience creates a third consequence: spirituality becomes subjective so that each person interprets the usefulness of religion based on an individual framework. In other words, society removes universal transcendence as a defining characteristic of truth, relativizing the concept so that each individual personally defines what works in their situation.²³ One outcome of this radical individualization of truth means that people hold dissonant views of morality and con-

sider contradictory courses of action as equally valid. The removal of an absolute standard of authority for morality, a norm that has been traditionally provided by organized Christianity in the Western world, individualizes the ethical framework, causing it to be rooted in social connections and personal preferences. This change provides a hint concerning the societal shift toward honor-shame that will be addressed in the next section.

In summary, the defining characteristic of secularization is that it can be understood as a historical trend. The functions and values of society are no longer determined by organized religion but are increasingly replaced by other forces. The trend of secularization has coextensively caused organized religion to lose its impact in society. This has a corollary effect: moral truth is no longer viewed as transcendent or universal, but truth has become privatized and subjectivized. As secularization has caused a shift in how truth is understood in society, untethering it from traditional Christian definitions, the need continues for society to maintain social structures and morality. Secularization and its consequences are changes that have occurred in tandem with other societal forces, including a shift toward shame as a moral imperative. As a result, shame as a moral compass needs to be examined.

Shame

What is shame? How can we understand shame in a cultural context? Shame isn't an isolated imperative but is coupled with honor as a coetaneous cultural value, in part because societal province of each requires the presence of an audience to function appropriately.²⁴ Brené Brown, a contemporary researcher, has written numerous books and articles on the topic and is well known, in part, through her 2010 TED talk on shame, which has been viewed more than forty-five million times.²⁵ She defines shame as the fear of disconnection because of something we have done or failed to do so that people see themselves as not worthy of love or belonging.²⁶ This contemporary definition of shame implicitly recognizes and reinforces the historical definition that shame requires an audience, external knowledge of comportment, and criticism of that comportment.²⁷ A moral imperative within culture is necessarily shaped by the dominant psychological tendency of the people specific to that culture, showing the interrelationship between the two fields.²⁸

The rise of shame in culture isn't only about one TED talk; shame is now the ascendant emotional reaction among millennials concerning morality. Recent data

demonstrates that Americans most seek to obviate shame above other emotive responses. Research revealed that 38 percent of American millennials seek to avoid feelings of shame, surpassing both guilt and fear.²⁹ This is the first time shame has been demonstrated to be the dominant moral imperative among a demographic sector of an American audience.

Shame has been a tool in enforcing morality in American culture throughout history.³⁰ One historical literary account of shame in relationship to sin is *The Scarlet Letter*. Written in 1850, this novel of historical fiction is set in New England in the 1640s. Many reviewers and critics have observed the motif of public shame for Hester Prynne's sin as a prominent theme in the book as demonstrated through wearing the scarlet A.³¹ American students often encounter the story because they interact with the text as part of their high-school curriculum, causing the term scarlet letter to gain familiarity as an idiom meaning to shame someone for a moral wrong.³² This example demonstrates shame as a form of societal norming so that conduct among a given group achieves clearly-established boundaries. It also allows us to realize that moral imperatives have dominant roles in society rather than exclusive roles so that in the American experience, most people have experienced shame when a moral failure is exposed in front of family or peers in order to bring correction.³³

Honor is connected to shame as a concomitant cultural value because both require an audience in order to function in society.³⁴ Honor normally reveals itself through two aspects when it operates in society: first a person establishes a claim to positive worth, and second a society or a subgroup thereof acknowledges that claim to worth.³⁵ Shame entails the loss of standing within a society or a specific social group when societal norms are violated. This means that the expected position of the person with their claim to status in society is put at risk or renounced by their conduct. Because shame and honor require an audience, the conduct almost always has a relational aspect in which the violation involves an offense against someone else's honor or standing.³⁶

The ascendance of shame in society occurred concurrently with the decline of guilt. The shift from guilt toward shame has been a trend in American society for many years, noted by Ruth Benedict's observation almost seventy-five years ago that "...shame is an increasingly heavy burden in the United States and guilt is less extremely felt than in earlier generations," recognizing the gradual transformation of moral values in culture.³⁷

To help clarify the standing of guilt in the American psyche as the dominant moral guide, we want to focus on two historical reasons for its ascendance. First is the privatization of the individual's life and emotions in American society.³⁸ Second, guilt is related to centuries of how organized Christianity interpreted the atonement and then expressed that interpretation through Christendom in Western culture.³⁹ This historical perspective of guilt highlights the cultural contrast in relationship to shame.

What has impacted the development of guilt as an American cultural orientation? The origins can be found in the Greek and Roman ideas of law, which elevated conduct as the determinant of personal worth.⁴⁰ The Renaissance and Enlightenment philosophers further developed this thinking to define people as rational, autonomous individuals who are each personally accountable.⁴¹ The image of the blindfolded Lady Justice impartially judg-



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ing conduct based on well-defined rules is a cherished American figure that identifies with the guilt-innocence worldview.⁴² Both impartiality and autonomy are vital to developing a society based primarily on the individual and their conduct. This moves the focus of society to a person's actions and projects behavior as the determinant of personal value.⁴³ In daily life, this works itself out through conversations that start out by asking "what a person does for a living."

The state plays a role in the privatization of society by moving punishment for crime out of the public square and into the privacy of prisons.⁴⁴ Legal professionals argue against the concept of public shaming, opting rather for the government to take full responsibility for punishment, removing the public from the role of retribution.⁴⁵ American society has reinforced the concept of guilt-innocence through several channels, including the elevation of the individual and his/her personal rights to the level of a moral issue.⁴⁶

Similarly, the penal substitution theory of atonement

illuminates the prominence of guilt as the traditional moral imperative in Western society, affirming Jesus's substitutionary death on the cross as the payment of the wages of sin.⁴⁷ This became a core element of the Reformation with a focus on how the price of sin had been paid for on the cross. Martin Luther and other Reformers raised the penal substitution model of atonement to primacy in Western thinking along with the message that the world is guilty of its sins.⁴⁸ In many ways, this model served the church well, and generations of people came to the Lord because of a culture that related to the gospel in such terms. However, the societal changes that are taking place in the Western world indicate that the church needs to reevaluate how the gospel is communicated.

The Western church often defines the problem of sin unidimensionally as guilt, not shame. In other words, the only paradigm is that people are guilty of their sin

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and they need that guilt removed. The church then relegates shame to a secondary issue that is resolved by removing guilt. When sin is primarily cast as a justice issue (as opposed to an honor issue), then the following sequence can be understood as the appropriate manner in which to address sin: the individual commits sin; sin has consequences; these consequences need to be paid, and in turn, Jesus paid the price for sin.⁴⁹ This brief summation of the penal substitution model of atonement is the predominant view in the Western church because it aligns with cultural understandings of the functions of justice, consequences, and individual responsibility in view of existing legal codes and justice systems in the Western context.⁵⁰ This view of atonement was also one of the primary responses that formed the foundation of the Reformation as Martin Luther reacted to the church requirements of paying penance and purchasing indulgences.⁵¹ Thus the cultural framework for understanding atonement resulted in a unidimensional paradigm for interpretation through which penal substitution was established as the explanation of the Cross.⁵² Sigmund

Freud's work in the early twentieth century centered on overcoming guilt for wrong action, affirming from a secular perspective the cultural dominance of this moral orientation.⁵³

This creates problems when discussing the issue of shame as a response to sin because if guilt is interpreted as the issue of sin, then shame becomes marginalized. Shame isn't viewed as a moral response but is understood as a peripheral issue: take care of guilt, and shame will be resolved accordingly. An alternative understanding allows that if a person feels shame for an act but there is no violation of justice for which they are guilty, then there is no sin issue. These views of the guilt-innocence worldview point toward the traditional dominance of guilt as a moral directive in society.

How does regarding shame as a legitimate response to sin expand the discussion of moral imperatives? An understanding of shame as a response to moral violations develops the view of atonement as a remedy for differing responses to sin, creating a robust perspective that acknowledges the multifaceted work of the death and resurrection of Christ.⁵⁴ Missiologists have realized for some time that there were problems in using only the penal substitution model to convey the message of Christ in cross-cultural work. Eugene Nida addressed this issue by interpreting Genesis 3 through the lens of cultural orientation, observing that guilt, shame, and fear are all legitimate reactions to sin.⁵⁵ Preceding Nida, Ruth Benedict observed the impact of shame from the perspective of cultural anthropology, recognizing its use as a moral imperative in Japanese society to guide conduct.⁵⁶ She defined shame through the social aspect of exclusion as the consequences for moral violations in which the person is made to feel contrite about their personal and social identity. Benedict observed that society defined the offender as a 'bad' person in these situations, focusing on personal identity, until proper steps were taken to restore their honor in society.⁵⁷ In reality, in a discussion of moral imperatives, people rarely only have one response to sin. To put it in a different light, responses to sin are almost never exclusive; guilt, shame, and fear can all be legitimate responses to offenses. But the way that sin and reactions to sin occur in culture means that one response will be predominant.

To summarize the discussion of shame, we see that both the individualization of American culture and the prominence of the penal substitution theory of atonement in the church during the Christendom era contributed to the dominance of guilt in culture. However,

shame is a legitimate response to sin that has increased as a moral imperative in society, pointing to a shift in the way that people understand values and how those values are established.

Honor and Shame in the Bible

First-century Middle Eastern cultures shared a predominant honor-shame cultural orientation that can be used as a lens for biblical interpretation.⁵⁸ Collectivism was a strong value in society and self-identity was formulated out of cultural characteristics.⁵⁹ Honor-shame was not the exclusive culture of the Bible, but it appears as the prevalent worldview in the biblical narrative.⁶⁰

Two aspects of honor-shame cultures in the Bible are that God seeks to cover shame and restore honor in humanity. In the Garden of Eden, Adam and Eve hid from God, indicating their shame as they recognized their failure in the relationship.⁶¹ These cultural values can be seen at work in the Bible: honor is a claim to worth that is socially affirmed, and shame is the opposite where worth is denied in a social context.⁶² Sin in this context is understood as damaging or breaking relationship. The community framework helps us understand the relational nature of honor-shame and how it requires an audience, affirming the social nature of this model.⁶³

The New Testament has several stories that allow us to reflect on redemptive behavior within honor-shame cultures. This moves beyond understanding the shift in society to understanding how to behave in a way that reflects Christ appropriately in context.⁶⁴ Our interest in these stories focuses on the social interaction, which conveys how honor-shame culture can be used to point to Christ.

Honor-shame culture views morality in the social context, and the Parable of the Prodigal Son in Luke 15:11–32 is a story of reconciliation that demonstrates redemptive behavior in such cultures.⁶⁵ While the story is well-known, the details mentioned here highlight aspects of the honor-shame culture. First, the son abruptly broke relationship, asking for his inheritance from his father.⁶⁶ The manner in which he addresses his father was insulting because implicit in the request for inheritance was a demeaning of the family structure and the desire for his father's death.⁶⁷ In reference to honor-shame culture, the son's request both dishonored his father and shamed himself, causing the son to acquire deviant status.⁶⁸

The son departs from the household and encounters the consequences of his sin. He is bereft of material goods and relationships, leaving him a desperate situa-

tion.⁶⁹ He soon finds that he suffers from hunger as well as living as a pariah in a "far off country," meaning that he lost honor and social standing because of his outsider status.⁷⁰ His repentance is tantamount within culture to a desire for reconciliation with his father. But there is a catch in honor-shame cultures that reveals itself through the cultural understanding of repentance: the son does not possess the power to be reconciled. As the person who has both acted shamefully and dishonored the father, he has placed himself outside of the relational boundaries of the culture.⁷¹ The repentance, which in this context means restoration of relationship, becomes dependent on the response of the father. In other words, the son requires the mercy of the father to return to relationship and needs the father to extend honor to him in order to reestablish his status in the community and the household; restoration of honor depends on the father.⁷² We observe that the father does at least three



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things in the reconciling act of restoring honor to the son. First, he facilitates reconciliation by running to the son. Second, he reconciles publicly. Finally, he celebrates the reconciliation.⁷³ To facilitate, to do so publicly, and to celebrate are key characteristics of reconciliation that have strong implications for our culture. Facilitating includes not holding any record of the wrong against the offender and, in fact, becoming their advocate. In this picture, the reconciliation and restoration of the son were a higher priority than retaining the social honor associated with the father's position.

A second honor-shame example is the narrative of Jesus with the woman at the well (John 4:1–42). The passage is a narrative affirmation of John 3, demonstrating that Christ's entrance into the world is not about condemnation and judgment but is focused on salvation, even to those at the margins of society.⁷⁴ The social interaction in John 4 focuses on how Christ crosses socio-ethnic barriers in order to establish acceptance and inclusion without regard to ethnicity, gender, or

social stigma.⁷⁵ In this narrative, Christ demonstrates that the person with the higher social standing has the responsibility to initiate inclusion.

The Samaritans were at odds with the Jews because of both their religious differences and for political reasons.⁷⁶ The ethnic differences were a key part of the estrangement. (“For Jews have no dealings with Samaritans,” John 4:9) The divisive issues also included the Jewish view of Samaritans as heretics and their understanding of Levitical purity laws because the Samaritans did not abide by the same ritual purity as Jews.⁷⁷ Therefore for a Jew to touch a Samaritan, enter their home, or share a drinking vessel would have made that Jew unclean.⁷⁸ It becomes clear that Jews and Samaritans are distanced for a multiplicity of reasons. But for Christ, these boundaries were not binding, and he freely crossed them.

In addition, Jesus engaged in conversation with a Samaritan woman in a culture where cross-gender conver-



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sation was deemed scandalous if not outright immoral.⁷⁹ The disciples are surprised by his behavior, probably because of the private nature of the conversation even in a public place.⁸⁰ The first-century reader might well have been scandalized to encounter such behavior in the life of Christ, especially in his willingness to fraternize with a Samaritan woman, compounding the perceived cross-gender social infraction.⁸¹ Even in the context of patriarchal honor-shame cultures of the first century, Christ wasn’t constrained by gender boundaries.⁸²

We encounter the issue of morality at work in the exchange because of questions concerning the conduct of the Samaritan woman.⁸³ Her arrival alone at the well outside the expected times for drawing water (morning or evening), in addition to her involvement with at least six partners, demonstrates her questionable morality.⁸⁴ In an honor-shame culture, people of questionable morality were to be avoided in all circumstances. Christ was

willing to cross the ethnic, gender, and moral boundaries in a way that conferred status to, and acceptance of, the Samaritan woman without regard to social expectations. Christ used his position redemptively in his interactions with the woman at the well.

Christ’s encounter with the Samaritan woman at the well portends the wider acceptance of both Samaritans (Acts 8) and Gentiles (Acts 10, 15) in the early church. The differences in heritage, religion, and customs between the Jews and Samaritans created an antagonistic atmosphere between the two groups. Redemptive boundary crossing demonstrated in these passages shows how those in power can use their position to change from condemnation and accusation to salvation and blessing.⁸⁵

Jesus demonstrated a pattern of seeking to confer honor in his treatment of people. He addressed two categories of those perceived to have no honor: those with ascribed shame and those with achieved or assumed shame. Ascribed shame is understood as the conferring of shame by society on certain people or groups of people because of definitive characteristics beyond the control of the individual, usually disease or physical handicap. Achieved or assumed shame means that the person made some choice that brought shame on themselves and others, such as tax collectors or prostitutes.⁸⁶ Ascribed honor is given because of identity, not actions, while acquired honor happens because a person’s actions exalt them in the eyes of the group.⁸⁷ Jesus identified with all those who had been shamed, whether achieved or ascribed, in order to restore honor by relating to them in their brokenness as a demonstration of love.⁸⁸ The ultimate example of this was when Jesus took the shame of the cross upon himself to show those who suffered that they can be fully restored from the deepest depths of shame to the highest place of honor.⁸⁹

Exploring all the nuances of an honor-shame understanding in the New Testament narrative are beyond the scope of this paper, but what is included here sufficiently shows that removing shame and restoring honor are key themes in the redemption story.⁹⁰ These redemption themes communicate in terms that make sense to honor-shame audiences as identifiable and accessible within that cultural context.⁹¹

Implications for Contemporary Evangelism

The collateral rise of shame and secularization in American culture and the manner in which the biblical narrative informs the discussion provides insights into evangelism for the American church. This paper is

intended to be used as a starting point for discussion rather than a conclusive study and in that vein, there are three implications for evangelism in relationship to the shift toward shame-based morality.

First, the biblical dimension of honor-shame culture provides an excellent beginning to understand how to interact redemptively in such cultures. The emphasis on social interaction is replete throughout the New Testament narratives, and actions of acceptance, inclusion, empowerment, and initiating are all evident in the discussion above. Social interaction points toward an overarching theme of relationship in evangelism that implies genuine concern and interaction with the individual. The value of the individual is highlighted as a key relational component of honor-shame cultures.

A second implication for evangelism is the idea of belonging through reconciliation. The brokenness and dysfunction of families in contemporary society is symptomatic of the need for belonging on the part of the individual. Evangelism that focuses on providing belonging as a vital part of the process implements the value of removing shame from the individual.

Finally, models, teaching, and reflection in the area of evangelism need to be reconsidered to align with the cultural shifts taking place. Many evangelism models which have been useful to the church throughout the twentieth century create hesitancy to reevaluate and replace those models. The cultural changes at work in society mean evangelism based on guilt orientation needs to be reexamined. This is the requisite task of the hour in light of the collateral rise of shame and secularization that are impacting society. Shame and secularization are increasing trends in the American context, and the relevance of evangelism rests on appropriate contextualization toward this shifting reality.

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Continued on page 51



The Secularizing and Anti-Secularizing Potential of African Pentecostalism

Jerry M. Ireland

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Dallas Willard once said, “our souls are...soaked with secularity.”¹ By this he meant that we live in a world permeated by secular notions and that Christians often go about unaware of the secular tendencies to which they normally drift. Willard’s comment though was largely directed toward Western culture where secularism has been on the rise and where religion was once expected to disappear entirely as a result. Normally, though, we do not associate secularism with places like Africa. If anything, Africa has proven to be a terrible nuisance for those who had hoped for religion’s demise.

As J. Kwabena Asamoah-Gyadu points out, this enduring persistence of religion can especially be seen in shifting perspectives of scholars such as Harvey Cox. Cox, reflecting on Pentecostalism and who once counted himself among the “death of God” theologians, declared “today it is secularity, not spirituality that may be headed for extinction.”² Today one quarter of all Christians in the world reside in Africa and by 2030 it will likely be home to one out of three.³ By far the fastest growing form of Christianity in Africa is Pentecostalism, even though it

remains a movement of great diversity.⁴ Indeed, it is no exaggeration to speak, as does Asamoah-Gyadu, of “the Pentecostalization of Africa.”⁵

This essay explores the ways in which the growth of Pentecostalism in Africa represents both hope and concern in the area of secularization. My thesis is that 1) the prosperity gospel, or “prosperity Pentecostalism” as I am calling it, represents a turn away from classical Pentecostalism’s historic and theological roots and an embodiment of some of the key elements found in

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secularism, while at the same time 2) what I will refer to as “missional Pentecostalism” describes a stream of African Pentecostalism that has the potential to turn back the secularizing tendencies of prosperity Pentecostalism.

Secularism and African Pentecostalism

Secularization describes “a process in which religion diminishes in importance both in society and in the consciousness of individuals.”⁶ Modern notions of secularism often owe some lineage to, among others, Max Weber’s *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*, wherein Weber argued for a connection between the ‘worldly’ or practical ethics advocated by the Reformers and the emergence of market capitalism. The Protestant ethic which Weber described and linked to capitalism focused on hard work and delayed gratification, and was set intentionally within a material, or in Weber’s terminology, a “disenchanted” framework. Key to understanding the Protestant ethic in Weber’s work was a certain irony in which, as Nogueira-Godsey explains, “the rational discipline required of the Calvinist was intrinsically tied to modernization, scientific discovery, maximizing efficiency, and cultivating a rationalistic approach to all areas of life.”⁷ That is, the very basis of this Protestant ethic would lead to its own demise because it was a system in which belief in God was unnecessary to the achievement of its goals. Weber noted that Calvinism promoted a work ethic that served as evidence of having been part of the elect. In short, “the accumulation of wealth was morally sanctioned in so far as it was combined with a sober, industrious career; wealth was condemned only if employed to support a life of idle luxury or self-indulgence.”⁸ It is not difficult then to see the inevitable comparison that some contemporary scholars are making between the legitimation of wealth acquisition in Calvinism and that of the modern-day prosperity gospel in places like Africa.⁹

From the mid- to late twentieth century, American Sociologist Peter Berger championed Weber’s ideas by proposing (though eventually withdrawing) his own secularization thesis prognosticating the diminishing role of faith.¹⁰ Berger and others specifically attributed their predictions to the growing power of modernity, which they expected to eventually erode the role of faith.¹¹ Central to this thesis was Weber’s notion alluded to earlier of the “disenchantment of the world.” As Berger (2005) explains, “put simply, the idea has been that the relation between modernity and religion is inverse—the more of the former the less of the latter.”¹² Berger’s most

significant contribution and extension of Weber’s theory may be his focus on a relativistic form of pluralism as a product of modernity and thereby secularism. Pluralism, made possible by globalization and technology, forced to the forefront a situation in which religious belief exists in a marketplace of competing ideas, thereby underscoring the subjectivity of religious belief. “In other words, pluralism forces the religious believer to recognize that their sacred reality is subjective.”¹³

It is not uncommon in Africa or elsewhere for people to hold contradictory ideas. For example, a 2016 study done by LifeWay Resources observes of U.S. Christians that “many Americans live with a great deal of theological confusion and even hold contradicting sets of beliefs.”¹⁴ This is certainly the case regarding religion and elements of secularization in Africa, as both seem to coexist to some degrees. It would be short-sighted to assume that

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Africa’s strong and pervasive belief in the supernatural keeps secularism at bay, as the presence of pluralism shows. In Africa, secularism and the attenuating pluralism it produces has proven especially problematic in that it has brought about a resurgent syncretism between Christianity and African Traditional Religions. As T. D. Mashua observes in his study of Traditional Religion and secularism in Africa, “[Pluralism] has promoted a spirit of accommodation and tolerance to the point that it has become almost impossible for one to rebuke the spirit of syncretism without being accused of having a judgmental attitude.”¹⁵ The point here that Mashua correctly makes is that pluralism brings to Africa a subjective perspective on religion and thereby functions as a secularizing agent. And it was a similar secularism and subjectivity that arguably led to the demise of Christianity in Europe.¹⁶

The rapid growth of Pentecostal Christianity, especially in the Global South, has necessitated a reassessment of those predictions offered by secular theorists, especially

concerning the demise of religion.¹⁷ Indeed, some have seen the emergence of Pentecostalism in the early twentieth century as a reaction to modernity, and thereby to secularization, even if the precise nature and classification of that reaction remains the subject of some debate.¹⁸ However, I would add to Mashua's thesis that not only is religious pluralism a secularizing force in Africa, but so too is the prosperity gospel. As Mashua points out, A. Shorter and E. Onyancha have argued that secularism in Africa exists in four forms:¹⁹

1. secularism as a worldview, in which theory and practice deny God's presence in the world
2. secularism as a division between the private spheres of speculative opinion and public truth
3. secularism as religious indifference
4. secularism as consumer materialism

The prosperity gospel functions as the embodiment of the fourth way and may represent one of the means through which secularism will take hold on a continent long known for its religious devotion. For the purpose of this study, then, I will define secularization as the presence of certain ideological forces that effectively move religious belief to the periphery of life. Secularization accomplishes this by making religion increasingly irrelevant. As Mashua explains, "secularization is the process through which everything considered to be secular is detached from the church. When this process takes place, humans rely mainly on their own knowledge and findings, considering God to be redundant."²⁰ This is precisely what gave rise to liberal theology in the first place. Enlightenment-influenced theologians, such as Schleiermacher, sought to "protect God" as it were from the seemingly unstoppable forces of modern thought, embodied especially in higher criticism and evolutionary theory, and they did this by relegating God to the inner realm of subjectivity and values. In doing so, the very idea of "God" became unnecessary. In some ways, secularization describes the process of subtle distraction, in which the church takes its eyes off its eternal destiny and exchanges it for a temporal one.²¹

Secularism and African Pentecostalism

Owing to the vast diversity among movements variously classified as "Pentecostal," Allan Anderson, who has written extensively on both Pentecostalism in general and African Pentecostalism specifically, has argued for defining the term broadly according to a "family resemblance"

that emphasizes the work of the Holy Spirit.²² Speaking more specifically of African Pentecostalism, Anderson describes it as "divergent African churches that emphasize the working of the Spirit in the church, particularly with ecstatic phenomena like prophecy and speaking in tongues, healing and exorcism."²³ Anderson's concern is to be as inclusive as possible regarding more recent churches who bear this family resemblance, whether they be independent, charismatic or neo-charismatic in nature—that is, whether they call themselves Pentecostal or not.²⁴ For Anderson

In the multidisciplinary study of global Pentecostalism, a broad taxonomy must use the family resemblance analogy to include its historical links and its theological and sociological foci. Pentecostalism continues to renew and invigorate itself in countless new forms of expression. Seen from this perspective, it is not a movement that has a distinct beginning in America or anywhere else, or a movement based on a particular theology; it is instead a series of movements that emerged after several years and several different formative ideas and events.²⁵

While I generally agree with Anderson on the need for etic definitions in order to recognize the diverse history, origins, and contours of global Pentecostalism, I also believe that emic and theological definitions that are more exclusivist can be useful as well, especially when it comes to defining a particular species of Pentecostalism. As such, I will argue in this paper that two strands of African Pentecostalism, which I will refer to as "prosperity Pentecostalism" and "missional Pentecostalism" respectively represent secularizing and anti-secularizing forces within the movement. In what follows I will articulate the contours of these two opposing strands of African Pentecostalism.

Missional Pentecostalism

Generally, contemporary scholars divide Pentecostalism into four categories: 1) classical Pentecostals—representing those churches that emerged in the early twentieth century with connections to global revivals like the one at Azusa Street, 2) "churches of the Spirit"—those that do not self-identify as Pentecostal but whose practices closely resemble those of recognized Pentecostal churches (which in Africa includes African Initiated Churches, or AICs), 3) charismatics—usually traditional denominational churches such as Catholics and Anglicans that advocate spiritual gifts and Spirit baptism, and 4) Neo-Pentecostal churches—that include prosperity, word of faith, Third Wave, and many independent char-

ismatic churches.²⁶ This study focuses, first, on those churches with connections to classical Pentecostalism, or to what I prefer to call “missional Pentecostalism,” and second, on a strand within Neo-Pentecostalism that I will refer to as “prosperity Pentecostalism.”

I will begin my discussion by describing “missional Pentecostalism” since it likely represents the lesser well-known between the two. Anderson rightly says that “Pentecostalism is above all else a missionary movement,” (1) and “the fundamental conviction of Pentecostals is that the power they receive through the Spirit is to evangelize all nations and so glorify Jesus Christ.”²⁷ Similarly, Byron Klaus has argued that Pentecostalism must be understood “through a lens of mission.”²⁸ Klaus helpfully points out the various historical influences that combined to give birth to modern Pentecostalism, and how these contributed to the missional nature of the movement. These included a Wesleyan-Holiness emphasis on the Spirit’s power for entire sanctification for service to God, the Keswick emphasis on Holy Spirit empowerment for evangelism, a premillennial focus on the imminent return of Christ that empowered and motivated socially marginalized groups, restorationist expectations of a return to the nature and power of the New Testament church, and a multi-culturalism that anticipated the new heaven and new earth.²⁹ As Klaus notes:

the common thread in this stream of influences is the sovereign gift of power that God is using in a significant new chapter in this stage of redemptive history. A sense of participation in a story of eschatological significance, supported by supernatural Spirit empowerment(s) creates a strong sense of destiny in the Pentecostal identity.³⁰

Citing the work of Margaret Paloma, Klaus also notes that Pentecostalism challenges “the sacred/secular dichotomy that characterized modernity” and instead gives rise to “an affirmation of the immediate availability of God’s power and presence.”³¹ For this very reason, and speaking of North American Pentecostalism, Frank Macchia says that “Pentecostals need to rediscover the eschatological fervour that allowed them in the early years of the movement to swim against the spirit of the age” and thereby challenge many social paradigms that were oppressive to women and minorities.³²

Interestingly, Klaus also shows, citing McClung, that in the developing theology of Pentecostalism there has been a detectable movement away from an early emphasis on evangelism, epitomized in William Seymour’s admonition, “do not go forth from this meeting and talk about tongues, but try to get people saved.”³³ This shift does not

represent an abandonment of Pentecostalism’s missional emphasis, but rather an increased attentiveness to the meaning of the kingdom of God, along with explorations of applying that in a Pentecostal perspective beyond missions. This has for example been a dominant theme in the work of preeminent Pentecostal scholar Gordon Fee, and in more recent works such as that by Frank Macchia, in his *Baptism in the Spirit: A Global Pentecostal Theology*.³⁴ Similarly, arguing for understanding European Pentecostalism as a reaction to the Enlightenment and to secularism, Allan Anderson says that “for Pentecostals, a rationalistic intellectualism has destroyed the soul of Christianity.”³⁵ This leads to his conclusion that “Pentecostal mission is fundamentally and essentially proclaiming and demonstrating a holistic message.”³⁶ Murray Dempster has described this emerging holistic perspective of Pentecostalism as a “coming of age.”³⁷

In ways very similar to Klaus, Allan Anderson says “Pentecostalism is a mission movement par excellence.”³⁸

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He identifies “five cardinal features” of what I am here referring to as missional Pentecostalism.³⁹ First, Anderson notes that eschatology and the expectation of an end-times revival preceding the return of Christ was a driving force in the emergence of the Pentecostal movement. Second, Pentecostalism’s beginnings were multicultural. This was true not only of the Azusa Street revival in Los Angeles, led by African American pastor William Seymour, but also in that global revivals were taking place around that same time in places like India, Korea, and China.⁴⁰ Third, “Pentecostalism placed emphasis on missions as a result of the experience of Spirit baptism.”⁴¹ That is, many who experienced these Pentecostal revivals went out as missionaries, sensing an urgency to the task and an empowerment for world evangelization. Fourth, Anderson notes that many early Pentecostal missionaries were guilty of colonialism and paternalistic tendencies, often (though not always) failing to recognize the contributions of others, especially indigenous people or of

women.⁴² Finally, Pentecostalism's missionary nature was evident in its extraordinary capacity for contextualization. "Because of its emphasis on the empowering ability of the Spirit to equip ordinary believers for missionary service without requiring prior academic qualifications, Pentecostalism was more dependent on national workers than other missions were at the time."⁴³

Further evidence of the missional nature of early Pentecostalism described by Klaus and Anderson can be seen in many of the publications that helped sustain the movement. Publications such as William Seymour's *The Apostolic Faith*, and E. N. Bell's *Word and Witness* frequently published testimonies of visions, prophecies, and Spirit-inspired songs that underscored the urgency of global evangelization in light of Jesus's soon-expected return. Consider this typical example from the inaugural issue of *The Apostolic Faith*:

Many are the prophecies spoken in unknown tongues and many the visions that God is giving concerning his soon coming. The heathen must first receive the gospel. One prophecy given in an unknown tongue was interpreted "The time is short, and I am going to send out a large number in the Spirit of God to preach the full gospel in the power of the Spirit."⁴⁴

Similarly, Anna Hall, from Houston, Texas, who was a worker at the Azusa Street revival, shared a vision that concluded

I heard the beautiful warbling of a bird, and thought it was a mocking bird which one might hear there. But no, it seemed away own in my soul. And as that beautiful bird began to sing, I saw a little infant face right before my eyes. And as the song of the bird began to ripple, it began to sound like water running over pebbles. It increased till it sounded like many waters, and the face enlarged till it was a full grown [sic] face. I said "Surely this is a messenger from the holy country." The voice answered, "Yes and I have to tell you that Jesus is coming. Go forward in My name, preach the Gospel of the Kingdom, for the King's business demands haste. My people have only time to get on the beautiful garments and prepare for the wedding supper in the Heavens."⁴⁵

Early Pentecostal publications were riddled with similar warnings and admonishments. They served to sustain a sense of urgency created by the dynamic experience of God's presence that accompanied the many global revivals that birthed modern Pentecostalism. The specific focus of that urgency was the task of world missions. Thus, when the Assemblies of God organized in 1914, it did so specifically "for the greatest evangelization the world had ever seen."⁴⁶

This of course raises the important question of whether this missionary urgency that defined many of the turn-of-the-century global revivals is also true today of African Pentecostalism. I agree with D. J. Garrard who says that African Pentecostals do indeed "see themselves as engaged in fulfilling Christ's mandate to go into all the world to teach and evangelise [sic]."⁴⁷ This missional emphasis was evident in that the success of many Western missionary efforts in Africa was owed to the efforts of indigenous workers and that the contribution of these workers is often absent in many mission histories.⁴⁸ It is therefore far more accurate to speak not of the success of "Western missions" to Africa, but of mission movements from within Africa that succeeded largely because of cooperation between mission workers and vast numbers of indigenous peoples. This distinction is important because it helps not only overcome the racial and cultural superiority that often found their way into missionary hagiography, but also because it shows that "missional Pentecostalism" maintained its evangelistic fervor even as it took root in African soil. Without it, the vibrant African church that we see today would not exist. Plus, many African churches were immediately engaged in cross-cultural work within their own artificially-created borders right from the beginning, as local workers engaged in evangelism across the many tribes found within one nation.⁴⁹

Of course, contemporary mission among African Pentecostals looks different from that of its Western counterparts. In some ways, this difference represents a return to the roots of missional Pentecostalism, which first sent out missionaries with little resources, financial or otherwise. Many early Pentecostal missionaries sent out from Azusa Street, for example, were materially poor themselves, and went with scant backing and supplies.⁵⁰ Some even packed their belongings in coffins, never expecting to return from the land of their calling.⁵¹ They proceeded though in deep faith in the Spirit's leading and empowerment. In a similar manner, many African missionary efforts today also operate on a shoestring and in extreme hardship, and sometimes struggle against indifference and malaise within their own denomination. What Mkwaila says of the Malawi Assemblies of God (MAG) holds true for much of Africa when it comes to sending missionaries across geographic borders. He rightly observes, that "it is possible, therefore, to concur that far more can and should be done in missionary outreach, while simultaneously acknowledging that great strides have been made towards fostering a critical mass in the church that has been inculcated with a missionary vision."⁵²

African missions has also somewhat reversed the order of the older missions movements that occupied much of the “Great Century” of missions during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. While the defining ethos of that era was “the West to the rest,” Africans are now bringing the gospel and evangelistic fervency back to North American and European nations that are indeed soaked with secularity, to the point, in some cases, of being completely antagonistic toward Christianity. As Asamoah-Gyadu points out, “some of the largest and fastest growing churches in western Europe today are those set up and run by immigrants from sub-Saharan Africa.”⁵³ Granted, many of these focus on diaspora missions and reach mostly those from similar Majority World contexts. Nonetheless, there are pockets of exceptions to this, that range in size from the Sunday Adelaja’s massive Embassy of God Church in Ukraine to much smaller congregations like Église évangélique baptiste de Massy, in Massy, France, made up of mostly white French nationals, yet led by a Togolese pastor. Plus, the impact of diaspora churches among African immigrant communities in Europe has yet to be seen as it relates to secularism in Europe, and it would be unwise to discount their presence as unimportant.

African Pentecostals are also vigorously pursuing the *missio Dei* regarding unreached people groups (UPGs). When the Africa Assemblies of God Alliance (AAGA), a network of over forty Assemblies of God churches from all across sub-Saharan Africa met in Accra, Ghana, in February of 2018, they set in writing the goal of sending missionaries and establishing national indigenous churches in Western Sahara, Mauritania, Algeria, Libya, Tunisia, Morocco, Djibouti, Comoros, Eritrea, Somalia, Sudan and South Sudan—all by the end of 2022. Clearly, missional Pentecostalism is alive and well in sub-Saharan Africa and not only among African churches, but with African Pentecostal churches at the forefront.

Prosperity Pentecostalism

Regarding “prosperity Pentecostalism,” I have chosen this term over terms such as “Neo-Pentecostalism” because the latter is too broad to accurately depict the movement I have in mind.⁵⁴ Specifically, I refer to those forms of African Pentecostalism that promote a health-and-wealth understanding of Pentecostalism, in which proponents preach that faith in Jesus produces health and prosperity, and that sickness and suffering reflect a lack of faith. “Thus, according to this Gospel, getting rich is seen as God’s will and an outward manifestation of his

blessings.”⁵⁵ As Togarasei explains regarding the prosperity gospel, “the belief is that since God owns everything on earth, those who follow Jesus have a claim in God’s riches. Believers therefore have a right to the blessings of health and wealth through positive confession and sowing seeds of prosperity.”⁵⁶ Additionally, some have seen in the prosperity brand of African Pentecostalism the embodiment of many of the same secular notions articulated by Weber and others.⁵⁷ Ogunbible says that the prosperity gospel in Africa, almost always associated with Pentecostalism, represents a paradigm shift from the theology of many AICs which taught an other-world asceticism. Instead, prosperity Pentecostalism teaches that “material prosperity”—or an explicit affirmation of this world—“is God’s blessing and gift to a successful Chris-

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tian.”⁵⁸ Thus, prosperity Pentecostalism represents the very embodiment of secular ideals. In Africa, prosperity Pentecostalism represents a syncretistic combination of western materialism and individualism, with traditional religious beliefs about the spiritual causes and hindrances associated with wealth acquisition. God in this system functions much like the ancestors in the old religion, as a force to be appeased (or manipulated) until one gets the desired results.

Prosperity Pentecostalism has found fertile soil in Africa owing to poverty, African notions of the “Big Man,” and to traditional understandings of the interrelatedness of spiritual and material success.⁵⁹ Prosperity preachers have cast themselves as the new “Big Man,” roles that were first held by local chiefs and later by colonialists and missionaries alike. Their message of spiritual power available for the acquisition of wealth resonates deeply within a culture that has long held that material and spiritual prosperity are inseparable realities, and that malevolent spirits often hinder both. Ogunbible rightly observes, though, that the prosperity gospel contributes

to the very things it claims to solve, especially poverty and the oppression of the poor, not to mention bringing disrepute to the Christian faith.⁶⁰

Some claim that prosperity forms of Pentecostalism benefit places like Africa by reducing poverty, or at least changing people from a pessimistic, poverty mentality to an optimistic, hopeful one. This is the argument put forward by Lovemore Togarasei. While acknowledging the work of other African scholars, such as the study done by Nigerian A. O. Dada which concluded that the prosperity gospel peddles false hopes and delusion, enriching only its leaders, Togarasei believes that the prosperity brand of Pentecostalism has contributed to poverty alleviation. Even though he acknowledges its secular bent, evident in its emphasis on market capitalism and materialism, he says that prosperity teaching helps the poor especially through its advocacy of entrepreneurship.⁶¹ Prosperity teachers often emphasize that having a job is tantamount to being just one paycheck

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away from poverty, and therefore the goal of every believer should be to become an employer, rather than an employee. Plus, Togarasei says those churches that preach a prosperity gospel often bring in lots of money from their congregants and build large auditoriums, which can create jobs for as many as five hundred workers. But contradictions abound in this logic, especially on the very issue of entrepreneurship. For example, one of the lessons learned in the microfinance industry has been that not everyone has the capacity for business, even when given the proper tools.⁶² Not only that, but in some African countries, like Zimbabwe, fifty percent of the population belong to Pentecostal churches.⁶³ It would simply be impossible for all of them to become employers. Beyond these basic logical issues, there are the far more pressing theological ones. Specifically,

prosperity advocates do not seem to have taken seriously biblical injunctions to defend the poor and weak (Isa 1:7, 23) and an argument can readily be made that they take advantage of them by depriving them of the meager income they have. And even though entrepreneurship can be a good opportunity for some of Africa's poor, there are far better theological resources for promoting economic independence than the prosperity gospel.

It is not uncommon among Pentecostal churches in West Africa to take offerings in such a way as to praise those who could give more and thus humiliate those who gave less. One such offering process, witnessed in Lomé Togo at an Assemblies of God church, lasted well over an hour with the preacher starting at an exorbitant amount for anyone—roughly the equivalent of \$1000, and then slowly working his way down to one of the most common pieces of money available in West Africa, the 100 XFO coin, or about 20 cents. The preacher began at the higher amount, asking “Qui peut donner 500,000?” Since the person giving must walk to the front of the congregation, everyone knows exactly who gives what. The whole process is designed to put pressure on the congregation to give more than they might otherwise, because of the public spectacle being made. Congregants are prodded to give more in order to be blessed in greater ways. In this, the worshipful aspect of stewardship is reduced to a purely secular act—an act rooted in this-world values and in materialism.

Whether the approach is effective or not, is hard to say. By far the largest group to come forward were those in the 500 XFO group, roughly \$1. For most, even this amount probably meant a tremendous sacrifice, given that fifty-five percent of the population in Togo live below the poverty line of about \$2 per day. More interesting regarding the present study, was that this practice was witnessed twice in Assemblies of God churches in Lomé, one of those times being during a multi-church Easter service. Given that Assemblies of God churches are generally considered part of “classical Pentecostalism,” or what I have termed “missional Pentecostalism,” this suggests that the boundaries between missional Pentecostalism and prosperity Pentecostalism can sometimes become blurred. It also suggests the need to articulate the theological foundations for missional Pentecostalism not only as an anti-secularizing force, but also as a means of helping churches with an historic emphasis on missions to maintain a trajectory toward the *missio Dei*.

Implications for African Missions

I propose that the following important missiological implications follow from understanding the two strands of African Pentecostalism described above. I offer these as an observer and insider of Pentecostalism, and as one who considers that African Pentecostalism stands somewhat at a crossroads, in that it remains to be seen whether both of these strands will continue to impact the continent, or if one will give way to the other:

1. There is a need for clarity among scholars of all disciplines when referring to African Pentecostalism to therefore distinguish between its prosperity version and its missional version. To equate the prosperity gospel with “most” Pentecostals or with the movement as a whole is grossly inaccurate.⁶⁴ Plus, terms such as classical Pentecostalism and Neo-Pentecostalism are useful in defining historic currents regarding Pentecostal origins, but less useful when describing contemporary African Pentecostalism. The terms “missional Pentecostalism” and “prosperity Pentecostalism” more accurately describe precise contemporary approaches to Pentecostalism that are both alive and well on the continent. This is not to say that they are the only forms or even the most important forms, but two expressions of the movement that are worthy of attention, especially regarding the issue of incipient secularization in Africa.

Furthermore, the value of these terms lies in that they make explicit the theological motivations behind various strands of Pentecostalism and therefore might also serve as a rubric for African Pentecostal churches in determining who and what they wish to be. This also underscores the growing need for African Pentecostal scholars to articulate a biblical and robust theology of mission that draws on Africa’s deep appreciation of the Spirit’s power and presence.

2. The notion of secularism and anti-secularism can also help African Pentecostals attempting to clarify the relationship between evangelism and social concern. There has been a discernable drift of late toward a more holistic approach that sets the two on a level footing. The claim has been that even though early Pentecostals clearly emphasized evangelism, lately Pentecostals have become more theologically astute and see more clearly the need to undertake social action for its own sake.⁶⁵ I would argue, contrarily, that Pentecostal pioneers like William Seymour got it right. They understood that social concern should flow from a transformed life, but that eternal matters always are most pressing.

E. N. Bell, the first leader of the Assemblies of God,

USA, once said, in the context of advocating that missionaries engage in caring for orphans, that “primary emphases, too, should always be laid upon the direct proclamation of the gospel of salvation as God’s ordained and primary way of reaching the lost.”⁶⁶ The tendency in modern Pentecostal theologies to describe mission as involving word and deed without giving priority to evangelism represents a move away from Pentecostalism’s historic roots. Yes, Pentecostals have, since the beginning, been involved in social justice. But they did so with overriding urgency for evangelistic witness. Missional Pentecostalism must maintain that focus if it is to remain the anti-secularizing force it has long been. Emanuel Katongole argues this very point in his book, *The Sacrifice of Africa*.⁶⁷ Here Katongole observes that, for the most part, many Christian approaches to social change are indistinguishable from their secular counterparts. Thus, he calls for a “mythological adjustment” of the imagination. In other words, it requires a re-enchantment of Weber’s disenchanted world.

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IN SCRIPTURE AND IN CHRIST**
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I would contend that such an adjustment requires attention to the spirituality and eternal concerns that have long been the source of missionary and evangelistic urgency within Pentecostalism. Plus, the ability of the church to critique social structures stands on its possession of an inspired (i.e., enchanted) revelation that transcends human prognostications about our own limited potential. The priority of a word from God in Scripture and in Christ is perhaps the most anti-secular tool the church possesses, and early, missional Pentecostals seemed to know this intuitively. Prosperity Pentecostalism cheapens and secularizes God’s special revelation by making material prosperity its most desired outcome. Even beyond this, some have called for Pentecostals engaged in social ministries to abandon their so-called enchanted approach to healing and exorcisms in favor of a more widely accepted secular standards. For example,

Afe Adogome observes that Paul Gifford has deemed “a denial of the spiritual realm to be necessary for progress and development in Africa.”⁶⁸ And yet, recent studies have shown that Pentecostal churches are doing development in Africa better than most others including some of the world’s leading FBOs and NGOs, in part because they offer spiritual solutions in addition to material solutions to the problems faced by Africans.⁶⁹ It would therefore be endlessly tragic for Pentecostals to jettison the very thing which has caused them to succeed where their secular (NGO) and semi-secular (FBO) counterparts continue to struggle. Missional Pentecostals must not confuse “coming of age” with “accommodating the spirit of the age.”

3. Pentecostalism in Africa has largely succeeded because of its emphasis on the supernatural.⁷⁰ Missional Pentecostalism has historically grounded its power in prayer and in contemporary experiences of the Holy Spirit. But experiences of the Holy Spirit were never conceived of as a means to an end, but as both an enacted

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”

eschatological event and as empowerment for global witness. Conversely, not only is the message but also the tools for the propagation of prosperity Pentecostalism are mostly secular, and include especially the use of technology, media, and marketing. As Pentecostalism spreads and becomes arguably the dominant form of Christianity in sub-Saharan Africa, missional Pentecostals should take heed of the dangers of losing its historic dependence on Spiritual power even as it makes use of these things. This is not to say that the use of these modern advantages and resources for spreading the gospel are inherently problematic. Rather, as Kalu says, “there is often a thin line between religious and secular techniques in the use of media communication.”⁷¹ The ability to successfully send missionaries and plant churches in North Africa and in the Horn of Africa will depend heavily on maximizing the anti-secularizing, dynamic power of God that ignited indigenous movements throughout the continent. And

the danger of coming to rely wholly on non-spiritual and secular techniques is ever present in everything Pentecostals do from the way they take offerings to the sending and support of missionaries. Furthermore, compromise in one area often leads to compromise in another.

4. Harvey Cox once wrote that “Christian theology if it is truly biblical theology must always be prophetic.”⁷² Missional Pentecostalism functions in many ways a prophetic branch of African Pentecostalism and as a potent African critique of the excesses of the prosperity stream of Pentecostalism. Prosperity Pentecostalism will only bring Africa ideologically close to secular Europe. Missional Pentecostalism can bring Europe ideologically close to Africa. But to do so it must remain prophetic. And the essence of a prophetic church is to call God’s people back to faithful and holy living. It was this sort of prophetic call that gave birth to modern Pentecostalism in the first place, and it is this prophetic calling that will sustain it for the future. The marks of the prophet have always been hardship and suffering, often symbolic of the suffering that will befall God’s people if they fail to turn to him and repent. The minimalistic lifestyle of the Hebrew and Christian prophets from Moses to Jesus also served to underscore the radical departure between the ways of God and values of world. Missional Pentecostalism’s ability to remain a prophetic voice will largely depend on the degree to which it embraces the same sort of sacrifice and humility that characterized God’s prophets in Scripture.

5. Prosperity Pentecostalism represents an abandonment of the very things that drive missional Pentecostalism because mission has historically advanced at great personal sacrifice. Despite the tendency for the boundaries between these two expressions of Pentecostalism to become blurred, it seems unlikely that two can coexist for very long. When material well-being becomes the high-water mark of the Christian life, then the inevitable consequence is the faltering of missions. Furthermore, an essential feature of missional Pentecostalism is attention to community. Africans have long valued community and viewed with suspicion those who were outsiders or radically individualistic. Yet, prosperity Pentecostalism is individualistic to the core, and thus a betrayal not only of the gospel, but of African indigenous identity. James K. A. Smith, in his exposition of Charles Taylor’s *A Secular Age*, points out that one of the things that helped secularism overtake the deeply rooted religiosity of the Middle Ages was the loss of community and consequent heightened individualism.

"Once individuals become the locus of meaning, the social atomism that results means that disbelief no longer has social consequences. 'We' are not a seamless cloth, a tight-knit social body; instead, 'we' are just a collection of individuals." Smith adds, "this diminishes the ripple effect of individual decisions and beliefs. You're free to be a heretic—which means, eventually, that you're free to be an atheist."⁷³ Missional Pentecostalism in Africa will succeed most when it closely guards its most treasured value, that of community. It is through community that missionaries are called and sent, and in community that missions movements emerge. And no greater threat exists to undermine African indigenous notions of community than prosperity Pentecostalism and its rampant individualism.

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Continued on page 53

White Awake:

An honest look at what it means to be white

Daniel Hill. Downers Grove: IVP Academic. 2017. 208 pp. \$16.00; 978-0-8308-4393-0.

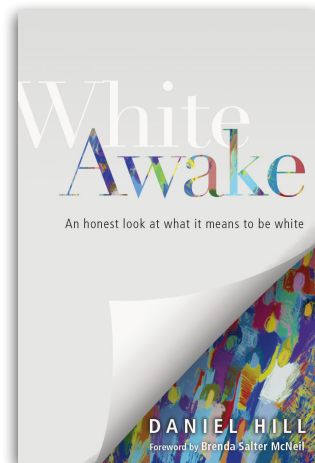
Reviewed by Kenneth Nehrbass, PhD. Kenneth is an associate professor of intercultural studies at the Cook School of Intercultural Studies, Biola University, and is the Southwest Regional Vice President of EMS.

In an era where critics are linking evangelicalism to white racism, Hill's *White Awake* can help predominantly white congregations become more aware of the significance of their avowed and ascribed racial identity. This popular level book draws on Daniel Hill's extensive experience as a pastor of a multiethnic church and frequent speaker on topics of race. Since he speaks to evangelical

he does organize the book around a fourfold action plan based on Nehemiah's example: hear the pain, lament the pain, repent for complicity, and join the efforts. The chapters elaborate on six (non-sequential) stages of awakening to white racial identity: encounter, denial, disorientation, lament (in a chapter called "Shame"), repentance (in a chapter on self-righteousness), and awakening. The discussion of lament, which draws largely on Soong-Chan Rah's *Prophetic Lament*, argues that the goal of the racial awareness journey is not just to blame or shame, but to open white people's eyes to the experiences of people of color, who have to think about issues of race on a regular basis.

Hill's chapter on repentance recounts his own experiences of publicly repenting for white racism. In a pastoral manner, he explains why white people would repent for things they do not necessarily feel responsible for: rather than insist on their own righteousness, they would do well to practice humility and self-examination. Hill bases this advice on Jesus' interaction with the Pharisees, who were convinced of their own righteousness. Jesus approved of those who knew they were sick and in need of healing; and Hill suggests white people ask the Healer to show them where they are sick.

Overall, the book avoids a common error in racial identity studies of making blanket generalizations about various ethnic groupings; though at times Hill conflates racism with white supremacy, neglecting other types of racism around the globe. While the book will be helpful in introducing the topic of white racial identity, its simplicity may be unsatisfying to those who are familiar with racial identity. Also, since it relies on anecdote rather than empirical studies, if it is used in university level intercultural studies courses, it would need to be supplemented with scholarly sources.



The chapters elaborate six STAGES OF AWAKENING to white racial identity.

audiences about whiteness, he has become familiar with a number of objections to the subject, including the ideology of "colorblindness."

Hill, whose D.Min. dissertation from Northern Theological Seminary also focused on racial identity, tackles concepts such as cultural identity, white privilege, and Dubois' "double consciousness" in a non-threatening way. Rather than preaching at the audience, Hill shares how his friends of color introduced him to these concepts. The reflection questions for each chapter encourage readers to think through racial identity. Some examples include: Is your world cut off from the voices of people of color? Why do you feel so threatened when we talk about America's shameful past?

The book is not a "to do" list for racial reconciliation because, Hill argues, the tendency of majority culture churches to "solve the problem" of racial discord actually reinforces paternalism and triumphalism. However,

Revocation of the Edict of Nantes. The Camisards owe their name to the white shirt they wore over their clothing in order to be recognized among themselves" (335).

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16. Jean-Michel Ducomte, *La Laïcité* (Toulouse: Milan Presse, 2001), 3.

17. Michel Vovelle, *La Révolution française: 1789-1799* (Paris: Armand Colin, 2006), 22.

18. De Montclos, 106.

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24. *Le Nouveau Petit Robert*, 1125/2652.

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41. Monod, 35.

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