AN INQUIRY INTO THE RELATIONSHIP OF EVANGELISM

AND SOCIAL ACTION IN THE MISSIOLOGY

OF ADONIRAM JUDSON

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by

Paul Gregory Wilkerson

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APPROVAL SHEET

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For the glory of God among the nations!

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PREFACE

In 2016, God began to move my heart toward a unique calling. Sensing the missionary call, I enrolled in a course at SBTS entitled Introduction to Missiology. God used this course and the materials presented to affirm His calling on my life. For the first time, I encountered the life and work of Adoniram Judson. Judson's dedication, incredible sacrifice, and heart for God's glory among the nations lit a fire in my soul that kindles still today. From the first moments of my calling, God orchestrated a process of training and development that is beyond my comprehension. I am grateful for the sovereignty of God, the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the Holy Spirit's guidance that has led me to where I am today. All glory belongs to God!

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the people God used to help support and sustain me through this time of preparation. First, my wife, Lindsey. She is my best friend, my closest companion, and the love of my life. Her dedication in service to our God, her relentless pursuit of His work, her unquenchable thirst for knowledge, and her remarkable ability to think deeply creates a partnership that I am eternally indebted to. I could not imagine pursuing anything in life without her by my side. I thank God continually for bringing us together. I would not be the person, the minister, or the father I am today without her.

Second, I would like to thank my parents for giving me a godly foundation that grounds me still today. As a young boy, my parents demonstrated unconditional love, which has allowed me to pursue God without desiring the things of this world. I am grateful for their sacrifice, for their love, and for their pursuit of God that has equipped me for the work of the ministry.

Third, I owe much gratitude to all of the professors who have shaped my understanding of missions. I am grateful for the guidance and assistance of Dr. John Klaassen. He has not only served as a professor but also as an indispensable mentor. I count it as a privilege that his remarkable experience in missions and education has shaped this project. Also, I must take the time to thank Dr. George Martin. His influence has altered the trajectory of my life. The vision I have for missions would not be a reality without his guidance in teaching and also his willingness to provide an opportunity to see firsthand the work of missions. I cannot begin to express how grateful I am for the kindness of Dr. Martin and his lovely wife, Donna. Their hospitality during my time in Louisville creates a form of gratitude that I will forever treasure.

To my children, Jayden, Kanyn, and Kye, I love you with all my heart. I thank God that he has allowed me the opportunity to call you my sons. You have graciously endured moments of sacrifice and will likely encounter more, but I hope that my pursuit of God will spur you toward complete surrender to our Lord. Only through submission will you find true joy. May you never wonder of my love or the love of our Lord.

Paul Wilkerson

Mayfield, Kentucky
May 2022

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

In the early 1900s, a significant schism known as the Fundamentalist-Modernist Controversy emerged.[1] The controversy triggered a debate between Christian leaders. The development of the modernist movement led to new perspectives of missions that shifted strategy away from evangelism and toward social engagement.[2] Evangelicals, fearful of the new perspective, intentionally distanced themselves from ecumenical orientations of missions defined by social action.[3] The debate between fundamentalists and modernists created a sharp division between the proponents of social action and evangelism. Beginning in the early 1900s and continuing till the end of the century, ecumenical and evangelical groups hosted over thirty international conferences, seeking to clarify and define theological definitions of missions regarding evangelism and social action. During this era, Christians fervently published materials to help establish a common understanding that would guide their missionary efforts globally. However, a consensus failed to materialize.[4]

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[1] For a more detailed explanation of the controversy, see Louis Gasper, *The Fundamentalist Movement* (The Hague: Mouton, 1963); Arthur P. Johnston, *The Battle for World Evangelism* (Wheaton, IL: Tyndale House, 1978), 55–76; Willem Adolf Visser 't Hooft, *The Background of the Social Gospel in America* (St. Louis, MO: Bethany Press, 1963).

[2] Johnston, *Battle for World Evangelism*, 56.

[3] The definition of evangelism and social action has shifted over the course of history. Due to the scope of this project, simply defining the two terms at this point may misconstrue the intended research goal. Therefore, I plan to provide detailed descriptions of both evangelism and social action as they have been defined throughout the twentieth and twenty-first century. In chapter 4, I will synthesize the descriptions and provide a final definition for each term.

[4] See David J. Hesselgrave, "Will We Correct the Edinburgh Error? Future Mission in Historical Perspective," *Southwestern Journal of Theology* 49, no. 2 (2007): 121–49; Johnston, *Battle for World Evangelism*. Also, the failed consensus can be seen through the divergent theological ideas represented by the multiple conferences of the International Missionary Council, the World Council of Churches, and the Lausanne Movement.

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Today, scholars and mission agencies continue to disagree on the precise position to which Christians should adhere as they participate in missions. Some proponents of holism, such as John Stott, contend that the debate between social action and evangelism should cease to exist, thus rendering the mission of God as solely holistic.[5] Other scholars, such as Carl Henry, Andreas Köstenberger, and Eckhard Schnabel, challenge holistic methodology and seek to prioritize evangelism in mission strategy.[6] Missiologists and theologians, such as David Hesselgrave, David Bosch, and Gustavo Gutiérrez, all disagree on which position is correct. The disagreement between scholars, missiologists, and mission agencies creates confusion. As evangelicals seek to participate in missions, the question often arises, Which position best serves as the foundation for mission practice and thought?

Before the debate surfaced in the early twentieth century, men like William Carey and Adoniram Judson represented the missionary enterprise. As a result, Arthur Johnston argues, "No one questions seriously the evangelical stance of the missionary movement of the nineteenth century. It was known to be biblical in doctrine, godly in conduct, emphasizing personal reconciliation with God, and concerned for human and national welfare."[7] The nineteenth century seems to provide valuable examples of those who serve as models for modern evangelicals to follow. However, the vast majority of research recounts the stories of their lives and focuses little attention on the theological foundations that guided their practice. Given the nature of the ongoing debate between evangelism and social action, it will be helpful to conduct a detailed analysis of the missiology of a prominent missionary before the debate began and compare that

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[5] John R. W. Stott, *Issues Facing Christians Today* (Basingstoke, UK: Marshalls Morgan & Scott, 1984), 3.

[6] David J. Hesselgrave, *Paradigms in Conflict: 15 Key Questions in Christian Missions Today*, ed. Keith Eugene Eitel, 2nd ed. (Grand Rapids: Kregel Academic, 2018), 124. This book was first published in 2005; see David J. Hesselgrave, *Paradigms in Conflict: 10 Key Questions in Christian Missions Today* (Grand Rapids: Kregel, 2005).

[7] Johnston, *Battle for World Evangelism*, 34.

individual's model to current paradigm positions. Adoniram Judson, due to his prominence among missionaries of the nineteenth century and his available resources, serves as a viable subject for this investigation.[8]

Thesis

The purpose of this dissertation is to conduct a historical theological analysis of Adoniram Judson's position on the relationship between social action and evangelism. Using primary and secondary sources, I attempt to understand his theological stance of social action and evangelism as it relates to missionary conferences and key proponents' published literature throughout the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. The present research attempts to answer two primary research questions and reflects on how Judson's view of the relationship between social action and evangelism impacts the current debate. The two primary research questions are:

1. What are the current paradigm continuum positions on the relationship between social action and evangelism?

2. What is Adoniram Judson's location on a modern continuum between social action and evangelism?

In this dissertation, I argue that an evaluation of Judson's missiology, in relation to current paradigm views, demonstrates how one of the most prominent missionaries of the nineteenth century understood the relationship between social action and evangelism in mission practice. Additionally, a detailed analysis of Judson's missiology provides a position for current missions proponents to consider as they attempt to reconcile the relationship between evangelism and social action in mission practice.

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[8] W. O. Carver, "The Significance of Adoniram Judson," *Review & Expositor* 10, no. 4 (1913): 477.

Methodology

I proceed through five significant steps in conducting research for this dissertation. First, I review twentieth and twenty-first-century literature associated with the debate between social action and evangelism. This segment of my research aims to identify and define the multiple positions utilized by various theologians and missiologists to purport their view of the relationship between social action and evangelism in mission practice.

The debate between evangelism and social action persisted throughout much of the twentieth century and, in the process, led to multiple publications that specifically sought to define the unique positions. Also, beginning in the early twentieth century, several missionary conferences emerged that sought to provide theological direction for mission practice.[9] Missionary conferences recorded their speeches and often published materials. The conference documents provide primary sources articulating the historical and theological development of each position in the debate between social action and evangelism in mission practice. Thus, I highlight textual examples from the key proponents' writings and the missionary conference documents to define the numerous positions surrounding the various views of the relationship between social action and evangelism.

The various mission conferences and missiological proponents presented a vast array of attributes associated with their particular position on the relationship between social action and evangelism. Therefore, in the second step of my research, I survey the literature and attempt to identify particular theological markers that reveal aspects of one's understanding of the relationship. The identified markers serve as the primary components for analyzing Adoniram Judson's view of the relationship between social action and evangelism.

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[9] See figure 1.1. in Johnston, *Battle for World Evangelism*, 14. Johnston's diagram displays the historical flow of the major missionary conferences in world history. The diagram will be helpful for visualizing the historical development of the evangelical and ecumenical orientations of mission thinking.

In the third step, I create an expanded paradigm continuum encompassing the various positions in the debate. Currently, multiple continuums exist. In 1981, Peter Wagner developed a continuum used to identify the various movements in a letter formula ranging from A to E.[10]

As the new millennium ensued, one of the world's leading missiologists, David Hesselgrave, developed a continuum that succinctly labels four theological positions in the debate between social action and evangelism: radical liberationism, revisionist holism, restrained holism, and traditional prioritism.[11] The lines between these particular categories may seem vague, but according to Hesselgrave, they present four distinct theological positions on the nature and practice of missions regarding social action and evangelism.

In 2018, Keith Eitel served as the editor in a project to update and expand Hesselgrave's work *Paradigms in Conflict*, originally published in 2005. In his chapter concerning the paradigm between holism and prioritism, Christopher Little modifies Hesselgrave's continuum. Little argues that his chart "builds upon the one by Hesselgrave but equates holism with revisionist holism and folds restrained holism into prioritism since to make the distinction between these views, both of which affirm the priority of proclamation, is somewhat arbitrary."[12] Little acknowledges that distinct views fall in between his three primary positions, but he does not utilize formal terminology to recognize them.

Due to continued modifications and the creation of multiple continuums, it is imperative to combine the research in order to create an expanded continuum

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[10] C. Peter Wagner, *Church Growth and the Whole Gospel: A Biblical Mandate* (San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1981), 101–4. Timothy Keller praised Wagner's creation but sought to add varying positions within each letter designation see Timothy Keller, *Ministries of Mercy: The Call of the Jericho Road*, 3rd ed. (Phillipsburg, NJ: P&R, 2015), 116–26.

[11] Hesselgrave, *Paradigms in Conflict* (2018), 110.

[12] Christopher Little, "Update Reflection: Holism and Prioritism: For Whom Is the Gospel Good News?," in Eitel, *Paradigms in Conflict* (2018), 126.

incorporating the numerous positions. An expanded continuum allows for a more precise synopsis of one's particular view of the relationship between social action and evangelism.

Once I establish the various positions and the expanded continuum, I proceed to my fourth research step, which involves surveying the primary and secondary source documents of Adoniram Judson. Judson published books, kept journals, wrote correspondences, designed tracts, composed hymns, and preached sermons before and during his service as a missionary. The vast majority of Judson's documents are held by the American Baptist Historical Society in Atlanta, Georgia, *Baptist Missionary Magazine* 1–89, and The Southern Baptist Historical Library and Archives in Nashville, Tennessee. In this fourth step, I examined Judson's writings, paying particular attention to his view regarding the relationship between social action and evangelism. In particular, I seek to discover the key features of Judson's theology and methodology in regard to evangelism and social ministry.

In the analysis of Judson's theology and methodology, secondary sources provide crucial evidence for uncovering the full extent of his belief and practice. Therefore, I also will analyze biographies and source documents from Judson's contemporaries. There are four main biographies composed by contemporaries of Judson.[13] The primary and secondary source documents provide an extensive sampling of materials for analysis.

In the fifth step of my research, I synthesize the data from primary and secondary sources to conduct a comparative analysis between Judson and current

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[13] Ann Hasseltine Judson, James D. Knowles, and Cairns Collection of American Women Writers, *Memoir of Mrs. Ann H. Judson: Late Missionary to Burmah; Including a History of the American Baptist Mission in the Burman Empire*, 4th ed. (Boston: Lincoln & Edmands, 1831); Edward Judson, *The Life of Adoniram Judson* (New York: A. D. F. Randolph, 1883); Robert Middleditch, *Burmah's Great Missionary: Records of the Life, Character, and Achievements of Adoniram Judson* (New York: Edward H. Fletcher, 1854); Francis Wayland, *A Memoir of the Life and Labors of the Rev. Adoniram Judson D.D.*, 2 vols. (Boston: Phillips, Sampson, 1853).

paradigm positions of the relationship between social action and evangelism. In this step, the theological markers provide a guide to evaluate Judson's theology and methodology in distinct categories. I use the collected research to graph Judson's position on an expanded continuum between social action and evangelism. I attempt to determine how Judson's understanding of the relationship between evangelism and social action aligns with the common paradigm positions of today. I conclude the research project by summarizing the findings of my research questions, provide implications of the findings, evaluate the research process, and propose further research recommendations that offer ways to strengthen the results.

Summary of the Research

Johnston notes that the first call for a worldwide missionary gathering came from a Bible conference sponsored by D. L. Moody. In 1885, Arthur T. Pierson stood to address the conference and contended,

> What is needed . . . is a world missionary conference. Let witnesses come from all parts of the world to tell what the Lord is doing, so that we might light upon the altars of our hearts new consecrated fires. . . . Let us have . . . an ecumenical council, representative of all evangelical churches, solely to plan this worldwide campaign and proclaim the good tidings to every living soul in the shortest time.[14]

Moody and Pierson's vision became a reality when 200,000 people gathered in Carnegie Hall for the New York 1900 Ecumenical Missionary Conference.

The same vision and fervor of collaboration for the sake of missions led to the Edinburgh Missionary Conference of 1910. Stephen Neill comments, "It was an impressive gathering, the like of which had never before seen in Christian History."[15] As 1910 approached, what was intended to serve as a continuation of the Great Century's

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[14] Delavan Leonard Pierson, *Arthur T. Pierson: A Biography* (London: J. Nisbet, 1912), 192–93, quoted in Johnston, *Battle for World Evangelism*, 29.

[15] Stephen Neill, *A History of Christian Missions*, ed. Owen Chadwick, 2nd ed., Pelican History of the Church 6 (Harmondsworth, UK: Penguin Books, 1964), 332.

evangelistic mandate coincidently provided an opportunity for the new theology of the ecumenical movement to form. The conference ended in 1910, but the discussions continued. The months after the Edinburgh conference proved to be a monumental era for mission theology. The theological shift, combined with a desire for inclusiveness, gave birth to the modern ecumenical movement.[16]

From Edinburgh onward, the missionary conference model grew and resulted in numerous international and regional gatherings. From New York in 1900 to Cape Town in 2010, the various conferences recorded their speeches and published materials before, during, and after each meeting. Each council meeting's primary sources articulate the specific definition of and vision for missions that they supported.

During the twentieth century, many authors published theological arguments on their particular views of the relationship between social action and evangelism in missions. From Edinburgh in 1910 to the founding of the World Council of Churches in 1948, the ecumenical movement consistently elevated the necessity of social action. Johnston argues, "The fifty years following Edinburgh 1910 point toward the steadily diminishing evangelistic spirit among many of the missionary agencies represented at Edinburgh."[17] Therefore, many of the books and articles in the first half of the twentieth century supported the growing liberal trend.

The 1966 conference in Berlin created a viable conservative response and eventually led to a more extensive gathering in Lausanne in 1974. The conservative response in Berlin and Lausanne toward evangelism fueled a fierce debate between competing proponents and led to several published works: *A Theology of Liberation*, *The*

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[16] Neill, *A History of Christian Missions*, 418.

[17] Johnston, *Battle for World Evangelism*, 29.

Great Reversal, *Christian Mission in the Modern World*, *The Battle for World Evangelism*, and the Lausanne Covenant.[18]

The changing theological climate and the subsequent texts produced in the 1970s carried the debate to the century's close. At the dawn of the new millennium, a consensus on the relationship between evangelism and social action failed to materialize. Instead, the new millennium gave rise to fresh voices who wrote extensively on their theological understanding of the relationship between social action and evangelism in missions.[19] From 1910 to today, many proponents have written from various perspectives on their particular understanding of the relationship between evangelism and social action. One can easily access sources from each unique perspective.

In the same manner, one can easily find a plethora of sources recounting the story of Adoniram Judson. Evan D. Burns comments, "The attraction of Judson's life is evident in the dramatic ways in which his biographers highlight the tragedy, romance, and triumph of his story; undoubtedly, the numerous times his biography has been written using the same sources and sketching the same events reveals the allure of his life's story."[20] However, Burns argues that no works synthesize the aspects of Judson's life in comparison with his theology. Therefore, while one can easily discover the details of

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[18] Gustavo Gutiérrez, *A Theology of Liberation: History, Politics, and Salvation*, ed. and trans. Caridad Inda and John Eagleson (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1973); David O. Moberg, *The Great Reversal: Evangelism versus Social Concern*, Evangelical Perspectives (Philadelphia: Lippincott, 1972); John R. W. Stott, *Christian Mission in the Modern World* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1975); Johnston, *Battle for World Evangelism*; Lausanne Movement, "The Lausanne Covenant," accessed February 2, 2021, https://lausanne.org/content/covenant/lausanne-covenant#cov.

[19] See Kevin DeYoung and Greg Gilbert, *What Is the Mission of the Church? Making Sense of Social Justice, Shalom, and the Great Commission* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2011); David J. Hesselgrave, *Planting Churches Cross-Culturally: North America and Beyond*, 2nd ed. (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2000); Bryant L. Myers, *Walking with the Poor: Principles and Practices of Transformational Development* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1999); Christopher J. H. Wright, *The Mission of God's People: A Biblical Theology of the Church's Mission*, Biblical Theology for Life (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2010).

[20] Evan Burns, *A Supreme Desire to Please Him: The Spirituality of Adoniram Judson*, Monographs in Baptist History 4 (Eugene, OR: Pickwick, 2016), 4.

Judson's life, it is more challenging to ascertain an analysis of his theological foundation that gave purpose to his actions.

In 2016, Burns veered from the common practice of chronicling Judson's life and performed an inductive synthesis of his theology. Burns thoroughly analyzed primary and secondary sources on Judson, specifically focusing on the aspects of his piety. Burns's research, delivers a remarkable study on Judson, but primarily focuses on four features of his spirituality. Currently, no research attempts to perform the same type of analysis focusing on how Judson's missiology compares with current paradigms of the relationship between social action and evangelism.

Significance

The debate is raging in the world of evangelicalism. Authors argue from every perspective as to the exact nature of the missionary task.[21] However, there is a gap in the documentation on how prominent missionaries functioned before the current debate began.

Identifying Judson's location on a modern missiological continuum is not merely for the sake of knowledge. Theological foundations and the understanding of the relationship between social action and evangelism guide entire mission agencies and the broader Christian world that they impact. The paths of liberationism, holism, and prioritism lead to vastly different ends. Therefore, identifying the missiology of Judson offers insights into the historical methodology of a trusted practitioner. In addition, the debate between social action and evangelism fractures unity between evangelicals and disrupts the effectiveness of gospel expansion around the world. Revealing Judson's view

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[21] John R. Franke, Jonathan Leeman, Peter J Leithart, and Christopher J. H. Wright, *Four Views on the Church's Mission*, ed. Jason S Sexton, Counterpoints, Bible & Theology (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2017).

of the relationship between social action and evangelism has the potential to unite evangelicals around the pattern of one of the most admired missionaries in history.

Argument

In the current cultural climate, the issue of social action and the church's response will by no means dissipate. Instead, the current social issues will likely raise the awareness and participation of the church thereto. Therefore, the debate will not cease but only grow as the future progresses.

Perceiving this shift toward social action, Johnston argues that the state of world evangelization is at stake. Johnston argues, "The redefinition of the mission of the church will distract from historic evangelical evangelism and, thereby, diminish both world evangelism and the by-products of evangelism in social and the political spheres of life in this world."[22] For this reason, Johnston describes the issue between social action and evangelism as a battle for world evangelization.

Donald McGavran, utilizing similar terminology as Johnston, refers to social action as a lion seeking to devour evangelism. McGavran concludes,

> As long as missiology straddles the fence, as long as missiology voices two opinions as to what its essential central task is, as long as missiology confuses helpful activity with the discipling of ethnos after ethnos, missiology will limp where it should run. Only by facing the lion, recognizing it as the enemy, and separating the science of missiology from it will missiology achieve its true goal. Only so will missiology do the work to which God has so clearly called it.[23]

From another perspective, Christopher Wright warns that a priority on evangelism creates a reductionist approach and "will result not only in hermeneutical distortion, but worse, in practical damage and deficiency in the fruit of our mission labors."[24]

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[22] Johnston, *Battle for World Evangelism*, 19.

[23] Donald A. McGavran, "Missiology Faces the Lion," *Missiology: An International Review* 17, no. 3 (1989): 340.

[24] Christopher J. H. Wright, *The Mission of God: Unlocking the Bible's Grand Narrative* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2006), 286.

Due to the importance of this issue and the disagreement between missiologists and scholars, contemporary evangelicals—more so than ever—need clarity and consistency concerning the relationship between evangelism and social action in mission practice. If a lack of consensus continues to abide, mission efforts will suffer at the hands of disunity. While evangelical scholars and missiologists struggle to find common ground, both sides affirm Judson as a hero and father of the modern missionary movement. Discovering and presenting Judson's understanding of the relationship between social action and evangelism provides a helpful example of how a prominent missiological figure functioned before the debate fractured the unity of the evangelical church's view of missions.

Chapter Summaries

In chapter 1, I introduce the need to analyze Adoniram Judson's missiology as it relates to his view of the relationship of social action and evangelism. The initial chapter establishes the basic plan and introduces how I perform the research in order to properly answer the major research questions.

In chapter 2 of this dissertation, I conduct a literature review to display the historical development of the major positions in the debate between evangelism and social action as purported by missionary conferences between 1900 and 2010. This segment of my research identifies the multiple positions and statements utilized by the various conferences to present their understanding of the relationship between social action and evangelism in mission practice.

Throughout the twentieth and twenty-first centuries, apart from the major missionary conferences, multiple authors delivered theological exposés that presented arguments from various competing positions on their understanding of the relationship between social action and evangelism. Therefore, in chapter 3, I continue a literature

review but shift the focus to survey published literature produced by the competing authors between 1900 and 2020.

In chapter 4, I synthesize the data from missionary conferences and key proponent's published literature to present seven theological markers regarding one's understanding of the relationship between social action and evangelism. Also, in chapter 4, I conduct a survey of multiple continuums utilized by various missiologists to label the unique positions of the relationship between evangelism and social action. I seek to combine the major aspects from the various continuums to create an expanded continuum encompassing all of the necessary positions.

In chapter 5, I analyze the missiology of Adoniram Judson regarding his view of the relationship between social action and evangelism. I examine primary and secondary sources on Judson, paying particular attention to his view as it relates to specific theological markers. In particular, I seek to discover the key features of Judson's theology and participation with both evangelism and social ministry as it compares to the markers identified in the literature review. Next, I synthesize the data to conduct a comparative analysis between Judson and current paradigm positions of the relationship between social action and evangelism. In this chapter, I conclude by graphing Judson's position on the expanded continuum.

In chapter 6, I conclude my research by offering overarching conclusions based on the findings. Also, I provide implications of how the research conclusions impact the current debate. Then, I evaluate the research design by providing the strengths and weaknesses of the research process and propose further research recommendations that offer ways to strengthen the current research findings.

CHAPTER 2

A SURVEY OF THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN
EVANGELISM AND SOCIAL ACTION AS
PURPORTED BY MISSIONARY
CONFERENCES BETWEEN
1900 AND 2010

Missionary Conferences

Today, Christianity exists as the largest religion in the world. The staggering number of Christian adherents and the spread of its teachings to nearly every corner of the earth suggests a history filled with Christian expansion. However, Stephen Neill reports that in the year 1800, "it was still by no means certain that Christianity would be successful in turning itself into a universal religion."[1] According to Ruth Tucker, "Christianity appeared to be little more than a Caucasian religion that was being severely battered by a wave of rationalism that was sweeping across the Western World."[2] However, this narrative changed as the nineteenth century gave rise to men and women who sacrificially abandoned their countries to take the gospel to the ends of the earth.

Timothy Tennent comments that during the nineteenth century, "more new Christians emerged from a wider number of new people groups than at any previous time in the history of the church. Never before has so many Christians moved to so many vast and remote parts of the globe and communicated the gospel across so many cultural

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[1] Stephen Neill, *A History of Christian Missions*, ed. Owen Chadwick, 2nd ed., Pelican History of the Church 6 (Harmondsworth, UK: Penguin Books, 1964), 207.

[2] Ruth Tucker, *From Jerusalem to Irian Jaya: A Biographical History of Christian Mission* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2004), 117.

boundaries."[3] The rapid expansion of Christianity led church historian Kenneth Scott Latourette to famously label the nineteenth century as "The Great Century."[4]

By the end of the nineteenth century, hundreds of mission agencies from multiple continents supported thousands of missionaries. Christians from various places began to sense the need to gather the numerous streams of the missionary enterprise into one concerted effort in order to more effectively spread the good news to the whole creation. Neill reports that as early as 1888, Gustav Warneck attempted to establish a missionary conference that met every ten years.[5]

The vision of a cooperative group or council of representatives for the sake of missions began to take shape in the form of a mission conference held in New York in 1900. Representatives from over one hundred mission agencies met to discuss, plan, and encourage one another in the work of missions. Thomas A. Askew notes, "Estimates placed attendance numbers at 160,000 to 200,000 for the ten-day gathering. Simply stated, it was the largest sustained formal religious event in the history of the Republic to that date and the best attended international missionary conference ever."[6] The New York 1900 Ecumenical Missionary Conference was a true success and solidified the idea of a global conference for the same purpose. From 1900 until the new millennium, the missionary conference model grew as a preferred instrument for establishing the theology and methodology of the missionary enterprise globally.[7]

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[3] Timothy C. Tennent, *Invitation to World Missions: A Trinitarian Missiology for the Twenty-First Century*, Invitation to Theological Studies 3 (Grand Rapids: Kregel, 2010), 256–57.

[4] Kenneth Scott Latourette, *A History of the Expansion of Christianity*, Contemporary Evangelical Perspectives (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1970), 443.

[5] Neill, *A History of Christian Missions*, 402.

[6] Thomas A. Askew, "The New York 1900 Ecumenical Missionary Conference: A Centennial Reflection," *International Bulletin of Missionary Research* 24, no. 4 (2000): 146.

[7] Neill, *A History of Christian Missions*, 402–3. See also Arthur P. Johnston, *The Battle for World Evangelism* (Wheaton, IL: Tyndale House, 1978), 29.

The theological discussions of these conferences opened a dialogue between theologians, missionaries, and pastors concerning the heart of missions. Major proponents continually sought to define the aims and purposes of missionary work. They believed that an agreement on the rudimentary aim of missions would result in a unified body of believers poised to reach the world for Christ.[8] However, providing an agreeable definition of the primary task of missions proved to be a complex undertaking.

As the conferences attempted to define the primary task of missions, a debate about the nature of evangelism and its relation to social action emerged. The mission conferences of the twentieth century provided a platform for theologians and missiologists to purport their ideas. Therefore, the conferences and their resources offer historical descriptions of missions in connection with evangelism and social action.[9]

In this chapter, I display the historical development of the major positions on the relationship between evangelism and social action as purported by mission conferences from 1900 to 2010. I review the primary and secondary sources of the conferences, specifically focusing on the documentation related to social action and evangelism. This segment of my research aims to identify the multiple positions utilized by various conferences to purport their view from 1900 to 2010.

**Edinburgh 1910: The World
Missionary Conference**

The 1910 World Missionary Conference, according to Tennent, "is widely regarded as the most important missionary conference in the twentieth century, and it stands as one of the great landmarks of mission history."[10] Edinburgh exists as the

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[8] See Askew, "The New York 1900 Ecumenical Missionary Conference," 146; Wolfgang Günther, "The History and Significance of World Mission Conferences in the 20th Century," *International Review of Mission* 92, no. 367 (2003): 522.

[9] Günther, "World Mission Conferences in the 20th Century," 535.

[10] Tennent, *Invitation to World Missions*, 278.

starting point of a worldwide effort to coordinate and organize Protestant missions globally.[11]

The conference's monumental impact and far-reaching scope finds its impetus in the years before the actual ten-day event in Scotland. The framers, sensing an awakening of the global church and the potential impact of such a gathering for world Christianity, sought to create and circulate articles in the weeks leading up to the conference.[12] The preceding documents would allow adequate time for thorough study so that those who came, according to Tennent, "were prepared for a serious engagement of important issues."[13] Therefore, in July 1908, the International Committee met at Oxford. W. H. T. Gairdner reports, "The Committee wisely decided not to let the great enquiry which it was planning range aimlessly over the whole field, and so miss, perhaps, attaining definite and useful results; but to select a limited number of subjects of cardinal importance and special immediate urgency, and direct a searching enquiry towards these alone."[14]

After much deliberation, the Committee selected eight subjects for consideration and assigned twenty representatives to systematically formulate a response to the issues at hand.[15] Of the eight commissions prepared by the one hundred and sixty men and women, commissions one, three, and seven reveal essential information about the conference's understanding of the relationship between evangelism and social action.

In the very first commission, the twenty representatives were tasked with the subject *Carrying the Gospel to All the Non-Christian World*. In the introduction of this

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[11] Johnston, *Battle for World Evangelism*, 29.

[12] Günther, "World Mission Conferences in the 20th Century," 524.

[13] Tennent, *Invitation to World Missions*, 282.

[14] W. H. T. Gairdner, *Echoes from Edinburgh, 1910: An Account and Interpretation of the World Missionary Conference*, Laymen's Missionary Library 2 (New York: Layman's Missionary Movement, 1910), 19.

[15] Gairdner, *Echoes from Edinburgh, 1910*, 19.

commission, the framers contended that the first duty of such a conference "is to consider the present world situation from the point of view of making the Gospel known to all men, and to determine what should be done to accomplish this Christ-given purpose."[16] According to the framers, the great command of Christ to carry the gospel to all mankind was largely unfulfilled. Due to the world's circumstances, the framers sensed that the time was ripe for a "campaign of evangelization."[17]

The framers of the first commission focused the majority of their research on providing a statistical description of non-Christian lands. There were undoubtedly time constraints that limited their ability to produce a comprehensive depiction of non-Christian lands. However, they forewarned readers that the primary goal of the first commission was not to produce an exhaustive work perfectly identifying every statistic. Instead, the framers hoped that "enough may have been done to impress the Church with the unprecedented urgency of the situation . . . to indicate the lines along which the Church may wisely enlarge its operations, and the ways in which the efficiency of the work of evangelization may be increased."[18] The framers remarked, "In the confident hope that with the delegates of the Edinburgh Conference, and with those who shall study its investigations, discussions, and conclusions, there may originate plans, efforts, and influences which . . . shall result in an advance on the part of the Church really adequate to make Him known to all men."[19] Therefore, all of the subheadings, the urgings, and the subsequent statistics of non-Christian lands of the first commission culminate to entice Christians to engage in the main task of missions.

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[16] World Missionary Conference, *Report of Commission I: Carrying the Gospel to All the Non-Christian World* (Edinburgh: Oliphant, Anderson & Ferrier, 1910), 1.

[17] World Missionary Conference, *Report of Commission I*, 1.

[18] World Missionary Conference, *Report of Commission I*, 3.

[19] World Missionary Conference, *Report of Commission I*, 4.

A careful reading of the first commission continually reveals that the framers understood the mission task in terms of evangelization. Their vocabulary describes evangelization as verbal proclamation and conversion. The framers comment, "There is almost everywhere a readiness to hear and to consider the Gospel message. . . . Almost the whole population of Korea is now ready to listen to the Gospel."[20] The framers continued, "In no land is there greater liberty for the preaching of the Gospel. . . . Throughout the island of Ceylon the wise missionary can to-day, without serious difficulty, obtain respectful audiences of non-Christian men for the presentation of the Gospel."[21]

The first commission, while encouraging verbal proclamation of the gospel of Jesus Christ, desired that non-Christians convert from their superstitious religions to Christianity. According to the framers, non-Christian people from multiple continents were becoming disenchanted from their traditional religions. The precepts practiced initially by their ancestors were failing to satisfy the deep cravings of their souls. The framers saw an opportunity for Christians to present Christ in order to fill the vacancy left in the aftermath of religious deconstruction. They did not desire that Christianity exist in combination with old religions but that it would completely replace those evil systems.[22]

The words "hear," "listen," "preach," and "present" as well as the idea of conversion provide clues as to the first commission's understanding of what is meant by evangelization and, subsequently, the missionary task. Combining the verbal clues of the first commission with their view of education provides an even clearer picture of their understanding of the relationship between evangelism and social action.

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[20] World Missionary Conference, *Report of Commission I*, 6.

[21] World Missionary Conference, *Report of Commission I*, 7.

[22] World Missionary Conference, *Report of Commission I*, 13.

In the early 1900s, the majority of non-Christian lands were beginning to develop governmental systems of education. However, these forms of education were largely void of any religion. Therefore, the educated class grew increasingly agnostic. As the demand for education grew, countries were finding it challenging to provide qualified educators. The framers saw this as a window of hope to present the essential truth of Jesus Christ. Therefore, they urged, "There should be a great expansion of Christian educational missions."[23] The framers believed that by inserting Christian educators into Chinese society, they could fulfill the government's demands of education while exposing nationals to the gospel of Jesus. They concluded, "Only one thing will meet the situation, and that is a prompt, comprehensive, and thorough campaign to make Christ known to all the students . . . together with a great strengthening of the educational missionary establishment of the Church."[24] The framers did not devise the educational mission plan to strengthen academics around the world. Instead, they created the strategy "to make Christ known to the largest possible number of people and to build up strong and enduring Churches."[25] The framers concluded that it is impossible to doubt "how important a part education has played in the process of evangelisation."[26] Therefore, one may conclude that education existed as a bridge leading to the first commission's primary goal and not necessarily as a goal in and of itself.

The framers of the Edinburgh commission purported that moral and social changes occur unilaterally as communities convert to Christianity. They argued that the current social changes in some regions of the world provided evidence of sizable populations converting to Christianity. The linking of social change with spiritual revival

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[23] World Missionary Conference, *Report of Commission I*, 30.

[24] World Missionary Conference, *Report of Commission I*, 31.

[25] World Missionary Conference, *Report of Commission I*, 289.

[26] World Missionary Conference, *Report of Commission I*, 6.

by no means places the two on equal footing in the first commission. Instead, a campaign of evangelization held the priority while social change existed as a consequence of spiritual transformation.[27]

Lake Mohonk 1921: The International Missionary Council

The actual commissions of the Edinburgh Missionary Conference of 1910 define the missionary task in terms of evangelization through sharing the gospel by verbal proclamation. However, David Hesselgrave has identified a crucial error of the conference that inaugurated a new movement in the understanding of the missionary task. According to Hesselgrave, "Edinburgh organizers decided to confine the Edinburgh agenda to strategy and policy issues."[28] The organizers were concerned that a specific focus on theological and doctrinal issues may dampen the ecumenical spirit of unity and deter participation from a broad spectrum of mission representatives.[29] Hesselgrave concludes, "As for the nature of Christian mission itself, participating churches and missions were free to define mission within their separate communions and without reference to any external standard, including the Great Commission itself."[30] Coincidently, in the exact moment that Christians were beginning to define their mission apart from theology, the First Great War began.

At the onset of World War I, J. H. Oldham was unsure of the exact impact it may inflict upon the missionary enterprise. Oldham and his counterparts agreed that the

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[27] World Missionary Conference, *Report of Commission I*, 37.

[28] David J. Hesselgrave, "Will We Correct the Edinburgh Error? Future Mission in Historical Perspective," *Southwestern Journal of Theology* 49, no. 2 (2007): 121.

[29] In framing this argument, Hesselgrave relies on two primary sources. For more information, see James A. Scherer, *Gospel, Church and Kingdom: Comparative Studies in World Mission Theology* (Minneapolis: Augsburg, 1987); Robert McAfee Brown, *The Ecumenical Revolution: An Interpretation of the Catholic-Protestant Dialogue*, William Belden Noble Lectures 1965 (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1967).

[30] Hesselgrave, "Will We Correct the Edinburgh Error?," 122.

world would suffer a physical consequence of the fighting, but more importantly, he argued, "far more serious than any material loss are the moral interests that are imperilled."[31] Oldham's prediction was all too true as World War I systematically eroded the social order around the world. John Flett comments, "The West had considered itself a Christian civilization, yet the war revealed the impotence of Christianity, even among its greatest supporters."[32] The preaching of the gospel of Christ no longer seemed strong enough to cure the social dilemma brought about through the effects of World War I. Also, the war revealed the failure of a supposed Christian civilization. If Christianity and its principles were so powerful and seemingly observed throughout the world, then how did they allow such a war to take place? Flett concludes that the war and the devastation it caused demonstrated the lack of connection Christians possessed regarding social action. Christians began to rethink their mission and explore methods to meet the tremendous physical needs wrought by the conflict.[33]

The failure of Edinburgh to provide theological proclamations allowed the effects of World War I to dictate the currents of the missionary task. As a result, new social perspectives began to rise to the surface. The burning social issues of the early 1900s began to shift the vision of missions from the individual soul to societal structures as a whole.[34] Representative of this shift, Walter Rauschenbusch proposed, "The kingdom of God is still a collective conception, involving the whole social life of man. It is not a matter of saving human atoms, but of saving the social organism. It is not a

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[31] J. H. Oldham, "The War and Missions," *International Review of Mission* 3, no. 4 (1914): 626.

[32] John Flett, "From Jerusalem to Oxford: Mission as the Foundation and Goal of Ecumenical Social Thought," *International Bulletin of Missionary Research* 27, no. 1 (2003): 17.

[33] John Flett, "From Jerusalem to Oxford," 18.

[34] Kenneth Scott Latourette, "Ecumenical Bearings of the Missionary Movement and the International Missionary Council," in *A History of the Ecumenical Movement*, vol. 1, *1517–1948*, ed. Ruth Rouse and Stephen Charles Neill, 2nd ed. (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1967), 368–69.

matter of getting individuals to heaven, but of transforming the life on earth into the harmony of heaven."[35]

Due to the lack of theological statements at Edinburgh, voices such as Rauschenbusch began to gain traction. Johnston reports that the silence of the Edinburgh conference for the sake of completing the task of worldwide evangelization "served rather to hinder evangelism by what it did *not* say concerning the authority of Scripture, and what it did through the agencies which grew out of it."[36] The International Missionary Council (IMC) exists as one such agency.

After the proceedings of Edinburgh in 1910, a Continuation Committee formed with the intention of carrying on the work established by the historic conference. In 1920, the Continuation Committee met provisionally in hopes of establishing a more permanent organization.[37] The committee's work led to the official formation of the IMC.

The IMC chose to adopt the same nontheological position supported by the framers of the Edinburgh conference.[38] In the first meeting at Lake Mohonk, New York, in 1921, the committee stated, "No decision shall be sought from the council and no statement shall be issued by it on any matter involving an ecclesiastical or doctrinal question on which the members of the council or the bodies constituting the council may differ among themselves."[39] According to Frank Lenwood, the major topics of the first IMC meeting were concerned with Near Eastern missionary strategies, missionary education, and constitutional formation. The first IMC gathering, while establishing a nontheological precedent adopted by future conferences, was largely preliminary as it

[35] Walter Rauschenbusch, *Christianity and Social Crisis* (London: Macmillan, 1907), 65.

[36] Johnston, *Battle for World Evangelism*, 43.

[37] Frank Lenwood, "The International Missionary Council at Lake Mohonk, October 1921," *International Review of Mission* 11, no. 1 (1922), 30.

[38] Johnston, *Battle for World Evangelism*, 51.

[39] International Missionary Council Committee, at Lake Mohonk (Geneva: WCC Archives, Box 16, 1921), quoted in Johnston, *Battle for World Evangelism*, 51.

codified the official organization.[40] The years following the first meeting proved more monumental as the IMC had the time and opportunity to prepare for their next gathering at Jerusalem in 1928.

Jerusalem 1928: The International
Missionary Council's
First Assembly

The nontheological position of the major missionary conferences and councils of the early 1900s, mixed with the rise of the social gospel, created many questions about the exact relationship between evangelism and social action. Walter Rauschenbusch, J. H. Oldham, and Willem Adolf Visser 't Hooft wrote extensively on the necessity of social action and thus shifted the narrative of evangelism from proclamation to action. Verbal proclamation of the gospel and a belief in the power of God to change lives through his Word was no longer enough. The formal expression of this shift became visible in the documents of the IMC meeting at Jerusalem in 1928.[41]

Before the conference convened at Jerusalem, the committee thought it best to circulate papers in order to encourage thoughtful dialogue in the weeks leading up to the conference. However, the tones of the papers caused concern in Europe. William Richey Hogg comments, "Their general approach toward non-Christian religions and what was understood as their undue concern with the 'social gospel' provoked, even in those Europeans who agreed to attend, a highly critical attitude toward the assembly."[42] With tensions and disagreements on the horizon, delegates met on the Mount of Olives in the spring of 1928. The first order of business was to form an official pronouncement agreed upon by its delegates. Over the course of fifteen days, several plenary sessions assembled

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[40] Lenwood, "The International Missionary Council at Lake Mohonk," 35–36.

[41] Johnston, *Battle for World Evangelism*, 55.

[42] William Richey Hogg, *Ecumenical Foundations: A History of the International Missionary Council and Its Nineteenth Century Background* (New York: Harper, 1952), 242.

where presenters delivered a formal report. Immediately following each plenary session, delegates divided into small groups and dedicated careful study to the issues at hand. Once the pronouncements were formed, the entire assembly of delegates met to vote on whether to accept each part of the document.[43]

The Message served as the subject of the first plenary session and the ensuing discussions. The actual *message*, which was once agreed upon by Christians in both the West and the East, found contention. A newer school of thought was represented by some of the delegates at Jerusalem. The old school, according to Oliver Chase Quick, focused on the uniqueness of the Christian gospel. The older school, he argued,

> has constantly preached that by Christ's death, and by that alone, is human sin really and fully forgiven; and its call to the non-Christian has been simply that he should pass from death into life, by accepting through faith Christ's atonement, and by renouncing once for all the whole system of religious belief and practice in which he had hitherto vainly striven to make himself right with God.[44]

The newer school viewed this form of the gospel as too exclusive. The change in perspective was mainly due to the newer school's experience with adherents of other religions.[45]

The newer school of thought represented at Jerusalem believed that Christianity shared many of the same moral and spiritual principles of other religions. As a result, they perceived that Christianity might advance the kingdom of God more rapidly if Christians came alongside the road that people from other religions were already on. Quick observed, "The newer school cannot insist in the old way that one who desires to bear the name of Christian must break completely and finally with the whole system of religious observance in which he has hitherto lived."[46] Instead, the newer school insisted,

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[43] Hogg, *Ecumenical Foundations*, 246.

[44] Oliver Chase Quick, "The Jerusalem Meeting and the Christian Message," *International Review of Mission* 17, no. 3 (1928): 446.

[45] Quick, "The Jerusalem Meeting and the Christian Message," 446.

[46] Quick, "The Jerusalem Meeting and the Christian Message," 446.

"Christianity may best spread itself by permeating other systems rather than by demanding the immediate and overt conversion of individuals."[47] Attempting to walk a fine line, John Mott and the other leaders found it a great challenge to form the official statements to appease both the old and new schools of thought about the Christian message.[48]

Another major issue arising out of Jerusalem in 1928 centered around the idea of the individual and society. According to Hogg, a large portion of the English-speaking countries believed that the gospel only applied to individuals. Therefore, the continentals viewed any form of social emphasis of the gospel toward society as unbiblical. A large portion of non-English-speaking countries began to emphasize a social dimension of the gospel meant for the whole society and not merely for individuals. Hogg comments, "The great majority of non-Continentals entrusted with carrying out the missionary enterprise believed that as Christians, they must take into account the whole life of those to whom they ministered. To do so meant concern for the social environment in which those lives were lived."[49]

At Jerusalem in 1928, the voices and concerns of the non-English-speaking nations grew loud. W. Wilson Cash proposed that the greatest concern among the delegates of the Jerusalem council "was that our evangelism has too often ignored the social needs of the people."[50] The growing concern of the social problem and the number of proponents seeking to codify its demands in writing led the council to propose new visions for the missionary enterprise officially.

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[47] Quick, "The Jerusalem Meeting and the Christian Message," 447.

[48] Quick, "The Jerusalem Meeting and the Christian Message," 447.

[49] Hogg, *Ecumenical Foundations*, 249.

[50] W. Wilson Cash, "The Jerusalem Meeting of the International Missionary Council" (n.p.: International Missionary Council, n.d.), 276, https://biblicalstudies.org.uk/pdf/churchman/042-04_269.pdf.

In the official council documents of 1928, the delegates proposed, "The Gospel of Christ contains a message, not only for the individual soul, but for the world of social organization and economic relations in which individuals live."[51] The church's task, according to the official council document, is "both to carry the message of Christ to the individual soul, and to create a Christian civilization within which all human beings can grow to their full spiritual stature." This new concern led the council to expand the definition of evangelism to include a social dimension encompassing more than the individual.

Not all of the delegates agreed on the new direction proposed by the council. Hogg asserts, "Jerusalem provoked a critical reaction from many quarters. Almost all adverse comments related either to Jerusalem's theology or to its expression of social concern."[52] Roland Allen challenged the social dimension idea by asserting, "How can a social organization, or an economic relation, receive a message? That is not a verbal quibble; it is a question of fundamental importance. As I have already pointed out, there is no gospel for social organizations, but only for men."[53]

Hogg affirms that regardless of which side of the argument one fell, "Jerusalem extended the dimensions of traditional missionary thinking."[54] The gospel was no longer seen in terms of conversion of individuals through the proclamation of Jesus Christ. Instead, after Jerusalem, the gospel was seen in a larger form of redeeming the entire social order through actions.

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[51] International Missionary Council, *The Jerusalem Meeting of the International Missionary Council, March 24–April 8, 1928* (New York: International Missionary Council, 1928), 141–43, quoted in Hogg, *Ecumenical Foundations*, 250.

[52] Hogg, *Ecumenical Foundations*, 251.

[53] Roland Allen, *Jerusalem: A Critical Review of "The World Mission of Christianity"* (London: World Dominion Press, 1928), 31.

[54] Hogg, *Ecumenical Foundations*, 251.

David Bosch, commenting on the particular theology present at the Jerusalem conference, reports,

> Jerusalem unlike Edinburgh, and in spite of the protests of some delegates, explicitly concerned itself with the social dimensions of the gospel, making it clear that this was not just a matter of cheap "social gospel" but an authentic consequence of God's revelation in Christ. It was not a mere supplement but an essential element in the theological understanding of mission. . . . The work done by mission agencies in the area of health, education and agriculture, was not just an "auxiliary" to "real" mission. . . . His spiritual life was inextricably intertwined with his psychological, economic, social, and political relationships.[55]

For the leaders of the Jerusalem conference, salvation was not a privatized experience for individual souls but also entailed redemption to the societies that they represented. The framers sought to promote a theology that refuted any dichotomies between spiritual and physical, thus forcing the message of salvation to include the social structure.

The Jerusalem conference occurred between World War I and World War II amid social upheaval, political chaos, and the global financial crisis. The environment around the world caused the message and the theology of the ecumenical movement to gain popularity. Likewise, the message of proclamation and a gospel focusing on the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus lost acceptance among the ranks of the newly formed IMC.

Madras 1938: The International
Missionary Council's
Second Assembly

The Jerusalem council of 1928 certainly shifted the conception and practice of evangelism to include the whole social environment. However, by 1938, the polarization between proponents of historical evangelism and the new modernist versions of the social gospel created much concern for the hopes of a unified body. According to Johnston,

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[55] David Jacobus Bosch, *Witness to the World: The Christian Mission in Theological Perspective*, New Foundations Theological Library (Atlanta: John Knox Press, 1980), 162–64.

"After a decade of reaction to the Jerusalem 1928 Conference and its 'social gospel,'

Madras 1938 attempted to return to a more moderate position, one which would include

both an evangelical and a modernist synthesis of evangelism."[56]

In 1938, the IMC put forth a sixteen-section study encompassing the findings

and recommendations of their council meeting in Madras, India. In section III ("The

Unfinished Evangelistic Task"), the council attempted to clarify its position on the

definition of evangelism:

> By evangelism, therefore, we understand that the Church Universal, in all its
> branches and through the service of all its members must so present Christ Jesus to
> the world in the power of the Holy Spirit that men shall come to put their trust in
> God through Him, accept Him as their Savior and serve Him as their Lord in the
> fellowship of His Church. This task to-day includes the preaching of the Gospel in
> the lands of both the older and the younger churches.[57]

Previous to their articulation of evangelism, in section II, the council outlined

what they believed was the essential task of the church. The framers supposed that the

Great Commission in Matthew 28:19–20 best served as the foundation for their practice.

They assumed that to fulfill this commission, the church must act as ambassadors of

Christ, proclaiming his kingdom. Although it retained the notion of the kingdom of God

and also included social gospel language, the 1938 declaration aligns more closely with

the sentiments of Edinburgh in 1910. The selection of Matthew 28:19–20 and the phrases

of preaching, proclaiming, and trusting in Christ speak of the conversionist mentality of

the previous century.

The declaration of 1938 certainly possessed language to appease the social

gospel proponents but was very careful to insist that the church has no "valid political or

economic program."[58] The framers attempted to maintain certain expressions of Christian

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[56] Johnston, *Battle for World Evangelism*, 64.

[57] International Missionary Council, *The World Mission of the Church: Findings and Recommendations of the International Missionary Council, Tambaram, Madras, India, December 12th to 29th, 1938* (London: International Missionary Council, 1939), 28.

[58] International Missionary Council, *World Mission of the Church*, 26.

principles in the social order through the outworking of their faith by devoted service to the societies in which they resided.[59] However, in section II, the authors placed the social ministries of the church as subservient to the essential task. The declaration states, "The Church's activities, whether social service, education, the spreading of Christian literature, the healing of body and mind, or any other work undertaken for man, follow from the essential task committed to it. They are signposts pointing to Christ as the Savior of men and of human society."[60]

Two unique phrases that bear repeating and represent a key theological description of the relationship between evangelism and social action are "follow from" and "signposts." The Madras declaration concluded that social action must be present in the ministries of the church. The declaration does not avoid including social action along with evangelism as actions of the church. However, the declaration used specific language to articulate the exact relationship in which they should function. Defining evangelism and proclamation as the essential task meant that other church tasks, while important, are secondary. According to Madras 1938, social action is best defined by following or flowing from the effects of evangelism. In their view, social action is a non-negotiable product of their conversion. To function as Christians in society meant caring for the social dimension in which people lived. In yet another description, social action serves as a signpost to Jesus. By exercising their function as converted Christians, their actions would help signal and guide people to the knowledge of Jesus. Therefore, social action is not an end in itself but rather a byproduct of and a means to the gospel of Jesus Christ.

The unique articulation of the relationship between evangelism and social action at Madras in 1938 indeed attempted to slow the tide of ecumenical progression

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[59] International Missionary Council, *World Mission of the Church*, 26.

[60] International Missionary Council, *World Mission of the Church*, 26–27.

toward liberal theology. However, it was too late. The fallout from the disagreements of Jerusalem in 1928 and the new perceived direction led many evangelicals to leave the ecumenical movement altogether. Also, Hogg argues, "when World War II broke a few months later, it made largely impossible any execution of the Madras recommendations and thus shifted the point at which Madras' significance must be sought."[61] Johnston asserts that without a strong evangelical base of representatives and the significant impacts of World War II, the IMC was left "with little apparent evangelistic enthusiasm."[62]

Amsterdam 1948: The World Council's First Assembly

Although the ecumenical movement persisted largely through the official organization of the IMC in the early 1900s, it was not the only expression and attempt at combining the churches of the world into one unified effort. As the IMC began to form, two other movements also arose called Faith and Order and Life and Work. Each movement had its inaugural conference in the mid to late 1920s. Faith and Order and Life and Work merged in 1948 to create the World Council of Churches (WCC).[63] At first, the IMC and the WCC met independently, but the IMC encouraged their members to participate in the new WCC movement.

In 1947, the Conference on Evangelism met in Geneva and served as a preliminary conference to prepare for the first official meeting of the WCC at Amsterdam in 1948. The Geneva 1947 conference provided a clear description of evangelism that served as the founding belief for the WCC. The Conference on Evangelism in 1947

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[61] Hogg, *Ecumenical Foundations*, 294.

[62] Johnston, *Battle for World Evangelism*, 79.

[63] For a more detailed historical description of the formation of the World Council of Churches, see Willem Adolf Visser 't Hooft, "The Genesis of the World Council of Churches," in House and Neill, *A History of the Ecumenical Movement*, 1:697–724.

maintained the principles of evangelism set forth at Madras in 1938. The conference

maintained that evangelism is an assignment given to every Christian that involves the

verbal proclamation and presentation of the gospel of Jesus Christ.[64] The two words of

proclamation and presentation denote a historical description of evangelism that includes

words and not merely actions or presence. Also, in the declaration, evangelism involves

not only people's release from sin but also a call for them to follow and serve Jesus as

their Lord. The call to serving and gathering sinners into the church's fellowship involves

conversion from one life to another.

The evangelical view of evangelism described at Geneva in 1947 persisted

throughout the official statements of the inaugural conference of the WCC in 1948. One

unique aspect of the WCC's declaration involves a focus on the salvation of the

individual. The WCC's explanation stands in distinction to the Jerusalem statements from

1928 that moved salvation from the individual to the society. According to the WCC, "To

the Church, then, is given the privilege of so making Christ known to men that each is

confronted with the necessity of a personal decision, Yes or No."[65]

According to Johnston, most evangelicals felt comfortable accepting the

WCC's articulation and definition of evangelism and, more broadly, the mission task as

proposed.[66] He argues, "In spite of the theological problems of the IMC, it is significant

to note that in the earlier years of the WCC there was a place for evangelical

evangelism."[67] The official statements of the 1948 conference at Amsterdam seemed to

capture the historical notion of evangelism as defined by proclamation for conversion of

individual souls. In their declaration, the social environment served as the realm in which

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[64] See Johnston, *Battle for World Evangelism*, 94.

[65] Willem Adolf Visser 't Hooft, ed., *The First Assembly of the World Council of Churches Held at Amsterdam August 22nd to September 4th, 1948* (London: SCM Press, 1949), 53, quoted in Johnston, *Battle for World Evangelism*, 97.

[66] Johnston, *Battle for World Evangelism*, 94.

[67] Johnston, *Battle for World Evangelism*, 81.

they would initiate their work of evangelism, not the subject of such work. Also, social programs such as educational institutions were avenues to increase their evangelistic impact on society.[68]

Willingen 1952: The International
Missionary Council's
Fourth Assembly

In 1948, the WCC took the opportunity to clearly and succinctly define their theological understanding of evangelism and social action. With the WCC's view recorded in the official statements, the IMC would have to wait another four years to respond. As the IMC gathered at Willingen, Germany, in 1952, the church's missionary calling took precedence. The report declares, "Amid the world-shaking events of our time, when men's hearts are failing them for fear of the things coming on the earth, what does the Spirit say to the churches about their missionary task?"[69] In the first section of the final report adopted by the enlarged meeting, the delegates provided official statements to answer their question.

The statement attempted a balancing act with the intent of maintaining the diminishing evangelical base by stating, "We meet here at Willingen as a fellowship of those who are committed to the carrying out of Christ's commission to preach the Gospel to every creature."[70] The statement continues to lay an evangelical foundation by presenting Christ as the one Redeemer and Savior for a world alienated from God. However, the theological understanding of how this is accomplished becomes vague. In

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[68] For a more detailed articulation of the Amsterdam declaration, see World Council of Churches, *The First Assembly of the World Council of Churches Held at Amsterdam August 22nd to September 4th, 1948*, ed. Willem Adolf Visser 't Hooft, *Man's Disorder and God's Design*, vol. 5, Amsterdam Assembly Series (London: SCM Press, 1949).

[69] International Missionary Council, *Missions under the Cross: Addresses Delivered at the Enlarged Meeting of the Committee of the International Missionary Council at Willingen, in Germany, 1952; with Statements Issued by the Meeting*, ed. Norman Goodall (London: Edinburgh House Press, 1953), 188.

[70] International Missionary Council, *Missions under the Cross*, 188.

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other conferences, like 1910 and 1938, the delegates presented evangelism defined by proclamation and conversion as the primary task of the church to achieve its intended purpose. At Willingen, while maintaining the notion of preaching the gospel to the whole creation, the delegates defined the missionary task uniquely.

In part III of the first section, their statement attempted to offer a description of the total missionary task: "God sends forth the Church to carry out His work to the ends of the earth, to all nations, and to the end of time." The problematic part of Willingen's description of the missionary task is the ambiguous phrase "His work." Instead of describing what the work entails, the statement focuses on the sending forth aspect of the declaration. Therefore, the Great Commission text of Matthew 28:19–20 is no longer the text that outlines the task. Instead, the delegates chose to cite John 20:21: "As the Father has sent me, even so I am sending you."[71] The commission text in Matthew provides a notion of what to do in one's going, whereas the commission text in John merely speaks of the nature in which one goes.

The replacement of commission texts may seem arbitrary, but the application of such an action turned the tide of theological articulation of evangelism and social action. As a result, the notion of evangelism and conversion was no longer necessary to identify the task of the church. The delegates instead defined the missionary task by stating, "The Church is sent to every inhabited area of the world. . . . The Church is sent to every social, political and religious community of mankind. . . . The church is sent to proclaim Christ's reign in every moment and every situation."[72]

Using the language of sending instead of defining what Christians are called to do in their being sent provides a vague definition of the missionary task. This type of generalized definition articulated by the conference at Willingen in 1952 may have

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[71] Unless otherwise noted, all Scripture quotations come from the *English Standard Version*.

[72] International Missionary Council, *Missions under the Cross*, 190.

allowed multiple proponents of various views to stay unified. However, Jacques Matthey maintains, "The conference struggled with the fundamental definition of what missions is in a time of uncertainty. . . . Willingen, like many other such conferences, did not come to a satisfactory conclusion about missiological priorities."[73]

**Evanston 1954: The World Council's
Second Assembly**

The WCC meeting at Evanston, Illinois, in 1954 provided some interesting clues about their definition of evangelism and its relation to social action.[74] The council certainly possessed delegates who were greatly concerned with the social aspects of the gospel. However, the council sought to maintain the priority of proclaiming the gospel of Christ for the conversion of the individual. In order to balance each position, the official declaration of the council spoke of the transformation of both the social institutions of society and the individual man.[75]

For those highly concerned with the social dimension, the official statements declared that the proclamation of the gospel intrinsically connects to the transformation of society. In their view, if one desired to see the social dimension of society transformed, then the appropriate action is the proclamation of the gospel. In this frame of thought, social transformation proceeds from the action of proclamation as the gospel works to conform society to the divine intention. At Evanston, the question was not on the importance or relevance of the social dimension to gospel work. Instead, the declaration focused on how evangelism and the proclamation of the gospel had the power to transform the individual man and also the societal institutions in which he was involved.

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[73] Jacques Matthey, "God's Mission Today: Summary and Conclusions," *International Review of Mission* 92, no. 367 (2003): 579.

[74] For a detailed study on the whole declaration, see World Council of Churches, *The Christian Hope and the Task of the Church: Six Ecumenical Surveys and the Report of the Assembly* (New York: Harper, 1954).

[75] World Council of Churches, *The Evanston Report: The Second Assembly of the World Council of Churches, 1954*, ed. Willem Adolf Visser 't Hooft (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1955).

The delegates agreed that the effects of conversion would transform society, but the actual conversion itself was reserved for the individual man.

The specific language used by the declaration at Evanston to define evangelism includes "bringing of persons to Christ," "the Gospel proclaims a living Christ," "personal encounter with Christ," and "eternal destiny of every man."[76] The language and heart behind evangelism and social action led Johnston to conclude that the Evanston report "clearly rejects the social gospel and universalism" while at the same time "gave continued evidence of conservative theology within the WCC."[77] Edward Duff reports, "Early reaction to the Evanston Report on Social Questions indicated that it was considered a 'balanced and unpartisan judgement.' It was undoubtedly planned as such."[78]

Not all delegates were in agreement with the Evanston report as it pertained to social action. Some believed the report did not go far enough to encourage a reorientation of social thought among the churches, and multiple reports spoke of the increasing differing opinions inside the council's ranks.[79] In the years following the meeting at Evanston in 1954, the continued push toward a social reorientation, the conflicting theological positions on eschatology, and the inclusion of social components in the official declaration opened the door for proponents of social action to build a more robust platform.[80]

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[76] World Council of Churches, *The Evanston Report*, 101.

[77] Johnston, *Battle for World Evangelism*, 108.

[78] Edward Duff, *The Social Thought of the World Council of Churches* (New York: Association Press, 1956), 169.

[79] H. Krüger, "The Life and Activities of the World Council of Churches," in *A History of the Ecumenical Movement*, vol. 2, *1948–1968*, ed. Harold C. Fey (Geneva: World Council of Churches, 2004), 39–41; see also Duff, *The Social Thought of the World Council of Churches*, 59.

[80] Krüger, "The Life and Activities of the World Council of Churches," 44.

New Delhi 1961: The World
Council's Third Assembly

   Until 1961, the IMC and the WCC cooperated with one another but existed as two distinct organizations. After the WCC's inaugural conference in 1948, it became apparent that the two organizations must, at some point, merge. At first, the attempted merger exposed core differences between the two organizations and led many to doubt a future partnership. However, hard questions eventually led to new realizations of the church's position in the world as well as to a rediscovery of the missionary nature of their being. Visser 't Hooft reports, "Thus by 1958 it was possible for both I.M.C. and W.C.C. to decide that they would work towards a full integration of the two bodies. The integration took place at the New Delhi Assembly in 1961."[81]

   In section III, entitled "Witness," the report from New Delhi provides three indications of their view on the relationship between evangelism and social action. First, the document sought to define the church's evangelistic task by stating,

> Christ loves the world which he died to save. He is already the light of the world . . . and his light has preceded the bearers of the good news into the darkest places. The task of Christian witness is to point to him, as the true light, which is already shining. . . . The work of evangelism is necessary. . . in order that the blind eyes may be opened to the splendour of light.[82]

According to their view of evangelism, Jesus is the light and already exists, although dimly, in the people's presence. The evangelistic duty is now to bear witness to assist in brightening the light that already exists. Johnston argues, "The new birth, it seems, is an apprehension of a greater measure of the light than that already possessed!"[83] In this articulation of evangelism, witness replaces the idea of verbal proclamation, and seeing the splendor of the light that already exists in their presence replaces conversion.

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   [81] Willem Adolf Visser 't Hooft, "The General Ecumenical Development since 1948," in Fey, *A History of the Ecumenical Movement*, 2:11.

   [82] World Council of Churches, *The New Delhi Report* (New York: Association Press, 1962), 77.

   [83] Johnston, *Battle for World Evangelism*, 144.

Second, the statement on "Witness" offers a progression of thought that deviates from previous statements on evangelism and what it means to proclaim the gospel. According to the report from New Delhi, "Today the task of evangelism must be performed in new situations and therefore in new ways. The Church in every land is aware that new situations require new strategies and new methods, an adventuring into new forms of human social relationships."[84] A few sections later, the New Delhi report clarifies its meaning of a new strategy by stating, "The communication of the Gospel today consists in listening first and then in showing how the Gospel meets the need of the times as we have learned to understand it."[85] In this form of evangelism, the culture and the current situation determine the need instead of the Bible.

Third, the verbal proclamation of the gospel of Jesus Christ is no longer seen as adequate to transform the hearts and lives of men. According to the New Delhi report, certain social components must be present for them to hear and receive the message of Christ. The report stipulates, "Our message has not been truly proclaimed until it has been lived in real life."[86] The mere verbal proclamation of Jesus, apart from a social component, is seen as inadequate or not truly proclamation. Witness requires more than words, and it must incorporate social service if hearers are to respond.[87]

Berlin 1966: The World Congress
on Evangelism

After the third assembly at New Delhi, the WCC continued to advance its new expression of evangelism and social action. However, not all Christians around the world agreed with their new direction. With a new vigor for evangelism spurred by the

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[84] World Council of Churches, *New Delhi Report*, 78.

[85] World Council of Churches, *New Delhi Report*, 84.

[86] World Council of Churches, *New Delhi Report*, 83.

[87] World Council of Churches, *New Delhi Report*, 82.

influence of Billy Graham, evangelicals began searching for an official proclamation to represent their sentiments. Johnston claims, "Evangelicals of the world should have been able to turn to the International Missionary Council and to the World Council for leadership in evangelism."[88] However, he adds, "To the Evangelical there seemed to be little, if any, hope for evangelism in this direction. For Evangelism had been redefined to mean something else."

Therefore, in 1963, some prominent evangelicals, led by Carl F. H. Henry, met to lay the foundation for what would be called the World Congress on Evangelism (WCE). Billy Graham responded to the need for a new movement by stating,

> In many circles today the Church has an energetic passion for unity, but it has all but forgotten our Lord's commission to evangelize. One of the purposes of this World Congress on Evangelism is to make an urgent appeal to the world Church to return to the dynamic zeal for world evangelization that characterized Edinburgh 56 years ago.[89]

By 1966, evangelicals rallied enough support to reestablish their voice on the global stage. Therefore, delegates from one hundred nations gathered at Berlin to proclaim the supreme mission of the church. John Stott alluded that the gathering came about due to the steady decline of commitment to world evangelism after the conference at Edinburgh in 1910. Stott argued, "The convening by evangelicals . . . at Berlin in 1966 . . . must unfortunately be understood, at least in part, as a loss of confidence in the World Council of Churches."[90]

The WCE at Berlin in 1966 formed a statement diverging from the modernist version of evangelism and social action as well as giving structure to the strengthening evangelical movement. The statement declares, "We cordially invite all believers in

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[88] Johnston, *Battle for World Evangelism*, 142.

[89] World Congress on Evangelism, *One Race, One Gospel, One Task: Official Reference Volumes: Papers and Reports*, ed. Carl F. H Henry and W. Stanley Mooneyham (Minneapolis: World Wide, 1967), 22.

[90] Lausanne Movement, "Lausanne Occasional Paper 21: Evangelism and Social Responsibility: An Evangelical Commitment," June 25, 1982, https://lausanne.org/content/lop/lop-21.

Christ to unite in the common task of bringing the Word of Salvation to mankind in spiritual revolt and moral chaos. Our goal is nothing short of the evangelization of the human race in this generation, by every means God has given to the mind and will of men."[91]

The committee in Berlin sought to spur the church toward an unwavering devotion to the salvation of human souls by using any method that would perpetuate this cause. The foundation for their statement came directly from the Great Commission in the Gospel of Matthew. The committee declared, "He commands us to proclaim to all people the good news of salvation through his atoning death and resurrection; to invite them to discipleship through repentance and faith; to baptize them into the fellowship of his church; and to teach them all His words."[92]

Carl F. H. Henry, in the congress declaration, asserted, "The Bible declares that the Gospel which we have received and wherein we stand, and whereby we are saved, is that 'Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures; and that he was buried, and that he rose again on the third day according to the scriptures' (1 Corinthians 15:3–4)."[93] Henry continued to articulate his view of evangelism by arguing, "Evangelism is the proclamation of the Gospel of the crucified and risen Christ, the only Redeemer of men, according to the Scriptures, with the purpose of persuading condemned and lost sinners to put their trust in God by receiving and accepting Christ as Savior through the power of the Holy Spirit."

In many ways, the WCE's statements were a reaction to the notion of evangelism pursued by the ecumenical movement. Early in the congress document, the framers confronted two primary issues in their articulation of evangelism as it related to

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[91] Carl F. H. Henry, *Evangelicals at the Brink of Crisis: Significance of the World Congress on Evangelism* (Waco, TX: Word Books, 1967), 3.

[92] Henry, *Evangelicals at the Brink of Crisis*, 5.

[93] Henry, *Evangelicals at the Brink of Crisis*, 5.

social action. The first confrontation addressed the notion of evangelism toward the social structure. Billy Graham stated, "Some new definitions of evangelism leave out entirely the winning of men to a personal encounter with Jesus Christ. They look upon evangelism as social action only."[94] According to Graham, salvation was being directed away from the individual and toward society as a whole. The historical pattern of winning souls one by one was replaced by reforming the structures of society.[95]

Second, the WCE addressed the idea of conversion. Graham stated, "This new evangelism leads many to reject the idea of conversion in its historical biblical meaning, and substitute education and social reform for the work of the Holy Spirit in converting and changing men."[96] Graham urged the congress delegates to reject this new interpretation of evangelism and return the biblical expression of the church's task.

While the congress sought to perpetuate the primacy of evangelism, it attempted to define its relation to social action. Graham argued, "Evangelism has social implications, but its primary thrust is the winning of men to a personal relationship to Jesus Christ."[97] In Graham's address to the congress at Berlin, the relationship between social action and evangelism can be defined as an unequal partnership. According to the framers, the primacy of evangelism was not meant to neglect the social dimension but to place it in its proper order. Graham urged,

> Today the evangelist cannot ignore the diseased, the poor, the discriminated against, and those who have lost their freedom through tyranny. . . . However, I am convinced if the Church went back to its main task of proclaiming the Gospel and getting people converted to Christ, it would have a far greater impact on the social, moral and psychological needs of men than any other thing it could possibly do.[98]

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[94] World Congress on Evangelism, *One Race, One Gospel, One Task*, 24.

[95] World Congress on Evangelism, *One Race, One Gospel, One Task*, 24.

[96] World Congress on Evangelism, *One Race, One Gospel, One Task*, 24.

[97] World Congress on Evangelism, *One Race, One Gospel, One Task*, 24.

[98] World Congress on Evangelism, *One Race, One Gospel, One Task*, 28.

The congress sought to demonstrate that social movements spring out of truly converted individuals as they receive the capacity to love as Christ loved them. The WCE at Berlin in 1966 defined social action as a manifestation of the primary action of evangelism as opposed to an equal partnership. The statements of the Berlin congress fractured the complete integration of social action and evangelism and established the latter as more critical than the former.

**Uppsala 1968: The World Council's
Fourth Assembly**

The response and attention gained through the 1966 congress at Berlin highlighted the growing concern of evangelical voices. When it came time for the WCC to respond in 1968, they failed to present a statement that satisfied the demands of the evangelical base. Therefore, Arthur Glasser comments, "The Fourth Assembly at Uppsala (1968) marked the beginning of widespread evangelical disenchantment with the direction of the WCC."[99] Glasser notes that many of the issues discussed at Uppsala were acceptable for evangelicals. However, the primary source of contention revolved around the WCC's increased prerogative toward Christian presence and interreligious dialogue over gospel proclamation. Tore Samuelsson reports, "The outcome was rather a logical and concrete process in which WCC moved in the direction of increased socio-ethical responsibility."[100]

The increased push toward social responsibility left little room for the concern of gospel proclamation. Evangelicals feared that what defined their mission for centuries was beginning to fade into the background of a more significant initiative. The response

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[99] Arthur F. Glasser, "World Council of Churches Assembly," in *Evangelical Dictionary of World Missions*, ed. A. Scott Moreau, Harold Netland, and Charles Van Engen, Baker Reference Library (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2000), 1025.

[100] Tore Samuelsson, "'Behold, I Make All Things New': WCC's Fourth Assembly in Uppsala 4-20 July, 1968," July 4, 2018, https://www.oikoumene.org/news/behold-i-make-all-things-new-wccs-fourth-assembly-in-uppsala-4-20-july-1968.

by the WCC at Uppsala codified the demand for evangelicals to unite together for the cause of world evangelization. Therefore, evangelicals began to work on plans to establish a conference that would seek to not only elevate the concern for evangelism but also rival the WCC's effort to unite the global church. The new movement would seize the momentum generated through the congress meeting at Berlin to create a historical gathering known as the First International Congress on World Evangelization (ICOWE). The first congress was held at Lausanne, Switzerland, in 1974.

The congress at Berlin in 1966 drastically swung the pendulum back toward a historical view of evangelism, but some argued that it may have gone too far if they were to capture the global church. Therefore, at Lausanne, an evangelical theology of evangelism and social responsibility emerged that distinguished itself from the WCC.

Lausanne 1974: The First International Congress on World Evangelization

In July 1974, over 3,000 observers and participants from over 150 countries gathered in Lausanne for the ICOWE. The congress's primary function was to define and establish the evangelical view of evangelism. C. René Padilla notes, "One of the most valuable results of the Congress was the Lausanne Covenant, a 2,700 word, fifteen-point document drafted under the leadership of John Stott. With this covenant, Evangelicals took a stand against a mutilated gospel and a narrow view of the Christian mission."[101]

The Lausanne Covenant, drafted at the ICOWE, provides critical descriptions of the congress's view on the relationship between evangelism and social action. Rather than segregating the two ideas of evangelism and social involvement or completely uniting them as equal partners, the Lausanne framers sought to create a middle view between the two extremes.

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[101] C. René Padilla, *Mission between the Times: Essays on the Kingdom* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1985), viii.

In article 4, the covenant begins its articulation of the relationship between evangelism and social action. Interestingly, the covenant incorporates a unique combination of the sentiments and language from both the ecumenical and evangelical movements. The Lausanne committee defines the good news thus: "Christ died for our sins and was raised from the dead according to the Scriptures, and that, as the reigning Lord, he now offers the forgiveness of sins and the liberating gifts of the Spirit to all who repent and believe."[102] The evangelical tone of the gospel of Jesus Christ is very evident as the framers sought to describe it in connection with conversion and repentance. However, in the following sentence, the covenant states, "Our Christian presence in the world is indispensable to evangelism, and so is that kind of dialogue whose purpose is to listen sensitively in order to understand."[103] In this sentence, the ecumenical ideas of presence and dialogue are clear and present for readers to consider. However, the covenant quickly qualifies the statement by affirming that evangelism is best defined not as presence or dialogue but as "proclamation of the historical, biblical Christ as Saviour and Lord, with a view to persuading people to come to him personally and so be reconciled to God."[104]

In article 5, the covenant continues to issue statements leaning toward an ecumenical understanding of the social dimension. The covenant states, "We affirm that God is both the Creator and the Judge of all men. We therefore should share his concern for justice and reconciliation throughout human society and for the liberation of men and women from every kind of oppression."[105] Article 5 continues to elevate social responsibility and even defines social action and evangelism in partnership as two

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[102] Lausanne Movement, "The Lausanne Covenant," accessed October 11, 2021, https://lausanne.org/content/covenant/lausanne-covenant#cov.

[103] Lausanne Movement, "The Lausanne Covenant."

[104] Lausanne Movement, "The Lausanne Covenant."

[105] Lausanne Movement, "The Lausanne Covenant."

necessary expressions. However, in article 6, the covenant stipulates, "In the Church's mission of sacrificial service, evangelism is primary."[106]

The Lausanne Covenant maintains a definition of evangelism that consists of sharing the good news of the gospel of Jesus for the conversion of men. It also chooses to use particular language that qualifies evangelism as the primary action over social action. Nonetheless, the covenant is filled with language that elevates the necessity of social action as the Christian's inherent responsibility. Throughout the covenant, the framers attempted to remain evangelically sound while ensuring that the social dimension played a large role in their view of the church's task.

Graham desired that the framers of the congress in 1974 only encompassed evangelical representatives. Therefore, it seems strange that the Lausanne Covenant possesses statements of competing voices about the exact relationship between evangelism and social action that diverge from the previous declaration by the WCE at Berlin. Robert Hunt explains, "While Graham clearly set an agenda for the Lausanne congress, his effort to create a worldwide movement drawing on the enthusiasm of the newer churches brought differing, and sometimes discordant, voices to Lausanne."[107]

Also, evangelicals differed on the exact idea that would bring the group together in one concerted effort to evangelize the world in their generation. Hunt notes that Peter Wagner and Ralph Winter argued for a focus on unreached people as the answer. However, John Stott and his British counterparts sought to influence the congress to focus on the social problems of the world in order to unite evangelicals.[108] A review of the covenant from Lausanne in 1974 clearly identifies that Stott and the social dimension took precedence.

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[106] Lausanne Movement, "The Lausanne Covenant."

[107] Robert A. Hunt, "The History of the Lausanne Movement, 1974–2010," *International Bulletin of Missionary Research* 35, no. 2 (2011): 83.

[108] Hunt, "The History of the Lausanne Movement, 1974–2010," 83.

**Grand Rapids 1982: The International
Consultation on the Relationship
between Evangelism and
Social Responsibility**

The competing voices in the Lausanne Movement and the contending ideas of the impetus behind evangelism led the congress to initiate a continuation process much like that of Edinburgh in 1910. Over the course of six years, four consultations occurred providing further commentary on the original congress declaration of 1974. The most important consultation in the scope of this project is the International Consultation on the Relationship between Evangelism and Social Responsibility held at Grand Rapids, Michigan, in 1982.

Stott believed that the consultation of 1982 came out of the unique circumstances surrounding the WCC's conference at Melbourne and the Lausanne consultation at Pattaya in 1980. Stott commented, "At Melbourne the necessity of proclamation was clearly recognized, but the cries of the poor, the hungry and the oppressed predominated. At Pattaya also the cries of the needy were heard . . . , but the call to proclaim the gospel to the unevangelized predominated."[109] As this debate grew, it became apparent that the Lausanne Movement must further study and define the exact meaning of social responsibility and its relation to evangelism.

According to the Grand Rapids consultation, social action and evangelism had always historically existed together without contention. However, in the twentieth century, liberal ideas of the social gospel linked with building God's kingdom on earth through social programs created a rift between many evangelicals. The 1982 consultation attempted to remarry the constructs of evangelism and social action. They believed that the social gospel advocated by the ecumenical movement and biblical social responsibility that they fostered were two completely different ideas.[110]

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[109] Lausanne Movement, "Lausanne Occasional Paper 21."

[110] Lausanne Movement, "Lausanne Occasional Paper 21."

The report from the consultation in 1982 provided three distinct expressions that explained their view on the relationship between evangelism and social action. First, the report identified social activity as a *consequence* of evangelism. The committee explained, "That is, evangelism is the means by which God brings people to new birth, and their new life manifests itself in the service of others."[111]

Second, the report identified social activity as a *bridge* to evangelism. According to the consultation documents, social activity exercised in the lives of believers can open doors for gospel proclamation.[112] The consultation feared that if Christians turned a blind eye to the social problems of people, then people would, in turn, respond with a deaf ear toward the Christian message. The consolation responded to the popular notion of making "rice Christians" and professed the danger in understanding social action as a bridge. Nonetheless, they continued to speak for the idea and claimed that the reward was worth the risk.

Third, the consultation claimed, "Social activity not only follows evangelism as its consequence and aim, and precedes it as its bridge, but also accompanies it as its *partner*."[113] The document defines the relationship as two wings of a bird or two blades of a pair of scissors. The framers claimed that the two acts of evangelism and social action go hand in hand in the ministry of Jesus. Even though the two constructs are defined as a partnership, the document stipulates, "This is not to say that they should be identified with each other, for evangelism is not social responsibility, nor is social responsibility evangelism. Yet, each involves the other."[114]

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[111] Lausanne Movement, "Lausanne Occasional Paper 21."

[112] Lausanne Movement, "Lausanne Occasional Paper 21."

[113] Lausanne Movement, "Lausanne Occasional Paper 21."

[114] Lausanne Movement, "Lausanne Occasional Paper 21."

The report from the consultation provides three helpful descriptions of how evangelism is related to social action. Also, the report provides a section addressing the idea of primacy.[115] The framers referred back to the Lausanne Covenant and affirmed its statement on the primacy of evangelism. However, the report speaks of how the use of primacy made several members uncomfortable. Nonetheless, when pressed, the members admitted, "If we must choose, then we have to say that the supreme and ultimate need of all humankind is the saving grace of Jesus Christ, and that therefore a person's eternal, spiritual salvation is of greater importance than his or her temporal and material well-being."[116]

**Manila 1989: The Second International
Congress on World Evangelization**

The Second International Congress on World Evangelization met at Manila fifteen years after the inaugural congress at Lausanne. The congress developed a final document called the Manila Manifesto, which represented the combined effort of the congress to put forth a plan for the delegates to accept. At the conclusion of the congress, the delegates overwhelmingly voted in favor to accept the Manila Manifesto. The delegates declared, "We accept the Manila Manifesto as an expression, in general terms, of our concerns and commitments, and we commend it to ourselves, to churches and to Christian organizations for further study and response."[117]

The Manila Manifesto delivers twenty-one affirmations. Although the affirmations are brief, one can compare their words to other congress declarations over the course of the twentieth century. For example, in affirmation 7, the congress states,

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[115] The report makes several other claims about social action and evangelism that will be addressed in chapters 3 and 4—specifically, their articulation of the relationship between the individual and society and how both should be held together with a creative tension.

[116] Lausanne Movement, "Lausanne Occasional Paper 21."

[117] Lausanne Movement, "Manila 1989 Documents," July 20, 1989, https://lausanne.org/content/manila-1989-documents.

"We affirm that other religions and ideologies are not alternative paths to God, and that human spirituality, if unredeemed by Christ, leads not to God but to judgment, for Christ is the only way."[118] Affirmation 7 provides clues to a unique understanding of other religions that distinguishes itself from the WCC's official declarations. The WCC, in the years following the Edinburgh conference, sought to portray a positive narrative of other religions. They felt that other religions possessed many attributes that could serve as alternative paths to God. The universalistic ideas of the WCC were directly challenged in the Manila Manifesto and served as a means of distinguishing between the two groups.

Though the Manila Manifesto and the WCC's declarations are distinct in their view of other religions, their comments on social activity are very similar. The congress at Manila affirmed the necessity of proclamation, but it often mixed the proclamation of the gospel with social witness. The Manila Manifesto asserts, "We affirm that the proclamation of God's kingdom of justice and peace demands the denunciation of all injustice and oppression, both personal and structural; we will not shrink from this prophetic witness."[119] In affirmation sixteen, the congress links evangelism and social action in a partnership by urging churches and mission agencies to cooperate in evangelism and social action through evangelistic witness and compassionate service.

According to the Manila Manifesto, evangelistic witness is vitally important, but social action must also exist alongside such efforts. In terms of the Manila Manifesto, the two actions of evangelism and social activity cannot and should not function separately from one another. In affirmation 15, the congress declares, "We affirm that we who proclaim the gospel must exemplify it in a life of holiness and love; otherwise our testimony loses its credibility."[120]

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[118] Lausanne Movement, "The Manila Manifesto," accessed October 14, 2021, https://lausanne.org/content/manifesto/the-manila-manifesto.

[119] Lausanne Movement, "The Manila Manifesto."

[120] Lausanne Movement, "The Manila Manifesto."

Regardless of the statements that advance the idea of social action to rival evangelistic proclamation, the congress maintains the language of primacy. The Manila Manifesto states, "Evangelism is primary because our chief concern is with the gospel, that all people may have the opportunity to accept Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour. Yet Jesus not only proclaimed the kingdom of God; he also demonstrated its arrival by works of mercy and power. We are called today to a similar integration of words and deeds."[121] The congress at Manila desired to affirm a specific priority for evangelism but at the same time sought to elevate social responsibility.

**Cape Town 2010: The Third Lausanne
Congress on World Evangelization**

After the Second International Congress on World Evangelization in 1989, the Lausanne congress met provisionally. In 2004, preparations began for the official Third International Congress on World Evangelization. The preparations for this congress came to fruition in 2010 as the Lausanne congress gathered at Cape Town for the Third International Congress on World Evangelization. In the first press release announcing the third Lausanne congress, the leaders commented, "New global challenges require thoughtful and prayerful global responses. We pray that Lausanne III: Cape Town 2010 will serve to unite and energize the Church with a new vision and a new commitment to partnership for the work of world evangelization for a new time."[122]

Over four thousand leaders from nearly two hundred countries met in 2010 to produce a statement called the Cape Town Commitment. By 2010, the Lausanne congress, initially forming out of a desire to see further initiatives toward evangelism worldwide, had now developed into a movement. The Cape Town Commitment was

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[121] Lausanne Movement, "The Manila Manifesto."

[122] Lausanne Movement, "Lausanne III: Cape Town 2010," accessed October 15, 2021, https://lausanne.org/news-releases/lausanne-iii-cape-town-2010-international-congress-on-world-evangelization.

designed to provide a road map for the movement as the new generation sought to evangelize the world.

Pierre Berthoud, an attendee at the meeting in Cape Town, reported that (1) those who had not yet heard the gospel and (2) works of compassion dominated the deliberations.[123] The same is true of the Cape Town Commitment itself. The congress maintained the historical understanding of gospel proclamation while at the same time strongly emphasizing social action.

The preamble of the Cape Town Commitment establishes a description of the gospel: "It is the unchanged story of what God has done to save the world, supremely in the historical events of the life, death, resurrection, and reign of Jesus Christ. In Christ there is hope."[124] The document declares a definition of the gospel that rivals that of the 1966 congress at Berlin. However, the 2010 congress issued other statements elevating the idea of social action that stand in contrast to the declarations of the 1966 gathering.

The exact nature of how evangelism and social action relate to one another is sometimes difficult to articulate. Berthoud observed this phenomenon at the meeting by claiming, "In one of the morning Bible studies, John Piper emphasised the central place of the proclamation of the Word in articulating these two aspects of the Christian ministry."[125] Berthoud reports that in response to Piper's comments, "several speakers addressed this topic, underlining the importance of discipleship and of adopting a lifestyle characterised by humility, integrity and simplicity."

The Cape Town Commitment provides a description of creation care that is notable to the discussion of the congress's view of social action. Creation care is a

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[123] Pierre Berthoud, "Africa Welcomes the Universal Church: The Lausanne III Congress in Cape Town," *European Journal of Theology* 21, no. 1 (2012): 60.

[124] Lausanne Movement, "The Cape Town Commitment," accessed October 19, 2021, https://lausanne.org/content/ctcommitment#capetown.

[125] Berthoud, "Africa Welcomes the Universal Church," 61.

byproduct of a heavy emphasis on social action. In creation care, social action includes witness and care not only for the structures of creation but also for creation itself. In the Cape Town Commitment, the framers link creation care with gospel proclamation: "For to proclaim the gospel that says 'Jesus is Lord' is to proclaim the gospel that includes the earth, since Christ's Lordship is over all creation. Creation care is thus a gospel issue within the Lordship of Christ."[126] The statement continues to emphasize the importance of creation care by urging and declaring that the Lausanne congress is committing themselves to "prophetic ecological responsibility."[127]

Creation care has a direct effect upon the congress's view on the relationship between evangelism and social action. The distinguishing mark of their view of the relationship is the description they entail by the partnership. According to the Cape Town commitment, a heavy emphasis on partnership allows for participation in either evangelism or social action as a calling or task. The commitment affirms, "We support Christians whose particular missional calling is to environmental advocacy and action, as well as those committed to godly fulfilment of the mandate to provide for human welfare and needs by exercising responsible dominion and stewardship."[128] The point of emphasis that will serve this project in the future chapters lies in the congress's articulation of particular missional calling as it relates to something other than gospel proclamation.

Conclusion

The historical conferences and their widespread participation highlighted the desire for Christians to gather for a global purpose. However, the exact purpose and description of how evangelism and social action related to one another in the mission task

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[126] Lausanne Movement, "The Cape Town Commitment."

[127] Lausanne Movement, "The Cape Town Commitment."

[128] Lausanne Movement, "The Cape Town Commitment."

seemed to fluctuate for decades. Nevertheless, the mission conferences of the twentieth and twenty-first centuries provide a helpful foundation for establishing the basic descriptions of the relationship according to their understanding.

One of the significant issues that arose in defining how the conferences understood the relationship between social action and evangelism was the nature of unity. Whether through brief statements or major theological declarations, many of the conferences attempted to establish a unifying decree for all of Christendom. For the sake of unity, numerous theological declarations were altered. Also, much of the language issued by their decrees were selected for the purpose of preserving harmony among competing beliefs.

Despite the altered theological language, the conferences of the twentieth and twenty-first centuries provide an excellent foundation that establishes the flow of thought concerning evangelism and social action. Defining the relationship between social action and evangelism apart from the conferences would be absurd. However, to provide a more comprehensive understanding of how Adoniram Judson's missiology compares with the definitions of the conferences, I conduct a survey of the major proponents who wrote exclusively from the conferences.

CHAPTER 3

A SURVEY OF THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN
EVANGELISM AND SOCIAL ACTION
AS PURPORTED BY COMPETING
AUTHORS BETWEEN
1900 AND 2020

Leading up to many of the significant missionary conferences, leadership employed theologians and missiologists to write articles and publish materials for conference delegates to consider. One of the major issues under consideration throughout many of the conferences revolved around an official position on the relationship between evangelism and social action. Therefore, throughout the twentieth and twenty-first centuries, numerous proponents attempted to articulate a theological position on the relationship between social action and evangelism.

Throughout the twentieth and twenty-first centuries, multiple authors delivered theological exposés that presented arguments from various competing positions. Major mission conferences then served as mediators, endeavoring to reconcile the various positions into an agreeable acknowledgment for the sake of unity across the body of Christ. Surveying major mission conferences' positions on the relationship between social action and evangelism only highlights the basic foundation for each view. Therefore, surveying the major proponents' published works will provide a more thorough theological synopsis highlighting specific details of the various positions that alluded the conferences' official declarations. The nuances presented by competing authors provide valid descriptions needed for conducting a comparative analysis of Adoniram Judson's view. This chapter is divided into three major sections, organizing the proponents according to the specific era of time in which they constructed their

arguments: (1) early to mid-twentieth century, (2) mid- to late twentieth century, and (3) early twenty-first century.[1]

Early to Mid-Twentieth-Century Proponents

In the early twentieth century, the conference model and the current debate between social action and evangelism grew somewhat unilaterally. In the formative years, perhaps the most dominant voice that led the church toward a theology of social action was J. H. Oldham.[2] In response to Oldham's continued push toward society, Roland Allen produced several theological publications strongly cautioning against this new direction.

After the conclusion of the Jerusalem conference in 1928, the ecumenical slant toward an emphasis on social action persisted. One of the major theological works addressing the issue of social action and evangelism in the early twentieth century was William E. Hocking's famous treaty *Re-Thinking Mission: A Laymen's Inquiry after One Hundred Years*, which serves to represent a major shift in missions thinking.

Carl F. H. Henry sought to produce a response to the continued ecumenical shift. His work provided theological arguments that attempted to straddle a line between an emphasis on social action and evangelism. Highlighting these four voices will demonstrate a balanced approach of the unique views of the relationship between social action and evangelism in the early to the mid-twentieth century.

J. H. Oldham

J. H. Oldham possessed a remarkable intellect and quickly became friends with John Mott through his connection with the YMCA and the broader student movement.

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[1] The three divisions of time are not meant to be the exact dates in which the authors published. Some authors lived and published in multiple eras. Therefore, the divisions are designed to serve as basic guides to generally structure the competing authors.

[2] John C. Bennett, "Breakthrough in Ecumenical Social Ethics: The Legacy of the Oxford Conference on Church, Community, and State (1937)," *Ecumenical Review* 40, no. 2 (1988): 132.

While studying at Edinburgh, Mott employed Oldham as one of the main organizers of the 1910 World Missionary Conference. After the conference, Oldham served as the primary editor for the official conference report. He continued his service to the Edinburgh conference by serving as the first secretary of the continuation committee. His involvement with the World Missionary Conference and his leadership in the continuation committee positioned him perfectly to create and lead the International Missionary Council (IMC).[3]

Much of Oldham's influence came about through various missionary conferences as he served as editor to many of the official conference declarations. In 1937, in connection with the Oxford conference on "Church, Community and State," Oldham co-authored a book entitled *The Church and Its Function in Society*. The primary objective of the work, according to Oldham, was to address the nature and function of the church in relation to society.[4] In this work, Oldham freely expressed his views on the relationship between social action and evangelism.

In the section regarding the church's function to the world, Oldham highlighted three aspects—evangelization, the ministry of mercy and kindness, and witness. Oldham used these three headings to outline his view of the relationship between evangelism and social action.

Oldham realized that the foundational philosophy of life among competing religious systems made it nearly impossible to find lasting social solutions. Oldham argued that a change in attitudes and actions of persons must occur in order to see an impact on society. This change in attitudes and actions is how Oldham chose to describe conversion. Oldham quickly qualified his perceived statement of conversion by

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[3] J. D. Douglas, "Oldham, Joseph Houldsworth," in *Evangelical Dictionary of World Missions*, ed. A. Scott Moreau, Harold Netland, and Charles Van Engen, Baker Reference Library (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2000), 709.

[4] Willem Adolph Visser 't Hooft and J. H. Oldham, *The Church and Its Function in Society*, Oxford Conference Books (Chicago: Willett, Clark, 1937), 7.

connecting it to the social order. He rejected any notion of conversion for the sake of the individual alone. According to Oldham, "The individual in isolation is a pure abstraction; he is inseparable from the social context."[5]

In Oldham's articulation of evangelization, social action seems to be the intended end. Oldham called for a renewed energy to the task of evangelism but only in proportion to its connection with the social and political spheres. The change in society that Oldham besought could only come about through the people who have found a "new orientation."[6] Therefore, evangelism, in the words of Oldham, "is only the beginning."

Oldham spoke of the necessity of evangelism and attempted to entice the church toward its task. According Oldham, the Christian religious system offered the most ideal path to improve the social order. Therefore, his sentiments toward evangelism did not negate the notion of social action as the intended end. In Oldham's framework, evangelism and conversion to the Christian religious system was the necessary starting point for accomplishing true social change. Oldham argued, "The significance of conversion lies in the ends to which men are converted and the content and quality of life to which they commit themselves."[7] In Oldham's articulation, evangelism and converting persons to the Christian religious system is an indispensable means or bridge to impactful social action.

In the section on the ministry of mercy and kindness, Oldham intrinsically connected word and deed: "The greatest service that the Church can render to men is to bring them to Christ, in whom their deepest needs are met."[8] This service is not primarily administered through word but must also incorporate deed. Due to Oldham's explicit

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[5] Visser 't Hooft and Oldham, *The Church and Its Function in Society*, 169.

[6] Visser 't Hooft and Oldham, *The Church and Its Function in Society*, 169.

[7] Visser 't Hooft and Oldham, *The Church and Its Function in Society*, 169.

[8] Visser 't Hooft and Oldham, *The Church and Its Function in Society*, 170.

argument for acts of mercy and kindness, he challenged those who viewed their responsibility as word alone. Nonetheless, in Oldham's view of the relationship between evangelism and social action, word alone was not enough; the Christian task must also incorporate deed if it is to bring men to Christ.[9]

Oldham ended his expression of the relationship between evangelism and social action with a synopsis about witness. Oldham addressed two aspects in this section that reveal pertinent information regarding the relationship between social action and evangelism. First, Oldham clearly announced that salvation is not meant for the individual alone. He contended, "It is directed not merely to individuals, in order that they may believe and be saved, but to the total life of the community. The beliefs and practices of society must be set in the light of the truth that has been revealed. . . . The Church has a responsibility to the community or nation as well as to the individual."[10]

Second, Oldham argued that situation and environment determine the primary task of the church. Oldham remarked, "The Church has different tasks to fulfill in different conditions of social and political life."[11] According to Oldham, when a person plants a church in new soil, the movement may not yet possess the ability to impact the general life of the community. In this instance, Oldham argued, "its primary task is to win fresh adherents to the faith." In other instances, per Oldham's progression, the church may have a large enough populous to engage in political and social policy. In Oldham's view, the circumstance or environment in which the church exists determines the primary task to be carried out.

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[9] Visser 't Hooft and Oldham, *The Church and Its Function in Society*, 170.

[10] Visser 't Hooft and Oldham, *The Church and Its Function in Society*, 172.

[11] Visser 't Hooft and Oldham, *The Church and Its Function in Society*, 172.

Roland Allen

As early as 1913, Allen responded to a vision of Christian mission that included social action. At the time, Allen noticed a trend in Christian thinking that saw truth in heathen religions and truth in heathen character. In light of the truth found in heathen systems, the goal, then, was diverted from converting individuals and planting churches in order to "leaven society and to help forward a movement towards a goal of glory to which heathen truth and Christian truth alike are tending."[12] In this frame of thought, Allen claimed, "interest in Foreign Missions is sometimes interest in the progress of a society."[13] In this disposition, the aim and the end goal of mission work centers on perfecting the physical realm of society.

Allen warned of the grave danger that arises when one dwells upon external conditions. According to Allen, the missionary in this scenario is no longer a preacher of Christ but a preacher of social righteousness.[14] Allen thought that the social righteousness stemming from Western sociology would distort or overlay the gospel and ultimately result in a failure to preach Christ. According to Allen's view, Christ is the only hope, and humanity "cannot arrive at Christ by adding social betterment to social betterment."[15] Allen vehemently claimed, "We cannot set a false end before us, we cannot degenerate into social reformers."[16] In Allen's view, a misconstrued focus of ends distorts the entire process. A worldly conception of ends will unavoidably lead to a worldly campaign. Likewise, a material conception of ends leads to a material campaign. The supreme end of an action determines its principles.

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[12] Roland Allen, *Essential Missionary Principles* (New York: Fleming H. Revell, 1913), 96.

[13] Allen, *Essential Missionary Principles*, 91.

[14] Allen, *Essential Missionary Principles*, 96.

[15] Allen, *Essential Missionary Principles*, 95

[16] Allen, *Essential Missionary Principles*, 97.

Allen's understanding of the spiritual task of missions led him to compose the classic *Missionary Methods: St. Paul's or Ours?* Allen's work on the apostle Paul's method mainly addressed the issues of indigenous church planting. However, one can discern in Allen's work his vision for the missionary task. Allen urged that Paul's method should serve as the model for mission work in his day. Allen suggested that Paul's typical pattern of church planting consisted of evangelizing and discipling new converts in a specific community. After training the converts for a period of time, Paul departed from the community of faith and entrusted the leadership to indigenous leaders. After several months, Paul or one of his disciples would visit the newly planted church to evaluate their progress.[17] Despite the horrendous moral and social conditions in the four provinces in which Paul ministered, his method, Allen pleaded, centered on planting churches.[18]

As the twentieth century unfolded, the continued push of the ecumenical movement toward the reformation of society led Allen to respond with a scathing critique of the new orientation of missions. In 1928, Allen revealed three areas of concern with the declaration of the Jerusalem conference. First, Allen cautioned mission agencies and missionaries against getting too involved with social ministry. He argued that the Jerusalem council proposed "without any doubt, that it is the business of missionary societies as missionary societies, and of missionaries as missionaries of the Gospel, and of Christian converts as Christians, to organize themselves as a political force to remove abuses."[19] Allen openly questioned this proposal and sought to argue in the negative that this organization of a political force for the righting of social abuses was not the proper business of missionaries.

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[17] For a more thorough explanation of Allen's view on Paul's method, see Roland Allen, *Missionary Methods: St. Paul's or Ours? A Study of the Church in the Four Provinces*, Library of Historic Theology (London: R. Scott, 1912).

[18] Allen, *Missionary Methods*, 52.

[19] Roland Allen, *Jerusalem: A Critical Review of "The World Mission of Christianity"* (London: World Dominion Press, 1928), 30.

Second, Allen pleaded that the individual soul was the goal of all missionary work. In his view, presenting a message to the society revealed a fatal error in understanding the effectual nature of salvation. Allen contended, "How can a social organization, or an economic relation, receive a message? That is not a verbal quibble; it is a question of fundamental importance. As I have already pointed out, there is no Gospel for social organizations, but only for men."[20] Allen believed that confounding society as a recipient of the gospel distorted the central task of the church. He could not comprehend why Christians were denying an antithesis between individual regeneration and social renewal. In his view, the two must remain separate.[21]

Third, Allen explained that ministry focused on society inevitably diverts missionary work from its intended purpose. He believed that the continued drift of Christians to social ministry detracted from their proper work. In sum, Allen pointedly argued, "As missionary societies they have one work and only one, and that is to convert men to Christ and to establish His Church, and they cannot do that work, as it ought to be done, if their minds are distracted by every political and economic problem."[22]

William Ernest Hocking

In 1932, John D. Rockefeller funded a project designed to reevaluate the missionary enterprise through laymen's perspectives. The project consisted of a commission board tasked with investigating and reporting on the mission work in four countries. Hocking, a distinguished Harvard professor, served as the leading editor of the report. The finalized published document generated widespread attention due to the theological nature of its content. Kenneth Scott Latourette commented, "The vigorous debate which was provoked by *Re-thinking Missions* centred chiefly on the theological

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[20] Allen, *Jerusalem*, 31.

[21] Allen, *Jerusalem*, 33.

[22] Allen, *Jerusalem*, 34–35.

and philosophical convictions which governed the document and which, persuasively set forth, were chiefly the work of Professor Hocking."[23] Hocking's report highlights a particular theological understanding of the relationship between social action and evangelism supported in the early twentieth century.[24]

John Mark Terry attributes much of the dispute to a particular chapter composed by Hocking. Terry comments, "This chapter proved quite controversial because Hocking wrote that every religion contains a germ of religious truth and that world religions and Christianity should stimulate each other in religious growth."[25] Hocking's sentiments toward other religions stemmed from his conception of a greater enemy.

Hocking believed that materialism and secularism posed a greater danger to Christianity than the world's dominant religions. He envisioned a movement that worked in unison with other faiths to establish the ancient conception of religious intuition. Hocking worried that secularism, through its non-religious system, would inevitably destroy any hope of Christianity's spreading to new lands. Therefore, Hocking pleaded for Christians to make an effort to "know and understand the religions around it, then to recognize and associate itself with whatever kindred elements there are in them."[26] Hocking's particular universal attitudes toward other religions came from a lack of trust in the power of the gospel to supersede secularism. Hocking added, "If there were not at

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[23] Kenneth Scott Latourette, "Re-Thinking Missions after Twenty-Five Years," *International Review of Mission* 46, no. 182 (1957): 165.

[24] William Richey Hogg, *Ecumenical Foundations: A History of the International Missionary Council and Its Nineteenth Century Background* (New York: Harper, 1952), 295.

[25] John Mark Terry, "Hocking, William Earnest," in Moreau, Netland, and Van Engen, *Evangelical Dictionary of World Missions*, 446.

[26] Laymen's Foreign Missions Inquiry (Commission of Appraisal) and William Ernest Hocking, *Re-Thinking Missions: A Laymen's Inquiry after One Hundred Years* (New York: Harper, 1932), 33. Hereafter, this source is abbreviated thus: "Hocking, *Re-Thinking Missions*, 33."

the core of all the creeds a nucleus of religious truth, neither Christianity nor any other faith would have anything to build on."[27]

In Hocking's framework, the old pattern of holding Jesus as the only authentic way and denouncing other faiths no longer satisfied the demands of secular culture. This foundational belief led the commission into syncretistic patterns, allowing the cultural environment to take precedence over biblical norms. Hocking proposed that sympathy and love, found in all religions, was the key for stirring up the religious intuition needed for Christianity to flourish.

According to Hocking, the aim of missions was to "seek with people of other lands a true knowledge and love of God, expressing in life and word what we have learned through Jesus Christ, and endeavoring to give effect to his spirit in the life of the world."[28] This aim of missions presents a universal understanding of other religions made effective by the social program of adherents in society. The missionary, in this conception, no longer needs to present Christ as the only hope for the conversion of souls. According to the commission members, the missionary may choose "to do so by way of ministering to health, or to the instruction of the mind, or by improving the social medium."[29] Hocking proposed that both the spiritual and physical spheres find equal weight due to the intended aim of missions.

Linking the physical and the spiritual in a comprehensive partnership led the commission to ask, "If we approach the spiritual life through its physical and social context, shall we continue to keep in mind evangelism as the main business to which all else is subsidiary? Shall these philanthropic activities be regarded solely as a means to the

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[27] Hocking, *Re-Thinking Missions*, 37.

[28] Hocking, *Re-Thinking Missions*, 59.

[29] Hocking, *Re-Thinking Missions*, 65.

end of conversion?"[30] The commission set forth an answer to the questions at hand that attempted to debunk the *means-to-an-end* version of evangelism over social action and ultimately redefined evangelism to mean social action. In their framework, evangelism was no longer defined as primary; therefore, social action could not exist as a means to that end. In defining their understanding of the relationship between social action and evangelism, the commission stated, "Ministry to the secular needs of men in the spirit of Christ is *evangelism*, in the right use of the word."[31]

Carl F. H. Henry

Carl F. H. Henry existed as a central figure in the debate between social action and evangelism and between fundamentalism and modernism.[32] He published many theological treaties that are still widely read today. His work carried into the mid- to late twentieth century, but it began in the 1940s with his famous exposé *The Uneasy Conscience of Modern Fundamentalism*. In the late 1940s, Henry perceived that the fundamentalist branch of the evangelical church possessed critical errors in their understanding of social action.

In the early twentieth century, the modernists' continued drift toward liberal theology led fundamentalists to distance themselves from any orientation of Christianity that conformed to the modernists' new ideas. Unfortunately, this included Christian participation in the social environment. By the time Henry wrote his treaties, many fundamentalists completely rejected any form of social action.[33] Henry responded to this

[30] Hocking, *Re-Thinking Missions*, 67.

[31] Hocking, *Re-Thinking Missions*, 68.

[32] Russell D. Moore, "The Kingdom of God in the Social Ethics of Carl F. H. Henry: A Twenty-First Century Evangelical Reappraisal," *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society* 55, no. 2 (2012): 378.

[33] Carl F. H. Henry, *The Uneasy Conscience of Modern Fundamentalism* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1947), 27.

perceived error by encouraging evangelicals to once again take hold of their social responsibility.

Henry attempted to display the social roots of historic Christianity from the Old Testament to the New Testament. According to Henry, Jesus's participation in healing physical woes in Matthew 11 and Luke 7 led him to conclude, "It is difficult to find room for a gospel cut loose entirely from non-spiritual needs. . . . There is no room here for a gospel that is indifferent to the needs of the total man nor of the global man."[34]

Reacting to a total rejection of social action, Henry desired to remarry the constructs of evangelism and social action in the life of Christians. In many ways, Henry did not intend to provide a theological argument for social action in complete unison with evangelism. Instead, he simply desired that Christians reclaim their social responsibility. In his view, Christians should feel obliged to freely participate in social ministry without the fear of aligning with a modernist version of Christianity.

While presenting a case for social participation, Henry qualified it in relation to evangelism. According to Henry, participation in the social environment does not negate the priority of redemption. Further, world peace was not the determining aspect of human happiness. True and lasting happiness comes ultimately through the redemption of souls. Redemption, Henry stated, is "the essential ingredient in the solution of economic problems."[35]

Henry's view of redemption rivals the sentiments of the International Consultation on the Relationship between Evangelism and Social Responsibility at Grand Rapids in 1982, where social action was deemed as a manifestation of evangelism. In pointing out the apostolic social program found in the book of Acts, Henry made sure to add, "This does not mean that early Christianity charted the course for social reform;

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[34] Henry, *Uneasy Conscience of Modern Fundamentalism*, 34–35.

[35] Henry, *Uneasy Conscience of Modern Fundamentalism*, 35.

rather, it furnished the basic principles and the moral dynamic for such reform, and concentrated on regeneration as the guarantee of bettered conditions."[36] Henry, relying on Ernest F. Scott, maintained a belief that transforming the souls of men naturally leads to change in society. Therefore, a concentrated effort to redeem souls would naturally lead to a better society as men and women lived out their new heart's conviction in the social environment.[37]

Regardless of his qualifying statements, Henry's view of social action stood in distinction to that of the fundamentalists of the early twentieth century. Jerry Ireland adds, "Though clearly believing that social transformation started with individual regeneration, Henry took a more proactive stance than fundamentalism at large and went far beyond this first step. Henry believed firmly that Fundamentalism needed to recapture the ethos of the early church regarding social transformation."[38] In sum, in 1947, Henry's theological reasoning drew a parallel between Old Testament ethics and Jesus's healing of physical bodies in order to encourage evangelicals to participate in social ministry so as not to undermine the primacy of redemption for the human soul.

Mid- to Late Twentieth-Century Proponents

In the early to the mid-twentieth century, the proponents' views of the relationship between social action and evangelism came in response to drastic movements within Christianity. In response to the social gospel on one side or strict fundamentalism on the other, the proponents attempted to establish the basic foundations of their theological beliefs.

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[36] Henry, *Uneasy Conscience of Modern Fundamentalism*, 37.

[37] Henry, *Uneasy Conscience of Modern Fundamentalism*, 37.

[38] Jerry M. Ireland, "Evangelism and Social Concern in the Theology of Carl F. H. Henry," (PhD diss., Liberty Baptist Theological Seminary, 2014), 230.

In the mid- to late twentieth century, the theological climate provided a unique environment that resulted in a modification to the nature of the proponents' theological renderings. At this point in history, the ecumenical movement and the evangelical movement both possessed a large following with concrete ideas of their basic theological presuppositions. Therefore, the missiologists and theologians were freer to provide a more nuanced articulation of the relationship between social action and evangelism for their particular theological position.

In this section, my goal is to highlight the theological arguments on the relationship between social action and evangelism from each end of the spectrum. There was certainly a plethora of authors who wrote on multiple occasions, addressing the specific issue at hand. However, a review of the major proponents will provide the groundwork needed to establish the parameters and theological renderings of each position in order to evaluate the missiology of Adoniram Judson. Beginning with the more liberal side of the spectrum and moving toward the more conservative side, this section will outline the views of Gustavo Gutiérrez, David O. Moberg, John Stott, Lesslie Newbigin, and Arthur Johnston.

Gustavo Gutiérrez

Liberation theology exists as a formal understanding of the relationship between social action and evangelism among liberal proponents due to its views of salvation. Many attest that Gustavo Gutiérrez is the founder and foremost representative of liberation theology.[39] For the purpose of this project, Gutiérrez's theological publications serve as a viable representation of liberation theology and its proponents' understanding of the relationship between evangelism and social action.

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[39] Vasilios Dimitriadis, "Gustavo Gutiérrez: Liberation Theology for a World of Social Justice and Just Peace," *Journal of Ecumenical Studies* 54, no. 3 (2019): 432.

The combination of Gutiérrez's position as a Roman Catholic priest, his nature as a philosopher and theologian, and his context in Peru led Gutiérrez to organize a theological campaign that addressed the socially unjust structures of South America. David Hesselgrave comments, "He consistently points to Scripture and draws upon biblical themes having to do with sin, self-denial, suffering, reconciliation, and salvation. He sometimes applies these themes to individuals, but his primary application is to the clash between classes, to social emancipation and cultural transformation."[40]

Gutiérrez contended, "Theology is reflection, a critical attitude. First comes the commitment to charity, to service. Theology comes 'later.' It is second. The Church's pastoral action is not arrived at as a conclusion from theological premises."[41] This statement highlights a significant attribute of Gutiérrez's theological framework concerning social action. According to Gutiérrez, actions in society should naturally come before theology is considered. Therefore, social action performed in society is not a manifestation of evangelism or even obedience to God. Social action supersedes both evangelism and an understanding of proper action in right relationship with God.

Gutiérrez introduced a dynamic process in which the community and cultural environment first inform the Christian, followed by theological reflection on how to meet the now-visualized need. Gutiérrez added, "Reflecting on the Church's presence and activity in the world means being open to the world, listening to the questions asked in it, being attentive to the successive stages of its historical growth."[42] According to Gutiérrez, this dynamic process of environment preceding theology is an indispensable task.

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[40] David J. Hesselgrave, *Paradigms in Conflict: 15 Key Questions in Christian Missions Today*, ed. Keith E Eitel, 2nd ed. (Grand Rapids: Kregel Academic, 2018), 108.

[41] Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Notes for a Theology of Liberation," *Theological Studies* 31, no. 2 (1970): 245.

[42] Gutiérrez, "Notes for a Theology of Liberation," 245.

In Gutiérrez's framework, charity is considered the center of the Christian life. Relying on Paul's teaching of faith working through love, Gutiérrez taught that charity serves to govern the construct of praxis preceding theology. Gutiérrez explained that faith is not the affirmation of truths but consists of a particular posture toward life. Using this basis, he determined that salvation comes through expressions of love in society instead of through faith in a proclaimed truth.[43] Margaret Campbell argues that Gutiérrez's statements on praxis preceding theology creates a "new hermeneutical starting point for biblical and doctrinal interpretation. What he proposes here is a new kind of discourse about faith, based on an expanded, 'praxical' understanding of how that faith functions in human life."[44]

Hesselgrave identifies another distinguishing mark of liberation theology by noting, "Liberationists tend to equate the biblical notion of salvation from sin with the struggle of poor and oppressed people for justice."[45] The equating of salvation from sin with social liberation is a recurring theme in the theology of Gutiérrez. Gutiérrez argued, "Sin demands a radical liberation, which in turn necessarily implies a political liberation."[46] Gutiérrez continued his equation of salvation by connecting political liberation, human liberation, and liberation from sin as one "all encompassing salvific process." In this view, there is no distinction between evangelism and social action. If one performs social action, then he or she is evangelizing in the sense of enacting salvation. For Gutiérrez, liberation from political oppression *is* salvation.

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[43] Gustavo Gutiérrez, *A Theology of Liberation: History, Politics, and Salvation*, ed. and trans. Caridad Inda and John Eagleson, rev. ed. (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1988), 6.

[44] Margaret M. Campbell, *Critical Theory and Liberation Theology: A Comparison of the Initial Work of Jürgen Habermas and Gustavo Gutiérrez*, American University Studies Series 7: Theology and Religion, vol. 140 (New York: Peter Lang, 1999), 62.

[45] Hesselgrave, *Paradigms in Conflict*, 108.

[46] Gutiérrez, *A Theology of Liberation*, 103.

Combining Gutiérrez's view of charity as the central construct of Christianity and his view of equating salvation from sin with political liberation completely changes the historical meaning of evangelism. Evangelism, defined as proclaiming the message of Jesus Christ for the salvation from sin, becomes an outdated construct replaced by a more comprehensive salvation. When evangelism and political liberation unite as one all-encompassing salvific process, Christians are free to wholly participate in social ministry and concern themselves exclusively with the political liberation of society. According to proponents of this view, the liberating of society is evangelism as it results in physical salvation from oppression.

Gutiérrez, on more than one occasion, presented a universalistic version of salvation. For example, he stated, "Persons are saved if they open themselves up to God and to others, even if they are not clearly aware that they are doing so."[47] Even if people do not confess Christ as their Lord, they still accept communion with God when they "renounce their selfishness, and seek to create an authentic fellowship among human beings."[48] Likewise, according to Gutiérrez, they reject God if they are unwilling to "build up this world."[49]

In the theology of Gutiérrez, the idea of social action's serving as a bridge to or manifestation of evangelism is a complete reduction of salvation. Gutiérrez critiqued the people who saw Christ's work as only touching the social order indirectly. Instead, Gutiérrez concluded that "salvation of Christ is a radical liberation from all misery, all despoliation, all alienation."[50]

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[47] Gutiérrez, *A Theology of Liberation*, 84.

[48] Gutiérrez, *A Theology of Liberation*, 85.

[49] Gutiérrez, *A Theology of Liberation*, 85.

[50] Gutiérrez, *A Theology of Liberation*, 104.

Gutiérrez's preoccupation with praxis and the unjust cultural experience of South America led him to redefine the idea of sin. For Gutiérrez, the consequence of sin leading to societal disruption took precedence over the effect of sin in the individual soul. Gutiérrez tried to qualify his belief by claiming that his view did not detract from the gospel but instead sought to enrich society. Despite his attempt, the linking of political liberation and salvation from sin as well as the focus on the social consequence of sin over the individual soul displayed a strong priority toward society.[51]

David O. Moberg

In the early 1970s, between the Berlin congress of 1966 and the Lausanne congress of 1974, David Moberg endeavored to provide a theological balance to the tension-riddled debate between social action and evangelism. According to Moberg, "Those who emphasize personal versus social ministries in contemporary Christendom are a continuation of the fundamentalist-modernist controversies, even though details of the issues, terminology, and groups involved have changed."[52]

Moberg visualized three unique positions—two extremes and one mediating—in the debate between social action and evangelism. One extreme, according to Moberg, was that some in the evangelistic camp viewed their primary responsibility as soul-winning. Moberg argued, "Since soul-winning is the chief goal, little direct attention is given to social problems except to relate them to that main objective."[53] Interestingly, Moberg offered a disparaging critique of this position by presenting an exaggerated basis for their actions. According to Moberg, Christians who prioritize evangelism attempt to win souls only to gain stars in their heavenly crowns. He imagined them as big game

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[51] Campbell, *Critical Theory and Liberation Theology*, 85.

[52] David O. Moberg, *The Great Reversal: Evangelism versus Social Concern*, Evangelical Perspectives (Philadelphia: Lippincott, 1972), 15.

[53] Moberg, *The Great Reversal*, 20.

hunters stalking their prey in hopes of capturing their trophies. All other functions of the church act as bait, luring lost sinners into the net of the kingdom of God. These types of Christians, according to Moberg, are delighted at the mess in society, for the mess will either drive them to seek an answer in Jesus or serve to represent the approaching eschatological return of Christ.[54]

As he continued his critical portrayal of the evangelistic position, Moberg highlighted other perceived weaknesses of this extreme view. Moberg proposed that evangelistic proponents believed their decision to follow Christ inevitably led to a change in heart. In this view, dishonest people become honest, corrupt people become clean, and criminals become law-abiding. As these changes occurred in the hearts of individuals, they naturally affected the society around them. Therefore, "soul-winning is thus seen as the very highest form of social concern."[55]

On the other extreme, Moberg claimed, "socially involved Christians view deeds of kindness as ends in themselves rather than as 'bait' to entice others to Christ or the church. Doing good is for them the highest form of preaching, for they see it as conveying the message of God's love to all mankind by deeds and examples."[56] In this view, evil lies not only in individuals but also in societal systems. Therefore, ministering to individuals alone cannot root out the inherent evil that exists in their societies. The war against sin is best fought in the realm of society.

Moberg sensed inadequacies in both extreme positions, and he added that in previous times, evangelicals possessed a balanced position. Consequently, *The Great Reversal* was his attempt to offer a more excellent alternative—a mediating position between the two extremes.

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[54] Moberg, *The Great Reversal*, 20–21.

[55] Moberg, *The Great Reversal*, 22.

[56] Moberg, *The Great Reversal*, 23.

Moberg's position can be visualized in his analysis between corporate sin and social responsibility. He understood how evangelicals could react against the belief of corporate social sin leading to corporate guilt. In this understanding, the individual cannot do anything to help the social situation, and in turn, no individual possesses the burden of guilt. However, Moberg maintained, "Awareness of the reality of social evil does not remove individual responsibility."[57] The correct position, according to Moberg, does not rely on an overemphasis toward social sin or an overemphasis toward individual sin.

Moberg relied on Matthew 5:13 to display his awareness of Christians' responsibility to be salt and light in this world. If Christians dismiss social action on the basis of corporate sin and guilt, then they would, in turn, forfeit their responsibility as salt. Therefore, due to Jesus's command to be salt and light, Christians cannot ignore the social environment.

Moberg connected the two constructs of evangelism and social action and argued for a particular relevance between the two. He asserted, "The victims of social evil will not hear the words of the gospel if they are so caught up in suffering that it preoccupies their thoughts, energy, and time."[58] In Moberg's version, to rescue and care for people "calls for much more than a verbalized message of the gospel. It demands a demonstration of love that meets immediate felt needs in addition to the proclamation of God's love which is communicated best of all by the Living Word, Jesus Christ." These two statements from Moberg offer a unique perspective of the relationship between social action and evangelism. Linking the two in a mediating position entails that lost people cannot hear the gospel if they are in a situation of suffering. Also, the verbalized gospel of Jesus Christ is not enough to turn hearts toward God. There also must exist an action to meet felt needs.

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[57] David O. Moberg, *Wholistic Christianity: An Appeal for a Dynamic, Balanced Faith* (Elgin, IL: Brethren Press, 1985), 101.

[58] Moberg, *The Great Reversal*, 144.

John Stott

John Stott served as the primary architect of the historic Lausanne Covenant

and the "Evangelism and Social Responsibility" report. However, Stott's involvement in

the debate between evangelism and social action began before the publication of

Lausanne's foundational document. Stott initially provided a theological voice in

preparation for the World Congress on Evangelism in Berlin in 1966. Additionally, in

1968, Stott attended the Fourth Assembly of the World Council of Churches at Uppsala

as an advisor. The conference assigned Stott to section 2 ("Renewal in Mission"). As a

result of this assignment, Stott claimed, "I was immediately plunged into the thick of

contemporary debate about the meaning of mission."[59]

In Berlin, Stott initially argued in support of the traditional view of mission

and evangelism that focused primarily on preaching, converting, and teaching as outlined

in the Great Commission of Matthew 28. However, by the time the Lausanne committee

formed, Stott had modified his view. Stott stated,

> Today, however, I would express myself differently. It is not just that the
> Commission includes a duty to teach converts everything Jesus had previously
> commanded (Matthew 28:20), and that social responsibility is among the things
> which Jesus commanded. I now see more clearly that not only the consequence of
> the Commission but the actual Commission itself must be understood to include
> social as well as evangelistic responsibility, unless we are to be guilty of distorting
> the words of Jesus.[60]

Hesselgrave argued that Stott's change in position resulted in a change to his

biblical basis for missions. By abandoning his prior conviction concerning the importance

of the Great Commission text in Matthew, Stott "had come to believe that the Johannine

statements (17:18 and, especially, 20:21) should take precedence. Moreover, he argued

that in saying, 'As the Father hath sent me, so send I you,' Jesus deliberately made his

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[59] John R. W. Stott and Christopher J. H. Wright, *Christian Mission in the Modern World*, upd. and exp. ed (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Books, 2015), 9.

[60] John R. W. Stott, *Christian Mission in the Modern World*, IVP Classics (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Books, 2008), 37.

own mission (as summarized in Luke 4:18–19—a favored passage of liberals) a model for ours."[61]

Stott, at times, agreed with the notion of social action as a consequence of and bridge to evangelism, but much like the Grand Rapids statement, he preferred to view the relationship in terms of a partnership. Stott asserted, "As partners the two belong to each other and yet are independent of each other. . . . Neither is means to the other, or even a manifestation of the other. For each is an end in itself. Both are expressions of unfeigned love."[62]

The view of a close partnership elevates social responsibility to the same level of importance as evangelism. Instead of viewing the Christian duty as evangelism, the new paradigm proposed by Stott gave equal grounds for someone to pursue their gifts in a social direction. As a body working together, some may labor toward evangelism, while others may exert their efforts toward social action. Regardless of the direction, both are justified in the mission of God. Stott asserted that his view of partnership "does not mean that words and works, evangelism and social action, are such inseparable partners that all of us must engage in both all the time. Situations vary, and so do Christian callings."[63] He concluded this idea of partnership by adding, "To see need and to possess the remedy compels love to act, and whether the action will be evangelistic or social, or indeed political, depends on what we 'see' and what we 'have'."

Stott believed in an intrinsic connection between body, soul, and community. He thought that Christians should not see a person as body alone, nor should they seek only to love one's soul. Stott further claimed that Christians should not minister to people

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[61] David Hesselgrave, "Redefining Holism," Missio Nexus, July 1, 1999, https://missionexus.org/redefining-holism/.

[62] John R. W. Stott, *Christian Mission in the Modern World* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1975), 27.

[63] Stott, *Christian Mission in the Modern World* (1975), 28.

as body and soul *in isolation from society*. According to Stott, God created man as body and soul *within community*. Therefore, Christians "must inevitably be concerned for his [i.e., man's] total welfare, the good of his soul, his body, and his community."[64]

Some may perceive Stott's view as a complete equal partnership between evangelism and social action. Regardless of how close Stott brought the two into partnership, he reserved a particular priority for evangelism. Stott contended that Christians should react to social injustices with compassion and utter concern but, at the same time, understand humanity's greatest travesty as separation from God.

Stott called on the example of the apostle Paul in Romans 9 and 10 to display the biblical priority of the reconciliation of souls. Paul writes, "I have great sorrow and unceasing anguish in my heart. For I could wish that I myself were accursed and cut off from Christ for the sake of my brothers, my kinsmen according to the flesh" (Rom 9:2–3). On these verses, Stott commentated, "What was the cause of his anguish? That they had lost their national Jewish independence and were under the colonial heel of Rome? . . . No. . . . The context makes it plain beyond doubt that the 'salvation' Paul desired for them was their acceptance with God."[65] Therefore, Stott concluded, "Moreover, in our evangelistic concern our chief burden should be for . . . the more than 2,700 million unreached peoples of the world."[66]

Lesslie Newbigin

Lesslie Newbigin, in many ways, aligned with the sentiments of Stott in his theological understanding of the relationship between social action and evangelism. However, Newbigin presented unique arguments in his understanding that display helpful nuances of the exact relationship.

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[64] Stott, *Christian Mission in the Modern World* (2008), 47.

[65] Stott, *Christian Mission in the Modern World* (1975), 35–36.

[66] Stott, *Christian Mission in the Modern World* (1975), 36.

Newbigin chose to begin his argument with a proper starting position. Evangelistic proponents tend to start with the individual and extrapolate out into society indirectly, while social action proponents begin with society and extrapolate to the individual. Newbigin argued, "We begin with the Bible as the unique interpretation of human and cosmic history and move from that starting point to an understanding of what the Bible shows us of the meaning of personal life."[67] The Bible reveals the story of God's movement in history and contains prophecies of a future fulfillment that all of history is moving toward. Therefore, according to Newbigin, the Bible serves as the appropriate source to determine action and provide hope.

Newbigin defined the Christian world mission in terms of proclaiming and propelling. The proclamation of the biblical story of Jesus's life, death, and resurrection offers humanity a hope that transcends any movement or program in history. In Newbigin's view, the term "proclamation" consists of both word and deed—to set the two against each other is absurd. He stated, "The central reality is neither word nor act, but the total life of a community enabled by the Spirit to live in Christ, sharing his passion and the power of his resurrection."[68] The new reality displayed through word and deed confronts culture with a crisis.

In Matthew 10, Jesus sends his disciples out to heal the people of their diseases and deliver them from evil spirits. Later in the passage, he also gives them instruction to preach of the coming kingdom of God. In Newbigin's framework, the disciples' healing ministry indicates that something new is happening and, consequently, demands a response. The acts in and of themselves cannot provide an adequate explanation for what is happening. Therefore, in the later verses of the passage, Jesus commands his disciples to preach. Preaching or proclaiming the words of the gospel of Jesus is the explanation

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[67] Lesslie Newbigin, *The Gospel in a Pluralist Society* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1989), 128.

[68] Newbigin, *The Gospel in a Pluralist Society*, 137.

for the new reality in their midst. Given the presence of a new reality working through word and deed, individuals then have the choice to "recognize the truth and believe, or else continue on their way facing in the wrong direction and pursuing that which is not God's kingdom."[69] This moment of decision and opportunity to join God's movement and future eschatological reality is brought into being by the combination of word and deed. Without deed, there is no new reality, and without word, there is no true explanation of what is transpiring. Both are intrinsically connected to serve the ultimate goal of leading people to believe in the gospel of Jesus.

In Newbigin's partnership between word and deed, he did not explicitly identify evangelism, or word, as the essential Christian action. However, his version of the relationship naturally indicated a priority for the verbal proclamation of the gospel. Deed exists in order to introduce a higher purpose. Word exists to explain this higher purpose. The higher purpose is not connected with the social environment but to belief in the historical reality of a man who died and rose again and offers salvation to all who believe.

Later in life, Newbigin spoke more directly to the issue of priority in an address to the World Conference on Mission and Evangelism at Brazil in 1996. He explained,

> Justice, peace, and the integrity of creation . . . are part of our common responsibility as human beings and insofar as we neglect them, we certainly contradict the gospel that we preach. But that which has been committed to the church exclusively, and to which no other agency will perform, is the responsibility to tell this story.[70]

Newbigin maintained the use of the word "kingdom" but qualified his sentiments toward its meaning. He thought that the ecumenical version of kingdom

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[69] Newbigin, *The Gospel in a Pluralist Society*, 133.

[70] Lesslie Newbigin and Geoffrey Wainwright, *Signs amid the Rubble: The Purposes of God in Human History* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2003), 115.

described programs of justice and peace exercised by Christians. Newbigin argued for a version of the kingdom completely defined by a person. In Newbigin's view, the kingdom had a face and a name. The cry for God's kingdom to come was not best defined as delivering God's character of love and peace to world structures. Rather, according to Newbigin, the cry for God's kingdom to come was a cry for the return of Christ. He viewed the separation of kingdom from Jesus and kingdom initiatives toward social renewal as a complete betrayal of the notion's historical meaning.[71]

Arthur Johnston

Providing a thoroughly researched historical argument, Arthur Johnston endeavored to combat the liberal shift in theology present in the ecumenical movement as well as in some evangelical circles. Johnston feared that the new theology supported by the ecumenical movement would eventually root out historical evangelism altogether. Therefore, he battled to preserve the evangelical view of priority for evangelism that seemed to be eroding in front of his very eyes.

Johnston perceived that higher criticism of the Bible created a theological environment that supported the growth of the social gospel. Johnston articulated this new theology or social gospel as follows: "The kingdom was on earth (community) and Christ sought to establish an ethical reign on earth as the final objective of the Gospel. . . . The Kingdom, consequently, is broader than the Church; and man's responsibility, consequently, is to work together with God as His instrument to establish God's reign in the social order."[72] Social gospel proponents saw the declining moral state of the culture as a hindrance to the coming of God's kingdom to earth. Also, the sin present in society was no longer seen as individual but corporate. Therefore, they devised a social ethic

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[71] Newbigin, *The Gospel in a Pluralist Society*, 134.

[72] Arthur P. Johnston, *The Battle for World Evangelism* (Wheaton, IL: Tyndale House, 1978), 37–38.

founded upon Jesus's life to bring about change in the moral environment of the society as opposed to the sinful heart of individuals.

In this theological environment, individual evangelism was no longer seen as a capable method of bringing society out of its sinful condition. Something more significant and more expansive was needed. However, this expansion sought to maintain a notion of evangelism. Johnston purported that after the sharp critique of the Jerusalem conference in 1928 and the Hocking report in 1932, the IMC felt compelled to retain some sense of evangelism in order to preserve fellowship with their evangelical brothers.[73] Therefore, they proposed the notion of Larger Evangelism. [74]

Even though they preserved evangelism in name, the view of Larger Evangelism shifted the notion of individual soul-winning to a conception of the universal church displaying God's love to the world in order to meet man's needs. Essentially, Johnston claimed, the corporate presence of love in the world replaced the individual proclamation of the gospel.[75]

In Johnston's view, the ecumenical redefinition of evangelism came from their view of the Bible. Johnston believed that their critical bias and their rejection of the Bible as God's Word supplanted the truth found in it. He claimed, "This means that the Christian has no certainty in turning to passages like John 5:24, Romans 10:9,10, and 1 John 5:11, 12 and therein to find Apostolic assurance for his personal salvation by faith in the resurrected living Christ."[76] The Bible and the apostolic pattern, in this view, is replaced by the church and/or the community of believers in the world. According to Johnston, the removal of truth and the pattern of the apostolic leaders distorts the

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[73] Arthur P. Johnston, *World Evangelism and the Word of God* (Minneapolis: Bethany Fellowship, 1974), 166.

[74] Johnston, *Battle for World Evangelism*, 69–76.

[75] Johnston, *Battle for World Evangelism*, 72.

[76] Johnston, *World Evangelism and the Word of God*, 256.

essential task given to them and entails a task devised by Christians who today through their belief in universalism focus "primarily on the man-to-man 'salvation' of the world system, not man's salvation from the moral judgement of sin that separates eternally from God."[77]

Johnston unapologetically maintained, "Evangelism is central and essential."[78] However, in his view of priority for evangelism, he still preserved a place for sociopolitical action. Johnston understood social action as an integral part of the Great Commission as represented by Christ's words "teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you" (Matt 28:20). Johnston believed that the social component was a part of the command to follow Christ but not the actual mission of the church. The Christian expression of love, as evidenced by Christians' hospitals, schools, and orphanages, represents their care for the sociopolitical needs of society. However, Johnston saw these social actions as means "which contribute to that mission of evangelism."[79]

Early Twenty-First Century

As the new millennium appeared, the debate between the relationship of social action and evangelism continued. Fresh voices replaced the great authors of the 1970s. Bryant Myers, writing from the perspective of relief and development, championed the idea of partnership with an emphasis on social action. Christopher Wright, filling the shoes of John Stott, wrote from the perspective of partnership with a slight emphasis toward evangelism. Lastly, David Hesselgrave, Kevin DeYoung, and Greg Gilbert wrote works supporting unique levels of priority for evangelism. The various authors' arguments are not incredibly unique from their mentors of the late twentieth century. However, the contemporary voices present the complexity of this debate and offer

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[77] Johnston, *World Evangelism and the Word of God*, 257.

[78] Johnston, *Battle for World Evangelism*, 357.

[79] Johnston, *Battle for World Evangelism*, 360.

nuances that will serve this project in evaluating the particular missiology of Adoniram Judson in relation to social action and evangelism.

Bryant Myers

At the dawn of the new millennium, Bryant Myers provided a few theological resources that explained a theology of the relationship between social action and evangelism. Myers's primary work, *Walking with the Poor*, represents how some new thinkers of the modern age developed their reasoning. From the onset of his famous work, Myers desires to present a new model of transformational development for the changing world. In his depiction, Myers seeks "an understanding of development in which physical, social, and spiritual development are seamlessly interrelated."[80]

For this seamless interrelation to exist, Myers needed to develop new terminology. For Myers, the term "evangelism" falls short in serving as the appropriate term to represent the Christian duty. If the word evangelism remains, then his version of development and the seamless interrelation between the social, physical, and spiritual cannot exist. Myers argues, "Evangelism tends to be used in the limited sense of referring to the verbal proclamation of the truth of the gospel of Jesus Christ. I need a phrase that includes proclamation, but that is not limited to it."[81] Therefore, Myers prefers the term "Christian witness" as opposed to "evangelism." However, Myers's appeal is not intended to completely erase the goal of evangelism. He maintains, "The best news I have is the knowledge that God has, through his Son, made it possible for every human being to be in covenant relationship with God. We need only say yes to this offer."[82]

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[80] Bryant L. Myers, *Walking with the Poor: Principles and Practices of Transformational Development* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1999), 1.

[81] Myers, *Walking with the Poor*, 4.

[82] Myers, *Walking with The Poor*, 3.

Myers claims, "The gospel message is an inseparable mix of life, deed, word, and sign."[83] Therefore, verbal proclamation, in terms of evangelism, is only one of four aspects of the gospel and fails to completely define what is meant by its message. In his framework, evangelism—or the mere proclamation of the story of Jesus—is only one way to witness and proclaim the gospel. Myers includes social action as another form of evangelism or proclaiming the message of Jesus. Proclaiming in this sense moves beyond words and entails actions in society. The term Christian witness serves to more comprehensively represent the interrelation between the unique forms of proclamation.[84]

The inclusiveness of the gospel, as defined by Myers, opens an opportunity for social action to find equal partnership alongside evangelism. The gospel is no longer solely comprised of the message of Jesus but now includes social action as an inseparable aspect of proclaiming the gospel of Jesus.

Even though Myers wishes to provide an interrelated description of the physical, social, and spiritual, these realms remain distinct. Myers claims, "If we reduce the gospel solely to naming the name of Christ, persons are saved but the social order is ignored."[85] According to Myers, the proclamation of the story of Jesus and the salvation of the individual is a reductionistic version of Christianity. This version has nothing to offer for the social environment.

Some propose that if individuals are intrinsically connected with society, then by their salvation and change of person, they will naturally affect the social environment. In Myers' description, however, this is not the case. The saving of souls does nothing to impact the social order. Therefore, one must conclude that Myers views the individual and the society as separate objects rather than viewing society as a structure comprised of

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[83] Myers, *Walking with The Poor*, 134.

[84] Myers, *Walking with the Poor*, 4.

[85] Myers, *Walking with the Poor*, 49.

individuals. In turn, Christians must work for the redemption of souls as well as the redemption of the social order because both are compromised by the fall and both need a separate gospel message.[86]

The basic framework of Myers's theology enables a unique interpretation of Scripture. First, the Great Commission text in Matthew shifts from the individual to corporate society defined as nations. Myers argues that the "social dimension of human life is also fallen and is thus a target of God's redemptive work."[87] Therefore, he proposes that the Great Commission "calls for making the nations into disciples, not just people. This commission of the living Christ instructs us to baptize the nations in the name of the triune God."

Second, Mark 3:14–15 serves as the base text that outlines Myers's ideal understanding of the Christian life. With this text, Myers points out that being precedes action. Before Jesus sent his disciples to do anything, he initially desired that they be with him. From this being then comes the action of preaching, healing, and casting out demons. Myers employs the illustration of a pyramid: being with Christ at the top, followed by the three lower prongs preaching (Gospel-as-Word), healing (Gospel-as-deed), and casting out (Gospel-as-sign).[88] Using these texts, Myers attempts to unite the ideas of evangelism and social action into a full and equal partnership. Myers "refuses the dichotomy between material and spiritual, between evangelism and social action, between loving God and loving neighbor."[89]

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[86] Myers, *Walking with the Poor*, 49.

[87] Myers, *Walking with the Poor*, 52.

[88] Myers, *Walking with the Poor*, 53–54.

[89] Bryant Myers, "Another Look at 'Holistic Mission': A Response," Missio Nexus, July 1, 1999, https://missionexus.org/another-look-at-holistic-mission-a-response/.

Christopher Wright

   Utilizing biblical theology as a guide, Christopher Wright proposes a missional hermeneutic rooted in the unfolding plan of God. Most would agree that the Bible speaks to missions or at least supports the idea. Wright goes beyond a mere reference to missions by validating it as the plan of God from the Old Testament to the New. Wright desires to highlight the thrust or central message of the entire Bible. Simply focusing on proof texts to establish a basis for missions misses the point of the entire grand narrative of God.

   Wright's *The Mission of God* offers great value for the debate between evangelism and social action by providing an expansive biblical argument of a particular position. Wright desires to balance the idea of evangelism and social action by displaying how the two have worked in unison from the foundation of the world.

   Wright sees the Great Commission in Matthew as a "Christological mutation of the original Abrahamic commission—'Go . . . and be a blessing . . . and all the nations on earth will be blessed through you.'"[90] Wright claims that Genesis 12:1–3 stands as the original commission of God and is binding on all Christians today. Therefore, the Christian's commission, according to Wright, is to be a blessing. Regarding Genesis 12:1–3, Wright comments, "It would be entirely appropriate, and no bad thing, if we took *this* text as 'the Great Commission.'"[91] Wright's argument from Genesis 12 represents his desire to elevate the nature of social action in the mission task. He concludes, "There could be worse ways of summing up what mission is supposed to be all about than 'Go . . . and be a blessing.'"

   Wright is very concerned that the Christian mission flows from God's mission.[92] He argues that the exodus event serves as one of the clearest examples of

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[90] Christopher J. H. Wright, *The Mission of God: Unlocking the Bible's Grand Narrative* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2006), 213.

[91] Wright, *Mission of God*, 214.

[92] Christopher J. H. Wright, *The Mission of God's People: A Biblical Theology of the Church's Mission*, Biblical Theology for Life (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2010), 24.

God's mission. God's comprehensive deliverance of the nation of Israel from slavery in Egypt included political, economic, social, and spiritual redemption.[93] According to Wright, "God responded to *all* the dimensions of Israel's need."[94] He did not simply redeem their spiritual nature, nor did he merely redeem their social situation and leave them to worship false gods. Wright uses the totality of redemption in Exodus to display the missional nature of God and, from this example, sets the stage for Christian missions today. Wright argues, "The inevitable outcome surely is that *exodus-shaped redemption* demands *exodus-shaped mission*. And that means that our commitment to mission must demonstrate the same broad totality of concern for human need that God demonstrated in what he did for Israel."[95]

Opening up missions to include economic, social, political, and spiritual redemption presents many options to choose from as one pursues the mission task.[96] Wright contends, "It seems to me there are as many missions as there are kinds of science—probably far more in fact. And in the same way, in the variety of missions God has entrusted to his church as a whole, it is unseemly for one kind of mission to dismiss another out of a superiority complex."[97] Therefore, Wright dislikes the old adage of missions that entails "If everything is mission, then nothing is mission." This type of phrasing explicitly reserves the word "mission" to define cross-cultural sending for evangelism. Instead, Wright prefers to conclude that "if everything is mission . . . , [then] everything is mission." A focus on cross-cultural sending for the purpose of evangelism is too narrow of a definition. The mission of God's people entails not only evangelism but also social action, creation care, and anything else the church does to participate in

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[93] Wright, *Mission of God's People*, 101.

[94] Wright, *Mission of God*, 271.

[95] Wright, *Mission of God*, 275.

[96] Wright, *Mission of God's People*, 25.

[97] Wright, *Mission of God's People*, 26.

the exodus-shaped mission of God to bring redemption to the political, economic, social, or spiritual realm.

According to Wright, a proper portrayal of God's mission must have a liberationist dimension. Throughout history, God has battled with oppression, bondage, and injustice. Therefore, Christians as his followers should fight the same battles, seeking to deliver the whole of creation and not humanity alone.[98] While proposing a liberationist perspective, Wright does not wish to align with liberationism as outlined by Gutiérrez. Wright argues, "To think that social action is all there is to mission, while failing to lead people to the knowledge, worship and service of God in Christ, is to condemn those whom we may, in one way or another, 'lead people out of slavery' to repeat the history of Israel."[99]

On the other hand, Wright aims to lead people away from a focus solely on evangelism. For Wright, mission includes evangelism, not in superiority to social action but alongside it. Wright summarizes mission as evangelism, teaching, compassion, justice, and creation care.[100] These five elements construct Wright's three-prong approach of cultivating the church, engaging society, and caring for creation. Wright concludes, "The gospel is God's good news, through the cross and resurrection of Jesus Christ, for individual persons, *and* for society, *and* for creation. All three are broken and suffering because of sin; all three are included in the redeeming love and mission of God; all three must be part of the comprehensive mission of God's people."[101]

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[98] Wright, *Mission of God*, 44.

[99] Wright, *Mission of God*, 286–87.

[100] Christopher J. H. Wright, "Participatory Mission: The Mission of God's People Revealed in the Whole Bible Story," in *Four Views on the Church's Mission*, ed. Jason S. Sexton, Counterpoints: Bible & Theology (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2017), 80.

[101] Wright, "Participatory Mission," 81–82.

David Hesselgrave

David Hesselgrave writes and speaks extensively defending a view that identifies evangelism and church planting in priority over other ancillary activities of the church, including social action. Hesselgrave argues, "With reference to spiritual transformation and social transformation, it gives priority to spiritual transformation. With reference to spirit, mind, and body, it gives priority to the spirit or the soul. With reference to social action and evangelism, it gives priority to evangelism."[102]

Hesselgrave unapologetically ascribes priority to evangelism and renders all subsequent ministries of the church as subordinate or supportive. The aim and the goal of the Christian is evangelism. Social ministry may serve as a bridge or even as a consequence of evangelism, but it does not share in the aim or function of evangelism. When asked to articulate the importance of different components of the missionary task, Hesselgrave concludes as follows: "Evangelism is 100% important. . . . Training is 100% important. . . . Church planting is 100% important. . . . All are of fundamental importance."[103]

In maintaining a priority for evangelism, Hesselgrave does not wish to neglect social ministry or only confine cross-cultural work to evangelism.[104] His version of priority does not necessitate dismissal but rather a reallocation of relationship. Challengers of his framework purport that Hesselgrave dismisses essential functions of Christian obedience toward Scriptures like the Great Commandment to love God and neighbor. Hesselgrave responds by adding, "The Great Commandment neither completes the Great Commission, nor competes with it. It was a summation of the Law and, as one of Christ's commands, complements the Great Commission. It is to be obeyed along with

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[102] Hesselgrave, *Paradigms in Conflict*, 109.

[103] Hesselgrave, "Redefining Holism."

[104] Hesselgrave, *Paradigms in Conflict*, 109.

all other things Christ commanded."[105] Hesselgrave fears that viewing the Great Commandment as the Great Commission transmutes the Christian duty with the Christian mission.

Hesselgrave, on more than one occasion, argues against the paradigm of mission proposed by Stott. In his opinion, Stott attempted to establish a middle ground between the liberal and conservative perspectives. Instead of bringing liberals and evangelicals together, however, Stott created a new and broader understanding of mission that allowed evangelicals to deviate from their traditional perspective.[106] In reaction to Stott's proposal and the subsequent shift toward the liberal agenda, Hesselgrave pleads with evangelicals to return to their heritage.[107] Hesselgrave contends,

> We can feed some of the hungry, but we cannot feed the whole world. We can help heal some of the sick, but we cannot heal the whole world. We can support the rights of some disenfranchised people, but we cannot enfranchise the whole world. But we can evangelize the whole world, and no one else will do it if we do not. In Matthew 24 our sovereign Lord tells us that it can and will be done; and in Matthew 28 he tells us both that we must do it and how it is to be done.[108]

Hesselgrave argues from other vantage points to establish his view of the priority of evangelism. One such way is his explanation of incarnationalism versus representationalism. Relying on Andreas Köstenberger's work in Johannine scholarship, Hesselgrave highlights two very distinct biblical models of missions—incarnationalism and representationalism.[109]

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[105] Hesselgrave, "Redefining Holism."

[106] Hesselgrave, "Redefining Holism."

[107] Hesselgrave's attempt to persuade the church to return to its original position of prioritizing evangelism led to the creation of the Evangelical Missiological Society. Harold Netland argues that the group was organized due to the perceived need of Hesselgrave and Donald McGavran to establish a society of leaders committed to the authority of Scripture and to the priority of evangelism and church planting in missions. Herold A. Netland, "Evangelical Missiological Society (EMS)," in Moreau, Netland, and Van Engen, *Evangelical Dictionary of World Missions*, 333–34.

[108] Hesselgrave, "Redefining Holism."

[109] For more information on the biblical argument of incarnationalism versus representationalism, see Andreas J. Köstenberger, *The Missions of Jesus and the Disciples According to the*

Incarnationalists, according to Hesselgrave, "attempt to build on principles and models developed from the history of God's people in the Old Testament and from Jesus in his kingdom mission. In either case, they propose that we continue doing what they see God doing throughout history and most significantly in the ministry of Jesus."[110] As a result, incarnationalists primarily focus on the exodus narrative, the servant passages in Isaiah, John 17:18, John 20:21, and Luke 4:16–20 to build their theology. Incarnationalism proponents actively attempt to establish shalom, liberate the oppressed, and minister to individuals, society, and creation through word, deed, and sign because that is the example set by God and Jesus in their mission to the world.

According to Hesselgrave, proponents of incarnationalism use John 20:21 to place ministries of healing and social betterment as well as the struggle for justice at the very heart of missions.[111] Hesselgrave aggressively comments, "But to say that good works constitute the Great Commission, or the heart of the mission, or that the Johannine statement supersedes the synoptic statements, is to fly in the face of sound exegesis and clear thinking."[112]

In distinction to incarnationalism, representationalists see a "discontinuity between the respective missions of Jesus and of his disciples. It acknowledges the uniqueness of Jesus' person and work while viewing the primary task of his disciples as

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Fourth Gospel: With Implications for the Fourth Gospel's Purpose and the Mission of the Contemporary Church (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1998).

[110] Hesselgrave, *Paradigms in Conflict*, 132.

[111] David J. Hesselgrave, *Planting Churches Cross-Culturally: North America and Beyond*, 2nd ed. (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2000), 22.

[112] Hesselgrave, *Planting Churches Cross-Culturally*, 22.

witnessing to Jesus."[113] Therefore, they, according to Christopher Little, "consider themselves as representing Christ to the world instead of incarnating him before it."[114]

Hesselgrave highlights a significant component of representationalism by displaying the apostle Paul's emphasis toward the completed work of Christ as opposed to the details of his life while on earth. While one can certainly emulate partial aspects of Jesus's work on earth, Hesselgrave notes that through incarnationalism, one "runs the risk of detracting the uniqueness of his person and the fulfillment of his mission."[115] Likewise, Hesselgrave purports that Christians best serve as ambassadors and witnesses *to* the distinct Christ instead of *as* the distinct Christ. In this frame of thought, Hesselgrave identifies the apostle Paul as the primary model for Christians to emulate in their mission to the world.

Hesselgrave uses Paul's model to construct the Pauline Cycle.[116] That is, Hesselgrave uses the apostle Paul's example in Scripture to formulate a pattern for followers of Christ to imitate as they obey the Great Commission. Hesselgrave identifies this cycle as Paul's master plan of evangelism and church development. Hesselgrave realizes that Paul did not use the same cycle in every city or on all occasions. Consequently, Hesselgrave constructs the Pauline Cycle by combining the *typical* pattern of Paul's work as seen in his epistles and the narrative of Acts.

Kevin DeYoung and Greg Gilbert

In 2011, Kevin DeYoung and Greg Gilbert collaborated to offer a modern articulation of the church's mission in relation to social justice, shalom, and the Great

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[113] Köstenberger, *The Missions of Jesus and the Disciples*, 3–4.

[114] Christopher R. Little, *Mission in the Way of Paul: Biblical Mission for the Church in the Twenty-First Century*, Studies in Biblical Literature 80 (New York: Peter Lang, 2005), 84.

[115] Hesselgrave, *Paradigms in Conflict*, 138.

[116] Hesselgrave, *Planting Churches Cross-Culturally*, 47.

Commission. From the very beginning of their book, they contrast their view of mission against an expansive expression of mission that entails every good thing a Christian can do. This broad view would claim that environmental stewardship, community renewal, or blessing one's neighbor is mission. DeYoung and Gilbert seek to combat that view of mission with corrective theology and biblical analysis. They define their premise definition of mission as follows: "The church is sent into the world to witness to Jesus by proclaiming the gospel and making disciples of all nations. This is our task. This is our unique central calling."[117]

DeYoung and Gilbert believe there are many great biblical passages that people use to argue for the identity of the church's mission but they rely on the Great Commission in Matthew 28 to define the mission of the church. They affirm that all Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable to us. However, DeYoung and Gilbert claim, "But—and here's the rub—every passage is profitable only *if understood and applied in the right way*."[118] Therefore, they urge that one must pay close attention to what Jesus specifically calls and sends his followers to do. For DeYoung and Gilbert, the strategic placement of the Great Commission and the message it entails should cause the church to view it with excessive importance. DeYoung and Gilbert propose a lengthier definition of mission as defined by the Great Commission by asserting, "The mission of the church is to go into the world and make disciples by declaring the gospel of Jesus Christ in the power of the Spirit and gathering these disciples into churches, that they might worship the Lord and obey his commands now and in eternity to the glory of God the Father."[119]

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[117] Kevin DeYoung and Greg Gilbert, *What Is the Mission of the Church? Making Sense of Social Justice, Shalom, and the Great Commission* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2011), 26.

[118] DeYoung and Gilbert, *What Is the Mission of the Church?*, 30.

[119] DeYoung and Gilbert, *What Is the Mission of the Church?*, 62.

Despite the cultural context or social situation of the world, the mission of God's people, "as seen in the Great Commissions, the early church in Acts, and the life of the Apostle Paul—is to win people to Christ and build them up in Christ. Making disciples—that's our task."[120] Much like proponents of representationalism, DeYoung and Gilbert believe that the model of the apostle Paul establishes the pattern for what Christians should be doing in the world.

In affirming the New Testament's vision of the church's mission, DeYoung and Gilbert respond to Wright's exposé of Genesis 12 by arguing,

> The New Testament does not understand the call of Abram as a missional charge. Clearly, it is a glorious mission text announcing God's plan to bless the whole world. But the blessing is not something we bestow on others as we work for human flourishing. Rather, the Abrahamic blessing comes to those who trust in Abraham's Offspring.[121]

According to DeYoung and Gilbert, the church has a tendency to broaden the scope of its mission. The authors wish to refocus and narrow what the actual mission entails. In doing so, they remind readers that the church should not undersell what the Bible says about the poor or social injustice. DeYoung and Gilbert believe that Christians should extend grace to others because of the grace given to them in Christ and that "ministering to the poor is a crucial sign that we actually believe the gospel."[122] However, DeYoung and Gilbert qualify that the church should not oversell what the Bible says about the poor. They purport that while it is necessary to care for and meet the physical needs of others, there still remains an alternative focus to missions. They contend, "The alleviation of poverty is simply not the main storyline of the Bible."[123]

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[120] DeYoung and Gilbert, *What Is the Mission of the Church?*, 63.

[121] DeYoung and Gilbert, *What Is the Mission of the Church?*, 33.

[122] DeYoung and Gilbert, *What Is the Mission of the Church?*, 174.

[123] DeYoung and Gilbert, *What Is the Mission of the Church?*, 175.

In their attempt to curtail a biblical exaggeration of the poor, DeYoung and Gilbert claim, "the poor" in Scripture does not usually refer to the downtrodden in our society but to the members of our community of faith.[124] As an example, DeYoung and Gilbert comment that the "least of these" in Matthew 25 "are our brothers in Christ, most likely traveling missionaries in need of hospitality."[125] As a result of this view of the poor, DeYoung and Gilbert claim, "You can make a good case that the church has a responsibility to see that everyone in their local *church* community is cared for, but you cannot make a very good case that the church must be the social custodian for everyone in their society."[126]

DeYoung and Gilbert, in their theological explanation, challenge the kingdom motif of the decades prior. They specifically argue, "*It is wrong to say that the gospel is the declaration that the kingdom of God has come*."[127] In their view, announcing the kingdom is only half of the task. Christians must also offer a means by which to enter it. Therefore, Mark 1:15 offers the ideal statement by declaring, "The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand; repent and believe in the gospel."

DeYoung and Gilbert establish a view of the relationship between social action and evangelism with significant priority reserved for the latter. Although they do not specifically reject the notion of caring for the social needs of people, their view pointedly establishes evangelism defined by the proclamation of the gospel of Jesus for the forgiveness of sins as the main thrust of the church's task. Wright summarizes their view by stating, "Good works in the world are assuredly the responsibility and duty of individual Christians in the world in obedience to Christ, they affirm, but these good

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[124] DeYoung and Gilbert, *What Is the Mission of the Church?*, 175.

[125] DeYoung and Gilbert, *What Is the Mission of the Church?*, 176.

[126] DeYoung and Gilbert, *What Is the Mission of the Church?*, 176.

[127] DeYoung and Gilbert, *What Is the Mission of the Church?*, 110 (emphasis original).

works are not part of the mission of the church."[128] DeYoung and Gilbert maintain that their narrow version of the church's task toward evangelism does not produce a reductionistic version of the gospel but rightly presents the true gospel.[129]

Conclusion

The proponents represented in this chapter offer some significant attributes on the particular nuances of the understanding between social action and evangelism from the early twentieth century to today. Viewing these proponents in the form of a spectrum, one can visualize how their articulations flow from one end to the other. A review of the major proponents' theological expressions reveals several patterns or particular markers that articulate the basic parameters of each view.

The vast number of proponents surveyed rendered a thorough investigation unreasonable. Instead, the goal was to review multiple proponents in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries to present an array of theological descriptions. The unique description and markers identified by the mission conferences and the major proponents serve to provide working perimeters for examining the particular missiology of Adoniram Judson in relation to his view of the relationship between social action and evangelism.

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[128] Christopher J. H. Wright, "Response to Jonathan Leeman," in Sexton, *Four Views on the Church's Mission*, 46.

[129] DeYoung and Gilbert, *What Is the Mission of the Church?*, 111.

CHAPTER 4

AN EXPANDED PARADIGM CONTINUUM OF THE
RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN SOCIAL ACTION
AND EVANGELISM

This chapter consists of three sections. First, I highlight the particular markers identified in the primary sources of mission conferences and major proponents' writings. Throughout the twentieth and twenty-first centuries, various mission conferences and missiological proponents presented a vast array of attributes associated with their particular position on the relationship between social action and evangelism. I combine the research from the literature review to describe seven specific markers. These seven markers will serve as the primary components for analyzing Adoniram Judson's view of the relationship between social action and evangelism.

Second, I present three existing continuums. Peter Wagner, David Hesselgrave, and Christopher Little have each created a particular continuum to serve as models attempting to graph each position of the relationship between social action and evangelism. Also, the three continuums offer specific terms to represent the unique views. In this part of section 2, I present the definitions of each unique term that the continuum creators utilized.

Third, I combine the seven particular markers and the three existing models to create an expanded and revised continuum. This expanded continuum will offer a precise model needed for the analysis of Judson's missiology as it relates to the relationship between evangelism and social action. The seven markers will serve as the specific components used in the analysis, and the continuum will serve to graph Judson's particular position as it relates to the views of mission conferences and other proponents of the twentieth and twenty-first centuries.

Seven Markers

The survey of missionary conferences' primary sources and major proponents' published literature revealed theological markers on the relationship between social action and evangelism. The first step to identifying these markers consisted of a thorough review of the literature. The sources surveyed limited their communication regarding social action and evangelism to specific locations. Therefore, in my survey, I identified these particular locations in each source. Once the locations where the authors discussed their view of the relationship were identified, I confined my research to these areas and performed a detailed study, recording meticulous notes of their articulations.

The research revealed reoccurring themes and repeated language that authors used to present their view of the relationship between social action and evangelism. I synthesized the reoccurring themes into particular categories. Initially, the research presented ten unique areas comprised of shared themes and language. Upon further review of the ten areas, certain categories corresponded to each other. Therefore, I combined these portions of the reoccurring themes to develop seven concise categories. After doing so, I again surveyed the literature to confirm the accuracy of these categories.

The results of this research process present seven theological markers that authors and conferences repeatedly used to articulate their positions on the relationship between social action and evangelism. The seven markers are (1) dichotomy/integration, (2) recipient/target, (3) biblical hermeneutic, (4) word/deed, (5) function, (6) epistemological foundation, and (7) eschatological interpretation. In this section, I highlight key aspects of each of the seven markers and then demonstrate how their theological components are graphed using a continuum between social action and evangelism.

Merriam-Webster defines a continuum as "a coherent whole characterized as a collection, sequence, or progression of values or elements varying by minute degrees."[1] In essence, a continuum is a scale used to measure differing positions between two extremes. As the continuum moves from one extreme to the other, qualitative transitions of gradual change occur.

Social action serves as one extreme end of the continuum, and evangelism as the other.[2] The middle of the continuum presents a complete integration of social action and evangelism. As the continuum moves from the far left to the far right, several positions of varying degrees exist (see figure 1). How one understands the seven markers or theological underpinnings determines the particular position he or she holds on the continuum.
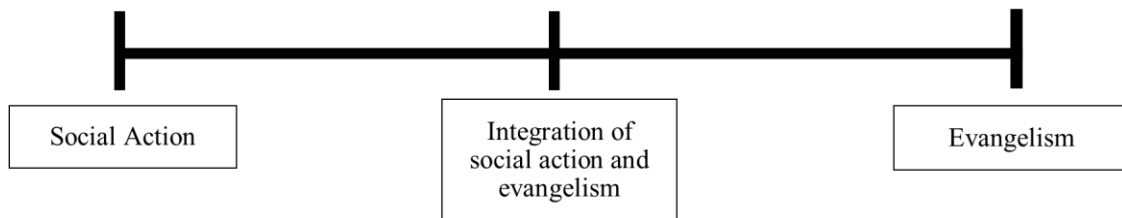
Figure 1. A basic social action/evangelism continuum

Dichotomy/Integration

Proponents of the twentieth and twenty-first centuries utilized various ideas to articulate their view of the relationship between social action and evangelism. Some expressed a dichotomist notion of the relationship between social action and evangelism, desiring to keep them completely separate. Others argued for a complete integration.

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[1] Merriam-Webster Dictionary, "Continuum," accessed November 23, 2021, https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/continuum.

[2] At each end of the continuum, complete rejection of the opposite end is assumed. For now, Carl F. H. Henry's notion that fundamentalists completely rejected forms of social action serves to highlight the existence of complete rejection. See Carl F. H. Henry, *The Uneasy Conscience of Modern Fundamentalism* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1947), 27.

Particular terms surfaced in their attempt to define unique levels of integration. Concisely, the terms of "bridge," "manifestation/consequence," and "partner" highlight the unique views between a dichotomist and integrated understanding of the relationship.

The IMC's declaration from Madras in 1938 chose to describe social actions as "signposts" pointing to Christ.[3] The actual social ministries in and of themselves were not an intended end but were subservient to another essential task. Likewise, the International Consultation on the Relationship between Evangelism and Social Responsibility held at Grand Rapids in 1982 employed the terminology "bridge to."[4] The consultation purported that social action "can break down prejudice and suspicion, open closed doors, and gain a hearing for the Gospel."[5] As a bridge, social action serves as a means to deliver evangelism more effectively.

The framers of the Edinburgh conference in 1910 provided an example of how social action as a bridge functions in mission work. The framers pleaded to increase the educational influence of the church around the world. However, the goal was not to strengthen academics. The framers saw the educational environment as a way to gain the ear of people in order to present the gospel of Christ. In this line of thinking, education plays a role in opening the door for evangelism to occur.[6]

Some proponents, such as David Moberg, rejected the idea of social action as a bridge. He insisted that viewing social action as a bridge was merely like baiting and luring people into the net of the kingdom of God. He feared that social action seen as a

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[3] International Missionary Council, *The World Mission of the Church: Findings and Recommendations of the International Missionary Council, Tambaram, Madras, India, December 12th to 29th, 1938* (London: International Missionary Council, 1939), 26–27.

[4] Lausanne Movement, "Lausanne Occasional Paper 21: Evangelism and Social Responsibility: An Evangelical Commitment," June 25, 1982, https://lausanne.org/content/lop/lop-21.

[5] Lausanne Movement, "Lausanne Occasional Paper 21."

[6] World Missionary Conference, *Report of Commission I: Carrying the Gospel to All the Non-Christian World* (Edinburgh: Oliphant, Anderson & Ferrier, 1910), 6.

bridge would create rice Christians in which men and women convert to Christ for material gain.[7]

The bridge theory of integration also applies to the social action side of the continuum. Proponents such as J. H. Oldham viewed evangelism as a means to usher in the goal of social transformation. For Oldham, evangelism was the natural starting place. Once a large enough volume of adherents was present in a community, those adherents would be able to affect social change in the cultural environment. In Oldham's framework, evangelism served as a means to assist in transforming the social environment.

As one moves to both extremes on the continuum, the idea of "bridge to" begins to break down. If proponents reject any form of social action, they also reject social action as a viable means to its intended end. Likewise, if one rejects evangelism and focuses solely on social action, they will, in turn, reject evangelism as a viable means to their intended end. For example, a non-governmental organization (NGO) with the sole purpose of social work may not have any Christian-based background. This particular NGO would not use evangelism or any other religious idea to guide or assist their work. They would reject the use of such means.

The second type of words used throughout history to illustrate the relationship is "consequence/manifestation." The Madras declaration in 1938 declared, "The Church's activities, whether social service, education, the spreading of Christian literature, the healing of body and mind, or any other work undertaken for man, follow from the essential task committed to it."[8] The 1982 consultation at Grand Rapids communicated the same idea but used the words "consequence" and "manifestation." The consultation stated, "First, social activity is a *consequence* of evangelism. That is, evangelism is the

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[7] David O. Moberg, *The Great Reversal: Evangelism versus Social Concern*, Evangelical Perspectives (Philadelphia: Lippincott, 1972), 20.

[8] International Missionary Council, *World Mission of the Church*, 26–27.

means by which God brings people to new birth, and their new life manifests itself in the service of others."[9]

"Consequence," "manifestation," and "follow from" communicate unique ideas, but the essential foundation remains unchanged. On the evangelism side of the continuum, social action is understood, at different levels, as a manifestation or consequence of the believer's changed heart acting in obedience to Christ's commands. In this frame of thought, social actions rely on the work of evangelism; therefore, evangelism carries a notion of priority. If salvation and discipleship are ignored, then true social change cannot ensue.

The third word describing a particular relationship is "partner." The word "partner" entails a complete integration of evangelism and social action as equals. A complete integration denies the notions of "bridge" and "manifestation/consequence." A complete and equal partnership never prioritizes either social action or evangelism. Therefore, if a proponent stipulates a priority, one has to conclude that it is not a complete integration. Priority, however slight it may be, presents a unique continuum shift compared to a complete and equal partnership. In a full integration, no dichotomy exists. When evangelism and social action stand as ends in themselves, there can be no natural priority. One no longer relies on the other. A complete and equal partnership identifies the middle point on a continuum between social action and evangelism (see figure 2).

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[9] Lausanne Movement, "Lausanne Occasional Paper 21."

Figure 2. Dichotomy/integration continuum

	Varying degrees of dichotomy	Complete integration	Varying degrees of dichotomy	
Social Action				Evangelism
Rejection of bridge theory	Evangelism as bridge to social transfor-mation	Partner	Social action as bridge to evangelism	Rejection of bridge theory
	Priority for social action	Equal	Priority for evangelism	
	No conceived notion of manifes-tation/consequence theory		Social action as manifestation/consequence of evangelism	

Recipient/Target

Another unique way of identifying particular positions on a continuum between social action and evangelism is the description of the recipient. Throughout the twentieth and the twenty-first centuries, proponents chose unique descriptions to identify the target or the recipient of their work. In the early 1900s, the individual served as the recipient and target of the proposed missionary work. Due to the influence of the social gospel and the work of Walter Rauschenbusch, the target began to shift toward the society.[10] The declaration from Jerusalem in 1928 and Roland Allen's critique of their view of society over individuals highlight the different notions of target.[11]

The words at the heart of defining the recipient entail "individual," "society," "nations," and "creation." The individual as target or recipient represents the idea of evangelism. For proponents on the evangelism side of the continuum, the target of missionary work focuses on the salvation and redemption of individual souls. For

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[10] Walter Rauschenbusch, *Christianity and Social Crisis* (London: Macmillan, 1907), 65.

[11] Roland Allen, *Jerusalem: A Critical Review of "The World Mission of Christianity"* (London: World Dominion Press, 1928), 31.

proponents on the social action side, the target of work focuses on the social environment. For proponents in the middle of the continuum, both the social environment and the individual soul exist as targets or recipients.

At varying degrees on each side of the middle point, the social environment or the individual is not ignored. On the evangelism side, the social environment is not the target but the realm in which one works to meet the individual soul. In this position, one does not entirely ignore the social environment but works in the social environment to affect change in the individual. Likewise, the same is valid on the social action side. The individual soul is not the target, but one works with the individual to ultimately affect his or her social environment.

Beyond the fundamental distinction of individual, soul, and society, some proponents added the nation or the creation as recipients or targets. Bryant Myers's understanding of the relationship between social action and evangelism led him to redirect the Great Commission text in Matthew to the nations.[12] In the same way, Christopher Wright's view of the relationship led him to develop the idea of creation care. In Wright's framework, a heavy emphasis on social action allows one to view the creation as a recipient or target of missionary work.[13] The literature review revealed that multiple authors and conferences utilized the phrases of target or recipient to explain their understanding of the relationship between social action and evangelism (see figure 3).

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[12] Bryant L. Myers, *Walking with the Poor: Principles and Practices of Transformational Development* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1999), 52–53.

[13] Christopher J. H. Wright, "Participatory Mission: The Mission of God's People Revealed in the Whole Bible Story," in *Four Views on the Church's Mission*, ed. Jason S. Sexton, Counterpoints: Bible & Theology (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2017), 81–82.

Figure 3. Recipient/target continuum
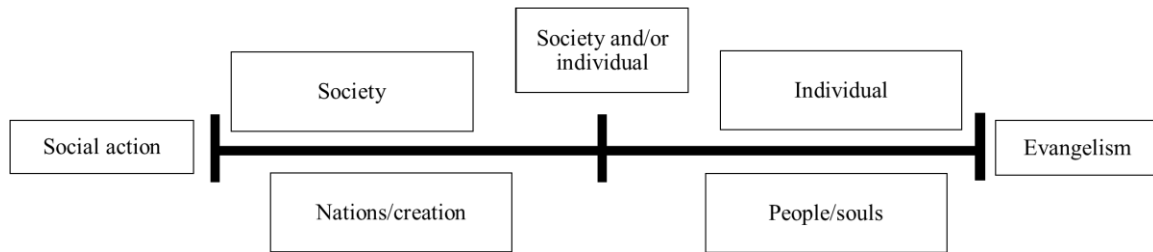
Biblical Hermeneutic

Most proponents and mission conferences in the twenty and twenty-first centuries utilized the Bible in some form or fashion. From multiple sides of the continuum, both social action and evangelism proponents referenced Scripture in attempting to describe their particular view of the relationship between social action and evangelism.[14] Therefore, it is impossible to determine a particular position on the continuum based solely on the idea of referencing the Bible. Instead, one must look at the particular verses they used and their hermeneutical interpretation of those verses to understand their position on the continuum.

The Great Commission of Jesus Christ appears in all four Gospels (Matt 28:18–20; Mark 16:14–18; Luke 24:44–49; John 20:21) and is also repeated by Luke in Acts 1:8. For the vast majority of church history, the terminology of the "Great Commission" did not exist. However, the church expanded and grew exponentially.

Hesselgrave claims that Justinian von Welz first used the term "Great Commission" in the mid-seventeenth century.[15] In the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, the central issue of the Great Commission revolved around

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[14] Gustavo Gutiérrez and David Hesselgrave represent very distinct views of the relationship between social action and evangelism. However, Gutiérrez and Hesselgrave both cite multiple Bible references in attempting to articulate their particular view.

[15] David J. Hesselgrave, "Great Commission," in *Evangelical Dictionary of World Missions*, ed. A. Scott Moreau, Harold Netland, and Charles Van Engen, Baker Reference Library (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2000), 412–14.

applicability. In his famous inquiry, William Carey pleaded that the command given to the apostles at the end of Matthew did not cease with the apostolic age but still applied to Christians of his generation.[16] After Christians accepted the applicability of the Great Commission, the controversy moved to the application of its principles.

In 1952 at Willingen, the delegates used John 20:21 instead of Matthew 28:18–20 as their mission text. John's version of the Great Commission picks up on the idea of sending. By emphasizing the sending aspect of Jesus's commission, the conference was able to modify the exact nature of its task. The idea of evangelizing and discipling new believers as outlined in Matthew was replaced by this: "The Church is sent to every inhabited area of the world. . . . The Church is sent to every social, political and religious community of mankind. . . . The church is sent to proclaim Christ's reign in every moment and every situation."[17]

The Johannine statement of the Great Commission allows the freedom to insert what one is called to do in his or her sending. In the case of Willingen, the church is commissioned and sent to the social and political community to proclaim Christ's reign in their particular situation. In this form of the commission, there is no precise call for Christians to evangelize, baptize, and teach. Therefore, if one wishes to support the idea of social action, the Johannine statement is preferred.

Hesselgrave picks up on this idea and notes that preferencing either the Matthean statement of the Great Commission or the Johannine statement of the Great

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[16] William Carey, *An Enquiry into the Obligations of Christians to Use Means for the Conversion of the Heathens* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1891).

[17] International Missionary Council, *Missions under the Cross: Addresses Delivered at the Enlarged Meeting of the Committee of the International Missionary Council at Willingen, in Germany, 1952; with Statements Issued by the Meeting*, ed. Norman Goodall (London: Edinburgh House Press, 1953), 190.

Commission reveals a priority for either evangelism or social action.[18] Hesselgrave

argues,

> Perhaps responding to the emphasis on the social task of the church in the WCC and especially at the 1968 General Assembly in Uppsala, some evangelicals (e.g., JOHN STOTT) revised their thinking on the Great Commission and now argue against the generally accepted position that the statement in Matthew 28:16–20, being the most complete, possesses a certain priority. Their revised position is that the statement in John 20:21 ("As the Father has sent me, so send I you") takes priority and makes the Lord Jesus' earthly ministry as outlined in Luke 4:18, 19 a model for modern missions.[19]

Christopher Wright denies the priority of both the Matthean and the Johannine

statements by preferring Genesis 12 as the primary commission text of the Bible.[20]

Wright's use of Genesis reveals his increased prerogative toward social action. Wright

prefers the Genesis commission because of its use of blessing. In Wright's hermeneutic,

blessing in the Old Testament entailed more than mere spiritual renewal. Wright believes

that the promise of blessing also included a social and political component. Therefore,

Genesis 12 supports his "exodus-shaped mission" by encouraging believers to care for

the church, society, and creation. The use of commission texts and the hermeneutical

description of other Bible passages offer unique perspectives that assist in mapping a

particular location on a continuum between social action and evangelism (see figure 4).

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[18] David Hesselgrave, "Redefining Holism," Missio Nexus, July 1, 1999, https://missionexus.org/redefining-holism/.

[19] Hesselgrave, "Great Commission," 413.

[20] Christopher J. H. Wright, *The Mission of God: Unlocking the Bible's Grand Narrative* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2006), 214.
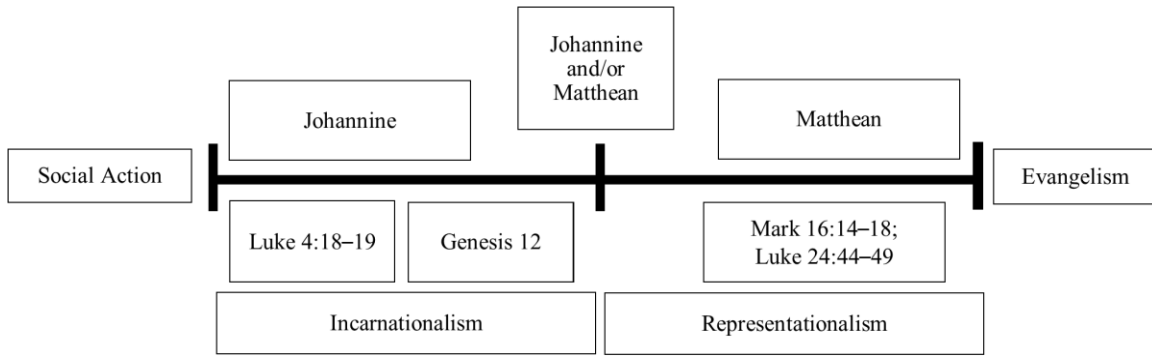
Figure 4. Biblical hermeneutic continuum

Word/Deed

Simplistically, the terminology of "word" and "deed" highlights another marker provided by the literature review.[21] Proponents on the evangelism side of the continuum prioritize word, social action proponents prioritize deed, and the middle position combines the importance of both word and deed. In the early twentieth century, word and deed were not the primary means of describing mission actions. Instead, authors tended to utilize language of "proclamation" and "presence" to define their view of word and deed.

Throughout the conferences of the early twentieth century, proclamation involved a verbal telling, presentation, or preaching of the gospel of Jesus Christ.[22] In 1961, the terminology of "witness" replaced "proclamation." For social action proponents, proclaiming a gospel with words is not enough. One must also demonstrate their faith through their actions in society. Thus, witnessing to Jesus Christ can come either by word or deed. Bryant Myers also utilized this method by replacing "evangelism" with the term "Christian witness."[23] According to Myers, evangelizing

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[21] For a thorough description of word and deed see Duane A. Litfin, *Word Versus Deed: Resetting the Scales to a Biblical Balance* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2012).

[22] World Missionary Conference, *Report of Commission I: Carrying the Gospel to All the Non-Christian World* (Edinburgh: Oliphant, Anderson & Ferrier, 1910), 6–7.

[23] Myers, *Walking with the Poor*, 1.

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through verbal proclamation only describes one way of sharing the gospel. Therefore, the term "witness" allows for a more comprehensive description of the missionary task and gives a place for social action to exist.

Proponents who tended to focus on word through verbal proclamation also believed in the idea of conversion.[24] They desired that people convert from their sin and superstitious religions to a new life in Christ. By contrast, proponents who prioritized deed usually preferred the use of presence and dialogue as opposed to conversion.[25] Many of the conferences and proponents who replaced conversion with presence bordered on a universalistic idea of salvation. According to universalism, people do not have to convert but are already saved. Bearing witness to Jesus and enhancing the good in other religions help people more fully comprehend the salvation already possessed.[26]

A priority of word entails verbal proclamation, preaching, hearing, listening, and presenting the gospel of Jesus Christ. Faith or affirmation in the death, burial, and resurrection story of Jesus Christ is enough to save one's soul. Likewise, the product of word produces conversion from sin and from other religions. Conversion, in this sense, goes beyond the mere modifying of belief to describe a total rejection of superstitious religious practices. On the other hand, deed entails physical social actions as a demonstration of love and presence in the community. Deed proponents attest to the ineffective nature of affirming a set of truths. Word alone is not enough to adequately present the gospel of Jesus Christ. Also, deed proponents do not necessitate an overt conversion from other religions but prefer interreligious dialogue and a brightening of the light already present in other religions.

[24] Edinburgh 1910, Amsterdam 1948, and Berlin 1966 serve as viable representatives of proclamation and conversion.

[25] Jerusalem 1928, New Delhi 1961, and Upsala 1968 represent the notion of presence and interreligious dialogue.

[26] See Laymen's Foreign Missions Inquiry (Commission of Appraisal) and William Ernest Hocking, *Re-Thinking Missions: A Laymen's Inquiry after One Hundred Years* (New York: Harper & Bros, 1932), 33; World Council of Churches, *The New Delhi Report* (New York: Association Press, 1962), 77.

In sum, the marker of "word/deed" is best described as an antithesis between proclamation and presence and between conversion and dialogue. An understanding of the relationship between word and deed, proclamation and presence, as well as conversion and dialogue highlights a significant aspect of one's position on a continuum between social action and evangelism (see figure 5).
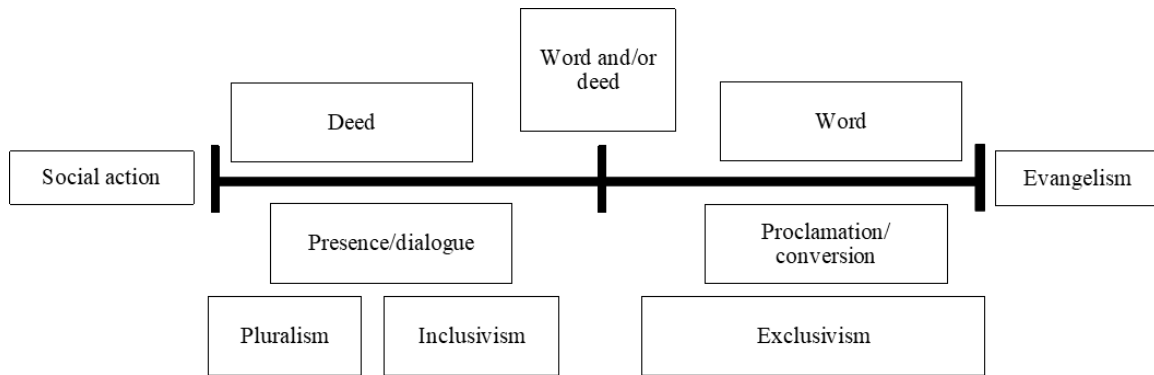
Figure 5. Word/deed continuum

Function

The literature review revealed that one's particular understanding of the relationship between social action and evangelism influenced their function. In his critique of the 1928 Jerusalem conference, Roland Allen revealed the idea of how one's end goal determines the means. A goal centered on meeting physical needs naturally leads to a physical campaign. Likewise, a goal focused on meeting spiritual needs naturally leads to a spiritual campaign.

The end goal usually determines one's function. For example, a heavy emphasis on evangelism unilaterally entails a heavy emphasis on the spiritual actions of proclamation, discipleship, and church planting. Allen and Hesselgrave, both holding evangelism in priority, wrote extensively on proclamation methodology and healthy

church formation.[27] Similarly, a heavy emphasis on social action entails a heavy emphasis on physical actions in the form of humanitarian or political efforts.

Determining one's position using the marker of function requires a special analysis of reason. At Edinburgh in 1910, the delegates held the spiritual actions of evangelism in high esteem. However, the conference encouraged the strengthening of the church's educational ministry. Therefore, just because Edinburgh participated in social action initiatives such as education reform does not necessarily mean that they fall on the social action side of the continuum. The reason behind their education initiatives was to increase the spread of the gospel among people who did not believe. Therefore, their social actions were for the purpose of spiritual actions. In this frame of thought, the principle of ends determining means still applies. However, when surveying function, one must determine the precise purpose for one's actions (see figure 6).
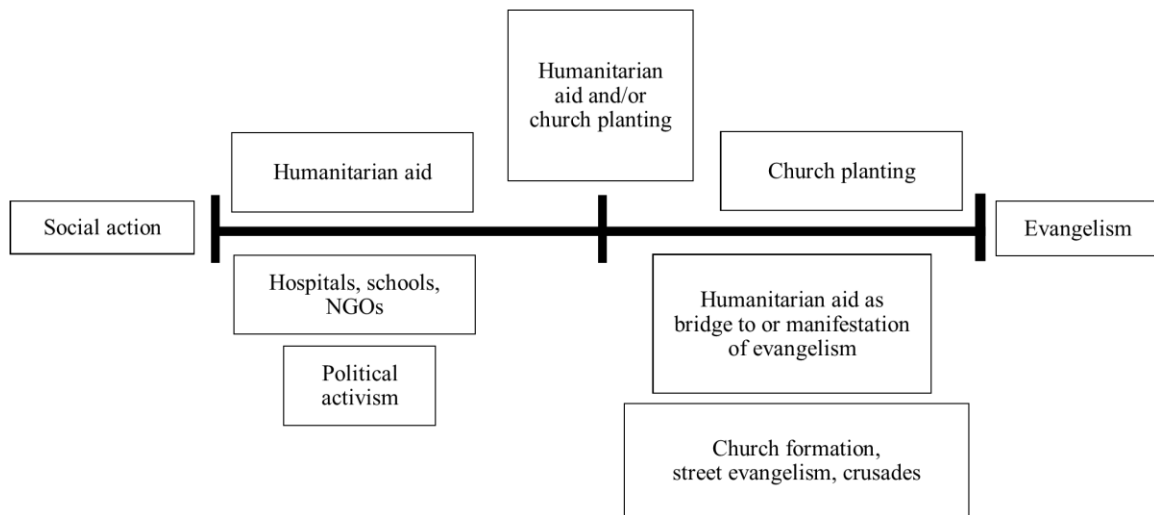

Figure 6. Function continuum

[27] Roland Allen, *Missionary Methods: St. Paul's or Ours; a Study of the Church in the Four Provinces*, Library of Historic Theology (London: R. Scott, 1912), 52; David J. Hesselgrave, *Planting Churches Cross-Culturally: North America and Beyond*, 2nd ed. (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2000), 47.

Epistemological Foundations

Epistemological foundations serve as a viable marker for mapping positions on a continuum between social action and evangelism. Paul Hiebert argued, "How we relate to non-Christian religions as systems of thought and to non-Christians as persons are all determined to a great extent by our epistemological premises."[28] Naïve realism, critical realism, and instrumentalism present three basic positions addressing unique conceptions of knowledge.

Hiebert describes naïve realism as the view that "the external world is real. The mind can know it exactly, exhaustively, and without bias. . . . Knowledge and reality are equated uncritically."[29] The basis that knowledge exists as real and knowable produces a belief in objectivity. In naïve realism, since knowledge is entirely objective, reality or truth is also objective.

In distinction to naïve realism, instrumentalism rejects the notion of absolute truth. Hiebert argued that instrumentalism professes a belief in a real world, but "we cannot know if our knowledge of it is true. In other words, Science . . . makes no ontological claims to truth."[30] Therefore, according to instrumentalism, truth is unverifiable.

Between the two opposing positions of naïve realism and instrumentalism exists critical realism. Critical realism supports the idea of knowable truth, but mankind's knowledge of it is partial. Therefore, critical realism proposes that truth is both objective and subjective. Experience and testing can bring one closer to the truth and may at times discover true reality. However, at other times one may not be able to completely verify truth.

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[28] Paul G. Hiebert, *Anthropological Reflections on Missiological Issues* (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 1994), 35.

[29] Hiebert, *Anthropological Reflections on Missiological Issues*, 23.

[30] Hiebert, *Anthropological Reflections on Missiological Issues*, 23.

The belief in objective or subjective knowledge directly applies to Christians due to the nature of absolute truth or the rejection thereof. Epistemological understanding determines much about one's view of God and his Word. Christians who believe in absolute truth define God as a knowable reality and the Bible as a form of absolute truth. Through instrumentalism, one may reject the truth of God and therefore also reject any notion of truth in his Word. David Bosch, borrowing from Hiebert's discussion of epistemological foundations, claimed,

> Evangelicals seek to apply Scripture deductively—in other words, make Scripture their point of departure from which they draw the line(s) to the present situation— ecumenicals follow the inductive method; the situation in which they find themselves becomes the hermeneutical key. Their thesis is: we determine God's will from a specific situation rather than in it. The nature and purpose of the Christian mission therefore has to be reformulated from time to time so as to keep pace with events. In the words of the Upsala Assembly: "The world provides the agenda."[31]

Ecumenical proponents, as revealed by the literature review, lean toward a critical realist to an instrumentalist view of knowledge. Higher criticism of the Bible and a view of truth as subjective inevitably lead to an inductive form of biblical reasoning. God's Word is no longer the absolute truth that determines action. Instead, proponents who lean toward instrumentalism tend to determine God's will from the situation. In this process, one participates in a dynamic interaction between partial truth and cultural context to determine best practices.

In 1961, at New Delhi, the congress feared that the old method of evangelizing was no longer applicable to the current culture. According to the congress, the new world situation created the need for fresh ways of evangelizing and the need to create different strategies for engaging in social relationships. The congress proposed, "The communication of the Gospel today consists in listening first and then in showing how

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[31] David Jacobus Bosch, *Witness to the World: The Christian Mission in Theological Perspective*, New Foundations Theological Library (Atlanta: John Knox Press, 1980), 38.

the Gospel meets the need of the times as we have learned to understand it."[32] In this

process, the Christian first looks to culture instead of the Bible in order to determine the

need. Once the cultural need is discovered, then one can turn to the Bible to see if it

offers anything for the current issue. J. H. Oldham and Gustavo Gutiérrez both aligned to

this instrumentalist idea of culture preceding biblical truth to determine actions.[33] John

Stott differed from Oldham and Gutiérrez's instrumentalist view. He presented an idea

that describes the critical realist viewpoint as a mixture of both culture's and the Bible's

working in a dynamic process to determine whether actions should be social, political, or

evangelistic.[34]

  Evangelical proponents who lean toward naïve realism view the Bible as a

form of absolute truth. Scott Moreau claims, "Evangelicals universally agree that the

Bible is our record of God's special revelation for all humanity. Traditionally, we also

have agreed that God's revelation to humankind through the Bible is both verbal (in

language) and propositional (truths are revealed)."[35] From this perspective, evangelicals

attest to a deductive form of biblical reasoning that allows the Bible—not the situation or

the cultural environment—to determine God's will. Despite the cultural environment,

naïve realists believe the Bible delivers everything needed to "determine how to live in a

godly fashion in any circumstance of any culture at anytime. This is not to say that

evangelicals think we have already unpacked all of this; we only maintain that everything

we need to know about life is present in the Bible."[36] The connection of epistemological

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[32] World Council of Churches, *New Delhi Report*, 84.

[33] See Willem Adolph Visser 't Hooft and J. H. Oldham, *The Church and Its Function in Society*, Church, Community, and State, vol. 1 (London: G. Allen & Unwin, 1937), 172; Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Notes for a Theology of Liberation," *Theological Studies* 31, no. 2 (1970): 245.

[34] John R. W. Stott, *Christian Mission in the Modern World* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1975), 27.

[35] A. Scott Moreau, *Contextualization in World Missions: Mapping and Assessing Evangelical Models* (Grand Rapids: Kregel, 2012), 57–58.

[36] Moreau, *Contextualization in World Missions*, 57.

foundations to either inductive or deductive forms of cultural response determines a great deal about one's position on a continuum between social action and evangelism (see figure 7).
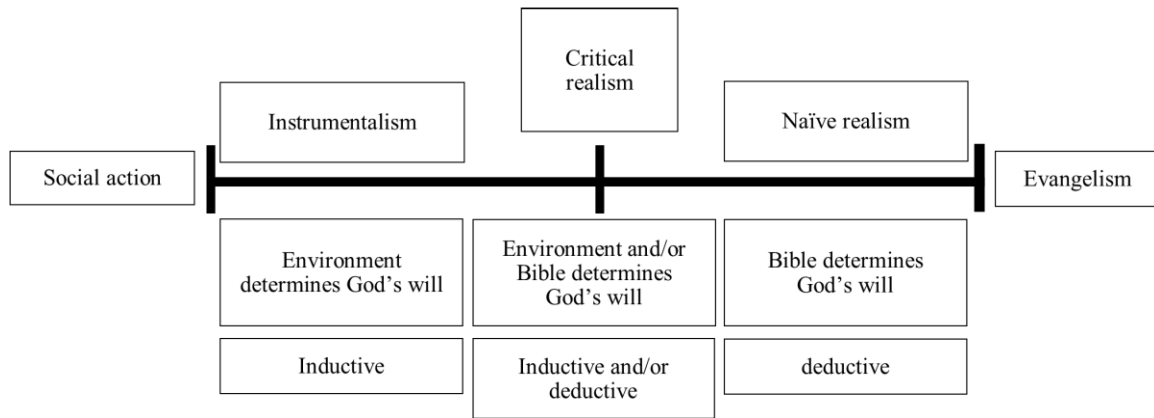
Figure 7. Epistemological continuum

Eschatological Interpretation

The interpretation of the world's condition prior to Christ's return and the understanding of how to quicken the return of Christ provides clues into one's particular understanding of social action and evangelism.[37] David Moberg explicitly linked one's eschatological interpretation to his or her view of social action and evangelism. He claimed that evangelistic Christians' "eschatological interpretation of history holds that the destiny of human society is one of progressive degeneration, deterioration, and devolution until the establishment of Christ's millennial Kingdom."[38] This view is based on a premillennial interpretation. According to this eschatological interpretation,

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[37] A thorough discussion of the differing views of eschatology is outside the scope of this project. However, to gain a more comprehensive understanding of the unique eschatological views, see Gregg R. Allison, *Historical Theology: An Introduction to Christian Doctrine* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2011), 683-701; John M. Frame, *Systematic Theology: An Introduction to Christian Belief* (Phillipsburg, NJ: P&R, 2013), 1086–97.

[38] Moberg, *The Great Reversal*, 21.

Christians are not meant to remedy the disorder in society. If God's sovereign plan entails the degeneration of society, then who are they to go against God's will. In this instance, the digression in society reveals that God's coming kingdom is getting closer.[39]

Moberg also described an evangelistic eschatological interpretation that involves a quickening of the Lord's return based on Matthew 24:14. Moberg described this view as believing in a certain quota of souls to be won. When that number is reached, the Lord will return. Moberg proposed, "Soul-winning therefore is 'hastening the coming' of the Lord. He will rescue the world from its mess by establishing the perfect society; therefore, soul-winning is the chief means of solving social problems."[40]

On the other side of the continuum, social action proponents prefer a postmillennial eschatological interpretation. Alan Bandy argues, "Whereas amillennialism expects the Church to experience both victory and suffering simultaneously until the second coming, postmillennialism maintains a gradual end to much of the Church's suffering before Christ returns."[41] The world is not in a state of progressive degeneration but in a gradual regeneration. Postmillennial proponents believe that the time prior to Christ's return will consist of peace and prosperity. Russell Moore contends,

> Walter Rauschenbusch, the pioneer of the Social Gospel, reinterpreted a Puritan postmillennialism in decidedly modern and liberal terms. The kingdom, in his assessment, was the triumph of Christian principles of peace, love, and justice in the structures of human government, economics, and society. The kingdom of God did not come with Jesus in the eastern skies, but in Christians asserting the "fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man" through fair labor legislation, redistribution of

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[39] The description of premillennialism in this paragraph is small in scope. I am only speaking of one aspect of premillennialism as it relates directly to the cultural environment. For a more thorough discussion of premillennialism and eschatology, see Gregg R. Allison, *Historical Theology: An Introduction to Christian Doctrine* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2011).

[40] Moberg, *The Great Reversal*, 21.

[41] Alan S. Bandy, "Views on the Millennium," Gospel Coalition, accessed December 3, 2021, https://www.thegospelcoalition.org/essay/views-of-the-millennium/.

wealth, racial reconciliation, and the "Christianization" of the world through international diplomacy and peacemaking efforts.[42]

Therefore, social action proponents align to a postmillennial interpretation due to the promise of social prosperity at the eve of Christ's return. In order to quicken the return of Christ, the social order must progressively elevate to a better condition. Social action, then, is a way to provide the environment necessary for the return of Christ (see figure 8).
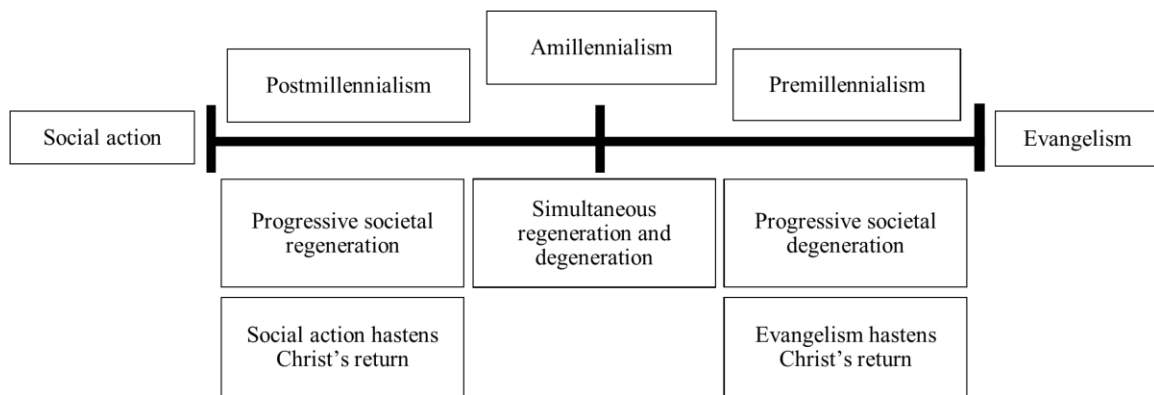
Figure 8. Eschatological continuum

Three Continuums

Until this point in the project, I have refrained from using any term to label the different views on a continuum between social action and evangelism. Instead, I have opted to provide the unique factors that influence each view. In this section, I present three current continuums—by Peter Wagner, David Hesselgrave, and Christopher Little—that are being used to order the different views of the relationship between social action and evangelism. Each author of the three continuums employs specific terms to define their views. I provide definitions and descriptions as each author addresses the

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[42] Moore D. Russell. "Personal and Cosmic Eschatology," in *A Theology for the Church*, ed. Daniel L. Akin et al. (Nashville: B&H, 2014), 690.

unique terms. After presenting the continuums, I summarize the terms utilized by the authors and conclude by describing the strength and weaknesses of each continuum.

Peter Wagner's Continuum

Peter Wagner explains the relationship between social action and evangelism in the form of a spectrum. On the far left of the spectrum is the cultural mandate, and on the far right is the evangelistic mandate. Wagner describes the cultural mandate as social service and social action. Social service, according to Wagner, "is the kind of social ministry geared to meet the needs of individuals and groups of persons in a direct and immediate way. If famine comes, social service will provide food for starving people. If an earthquake or tidal wave devastates an area, social service will provide food, clothing, blankets and medical supplies."[43] Wagner defines social action in distinction to social service but inside the larger classification of the cultural mandate. Social action, according to Wagner, is not best described by relief and development but ministry focused on the sociopolitical environment seeking to wrought changes in government.[44]

Wagner defines the evangelistic mandate by describing its nature, purpose, and goal. Wagner's definition of the evangelistic mandate is how he also wishes to define proper evangelism. According to Wagner, "The *nature* of evangelism is the communication of the Good News. The *purpose* of evangelism is to give individuals and groups valid opportunity to accept Jesus Christ. The *goal* of evangelism is to persuade men and women to become disciples of Jesus Christ and to serve him in the fellowship of his Church."[45]

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[43] C. Peter Wagner, *Church Growth and the Whole Gospel: A Biblical Mandate* (San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1981), 36.

[44] Wagner, *Church Growth and the Whole Gospel*, 36.

[45] Wagner, *Church Growth and the Whole Gospel*, 56–57.

Wagner admits that there are a vast number of positions that one may hold between the cultural and evangelistic mandate endpoints of his spectrum. However, Wagner specifically chooses five options to describe the unique views. Beginning with the cultural mandate side and moving to the evangelistic mandate, Wagner presents the letter designations of A, B, C, D, and E:

> *Position A* holds that God's mission includes only the cultural mandate, and not the evangelistic. *Position B* holds that mission includes both the cultural and evangelistic mandates, but that the cultural mandate has the priority. *Position C* holds that the cultural mandate and the evangelistic mandate have equal part in mission. *Position D* holds that the evangelistic mandate has priority over the cultural mandate. *Position E* holds that mission includes only the evangelistic mandate, and not the cultural.[46]

Instead of providing extended definitions of each letter designation, Wagner chooses to highlight certain key Christian leaders' positions according to his understanding of how they fit on the spectrum. For position A, Wagner describes its proponents in the form of secular humanists. According to Wagner, despite how liberal they may be, most Christians do not align with position A. However, he believes that the WCC statement from Bangkok in 1973 is as close to position A as one can get without fully embracing a secular humanist perspective.[47]

According to Wagner, position B represents the view of most ecumenical leaders. Wagner reports, "Evangelical consultants at the Uppsala Assembly of the World Council of Churches, held in 1968, described the WCC view in Position B terms."[48] Wagner agrees with their determination and describes Uppsala as position B leaning toward position A.

Wagner describes position C as holistic mission. He links René Padilla, Orlando Costas, Carl Henry, and Harvie Conn with this position. The defining aspect of

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[46] Wagner, *Church Growth and the Whole Gospel*, 102.

[47] Wagner, *Church Growth and the Whole Gospel*, 102–3.

[48] Wagner, *Church Growth and the Whole Gospel*, 103.

this position is a rejection of dichotomy. Proponents of position C do not find it appropriate to separate proclamation from service. Preaching the good news and healing the sick are equally important actions.[49]

Wagner describes position D as his personal view. He claims that his position, like the Lausanne Covenant, "recognizes at the same time holistic mission and the priority of evangelism."[50] Proponents of position D do not refrain or shy away from social ministry but also have no shame in claiming the priority of evangelism.

Wagner defines position E as the classical definition of mission. According to his understanding, many in this position sympathize with the Lausanne Covenant but take issue with the acceptance of holistic mission. Wagner identifies Arthur Johnston and Donald McGavran as the key proponents of position E. They tend to view the cultural mandate as something in which the church must participate, but they fail to recognize it as a legitimate aspect of biblical mission.

David Hesselgrave's Continuum

David Hesselgrave offers a continuum comprised of three primary positions: liberationism, holism, and prioritism. Liberationism and prioritism stand on their own, but Hesselgrave divides holism into two separate positions—revisionist holism and restrained holism. Therefore, Hesselgrave's continuum of the relationship between social action and evangelism encompasses four unique positions.

Radical liberationism, according to Hesselgrave, "draws heavily upon the Marxist view of the class struggle and the biblical emancipation motif of Israel's exodus from Egypt. Liberationists tend to equate the biblical notion of salvation from sin with

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[49] Wagner, *Church Growth and the Whole Gospel*, 104.

[50] Wagner, *Church Growth and the Whole Gospel*, 104.

the struggle of poor and oppressed people for justice."[51] Hesselgrave connects the view of liberationism with the struggle to work for justice in society and establish shalom on earth. Hesselgrave identifies Gustavo Gutiérrez as the primary proponent of this particular position.

In revisionist holism, evangelism and social action share priority. Revisionists do not seek to divide the two mandates but unite them as one. However, in contrast to radical liberationism, proponents of revisionist holism do not quantify social action as evangelism. They are distinct yet equal parts of the mission of God. Hesselgrave contends, "Revisionist holism does not go as far as radical liberationism, but it does make evangelism and social action full and equal partners."[52] Hesselgrave identifies Bryant Myers as a major proponent representing the revisionist perspective.

Restrained holism, Hesselgrave argues, "attempts to preserve the traditional priority for evangelism, while elevating social action. . . . In restrained holism, evangelism and social action are made to be more or less equal partners, although a certain priority is reserved for evangelism."[53] Both views share a common agenda to elevate the nature of social action in the mission of God. However, in restrained holism, social action is not a full and equal partner to evangelism. Although social transformation plays a crucial role in the theology of restrained holism, a certain priority is still reserved for evangelism. The notion of priority, though small, renders the integration of social ministry and evangelism in restrained holism distinct from revisionist holism. Hesselgrave identifies the Lausanne Covenant and John Stott as key representatives of the restrained holism position.

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[51] David J. Hesselgrave, *Paradigms in Conflict: 10 Key Questions in Christian Missions Today* (Grand Rapids: Kregel, 2005), 119–20.

[52] David J. Hesselgrave, *Paradigms in Conflict: 15 Key Questions in Christian Missions Today*, ed. Keith E. Eitel, 2nd ed. (Grand Rapids: Kregel Academic, 2018), 108–9.

[53] Hesselgrave, *Paradigms in Conflict* (2018), 109.

Traditional prioritism outlines a theological opinion that views evangelism—defined by preaching, converting, and teaching—as the primary focus of Christian mission. However, traditional prioritism, while upholding the primacy of evangelism, does not attempt to exclude social engagement.

James Engel and William Dyrness, critics of traditional prioritism, define its practice as "communicating a set of biblical propositions to a maximum number of people and declaring them as 'reached' once this takes place."[54] According to Engel and Dyrness, prioritism is nothing more than a single-minded focus on evangelism—but this single-minded focus, or merely the preaching and proclaiming of the gospel, does not accurately define its position. Hesselgrave purports that in the prioritist paradigm, "the mission is primarily to make disciples of all nations. Other Christian ministries are good but secondary and supportive."[55] Therefore, social action is not a negative aspect or something to avoid but serves as a valuable bridge to or a necessary consequence of proper evangelism.

In restrained holism, some are called to evangelism and others to social action. Believers are free to pursue either option exclusively, as the body of Christ functions as a whole. According to traditional prioritism, every believer is called to the task of evangelization.[56] Therefore, an exclusive pursuit toward social engagement is not warranted. This does not mean that every believer will forfeit his or her involvement with social action. Instead, as Christians engage with the social needs of people, the ultimate goal of evangelism remains. Hesselgrave asserts himself as a proponent of this position while including the World Congress on Evangelism at Berlin in 1966.

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[54] James F. Engel and William A. Dyrness, *Changing the Mind of Missions: Where Have We Gone Wrong?* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2000), 21.

[55] Hesselgrave, *Paradigms in Conflict* (2018), 110.

[56] Carl F. H. Henry, *Evangelicals at the Brink of Crisis: Significance of the World Congress on Evangelism* (Waco, TX: Word Books, 1967), 5.

Christopher Little's Continuum

Christopher Little attempts to build on Hesselgrave's continuum and provides a revised model to decipher the unique positions of the relationship between social action and evangelism. Little's continuum encompasses five positions: liberalism, holism, on the fence, prioritism, and fundamentalism.[57] Little borrows the terminology from Hesselgrave but combines and separates positions at distinct points. Little does not define revisionist and restrained views as holism; instead, he removes the restrained position from holism and simply defines holism as the revisionist perspective. Little believes that the affirmation of priority in prioritism and restrained holism naturally joins them together "since to make a distinction between these views, both of which affirm the priority of proclamation, is somewhat arbitrary."[58]

Another unique attribute of Little's continuum is his distinction between prioritism and fundamentalism and between holism and liberalism. According to Little, the fundamentalist position rejects the notion of social action. In his assessment, prioritism does not reject social action; therefore, a separate category must exist. In the same way, holism maintains aspects of evangelism; therefore, another distinct category of rejecting evangelism must exist.

Little attempts to explain that his continuum does not formulate a dichotomist description: "What is being stipulated here is not that there is a *dichotomy* between word and deed, but also that there is not an *equality* between them either. Rather, there exists a *hierarchy* of word over deed."[59] In this hierarchical continuum, Little defines Wright's theology as holism while presenting Stott's view as prioritism.

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[57] Christopher Little, "Update Reflection: Holism and Prioritism: For Whom Is the Gospel Good News?," in Eitel, *Paradigms in Conflict* (2018), 125.

[58] Little, "Update Reflection: Holism and Prioritism," 126.

[59] Little, "Update Reflection: Holism and Prioritism," 126.

Expanded Paradigm Continuum

Wagner's, Hesselgrave's, and Little's continuums offer both strengths and weaknesses. Combining the three continuums, one may discover the proper classifications and the number of positions that describe a unique understanding of the relationship between social action and evangelism. However, the continuums present three unique ideas that somewhat blur the lines of each position. Therefore, gathering the classifications and presenting the strengths and weaknesses of the continuums prove the need to establish a more comprehensive combined continuum utilizing each author's perspectives.

A combined and expanded continuum will allow one to understand how the historical views from the twentieth and twenty-first centuries properly align. Also, an expanded continuum will provide a more precise guide to measure the missiology of Adoniram Judson vis-à-vis his view of the relationship between social action and evangelism.

Expanded Continuum Model

Wagner provides a well-balanced continuum, but his classifications of letter designations do not give readers a proper understanding of the traditional terms in the debate. Hesselgrave's terminological creation mixed with Little's added modifications provides a better way to label the unique positions on a continuum between social action and evangelism. Hesselgrave offers the terms radical liberationism, revisionist holism, restrained holism, and traditional prioritism. Little identifies a far right and left position on each end of the spectrum and designates them as fundamentalism and liberalism. Hesselgrave and Little's terms satisfy Wagner's five letter designations but describe them in a more detailed manner.

Although Wagner presents a balanced continuum of five positions, he openly admits that several other positions fall between each letter designation. He argues, "There are probably an infinite number of positions that Christians could choose to take, but I

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have located five as being typical of the options open to those who feel involved in God's mission in the world."[60] As Wagner explains his five typical positions, he quickly inserts several additions—designated by a letter and number—to describe the positions in between the main five. For example, he describes the position of A.1 and A.2. Also, he describes McGavran as E if not D.9. In these examples, Wagner describes at least nine continuum positions between each of his five major designations. Following this pattern for every major position may result in a continuum of over forty total positions. Providing so many positions creates too large of a continuum to measure one's view properly. On the other hand, Little provides essentially two categories—prioritism and holism—to describe the unique views. Little's failure to provide descriptions of his other positions creates too narrow of a continuum to measure a precise position. Hesselgrave, while providing great terminology, provides an unbalanced continuum. According to his description, radical liberationism is the only position on the left side of a fully integrated position, leaving the remaining three for the right side of the continuum. Wagner's balanced continuum offers a true middle, integrated position while presenting a progression as one moves either left or right of center.

Hesselgrave's terminological creation, Wagner's balance, and Little's positions on each end of the continuum provide the reasoning for offering a combined and expanded continuum. Therefore, I propose an expanded continuum of seven positions between the two broad constructs of social action and evangelism.[61]

The term "social action" has carried several unique titles over the years, such as "social service," "social responsibility," "social ministry," "social concern," and "social mandate." Wagner proposes a unique distinction between the terms "social

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[60] Wagner, *Church Growth and the Whole Gospel*, 102.

[61] There are a few terms that have been utilized throughout history that are not represented by Hesselgrave and Little. Touched on briefly by Little, integral mission is a term that needs to be addressed. Not mentioned are integral mission, soteriological mission, and participatory mission.

action" and "social service." According to Wagner, social service defines relief and development work, as in the case of natural disasters and food scarcities. Social action entails initiatives toward the sociopolitical environment. Hesselgrave uses the term social action more broadly to encompass both works in meeting the physical needs of people and initiatives toward the sociopolitical sphere. Like Hesselgrave, I am employing the term "social action" in a more general sense, combining Wagner's ideas of social action and social service into one construct.

The term "evangelism" is also loaded with many connotations that demand clarity. Given the nature of how proponents describe the root meaning of this word, it is imperative to establish a clear definition. For the purpose of an expanded continuum between social action and evangelism, the best description entails proclamation evangelism. Proclamation evangelism necessitates a distinct description compared to presence evangelism. Proclamation evangelism focuses on the verbal witness of preaching, teaching, and proclaiming the gospel of Jesus Christ.[62]

I offer seven positions partly due to the need for a true middle position. More so, a seven-position continuum utilizes Wagner's primary positions but adds a position to each side of the continuum. Wagner's conception does not leave any designation for unique levels of priority between evangelism and social action. As a result, Wagner places Arthur Johnston on the far right end of his continuum. The problem lies in the fact that Johnston did not completely reject social action.[63] Therefore, a position more extreme than E, or an additional position of priority but not rejection, must exist.

Little argues that Wright exists as a major proponent of holism, which serves as the true middle position. Also, Little explains that Stott's theology differs from

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[62] Raymond P. Prigodich, "Proclamation Evangelism," in Moreau, Netland, and Van Engen, *Evangelical Dictionary of World Missions*, 791.

[63] Arthur P. Johnston, *The Battle for World Evangelism* (Wheaton, IL: Tyndale House, 1978), 360.

Wright's position. If there were only two positions right of the true middle, then Stott and Johnston would have to share a common position. As seen earlier, Stott's and Johnston's theology do not align. Therefore, Johnston has to progress further to the right than Stott. Due to Johnston's acceptance of social action, placing him at the far end does not adequately describe the major positions. This problem is easily solved by adding a position further right of Johnston's view. A seven-position continuum allows Wright, Stott, Johnston, and a total rejection of social action to exist as separate and unique descriptions of the relationship between social action and evangelism. In order to provide balance, the same must be true for the left side of the continuum.

Beginning from the left and moving to the far right, the seven positions of my proposed continuum are (1) liberalism, (2) radical liberationism, (3) ecumenical holism, (4) holism, (5) evangelical holism, (6) traditional prioritism, and (7) fundamentalism (see figure 9).

| Liberalism | Radical Liberationism | Ecumenical Holism | Holism | Evangelical Holism | Traditional Prioritism | Fundamentalism |
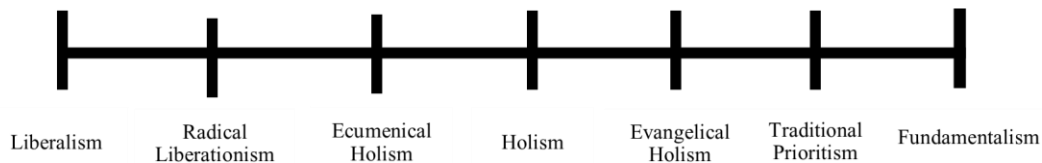
Figure 9. The social action and evangelism continuum

The two end positions of liberalism and fundamentalism come directly from Little's continuum. The far left and far right positions entail a rejection of evangelism on one end and a rejection of social action on the other. The designation of liberalism creates a position for proponents who only care for the physical needs of people while rejecting any form of religious dogma. A secular humanist fits this particular profile. The designation of fundamentalism borrows from the perspective of the early twentieth century in which proponents, fearful of the new direction of modernism, distanced

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themselves from any form of social ministry. Carl Henry attempted to discredit this position, but certain fundamental proponents remained who completely rejected any notion of social action as a viable option in the mission task.

The position of radical liberationism, stemming from Hesselgrave's continuum, runs parallel with Wagner's conception of A.1 and A.2.[64] Proponents of radical liberationism, such as Gustavo Gutiérrez or the WCC's position in the early 1970s, prioritize social action but still maintain an aspect of religion and even, in some cases, a form of evangelism. Regardless of how small, their use of the Bible and retainment of some form of evangelism moves them away from the far left position.

Hesselgrave and Little do not have a term representing ecumenical holism on their continuums. However, Wagner's position B is synonymous. Wagner argues, "Position B is probably the most common position of ecumenical missiologists and church leaders."[65] There is a priority for social action, but evangelism holds a stronger place than in radical liberationism, thus representing a unique position. Therefore, the minor priority for social action and Wagner's argument of ecumenism provide the basis for the classification of ecumenical holism.

The term "holism" exists as the most appropriate description of a true middle position. For clarity's sake, following the lead of Little, it is best to equate holism with Hesselgrave's revisionist perspective.[66] Holism, as a construct, entails a complete integration of—or an equal partnership between—social action and evangelism. Hesselgrave even defines revisionist holism as the mission "to minister to society and

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[64] Wagner, *Church Growth and the Whole Gospel*, 102.

[65] Wagner, *Church Growth and the Whole Gospel*, 103.

[66] Little, "Update Reflection: Holism and Prioritism," 126.

individuals without dichotomizing between the physical and spiritual or the body and soul/spirit."[67]

Moving to the right from the true middle position of holism presents the unique view of evangelical holism. Hesselgrave labels this position restrained holism and presents William Larkin Jr. as a major proponent of its perspective. However, Larkin prefers to label his view expansive prioritism.[68] Little modifies Hesselgrave's designation of holism and prefers to align with Larkin for a more prioritistic description. According to Little, establishing priority, however incremental, moves this position beyond the category of a full and equal partnership.[69] Even though the position of evangelical holism signifies a certain level of primacy between two constructs, Wagner's and Hesselgrave's determination help provide balance for an expanded continuum. Larkin's designation of expansive holism may offer a better description of its tenets but evangelical holism serves as a better description when comparing it to other positions on an expanded continuum between social action and evangelism.

Traditional prioritism, or the view of Hesselgrave and Johnston, moves beyond a slight priority but at the same time maintains a connection with social action. Hesselgrave comments,

> What I will call traditional prioritism recognizes the importance of all or most of those ministries that address the various medical, educational, economic, and social needs of individuals and societies. At the same time, it sustains the time-honored distinction between the primary mission of the church and secondary or supporting ministries.[70]

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[67] Hesselgrave, *Paradigms in Conflict* (2018), 122.

[68] William Larkin Jr., "Prioritism and Holism: The Contribution of Acts (6)," Columbia International University, accessed December 7, 2021, https://www.ciu.edu/content/prioritism-and-holism-contribution-acts-6.

[69] Little, "Update Reflection: Holism and Prioritism," 126.

[70] Hesselgrave, *Paradigms in Conflict* (2018), 121.

Hesselgrave's use of "time-honored" provides his reasoning for the traditional suffix. Wagner supports Hesselgrave's designation of traditional by defining his position E, which aligns with traditional prioritism, as the classical definition of missions.[71]

Conclusion

Examining mission conferences of the past several decades allows one to discover particular theological beliefs that surfaced in the debate between social action and evangelism. In particular, the seven markers that I present serve as viable attributes to reveal one's understanding of the relationship between social action and evangelism. However, without a particular model or graphing agent, it becomes difficult to systematize each marker.

The three continuums presented in this chapter offer a working model on how certain key proponents graphed the major views of the relationship between evangelism and social action. Utilizing the strengths and weaknesses of each model, I created an expanded paradigm continuum. The seven markers discovered in the literature review and the expanded continuum provide methods for understanding and measuring one's view of the relationship between social action and evangelism. The social action and evangelism continuum with added markers provides a descriptive synopsis of how each of the seven markers align with each of the seven positions (see table 1).

The rendering of the expanded social action and evangelism continuum with added markers will serve as the specific model used to analyze Adoniram Judson's missiology in relation to his particular position of the relationship between social action and evangelism. In the next chapter, I survey the primary and secondary sources of Judson, specifically focusing on how he viewed each of the seven markers. Graphing

[71] Wagner, *Church Growth and the Whole Gospel*, 104.

Judson's view of the seven markers will reveal his particular location on the social action and evangelism continuum.

Table 1. The social action and evangelism continuum with added markers

	Liberalism	Radical Liberationism	Ecumenical Holism	Holism	Evangelical Holism	Traditional Prioritism	Fundamentalism
Marker 1: Dichotomy/ Integration	Rejection of evangelism Rejection of bridge theory No conceived notion of manifestation/consequence theory	Major Priority for social action Evangelism as bridge to social action No conceived notion of manifestation/consequence theory	Minor priority for social action Evangelism as bridge to social action No conceived notion of manifestation/consequence theory	Complete integration Equal partnership	Minor priority for evangelism Social action as bridge to evangelism Social action as manifestation/consequence of evangelism Social action as partner with evangelism	Major Priority for evangelism Social action as bridge to evangelism Social action as manifestation/consequence of evangelism	Rejection of social action Rejection of bridge theory No conceived notion of manifestation/consequence theory
Marker 2: Recipient/ Target	Society Nations/creation	Major emphasis on society Major emphasis on nations/creation	Minor emphasis on society Minor emphasis for nations/Creation	Society and/or individual Nations/creation and/or people/souls	Minor emphasis on individual Minor emphasis for people/souls	Major emphasis on individual Major emphasis for people/souls	Individual People/souls
Marker 3: Biblical Hermeneutic	No biblical hermeneutic	Johannine Luke 4:18–19 Major Incarnationalism	Johannine Gen 12; Exodus Minor Incarnationalism	Johannine and/or Matthean Incarnationalism and/or representationalism	Slight emphasis on Matthean Minor Representationalism	Matthean Mark 16:14–18; Luke 24:44–49 Major Representationalism	 Mark 16:14–18; Luke 24:44–49 Representationalism
Marker 4: Deed/word	Deed Presence Pluralism	Major priority for deed Presence/dialogue Inclusivism	Minor priority for deed Presence/dialogue Inclusivism	Deed and/or word Presence/dialogue and/or proclamation/conversion	Minor priority for word Minor emphasis on Proclamation/conversion Exclusivism	Major priority for word Major emphasis on Proclamation/conversion Exclusivism	Word Proclamation/conversion Exclusivism

	Liberalism	Radical Liberationism	Ecumenical Holism	Holism	Evangelical Holism	Traditional Prioritism	Fundamentalism
Marker 5: Function	Humanitarian relief/political activism	Major emphasis on humanitarian relief/political activism	Minor emphasis on humanitarian relief/political activism	Humanitarian relief/political activism and/or church planting	Minor emphasis on church planting	Major emphasis on church planting	Church planting
	Hospitals, schools, and other NGOs	Major emphasis on hospitals, schools, and other NGOs	Minor emphasis on hospitals, schools, and other NGOs		Minor emphasis on church formation, mass evangelism, and personal evangelism	Major emphasis on church formation, mass evangelism, and personal evangelism	Church formation, mass evangelism, and personal evangelism
		Church formation, mass evangelism, and personal evangelism as bridge to hospitals, schools, and other NGOs	Church formation, mass evangelism, and personal evangelism as bridge to hospitals, schools, and other NGOs	Church formation, mass evangelism, personal evangelism and/or hospitals, schools, and other NGOs	Hospitals, schools, and other NGOs as bridge to or manifestation of evangelism	Hospitals, schools, and other NGOs as bridge to or manifestation of evangelism	
Marker 6: Epistemological Foundations	Instrumentalism	Instrumentalism	Critical realism	Critical realism	Critical realism	Naïve realism	Naïve realism
	Environment determines everything	Environment determines God's will	Environment mostly determines God's will	Environment and/or Bible determines God's will	Bible mostly determines God's will	Bible determines God's will	Bible determines God's will
		Inductive biblical analysis	Mostly inductive biblical analysis	Inductive and/or deductive	Mostly deductive biblical analysis	Deductive biblical analysis	Deductive biblical analysis
Marker 7: Eschatological interpretation	No eschatological stance	Postmillennialism	Postmillennialism	Amillennialism	Premillennialism	Premillennialism	Premillennialism
		Progressive societal regeneration	Mostly progressive societal regeneration	Simultaneous regeneration and degeneration	Mostly progressive societal degeneration	Progressive societal degeneration	Progressive societal degeneration
		Social action hastens Christ's return	Social action hastens Christ's return	Social action and/or evangelism hastens Christ's return	Evangelism hastens Christ's return	Evangelism hastens Christ's return	Evangelism hastens Christ's return

CHAPTER 5

AN ANALYSIS AND DETERMINATION OF
ADONIRAM JUDSON'S POSITION ON
THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN
SOCIAL ACTION AND
EVANGELISM

In the previous chapters, I sought to survey the literature of the twentieth and twenty-first centuries in order to discover the historical views of the relationship between social action and evangelism. I systematically organized the theological presuppositions and the methodological initiatives into a concise form of seven markers. Next, I researched various models that specific authors used to graph the main positions between social action and evangelism. Combining their research, I sought to create an expanded continuum that allowed for a more precise description of the various views of the relationship between social action and evangelism. The seven markers combined with the expanded continuum offers a model to analyze one's position.

In this chapter, I first briefly describe Burma's religious and social context at the time of Judson's ministry.[1] The religious and social context provides insightful clues to his view of the relationship between social action and evangelism. Second, I survey primary and secondary sources on Adoniram Judson to analyze his views of the particular seven markers. Third, I conduct a comparative analysis of Judson and the social action and evangelism continuum and ultimately attempt to determine his position on the relationship between social action and evangelism.

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[1] The country of Burma is now known as Myanmar. Judson preferred the spelling "Burmah." When quoting the biographies and letters, I will use their particular spellings. However, I will refer to Myanmar—or, as Judson prefers, "Burmah"—as Burma due to the historical context of the research and the common spelling today.

A Brief Description of Burma's Religious
and Social Context in the 1800s

Burma sits nestled between the landmasses of India to the west and China to the east. Burma's history is riddled with successive civil wars between factions dating back hundreds of years. In the late 1700s, China invaded Burma with 50,000 soldiers, but they were cut off from their supply chains and ultimately defeated. At the time of Adoniram's arrival, Burma existed as a sovereign nation free from Chines—or English—constraints.[2]

At the time of Judson, Burma's governmental system was best described as tyrannical.[3] Francis Wayland claimed, "The government of Burmah is an unmitigated despotism of the sternest character."[4] The king of Burma possessed absolute control over his subjects and was considered the lord over all property and life. Wayland added, "No rank or office protects a citizen from the liability of being ordered to immediate execution, if such be the will of the monarch."[5] The viceroys, or rulers of individual districts, operated under the same oppressive nature, depriving the people of food, charging heavy taxes, and instilling a sense of fear at every turn. The oppressive tyrannical government led the people to become, as James Davis Knowles explained, "indolent, inhospitable, deceitful and crafty."[6]

The principal religion of the Burman empire was Buddhism.[7] In its moral precepts, Buddhism offers a system of right and wrong with the capacity to provide a safe

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[2] James Davis Knowles, *Memoir of Ann H. Judson, Late Missionary to Burmah: Including a History of the American Baptist Mission in the Burman Empire*, 5th ed. (Boston: Lincoln and Edmands, 1832), 108.

[3] Robert Thomas Middleditch, *Burmah's Great Missionary: Records of the Life, Character, and Achievements of Adoniram Judson* (New York: Edward H. Fletcher, 1854), 78.

[4] Francis Wayland, *A Memoir of the Life and Labors of the Rev. Adoniram Judson D.D.*, 2 vols. (Boston: Philips, Sampson, 1853), 1:133.

[5] Wayland, *Memoir*, 1:133.

[6] Knowles, *Memoir of Ann H. Judson*, 111.

[7] For a more detailed description of the particular type of Buddhism practiced in Burma, see Wayland, *Memoir*, 1:138–53.

and peaceful society. However, the Burmans did not follow the letter of the law, and its system of punishments with no atonement created a hopeless and desperate disposition among the people. At the heart of Burman Buddhism lay incessant idolatry. Knowles argued, "The essence of idolatry is everywhere the same. It is everywhere 'abominable' in its principles and its rites, and everywhere the cause of indescribable and manifold wretchedness."[8] The religious and social context of Burma led Ann Judson to write, "We have found the country, as we expected, in a most deplorable state, full of darkness, idolatry, and cruelty—full of commotion and uncertainty."[9]

The particular cultural situation at the time of Judson establishes the context of his mission work. If the culture presented an atmosphere of peace and prosperity with little to no oppression, then one could expect missions methodology to focus on the spiritual condition. However, the particular cultural context presents the question, What is Judson's methodology in the midst of extreme cultural oppression and hardship? Analyzing Judson's view of the seven markers in the midst of extreme cultural oppression highlights significant aspects of his view on the relationship between social action and evangelism.

An Analysis of Judson's View of the Seven Markers

Four main biographers, Francis Wayland, Robert Middleditch, Edward Judson, and James Knowles, who were contemporaries of Judson, sought to compose his life's story. The four primary biographies produced by these men are the particular sources used in the analysis of Judson's missiology as it relates to the seven markers of the relationship between social action and evangelism. Wayland's two-volume biography, consisting of over one thousand pages, was almost exclusively comprised of Judson's writings. Wayland attempted to organize Judson's journal entries, sermons, tracts, and

[8] Knowles, *Memoir of Ann H. Judson*, 115.

[9] Wayland, *Memoir*, 1:165.

letters to the mission board, friends, and relatives in order to present a firsthand description of his life and labors. Wayland contended, "I have withheld nothing of any importance which I have found among his papers. The evidence is therefore before the world, and let the world judge of it."[10]

Middleditch claims that Wayland's biography gathered together Judson's writings in such a manner that the length of his work is too large for many readers to attempt. Nevertheless, Middleditch felt that Wayland's biography served as an essential contribution to missions literature. Writing in 1854, Middleditch did not intend to supersede Wayland's biography but rather present a more manageable depiction of Judson's life.

Edward Judson, Adoniram Judson's son, composed his first biography in the late 1800s. At this time, Wayland's biography was out of print. Edward felt that the world needed a fresh reminder of his father's character and influence. Therefore, Edward sought to compose a clear and consecutive story displaying his father's journey as outlined by the collection of papers still available.

Distinct from the previous three biographers, James Knowles provided a biography of Ann H. Judson, Adoniram's first wife. After the death of his wife, Adoniram spent two years searching for and recovering the documents needed for a proper biography. Ann destroyed many of her personal writings during the war to prevent them from falling into the hands of Burman authorities. However, many were recovered and sent to the United States by her husband's hand. Ann's private journals and letters help present a working narrative of the Burman mission.

Wayland's extensive biography and his use of Judson's letters, journal, sermons, and tracts may have been enough to satisfy the content needed for an analysis of Judson's missiology. However, for the sake of balance and in an attempt to allude any

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[10] Wayland, *Memoir*, 2:386.

form of bias, I thoroughly researched each of the four biographies from Judson's contemporaries. The multiple biographies offer unique perspectives that work together to supply a vast body of research needed to adequately and thoroughly determine Judson's view of the relationship between social action and evangelism.

Marker 1: Dichotomy/Integration

The major components that highlight a dichotomy/integration position on the social action and evangelism continuum are notions of priority, bridge theory, and consequence/manifestation. In this section, I describe how primary and secondary sources on Judson portray his view of these three ideas. I conclude this section by describing Judson's position on the continuum as it relates to dichotomy/integration.

In 1816, Adoniram Judson and George Hough drafted a list of principles entitled "Articles of Agreement." Judson and Hough hoped that the agreement would solidify their work and lead to more effective ministry among the heathen. Principle three stated, "We agree in the opinion that our sole object on earth is to introduce the religion of Jesus Christ into the empire of Burmah; and that the means by which we hope to effect this are, translating, printing, and distributing the Holy Scripture, preaching the gospel, circulating religious tracts, and promoting the instruction of native children."[11] In this agreement, Judson declared his sole object and highlighted the actual means to accomplish its purpose. From this agreement, much can be learned of Judson's primary motivation.

Judson and his biographers employed terms that spoke regarding notions of priority. In a letter to Mr. Amariel Joy, Judson declared, "The grand means of converting the heathen world is to preach the glorious gospel of our great God and Savior Jesus

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[11] Adoniram Judson and George H. Hough, "Articles of Agreement: To Rev. William Staughton, D.D., Cor. Sec. of Baptist Board of Missions, Rangoon, Oct. 21, 1816," *Baptist Missionary Magazine* 1 (1817): 183–84.

Christ, in the vernacular language of the people."[12] After Judson's long and arduous detention in Ava, he immediately restored the work of preaching on the Lord's Day. Middleditch added, "Thus he showed, though the sorrows of his bereavement caused him to contemplate his work with diminished pleasure, that he was not forgetful or negligent of his great purpose."[13] On other occasions, it was said that Judson's preference was preaching the gospel, and thus he was continually consecrated to this work.[14] An analysis of hundreds of pages of letters, journals, and biographer's notes clearly indicates that Judson believed in a grand means, a great purpose, and a preference for preaching the gospel as a form of evangelism. Judson's two wings of a bird, or two arms that worked together to pull down the kingdom of God were not evangelism and social action (as according to John Stott) but preaching and distributing the written Word.[15]

In the "Articles of Agreement," Judson retained a notion of education that may argue for a more integrated partnership between the work of evangelism and social action. However, Judson's attitudes toward schools and education exemplify his belief in social action as a bridge to evangelism. Middleditch argued, "To schools for children he was not adverse, when they could be prosecuted without hindrance to the publication of the Gospel. He regarded them as an important, but, nevertheless, subordinate agency."[16] Likewise, Edward Judson described his father's view of schools as "subordinate to the work of preaching the gospel to the adult mind."[17]

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[12] Wayland, *Memoir*, 2:108.

[13] Middleditch, *Burmah's Great Missionary*, 228.

[14] Middleditch, *Burmah's Great Missionary*, 445; Wayland, *Memoir*, 1:406.

[15] Wayland, *Memoir*, 2:127.

[16] Middleditch, *Burmah's Great Missionary*, 444–45.

[17] Edward Judson, *Adoniram Judson: A Biography*, Notable Baptists (Philadelphia: American Baptist Publication Society, 1894), 61.

Judson himself declared that he was accused of being a discourager of schools. To this claim, he admitted that it was only partly justified.[18] Judson was not necessarily a discourager of schools as long as they properly functioned to aid in the main work of evangelism. On multiple occasions, Judson attempted to secure funds and teachers from America to establish and support schools.[19] However, when schools did not align with their primary purpose, Judson questioned their usefulness.[20]

Judson believed that schools had the opportunity to influence the morals of society positively but that doing so was not the main thrust of their function.[21] Mr. Wade and Judson, in a letter to the corresponding secretary concerning the hope of schools, claimed, "But above all, that their minds be enlightened and their hearts inspired by the Holy Spirit to know and love the Savior of sinners."[22] This statement illustrates a valuable point of how Judson and his companions understood their educational work. They offered the students a balanced education of religion, science, geography, and math. There was a partial hope that they would grow into morally decent people who contributed to the betterment of society. However, this was not the chief purpose of their education. Above all, they were to help evangelize the native population.

The native Burman schools were much like seminaries contributing to the religious instruction of its people. Mr. Boardman, an associate of Judson, explained that the missionary schools helped combat the native religious education and provided a means of instructing the Burman children in the truth of the gospel. Ultimately, their work in education was to convert the students and possibly provide a means of training

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[18] See Wayland, *Memoir*, 2:121.

[19] See Wayland, *Memoir*, 1:410; 2:14; Middleditch, *Burmah's Great Missionary*, 217; Knowles, *Memoir of Ann H. Judson*, 363.

[20] Wayland, *Memoir*, 2:6, 317–18.

[21] See Wayland, *Memoir*, 2:96.

[22] See Middleditch, *Burmah's Great Missionary*, 237.

local leaders for employment as preachers and teachers of the gospel to their villagers.[23]

Knowles highlighted that for several years Ann Judson engaged in establishing and teaching in schools. However, he claimed, "But she regarded the fear of the Lord as the beginning of wisdom; and she strove to guide her dear pupils to the Savior. She felt herself to be intrusted, in some measure, with the charge of their souls."[24]

Judson had very little involvement with governmental affairs that assisted in promoting social action initiatives in the country. After his imprisonment at Ava, he reluctantly agreed to a short-term employment in the embassy to help construct a treaty between Great Britain and Burma. The exception was only made to procure religious toleration, which would in the future support the freedom to propagate the religion of Jesus to the Burmese people.[25] Judson's work in education and government demonstrates his clear sentiments toward a bridge theory of how social work is not an end in itself but a subordinate means to a greater object.[26]

The 1982 consultation at Grand Rapids communicated that "evangelism is the means by which God brings people to new birth, and their new life manifests itself in the service of others."[27] As a consequence of evangelism, the character of men changes, thus affecting the society in which they reside. According to Wayland, Judson's view aligned with the 1982 consultation's statement regarding consequence. He claimed that Judson believed that "the affections of the heart, by nature estranged from God, are restored to him again, and the radical moral evil of the soul being corrected, there will flow from it, by necessity, the fruits of justice and charity, and man, individual and social, transformed

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[23] See Knowles, *Memoir of Ann H. Judson*, 362.

[24] Knowles, *Memoir of Ann H. Judson*, 34.

[25] See Wayland, Memoir, 1:412.

[26] See Knowles, *Memoir of Ann H. Judson*, 370.

[27] Lausanne Movement, "Lausanne Occasional Paper 21: Evangelism and Social Responsibility: An Evangelical Commitment," June 25, 1982, https://lausanne.org/content/lop/lop-21.

in the image of his mind, will awake to a life of righteousness."[28] Judson did not attest to a simple intellectual belief with no life change. His view of the consequence of evangelism and the change wrought in individuals at conversion is demonstrated by his requirement for believers to evidence their new life before being admitted as members of the churches he planted.[29]

Judson displayed a major priority for evangelism. He considered it his sole object, preference, and grand means. At the same time, he did not neglect forms of social action. Judson participated in establishing and supporting schools, assisted in governmental initiatives, and cared deeply for people, which resulted in the distribution of medicine and the provision of care for orphans.[30] However, his social action initiatives are best seen as bridges to or natural consequences of evangelism. Therefore, Judson's major priority for evangelism, combined with his minor participation in social action, places his view of dichotomy/integration in the traditional prioritism position on the social action and evangelism continuum (see figure 10).
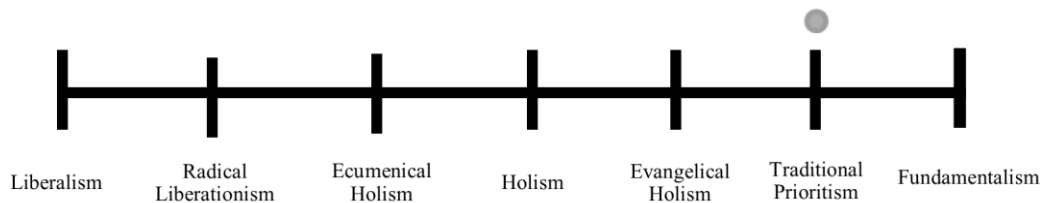

Figure 10. Marker 1: Dichotomy/integration

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[28] Wayland, *Memoir*, 1:155.

[29] See Wayland, *Memoir*, 1:210.

[30] See Wayland, *Memoir*, 2:93; Knowles, *Memoir of Ann H. Judson*, 373.

Marker 2: Recipient/Target

Proponents discussed in the literature review continually utilized particular terms to highlight their intended recipient or target of missionary work. The terms individual, society, nations, or creation regarding the target speak toward one's view of the relationship between social action and evangelism. The language used at Jerusalem in 1928 and Roland Allen's critical reaction affirms this idea.[31]

Before Judson's departure to India, he pointedly penned a famous letter to Ann Hasseltine's father in which he asked for her hand in marriage. Notoriously, Judson admitted that Ann might suffer many hardships and even a violent death if she were to come with him to the East. Despite the fears, dangers, and prospects of suffering, Judson asked, "Can you consent to all of this, for the sake of Him who left his heavenly home, and died for her and for you; for the sake of perishing immortal souls; for the sake of Zion, and for the glory of God?"[32] This intense letter calls one's attention to many aspects of the missionary life, but for the sake of measuring Judson's views on the recipient, it directs one to the reason he is requesting Ann's father to consent to his proposal. He calls her father's attention to the perishing immortal souls. Judson, even before he sailed to India, possessed an innate burden for individual souls, and it continued throughout his entire missionary journey.

In a letter to the Third Church in Plymouth, Judson described his initial thoughts of the events during his voyage to a new land. This letter came early in his ministry among the heathen. He spoke of the hope he had that his work would be blessed. Judson describes this particular work as the conversion of souls.[33] The work of

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[31] Roland Allen, *Jerusalem: A Critical Review of "The World Mission of Christianity"* (London: World Dominion Press, 1928).

[32] Knowles, *Memoir of Ann H. Judson*, 49.

[33] See Wayland, *Memoir*, 1:95.

converting souls rightly describes Judson's sentiments toward the intended recipient of his task.

At times, Judson seemed disappointed that individuals had not come to faith. Judson explained, "I have not had the happiness of adding a single individual to the branch of the church in this quarter."[34] However, as his work of evangelism from one individual to another transpired, souls began to receive his message and trusted in Jesus as their Savior. Judson's expression after Moung Nau, the first Burman convert, committed his life to Christ evidences his care for individual souls. This glorious event came after six years of plowing the hard ground of the Burman heart. Judson exclaimed, "It seems almost too much to believe that God has begun to manifest his grace to the Burmans; but this day I could not resist the delightful conviction that this is really the case, PRAISE AND GLORY BE TO HIS NAME FOREVERMORE. AMEN."[35]

Nearing the end of his missionary journey, while stateside for a brief season, Judson pleaded with his brethren at home. He declared that Jesus's death on the cross made it "possible for every individual of our lost race to find salvation."[36] Despite the tremendous task and the hardships that awaited, he believed that every soul could come to a knowledge of salvation. It was this belief that continually propelled this one individual to present the gospel daily with other individuals one by one.

After his stateside bereavement, Judson returned to Burma and spoke about his hope of establishing a new gospel work in Rangoon. He stated, "In Rangoon, I shall be in the way of the openings of Providence into the heart of the country. It may be that the time for opening Burmah to the gospel is near. . . . The first motive is my leading one. There are some souls in Rangoon who are groping in the dark and feeling after the

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[34] Wayland, *Memoir*, 2:19.

[35] Wayland, *Memoir*, 1:217 (emphasis original).

[36] Middleditch, *Burmah's Great Missionary*, 387.

truth."[37] From his first realizations of the missionary call to the end of his journeys, Judson continually felt the burden for individual souls who were groping in darkness and perishing.

Wayland picked up on Judson's passion for the individual soul and concluded, "He believed that Christianity was to be promulgated by the contact of individual mind with individual mind, and hence he diligently sought every possible occasion for personally offering to men salvation by Christ."[38] Edward Judson, much like Wayland, also noticed Judson's distinct focus on the individual as opposed to a social or state movement. Edward, attempting to explain his father's intentions, added, "They sought to work out a more searching revolution, nothing less than a change of belief and of heart in each individual. The millions of Burma were to be taken one by one—their affections subdued, and their characters transfigured by the religion of Christ."[39]

Proponents of the twentieth and twenty-first centuries who preferred the recipient as society often believed that more spiritual good would come from a transformed moral society, the effects of which would eventually stir people's hearts toward the reason for their actions and they would discover God. Judson believed the opposite to be true. He maintained that a systematic and slow process of an individual man's sharing the gospel with an individual man would eventually affect the moral society in which these transformed souls resided.

Judson possessed an undeniable passion for the individual soul. He labored day after day for individuals to grasp the truth he declared. He felt secure in his work that individual souls were coming to a knowledge of the gospel. Throughout all of the biographies and all of Judson's letters, journals, and sermons one will be hard-pressed to

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[37] Wayland, *Memoir*, 2:269.

[38] Wayland, *Memoir*, 2:5.

[39] Judson, *Adoniram Judson*, 59–60.

find any notion of the recipient as anything other than the individual. The individual soul dominated his desires and directed his actions throughout his missionary career. Also, there is no evidence suggesting that Judson participated in any ecological initiatives. Therefore, creation care, as outlined by Christopher Wright, was not a sentiment that Judson held. With respect to the evidence at hand, Judson falls on the far right of the social action and evangelism continuum regarding recipient/target—fundamentalism (see figure 11).
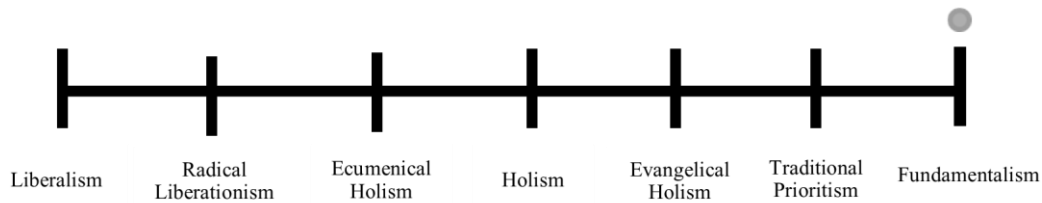

| Liberalism | Radical Liberationism | Ecumenical Holism | Holism | Evangelical Holism | Traditional Prioritism | Fundamentalism |

Figure 11. Marker 2: Recipient/target

Marker 3: Biblical Hermeneutic

The examination of mission conferences and major proponents' writings revealed that the Bible played a significant role in highlighting one's view of the relationship between social action and evangelism. However, given the extensive use of biblical references by multiple positions on the continuum, it became apparent that simply referencing the Bible was not a sure way to measure one's view. In order to perceive a view, one must look at the particular references he or she employed and the hermeneutical interpretations of those verses.

The classic four texts of the Great Commission and how one employs those passages provide clues of a motivation for missions. The left side of the continuum prefers the Johannine commission due to its notion of sending as Jesus was sent and its vague conception of what one is called to do in one's going forth. Therefore, one is freer to determine the particulars of one's sending or to focus on the healing aspect of Jesus's

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ministry. The right side of the continuum prefers the Matthean commission as it explicitly outlines the means of baptizing and making disciples by teaching them to observe the commands of Christ. As one moves to the far right of the continuum, the Matthean interpretation of the missionary task drops out due to its connection with discipleship. If there is a rejection of social action and even a perceived rejection of discipleship ministry, then Mark's commission is preferred due to its singular focus on preaching the gospel.

Also, in the biblical hermeneutic marker, the idea of representationalism and incarnationalism provides aspects of one's view of the relationship. Whether one focuses on the work of the apostles in Acts or on the life of Jesus in the Gospels can provide much information concerning one's view of the relationship of social action and evangelism. Therefore, in this section, I describe how Judson aligns concerning his commission text preference and his views on representationalism and incarnationalism.

While at Maulmain in 1837, Judson wrote a letter to Dr. Chapin describing his missionary call. He first referenced the powerful impact of Claudius Buchanan's sermon *The Star in the East*.[40] At first, this sermon induced in Judson a great excitement at the prospects of missionary life. However, those feelings soon passed but gave him enough motivation to dwell upon the prospects of such work continually. Judson claimed,

> It was during a solitary walk in the woods behind the college, while meditating and praying on the subject, and feeling half inclined to give it up, that the command of Christ, "Go into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature," was presented to my mind with such clearness and power, that I came to a full decision, and though great difficulties appeared in my way, resolved to obey the command at all events.[41]

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[40] Claudius Buchanan, *The Star in the East: A Sermon, Preached in the Parish-Church of St. James, Bristol, on Sunday, Feb. 26, 1809, for the Benefit of the "Society for Missions to Africa and the East"* (Philadelphia: Bradford and Inskeep, 1809).

[41] Wayland, *Memoir*, 1:52.

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Judson's motivating commission text at the onset of his call was solely that of Mark 16:15. Judson considered the eastern regions of the world as a viable location to fulfill his call to preach the gospel.[42] In his journal, he continually updated a set of resolutions. In 1837, his last resolve was to "*Go* and *preach* the gospel, every day."[43] As Judson addressed a room full of missionary candidates after years of labor on the field, he pleaded with them to do their duty to please the Lord. He added, "How indeed, shall we know what will please him, but by his commands? Obey these commands, and you will not fail to please him. And there is that 'last command,' given just before he ascended to the Father, 'Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature.'"[44] The commission found in Mark would prove to be the motivating, guiding, and sustaining text throughout his entire life.

Judson held Mark's commission text in priority, but in practice he adhered closely to Matthew's version. Judson did not simply preach the gospel without also teaching people to observe all of the things that Jesus commanded. After the first convert, Moung Nau, trusted in Jesus as his Savior, Judson met with him daily to teach him the truths of Scripture. In his journal, Judson recorded, "Moung Nau was again with me a great part of the day. He appears to be slowly growing in religious knowledge, and manifests a teachable, humble spirit, ready to believe all that Christ has said, and obey all that he has commanded."[45] This pattern of teaching continued as Judson led Moung Nau into maturity until he became ready to lead others in the same way of salvation.

Another aspect of determining one's biblical hermeneutic is their view of representationalism and incarnationalism. The major distinction between these two views

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[42] See Middleditch, *Burmah's Great Missionary*, 38.

[43] Wayland, *Memoir*, 2:114.

[44] Wayland, *Memoir*, 2:235.

[45] Wayland, *Memoir*, 1:217.

rests in the nature of how one is sent, and what one is sent to do. Are Christians sent into the world like Jesus to serve (incarnationalism) or are Christians sent into the world like the apostles to proclaim the gospel of Jesus (representationalism)?

Wayland argued that the New Testament in general and the Acts of the Apostles in particular outlined Judson's actions.[46] Wayland declared, "Experience had taught him [Judson] to adhere with greater strictness to the example of missionary effort contained in the Acts of the Apostles."[47] Judson is seen to have relied on Acts and the ministry of preaching to represent Christ to the world.[48] He diligently sought to preach and proclaim the message of Christ like the apostles as a witness to his saving power. It is more accurate to conclude that Judson's work was one of representationalism. However, while maintaining representationalism, Judson did not neglect a ministry of service.

In conforming to the pattern of Jesus's life, Judson argued, "We must become like him, not only in spirit and character, but in the whole course and conduct of life; and to become like him ought to be our whole aim. . . . It appears from the inspired writings, that one leading characteristic of Christ was, that 'he went about doing good.'"[49] Judson's life proved these sentiments as he continually modified his character to align with Jesus and sought to have others imitate him as he imitated Christ. Judson composed a small tract called *The Threefold Cord*. The third strand that he chose to outline the basis of his life was that of doing good. Judson explained,

> It is written of the Lord Jesus, that he went about doing good. Art though his disciple? Imitate his example, and go about doing good. DO GOOD. Let this be thy motto. Do good—all the good in thy power—of every sort—and to every person. . . . Comfort him in trouble; relieve his wants; instruct his ignorance;

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[46] Wayland, *Memoir*, 2:96–97.

[47] Wayland, *Memoir*, 1:446.

[48] Judson, *Adoniram Judson*, 61.

[49] Wayland, *Memoir*, 2:232.

enlighten his darkness; warn him of his danger; show him the way of salvation; persuade and constrain him to become thy fellow-traveller in that blessed way.[50]

Judson possessed a view of representationalism in his practice of missions, but he did not neglect to conform his character and actions to the pattern of Christ and do good to his neighbor. He may not have modeled his mission primarily on doing good to others, but service was a part of his work.

Judson clearly held Mark in priority among the commission texts and dedicated his life to preaching. Nonetheless, he did not neglect discipling believers or doing good to his neighbor.[51] There is not enough evidence of his ministry of service that would allow one to describe his work as incarnationalism. Also, there is not enough evidence to conclude that his priority of Mark places him in a fundamental position. The evidence presents a view of Mark in priority combined with a heavy discipleship emphasis, and a representationalism view with careful consideration to serve others. At this conjunction, Judson's biblical hermeneutic aligns with the traditional prioritism position on the social action and evangelism continuum (see figure 12).
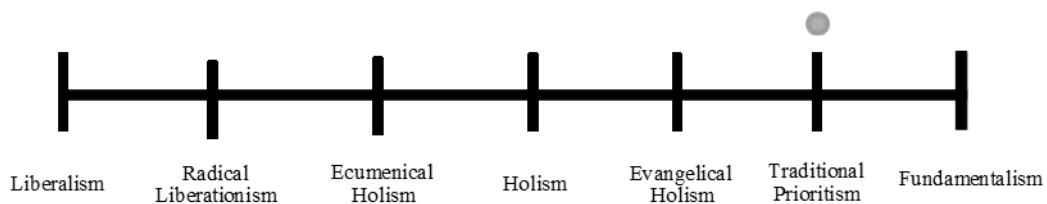

Figure 12. Marker 3: Biblical hermeneutic

Marker 4: Deed/Word

The marker of deed/word is best described as an antithesis between proclamation and presence and between conversion and dialogue. Understanding the

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[50] Wayland, *Memoir*, 2:464.

[51] Judson, *Adoniram Judson*, 116.

relationship between these aspects highlights a significant feature of one's position on the social action and evangelism continuum. In this section, I analyze and describe Judson's missiology concerning the three particular areas of deed/word, proclamation/conversion, and view toward other religions.

According to Judson, Jesus's main objective was to restore paradise, redeem his chosen people, and extend and establish his kingdom on earth. Judson argued, "The means which he has appointed for the accomplishment of this purpose dearest his heart is the universal preaching of the Gospel."[52] Therefore, Judson concluded that the command to preach the gospel is binding on every Christian of every generation.

Judson's ministry of word, or preaching, did not always come in the form that one may expect. His first means of preaching the gospel came in the form of privately conversing with the natives and reasoning with them about the things of God.[53] After Judson acquired a working knowledge of the local language in Burma, he began to translate portions of Scripture and produce small tracts.

Judson believed that the word "preaching" was best translated as "proclaiming." He used the illustration of a king's messenger.[54] If this messenger received the responsibility to announce a certain edict to his people, then an oral announcement or an official document would suffice for the duty assigned. In the same way, the proclamation of the gospel of Christ is delivered through oral means and also through the official written documents of the messenger. Judson contended, "The earlier communications of a missionary, sent to impart the gospel to an unenlightened people, will probably be of an oral kind; but he will have very imperfectly fulfilled his

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[52] Middleditch, *Burmah's Great Missionary*, 399.

[53] Knowles, *Memoir of Ann H. Judson*, 159.

[54] See Wayland, *Memoir*, 2:236.

commission, if he leaves them without the written word."[55] Therefore, in his mind, translating the Scriptures and producing tracts were modes of proclamation and preaching. As Judson completed his translation of the Bible in the Burman tongue, he declared, "May he make his own inspired Word, now complete in the Burman tongue, the grand instrument in filling all Burmah with songs of praise to our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ. Amen."[56]

Eventually, after acquiring language proficiency and a substantial amount of translated written material, Judson developed a public preaching ministry. In April 1819, Judson's construction of a zayat was sufficient to hold a public worship service.[57] At the inauguration, Judson claimed that he had been preaching the gospel in the form of conversations and tracts but had not until this point preached as in the full usage of the word.[58] On this day, public preaching in the zayat became a staple of his ministry to the Burman people.

Some may be inclined to assume that the public preaching of the gospel in a zayat was a common and acceptable form of missionary endeavor as opposed to other hostile areas of the world. However, Knowles explained that Judson and his companions' attempt of proceeding with public preaching and conversing was a dangerous endeavor and was likely to attract the displeasure of the local government. Knowles added, "It was well known, that a renunciation of the established religion would be punished by death.

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[55] Wayland, *Memoir*, 2:236.

[56] Middleditch, *Burmah's Great Missionary*, 305.

[57] The zayat was a common structure in Burmese culture. The zayat was much like a shed built on a busy road. The zayats were occupied daily by Buddhist priests who conversed and taught the people the religion of Buddhism. In similar fashion, Judson constructed a zayat with the opening facing a busy road in order to entice people who were passing by to stop in and converse. Judson added a large interior room in which he held public worship gatherings.

[58] See Knowles, *Memoir of Ann H. Judson*, 176. Also, according to his son, Judson believed that oral preaching was far more important than the work of translating and distributing tracts. Even while Judson was engaged in translation work, Edward claimed that his father was always pining for the opportunity to preach the gospel with his human voice. See Judson, *Adoniram Judson*, 62.

But the missionaries resolved to make the attempt, and trust in the Lord for protection."[59] Although Judson and his companions exercised great boldness in the face of an oppressive government, there were times that they exercised caution and secrecy.[60]

A priority of word entails verbal proclamation, preaching, hearing, listening, and presenting the gospel of Jesus Christ. Primary and secondary sources on Judson provide many examples of such priority.[61] On one occasion, Judson proposed, "But we beg still to be allowed to feel, that our great work is to preach the gospel *viva voce*, and build up the glorious kingdom of Christ among this people."[62] Judson begged that his great work of oral proclamation find support among the brethren in America.

Judson exemplified a heavy emphasis on the ministry of word. He believed that a ministry of word was enough to convert hearers to Christ. In a letter to the Rev. Dr. Baldwin, Judson spoke of a moment when an inquirer came to the zayat. Judson recorded, "And here comes a man, this moment, to talk about religion. What shall I do? I will give him a tract, to keep him occupied for a few moments while I finish this. 'Here, my friend, sit down, and read something that will carry you to heaven, if you believe and receive the glorious Savior therein exhibited.'"[63] Wayland, in the same fashion, argued that Judson believed that "the Holy Spirit should with irresistible energy accompany the proclamation of the message of salvation wherever the gospel shall be preached in simple and earnest faith: so that the means are amply provided for carrying forward the

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[59] Knowles, *Memoir of Ann H. Judson*, 175.

[60] Judson, *Adoniram Judson*, 161.

[61] See Middleditch, *Burmah's Great Missionary*, 123, 332; Knowles, *Memoir of Ann H. Judson*, 125; Wayland, *Memoir*, 50, 59, 95, 157.

[62] Wayland, *Memoir*, 1:467.

[63] Wayland, *Memoir*, 1:186.

regeneration of our race."[64] Judson believed in the power of word, even in the form of a tract, to save people from their sins and secure an eternal home in heaven.

Judson's belief in conversion and his view toward other religions were apparent in his writings. Not only did he employ the term "conversion," but also his actions illustrate what he meant by such a term.[65] Perhaps the most precise illustration of Judson's belief in the inadequacies of other religions and the only way to salvation is best summarized by his attempt to describe the feeling he possessed when looking upon the Burman. Judson exclaimed,

> When he sees them lying in their ruin, ravaged by their spiritual enemies, death prowling near, and dragging them away to his dreadful charnel house, and the bottomless pit opening to receive and imprison their lost souls in the burning tombs of hell, where the eye of mercy must never look, nor angel voice whisper consolation or hope through interminable ages,—when he knows that the cross of Christ is the only refuge from these horrors, the only life-boat which can bear away the struggling, sinking soul from the abyss into which it is rushing,—he will exclaim with the apostle, "I am determined to know nothing among you but Jesus Christ, and him crucified."[66]

Judson held a major priority for word. According to his beliefs, word alone was enough to change the entire nation of Burma. However, he was not negligent of deed ministry, as seen by his participation in education, orphan ministry, and medication distribution. Deed was always near his heart—not as means to salvation but as a natural consequence of the Christian life. Also, he preferred proclamation but often held religious dialogue with the natives.[67] He believed strongly in conversion from sin and other religions. Therefore, his major priority for word and conversion but not to the exclusion

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[64] Wayland, *Memoir*, 1:155.

[65] For examples from Judson, his biographers, and even the native Burman converts, see Judson, *Adoniram Judson*, 59; Knowles, *A Memoir of Ann H. Judson*, 226, 267; Wayland, *Memoir*, 1:152–53, 285–86, 321; 2:305–6.

[66] Wayland, *Memoir*, 2:487.

[67] See Middleditch, *Burmah's Great Missionary*, 314; Knowles, *Memoir of Ann H. Judson*, 159–62.

of deed and dialogue renders his view more in alignment with traditional prioritism on the social action and evangelism continuum (see figure 13).
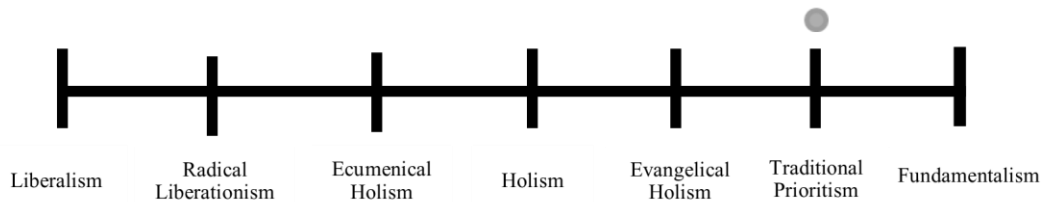

Figure 13. Marker 4: Deed/word

Marker 5: Function

The particular function that one administers in mission work determines much about his or her view of the relationship between social action and evangelism. If one heavily emphasizes social action, then one's work centers on a physical campaign to meet those demands. Likewise, if one possesses a heavy emphasis on evangelism, then he or she will employ the use of a spiritual campaign to accomplish that goal. In this section, I synthesize primary and secondary sources on Judson to determine the basic pattern of his function.

Middleditch observed that upon arrival in a heathen land, Judson's first priority was to learn the native language.[68] He employed a local tutor, but with such meager means, language proficiency took several years. On occasion, Judson wrestled with the amount of time spent in language acquisition but resolved that it was necessary to intelligibly write and communicate the sacred truths of the gospel of Jesus Christ.[69] As Judson slowly progressed in the language, he conversed with the natives about religion,

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[68] Middleditch, *Burmah's Great Missionary*, 92.

[69] See Wayland, *Memoir*, 1:177.

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translated portions of Scripture, and constructed various tracts.[70] At this point, he had never preached the gospel or prosecuted his work publicly. Judson claimed, "I have found that I could not preach publicly to any advantage, without being able, at the same time, to put something into the hands of the hearers."[71] Therefore, the next phase of Judson's work consisted of translating the Bible. Judson tirelessly labored to produce an intelligible copy of the Gospel of Matthew before he moved on to his next phase of ministry.

With a completed translation of the Gospel of Matthew, Judson felt that the time was ripe to introduce public teaching, preaching, and the distribution of literature. As stated in the previous section, in April 1819, Judson held his first public worship service in which he publicly preached the gospel.[72] Judson continued his preaching ministry throughout his entire missionary journey, only interrupted by sickness, imprisonment, and Scripture translation.

In Judson's function, the work of language acquisition, translation, and preaching were for the purpose of converting Burmans to Christ. Judson labored daily for this cause, and eventually, Burmans' hearts were opened to the gospel of Jesus. On June 27, 1819, Judson baptized the first Burman convert.[73] As the days went by, more and more Burmans trusted in Christ as their Savior and underwent believer's baptism. Simultaneously, Judson endeavored to disciple the new converts while continuing to preach to fresh inquirers. Judson explained, "After worship, I spend the evening with those who are willing to remain, particularly the converts, and endeavor to make the conversation instructive and profitable to them."[74]

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[70] See Middleditch, *Burmah's Great Missionary*, 99–102.

[71] Wayland, *Memoir*, 1:189.

[72] See Knowles, *Memoir of Ann H. Judson*, 176.

[73] See Middleditch, *Burmah's Great Missionary*, 127.

[74] Middleditch, *Burmah's Great Missionary*, 241.

Once a sizable number of converts had dedicated themselves to the Lord, Judson pronounced the formation of a church. In January 1821, Judson declared, "All the disciples but one, and all the hopeful inquirers, were present at worship; who, together with some others, made up an assembly of about twenty-five adults, all paying respectful and devout attention; the most interesting assembly, all things considered, that I have yet seen."[75] Reflecting on the same assembly some months later, Ann Judson exclaimed, "When we hardly ventured to hope that we should ever see a truly converted Burman, how great is our joy to see a little church rise up in the midst of the wilderness, consisting of thirteen converted Burmans."[76]

A few years later, the church grew to nineteen members, and some of the disciples indicated a desire and possessed an aptitude for ministry. After training the local leaders and feeling comfortable with the church's strength, Judson began to shift his prospects to planting a new church in Ava. Thus, Wayland commented, "Like the apostle Paul, his eye was ever fixed on 'the regions beyond.' He desired to go where Christ had not yet been named. When a church had been planted in Rangoon, he felt compelled to proceed with the message of salvation to Ava."[77] Judson's work of planting churches continued in Rangoon, Ava, and Amhurst. Also, like the apostle Paul, he frequently corresponded with church leaders in those regions and felt the utmost concern for the churches he left behind.[78]

In 1835, Judson reflected on his missionary exertion and concluded that if he translated and printed the Scriptures and raised up a church on heathen ground, then he would die peacefully knowing that he had completed his work. As he wrote these

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[75] Wayland, *Memoir*, 1:291.

[76] Knowles, *Memoir of Ann H. Judson*, 226.

[77] Wayland, *Memoir*, 1:327.

[78] See Judson, *Adoniram Judson*, 122. Wayland, *Memoir*, 1:435, 487–94.

sentiments, the entire translation of the Bible was days away from coming out of the press, and his church consisted of ninety-nine members with several hopeful inquirers. Judson declared, "Unite with me, my dear mother and sister, in gratitude to God, that he has preserved me so long, and, notwithstanding my entire unworthiness, has made me instrumental of a little good."[79]

Judson's function of language acquisition, translation, preaching, teaching, baptizing, instructing believers, forming churches, training leaders, and then moving to new regions was undoubtedly a spiritual campaign.[80] Judson's function in missions aligns closely with David Hesselgrave's Pauline Cycle. Hesselgrave identifies this cycle as Paul's master plan of evangelism and church development.[81]

Primary and secondary sources on Judson reveal a major priority for personal evangelism, mass evangelism, and a systematic process of forming churches. There are no references to the construction of hospitals or other non-governmental organizations.[82] As seen in the discussion of marker 1, Judson had a minor connection with the establishment of schools. However, his work in building schools must be seen as a bridge to his primary goal of evangelizing the native Burman people. His major priority for church planting and evangelism with the formation of schools as a bridge to evangelism renders his position of function in alignment with traditional prioritism on the social action and evangelism continuum (see figure 14).

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[79] Wayland, *Memoir*, 2:105.

[80] For a concise summary of his work, see Wayland, *Memoir*, 2:164; Middleditch, *Burmah's Great Missionary*, 450; Judson, *Adoniram Judson*, 84, 138, 173.

[81] See David J. Hesselgrave, *Planting Churches Cross-Culturally: North America and Beyond*, 2nd ed. (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2000), 47.

[82] Although he made no mention of hospitals, Judson employed and served alongside medical personnel. However, Mr. Price, Judson's main medical missionary, even expressed his sentiments toward his duty as a missionary. See Knowles, *Memoir of Ann H. Judson*, 355.
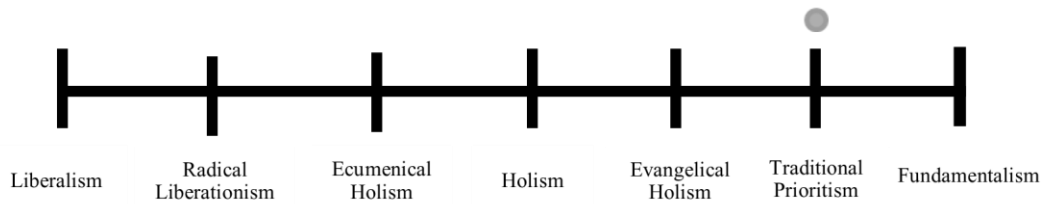
Figure 14. Marker 5: Function

Marker 6: Epistemological Foundations

In measuring one's epistemological foundation, a few questions arise. First, Does truth exist, and how knowable is that truth? Second, What determines our actions, the culture, or some other truth source? Providing the answers to these questions helps reveal one's position on the relationship between social action and evangelism. In this section, I seek to display how sources on Judson answer these two questions.

Judson described the process of salvation as being brought to the knowledge of the truth.[83] For Judson, God, through his infinite ability, enlightens the faculties of depraved humans to perceive of real and knowable truth. In Judson's view, the Bible, containing adequate revelation, is the source that God chose to use to awaken men out of the confines of darkness. Judson claimed that the Bible is perfect and unique.[84] Declaring a truth source as perfect and knowable highlights his view of naïve realism.

Revisiting David Bosch's statements on deductive versus inductive biblical reasoning sets the stage to answer the second question. Bosch argued,

> Evangelicals seek to apply Scripture deductively—in other words, make Scripture their point of departure from which they draw the line(s) to the present situation— ecumenicals follow the inductive method; the situation in which they find themselves becomes the hermeneutical key. Their thesis is: we determine God's will from a specific situation rather than in it. The nature and purpose of the Christian

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[83] See Wayland, *Memoir*, 1:168.

[84] See Middleditch, *Burmah's Great Missionary*, 389.

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mission therefore has to be reformulated from time to time so as to keep pace with events. In the words of the Upsala Assembly: "The world provides the agenda."[85]

Sources on Judson show that he emphatically believed in a form of deductive biblical reasoning in which the Bible—as opposed to the cultural situation—served as the sole source for determining action. Judson claimed that the Bible was the great directory for missionary labor.[86] He viewed it as perfect and guiding for all principles. He endeavored to test every scheme against its enduring truth and to reject any action that was not confined in its pages.[87] Judson exclaimed, "Let this blessed word be to you the golden lamp of heaven, hung out to guide you into and along the pathway of duty, and do not for a moment turn your backs upon this glorious light, to follow the feeble tapers of your own lighting."[88] Judson feared that men and women would one day trust in their own reason to determine the actions of their lives. In essence, instrumentalism and a failure to acknowledge truth provide the means for individuals to determine their own actions. Again, on another occasion, Judson refuted instrumentalism by adding, "A true disciple inquires not whether a fact is agreeable to his own reason, but whether it is in the book."[89]

If Judson relied on a critical realism or instrumentalist notions of truth, then the cultural situation would have shaped his methodology. The desperate situation of the Burman people, the oppressive government, and the lack of adequate food and shelter would have driven him to a systematic work in social reform. He may have spent his days attempting to reform the education system. He may have capitalized on his opportunity to work at the embassy in order to support social reform. He may have continually

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[85] David Jacobus Bosch, *Witness to the World: The Christian Mission in Theological Perspective*, New Foundations Theological Library (Atlanta: John Knox Press, 1980), 38.

[86] See Wayland, *Memoir*, 2:96.

[87] See Wayland, *Memoir*, 2:227.

[88] Wayland, *Memoir*, 2:227.

[89] Wayland, *Memoir*, 1:242.

requested funds from America to supply the physical needs of hunger and displacement. However, despite all of these areas of cultural demand, Judson dedicated his days to translating, teaching, preaching, and forming churches among the Burman people.

Judson aligned with a naïve realist notion of truth, believed that the Bible determines God's will, and practiced a deductive form of biblical reasoning that guided his actions as a missionary. However, it is difficult to determine the exact location of Judson on the social action and evangelism continuum with respect to epistemological foundations due to the overlap of categories. The traditional prioritism and fundamentalism positions both possess the same conceptions of these categories. Therefore, it is best to place Judson in an intermediate position between traditional prioritism and fundamentalism on the social action and evangelism continuum (see figure 15).
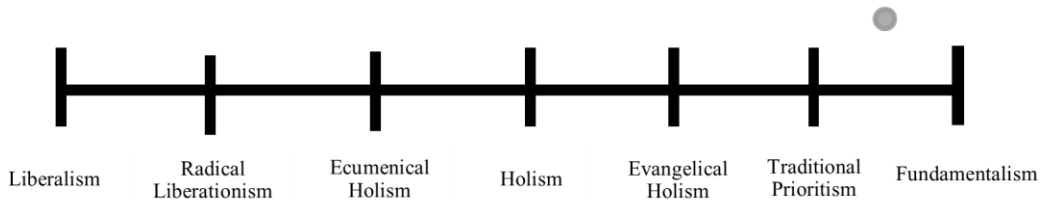
Figure 15. Marker 6: Epistemological foundations

Marker 7: Eschatological Interpretation

A comprehensive description of one's eschatological interpretation is outside this project's scope. The differing theological points between premillennialism, amillennialism, and postmillennialism are vast. In order to analyze one's view of the relationship between social action and evangelism, one must consider two eschatological categories: the interpretation of the world's condition prior to Christ's return and the understanding of how to quicken the return of Christ. How one views these two subjects may not necessarily determine his or her particular eschatological position. However,

they provide clues into one's understanding of how eschatological tenets apply to the relationship between social action and evangelism.

A postmillennial eschatological interpretation professes a belief in a progressive regeneration of society until the return of Christ. If the time at the eve of Christ's return is believed to be one of peace and prosperity, then Christians must participate in social action initiatives to fulfill its promise. On the other side, premillennial proponents believe in a progressive degeneration of society until the return of Christ. In this view, Christians are not called to remedy the disorder in society. The ultimate regeneration comes through the coming kingdom of Christ at the end of the age.

Sources on Judson show that he was indifferent to the world's condition and instead placed his hope in a future renewal. He constantly prayed for the strength to look to the world beyond for comfort. Judson pleaded, "Let me pray that the trials which we respectively are called to endure may wean us from the world, and rivet our hearts on things above."[90] In his famous letter to his future father-in-law, Judson denied any hope of worldly renewal or comfort. He perceived his journey as one filled with trials and hardships at every turn. The death of loved ones constantly reminded Judson of this truth. In a letter written shortly after his arrival in Rangoon, Judson contended, "We felt we had no portion left here below, and found consolation only in looking beyond our pilgrimage, which we tried to flatter ourselves would be short, to that peaceful region where the wicked cease from troubling and the weary are at rest."[91] Judson's hope was not in a renewed world where Christians could live in peace and prosperity. Instead, Judson believed that he would only experience suffering in this life and hoped that his time would be short.

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[90] Middleditch, *Burmah's Great Missionary*, 167.

[91] Wayland, *Memoir*, 1:121.

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Judson taught this same expectation of worldly suffering to Burman religious inquirers. As Moung Nau, the first Burman convert, expressed great interest to trust in Christ as his Savior, Judson commented, "He had been told plainly that he has nothing to expect in this world but persecution, and perhaps death."[92] Judson did not allude to any form of societal regeneration or expectation that the world condition would get better as time progressed. According to Judson, happiness could only come in the life hereafter. A Burman convert, Moung Shwa-ba, who was personally discipled by Judson, displayed Judson's teaching about worldly expectations and future hope. Moung Shwa-ba declared, "The inhabitants of this country of Burmah, being in evil practice of forbidden lust, erroneous worship, and false speech, deride the religion of Christ. However, that we may bear patiently derision, and persecution, and death, for the sake of the Lord Jesus Christ, pray for us."[93]

Judson's writings did not supply adequate information regarding the hastening of Christ's return. However, portions of Judson's writings did present several clues to his understanding of the world's condition at the return of Christ. With respect to these basic eschatological views, Judson more closely aligns with a premillennial interpretation of the world's condition at Christ's return. His indifference to the condition of the world and his expectation of societal degeneration places his view on the far right of the social action and evangelism continuum. Once again, there is little difference between the traditional prioritism and fundamentalism position in this category. Therefore, I place Judson in an intermediate position between traditional prioritism and fundamentalism (see figure 16).

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[92] Wayland, *Memoir*, 1:219.

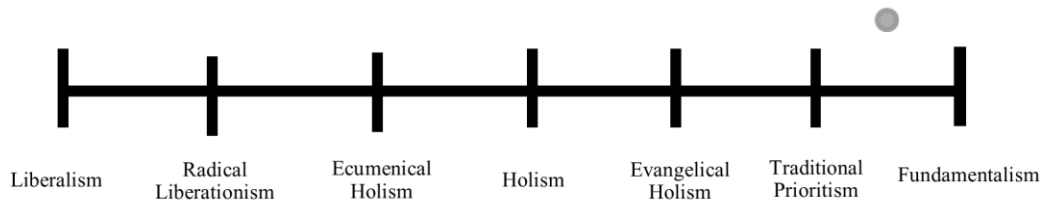[93] Knowles, *Memoir of Ann H. Judson*, 266–67.

Figure 16. Marker 7: Eschatological interpretation

A Comparative Analysis of Adoniram Judson
and the Expanded Continuum

In this section, I combine the graphing points from each marker into one model. Next, I make a final determination of Judson's position using the marker points and summarizing his major beliefs of the relationship between social action and evangelism. Lastly, I present how other authors have described Judson concerning his views of the relationship between social action and evangelism in order to offer support for such a designation.

The seven markers provide a detailed description of the unique factors in how one views the relationship between social action and evangelism. Combining all of the marker points from each section into one graph illustrates one's positions on the social action and evangelism continuum. If the points land at various locations from the far left of the continuum to the far right, then it may be difficult to conclude one's particular positions. However, Judson's points offer a valuable description of his position on the continuum. Using the graphing points alone, one can describe Judson's position as a right-leaning proponent of traditional prioritism (see figure 17).
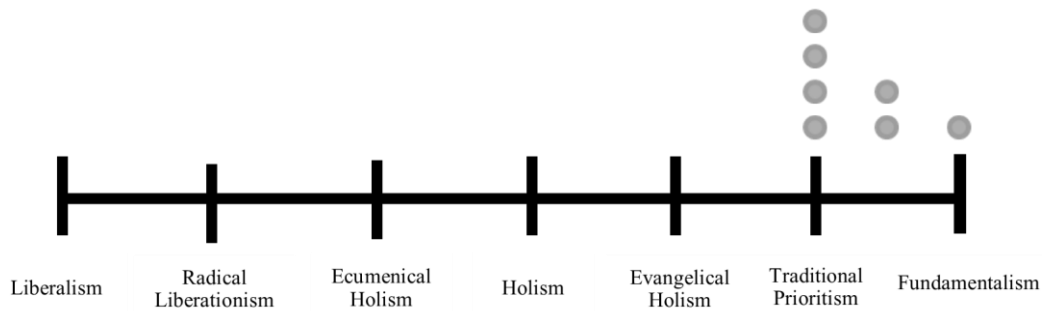
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Figure 17. Adoniram Judson's seven marker points

I assert that the graphing point designation aligns with Judson's view of the relationship between social action and evangelism. Judson possessed a major priority in several areas. He retained a major priority for proclamation evangelism, a major emphasis on the individual, a major priority for the ministry of word, and a major emphasis on church planting. Combining his major priority for these initiatives with his view of exclusivism, naïve realism, and representationalism, one must place his position to the far right of the continuum.

Due to Judson's high priority, one may argue that Judson belongs in the fundamentalism position on the social action and evangelism continuum. However, certain aspects of his character and actions render this claim invalid. Judson did possess a high priority for evangelism initiatives, but he did not reject notions of social action and discipleship. Judson's participation in and support for school education, his governmental role, and his Christian character of doing social good to care for orphans and distribute medication speak to his participation. Although Judson participated in social action, it must be said that he viewed them as bridges to evangelism and the product or consequence of the change wrought in individuals at conversion. However, Judson's acceptance and support of social action initiatives combined with his belief in a bridge and consequence theory illustrates the traditional prioritism position.

In a similar fashion, E. D. Burns conducted a theological analysis of Adoniram Judson. Burns's research goals were unique, but he thoroughly investigated primary and secondary sources on Judson. Burns provides a synopsis of his character concerning social action and evangelism by arguing, "Judson upheld evangelism, translation, tract distribution, and the equipping of indigenous church leaders as superior for the spread of the gospel over against establishing schools, hospitals, and civilizing the locals with Western culture."[94]

In 2012, multiple contributors collaborated to provide a bicentennial appreciation of the life and labors of Adoniram Judson. Charged with presenting a missiological and theological reflection of Judson's life, Keith Eitel reflected upon Judson's "Articles of Agreement." Eitel claimed, "A clear objective gave them direction in their day-to-day tasks. All would, of course, hinge on acquisition of Burmese which in turn would open doors to the culture and maximize the effect of Scripture translation, evangelization, and church planting. Cross-cultural communication of the gospel was the Judsons' heartbeat."[95]

When one combines Judson's seven marker graphing points, the confirmation of his priority views from the vast body of sources, and supporting summaries from other authors who thoroughly researched the life of Judson, the evidence becomes clear. Therefore, with high confidence, I conclude that Adoniram Judson aligns with the traditional prioritism position on the social action and evangelism continuum.

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[94] Evan Burns, *A Supreme Desire to Please Him: The Spirituality of Adoniram Judson*, Monographs in Baptist History 4 (Eugene, OR: Pickwick, 2016), 58.

[95] Keith E. Eitel, "The Enduring Legacy of Adoniram Judson's Missiological Precepts and Practices," in *Adoniram Judson: A Bicentennial Appreciation of the Pioneer American Missionary*, ed. Jason G. Duesing, B&H Studies in Baptist Life and Thought (Nashville: B&H Academic, 2012), 139.

Conclusion

In this chapter, I analyzed primary and secondary sources on Judson regarding his views of the relationship between social action and evangelism. Using the vast body of sources, I displayed how Judson's view aligned with each of the seven markers discovered in the literature review. After the analysis, I combined Judson's marker positions into one concise model to display how each of his points aligned with the social action and evangelism continuum. Combining the marker positions with a comparative analysis of Judson's main views and the continuum, I made a final determination of his position. I concluded that Adoniram Judson aligns with the traditional prioritism position on the social action and evangelism continuum.

CHAPTER 6

CONCLUSION

The present research project was designed to identify the current continuum positions on the relationship between social action and evangelism and to ascertain Adoniram Judson's location on an updated and expanded continuum. In this concluding chapter, I first restate the research questions and offer overarching conclusions based on the findings. Next, I provide implications of how the research conclusions impact the current debate. Then, I evaluate the research design by providing the strengths and weaknesses of the research process. Lastly, I propose further research recommendations that offer ways to strengthen the current research findings.

Research Purpose

The purpose of this dissertation was to analyze and determine Adoniram Judson's view of the relationship between social action and evangelism. In the early twentieth century, a debate emerged on the relationship between social action and evangelism in missions practice. Multiple mission conferences convened that sought to provide answers for the discussion. Outside the meetings, theologians and missiologists also attempted to clarify their particular understanding of the relationship. Although the mission conferences and theological proponents produced a vast body of research on the topic, they failed to analyze how past missionaries viewed the relationship. Therefore, I sought to provide a historical analysis of how one particular missionary understood the relationship between social action and evangelism before the debate surfaced. Adoniram Judson served as the subject of my inquiry due to his prominence among early missionaries as well as a vast body of primary and secondary sources.

Research Questions

I set out to answer the following research questions in this study:

1. What are the current paradigm continuum positions on the relationship between social action and evangelism?

2. What is Adoniram Judson's location on a modern continuum between social action and evangelism?

Research Conclusions

The following research conclusions are organized into three parts. First, I restate each research question. Second, I review the research process that attempted to answer each question. Third, I state the findings of each research question.

Research Question 1 Conclusion

Research question 1 asked, "What are the current paradigm continuum positions on the relationship between social action and evangelism?" To answer this question, I conducted a thorough literature review. After the "Great Century" of missionary expansion, hundreds of mission agencies and thousands of missionaries sensed the need to gather the multiple streams of missions practice into one concentrated effort. Therefore, in the early twentieth century, mission conferences began to convene and deliberate on the best practices for the missionary enterprise. The theological discussions of these conferences opened up a dialogue between missiologists and theologians. As they attempted to define the primary task of missions, a debate about the relationship between evangelism and social action emerged.

The mission conference's primary sources and major proponents' published literature provided the resources for the review. A thorough survey revealed reoccurring language and ideas about the relationship between social action and evangelism. I synthesized the reoccurring themes into particular categories. I noticed seven theological markers that authors and conferences repeatedly used to articulate their positions. The seven categories provided theological ideas about the relationship but failed to deliver

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particular classifications for certain positions. Therefore, the next phase of my research involved identifying the specific positions on the relationship.

Peter Wagner, David Hesselgrave, and Christopher Little designed continuums with particular labels for each position. Although their continuums offered labeled positions, their terms and boundaries fluctuated between each other. Also, their titles and boundaries were inconsistent with the body of literature throughout the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. Using the basis of their ideas, I combined their research with the seven theological markers to provide an updated and expanded continuum.

My proposed expanded continuum aligns the historical ideas of the twentieth and twenty-first centuries with modern terms to provide a concise description of the current positions on the relationship between social action and evangelism. I concluded that the particular positions on the relationship between social action and evangelism are (1) liberalism, (2) radical liberationism, (3) ecumenical holism, (4) holism, (5) evangelical holism, (6) traditional prioritism, and (7) fundamentalism.

Research Question 2 Conclusion

Research question 2 asked, "What is Adoniram Judson's location on a modern continuum between social action and evangelism?" The first step to identifying a location on a continuum involved analyzing the primary and secondary sources on Judson. Four contemporary biographers of Judson provided a vast body of literature chronicling the details of his life and ministry. The four earliest biographers relied heavily upon his letters, sermons, and tracts to provide the synopsis of his life. For example, Francis Wayland's biography consisted of over one thousand pages, primarily comprised of his letters with minimal extended commentary.

Once the sources on Judson were selected, the seven theological markers identified in the literature review provided the guide to analyze the vast body of resources. As I surveyed the thousands of pages, I specifically sought to discover how

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Judson's view aligned with each of the seven markers. After the analysis, I combined

Judson's seven marker positions into one concise model to display how each of his points

aligned with the social action and evangelism continuum. Once the points were graphed,

it became relatively clear where Judson aligned. If the markers were scattered at different

positions on the continuum, then it would have been difficult to determine his precise

location. However, Judson's seven positions were concentrated around the traditional

prioritism area on the continuum. There were a few points where Judson did not align

directly with traditional prioritism. Therefore, I combined the seven positions with his

major views regarding social action and evangelism to make a final determination. I

concluded that Adoniram Judson aligns with the traditional prioritism position on the

social action and evangelism continuum.

Implications of Research

Today, authors argue from every perspective as to the most accurate position

on the relationship between social action and evangelism. The persistent arguments insist

on continued study. Instead of arguing from personal belief, possibly intertwined with

bias, it is helpful to look back in history to understand how respected mission

practitioners functioned before the modern debate began. I sought to select a historical

subject that served before the debate surfaced but remained in the era of modern

missions. Adoniram Judson served as the subject of my investigation due to his standing

among missionaries of the nineteenth century as well as the vast body of available

sources.

The immense number of current biographies about Judson, the countless

references to his life, and the designation of "the Christian hero of the nineteenth

century" display his prominence among missionaries.[1] Recounting Judson's character, his

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[1] See Evan Burns, *A Supreme Desire to Please Him: The Spirituality of Adoniram Judson*, Monographs in Baptist History 4 (Eugene, OR: Pickwick, 2016), 1–4.

biographers described him as an expert example in mission practice. Wayland proclaimed, "Dr. Judson was, by universal consent, one of the ablest missionaries of his time, of remarkable singleness of purpose and large opportunities of observation. It has seemed to me that all matured opinions of such a man on the subject to which his whole life was so exclusively devoted should be spread before the public."[2] Wayland further described Judson as an expert intellect that perfected precision in all he did.[3] Robert Middleditch affirmed Wayland's sentiments and contended, "Intellectually, the endowments of Mr. Judson were remarkable. Possessed of a lofty and richly poetic imagination, he had at the same time a judgement of most thorough precision."[4]

Among his venerable qualities, Judson possessed a keen affection for biblical accuracy. On his visit to America, he pleaded with future missionary candidates to "try all your schemes by the unerring word of God. Reject, at once, whatever has not a firm basis there."[5] Judson's love for the Word of God and his sacrificial dedication to its principles is demonstrated by his changed position on baptism. On a ship bound for India, Judson diligently sought the Scriptures to prepare a defense of his Congregationalist view of infant baptism.[6] After a great struggle, Judson conceded that his view did not properly align with the Bible.

Changing his view on baptism to align with the Scripture provoked a precarious situation. Edward Judson elaborated, "He had to break with all the traditions and associations of his ancestry and childhood. He pictured to himself the grief and

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[2] Francis Wayland, *A Memoir of the Life and Labors of the Rev. Adoniram Judson D.D.*, 2 vols. (Boston: Philips, Sampson, 1853), 2:95.

[3] Wayland, *Memoir*, 2:374.

[4] Robert Thomas Middleditch, *Burmah's Great Missionary: Records of the Life, Character, and Achievements of Adoniram Judson* (New York: Edward H. Fletcher, 1854), 436.

[5] Wayland, *Memoir*, 2:227.

[6] Edward Judson, *Adoniram Judson: A Biography*, Notable Baptists (Philadelphia: American Baptist Publication Society, 1894), 30.

disappointment of his Christian friends in America, especially of his venerable parents."[7]

If shame and abandonment were not enough, Judson's changed view forced him to seek

financial support from a Baptist denomination whose feeble condition in America

promised little if any provision.[8] Judson's wife continually reminded him of the dire

consequences that would ensue from such a decision. However, she exclaimed, "But he

said his duty compelled him to satisfy his own mind, and embrace those sentiments

which appeared most concordant with Scripture."[9] Judson was convinced that he should

follow the Word of God despite the consequences that may occur.

Judson's prominence among missionaries of the nineteenth century, his expert

intellect, and his reliance on the Word of God to direct action presents a subject worthy

of emulation today. Likewise, if Judson exists as a viable model for missionaries to

imitate today, then his methodological initiatives should help inform mission practice.

Conducting a thorough analysis of Judson in seven unique areas through

multiple sources presents a justifiable determination of his position on the relationship

between social action and evangelism. Therefore, Judson's position of traditional

prioritism not only is a determination of his practice but also serves as a viable model for

modern mission proponents to emulate. As Christians grapple with the complexity of the

debate between social action and evangelism, Judson's view presents a valid historical

example of one of the most prominent and trusted missionaries of the modern missions

movement.

Evaluation of the Research Design

The particular method employed to locate the positions between social action

and evangelism and to discover Adoniram Judson's position possessed several strengths.

[7] Judson, *Adoniram Judson*, 30.

[8] Judson, *Adoniram Judson*, 31.

[9] See Wayland, *Memoir*, 1:106.

However, the research process also presented some weaknesses. In this section, I highlight some strengths and weaknesses to demonstrate an awareness of the positive conclusions as well as to improve future research projects.

Research Strengths

One of the research design strengths was the afforded opportunity to fill the gaps of Arthur Johnston's work. Johnston provided a thorough synopsis of missionary conferences from the early twentieth century until the International Congress on World Evangelization in 1974. This project's scope utilizes Johnston's pattern of evaluating the conferences' theology and extends the research to encompass the consultations until the year 2010. Also, researching and analyzing the literature from major proponents who wrote separately from the conferences strengthens the body of knowledge on specific missiological issues of the twentieth century. Synthesizing the major theological issues of the mission conferences and major proponent's literature provides a historical commentary on how the case of social action and evangelism progressed over the course of one hundred years.

Another strength of the research design was the outcome of an updated and expanded continuum on the relationship between social action and evangelism. The updated continuum allows for a more precise model for graphing one's position. Also, the updated continuum runs parallel with the major missionary conferences and theological proponents' literature. Due to its historical development and its combining of multiple continuums, the social action and evangelism continuum provides a viable tool for missiologists today. The social action and evangelism continuum served this project well but also possesses further uses in the broader world of missions literature and research.

Research Weaknesses

        Although the seven theological markers came directly from the literature review and the social action and evangelism continuum combined the research of existing continuums, I developed both myself. Therefore, the models used to analyze Judson and graph his position are untested outside this project. The model used may indeed provide a viable method for analyzing one's view of the relationship between social action and evangelism. However, there is a possibility that the current model may not function over a wider body of testing subjects. Further research is needed to confirm whether the present method is repeatable and reliable.

        Another weakness of the research is that it relies on only one testing subject. Initially, I intended to analyze two historical missionary figures to balance the results. However, the amount of primary sources and research space needed exceeded this project's capacity. Therefore, I delimited the project to include only one missionary figure.

        Also, the research is based on a human subject instead of the Bible. The intended end of the study is to help inform mission practice today. Relying on a man to inform practice as opposed to the Bible is a risky endeavor. However, as seen in the research, multiple proponents who viewed the relationship uniquely used the Bible to support their argument. In this scenario, it becomes difficult to determine the most accurate biblical position. Using a human subject provides historical evidence of past practices that may help support biblical cases, but there is an inherent weakness in relying upon flawed humans.

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Further Research

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        The following recommendations for further research address the three weaknesses present in the research design. First, the research should widen to include more missionaries from multiple eras. Providing a more extensive result base of missionaries could further qualify the validity of the methods used in this project. Also, it

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would be beneficial to analyze how other missionaries from Judson's era and other eras viewed the relationship between social action and evangelism.

Second, the research results from Judson should be comparatively analyzed with the Bible. A thorough research project attempting to determine Judson's biblical congruency would help further the research results. Only using Judson's model apart from the Bible may cause concern and provide an invalid model. If it is discovered that Judson's model runs perpendicular to the biblical model, then the research results should be questioned regarding their use to inform mission practice today. However, if Judson's view runs parallel with the biblical text, then his method can offer a more trusted model to consider.

Conclusion

Today, there is much disagreement between missiologists and theologians on the exact position one should hold regarding the relationship between social action and evangelism. The disagreement creates confusion and hinders the church from joining together in one concerted effort to reach the nations for Christ. Before the modern debate surfaced, well-respected men like William Carey and Adoniram Judson, represented the missionary enterprise. These men provide valuable examples of how early prominent missionaries viewed the relationship between social action and evangelism.

The findings of this study provide a detailed descriptive position of one of the most prominent missionaries in recent history. Therefore, the results should affect how we view the relationship between social action and evangelism today. Judson's methodological and theological understanding of the relationship between social action and evangelism provides a position that modern missions proponents should consider adopting. The hope is that this study, combined with further research, would promote unity between evangelicals and provide a biblically and historically congruent position to inform missiological practice.

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ABSTRACT

AN INQUIRY INTO THE RELATIONSHIP OF EVANGELISM
AND SOCIAL ACTION IN THE MISSIOLOGY
OF ADONIRAM JUDSON

Paul Gregory Wilkerson, PhD
The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, 2022
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This dissertation is a historical theological analysis of primary and secondary sources on Adoniram Judson concerning his understanding of the relationship between social action and evangelism in mission practice. This research identifies and defines the current paradigm continuum positions on the relationship between social action and evangelism, categorizes Adoniram Judson's location on a modern continuum, and offers insights on how Judson's view can impact the current debate.

This dissertation argues that an evaluation of Judson's missiology vis-à-vis current paradigm views demonstrates how one of the most prominent missionaries of the nineteenth century understood the relationship between social action and evangelism in mission practice. Additionally, a detailed analysis of Judson's missiology provides a model for current missions proponents to consider as they attempt to reconcile the relationship between evangelism and social action in mission practice.

I proceed through five significant steps in conducting research for this dissertation. In chapters 2 and 3, I review twentieth- and twenty-first-century literature associated with the debate between social action and evangelism. This segment of my research aims to identify the multiple positions utilized by various theologians and missiologists in order to purport their view of the relationship between social action and evangelism. In chapter 4, I synthesize the literature and present particular theological

markers regarding one's understanding of the relationship. Then, I survey existing paradigm continuums and conclude by creating an expanded paradigm continuum encompassing the various positions in the debate. In chapter 5, I analyze and determine Adoniram Judson's view regarding the relationship between social action and evangelism utilizing particular theological markers. I synthesize the data from primary and secondary sources to conduct a comparative analysis between Judson and current paradigm positions concerning the relationship between social action and evangelism. In chapter 6, I conclude my research by offering overarching conclusions based on the findings. Also, I provide implications of how the research conclusions impact the current debate. Then, I evaluate the research design by providing the strengths and weaknesses of the research process and propose further research recommendations that offer ways to strengthen the current research findings.

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