



The Lausanne Committee for World Evangelization

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Lausanne Occasional Paper 19 Christian Witness to Nominal Christians among the Orthodox

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Christian Witness to Nominal Christians among the Orthodox
Report of the Consultation on World Evangelization Mini-Consultation
on Reaching Nominal Christians Among Orthodox
held at Pattaya, Thailand from 16-27 June 1980
Sponsored by the Lausanne Committee for World Evangelization

Prefatory Note

This report, *Christian Witness to Nominal Christians among the Orthodox*, is one of a series of Lausanne Occasional Papers (LOPs) emerging from the historic Consultation on World Evangelization (COWE) held in Pattaya, Thailand, in June 1980. The report was drafted by members of the "Mini-Consultation on Reaching Nominal Christians among Orthodox," under the chairmanship of Rev. Apostolos D. Bliates, who also served as International Coordinator of the pre-COWE study groups on Reaching Nominal Christians among Orthodox.

The major part of this report went through a draft and a revised draft, which involved all members of the mini-consultation. It was also submitted to a wider "sub-plenary" group for comment, but the responsibility for the final text rests with the mini-consultation and its chairman.

The report is released with the prayer and hope that it will stimulate the church and individual members in reaching this large segment of the population.

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1. Introduction

The history of the Orthodox churches goes back to the early centuries. Throughout many centuries of persecution, these churches bravely proclaimed the gospel and were very much alive.

This history reflects the reality of the often-quoted axiom, "The blood of the martyrs is the seed of the church." Today, however, many of its members are Christians only in name. A nominal Christian Orthodox is any person who is born into an Orthodox family and is baptised by his church. He may or may not attend his church and may participate in the sacraments, but he does not have a personal experience of salvation and a relationship with our Lord Jesus Christ. The objectives of this paper, therefore, are to outline the historical development of the theology of the Orthodox Church, to survey the contemporary situation in matters of faith and practise, and to suggest appropriate approaches.

A. Terminology

The term is the English equivalent of the Greek *Orthodoxia*, which is etymologically derived from two Greek words, *Orthos* (right) and *Ooxa* (opinion or glory), and the meaning of this combination is "right-belief" as opposed to heresy or heterodoxy. Orthodoxy became important in the church (from the second century onwards) through conflict, first with Gnosticism, and then with other Trinitarian and Christological errors. The Eastern church claims itself to be "orthodox" and condemns the Western church as heterodox because (among other things) it includes the "filioque" clause in its creed. The Eastern church claims to be the unbroken continuation of the Christian church established by Christ and his Apostles.

B. Membership

The world's population in 1976 was 4,019 million. It is estimated that 33% of the world population claims to be Christians, i.e., approximately 1,300 million people. Numerically speaking, the Orthodox churches are large in terms of membership. A conservative estimate suggests that 1/6 of all Christians are Orthodox or 4% of the population of our planet. That statistic suggests the staggering figure of 155 million people!

C. Expansion

Geographically and chronologically, the Orthodox Church began its external development in areas along the coast of the Eastern Mediterranean Sea in Greece, in the Roman provinces of the Middle East, and in north eastern territories of Africa, Egypt and Ethiopia, reaching as far as India by the first century. In 324, Constantine the Great decided to move the capital of the Roman Empire to the site of the Greek city Byzantium, which was renamed Constantinople and which became the centre of both the Byzantine Empire and the Orthodox Church. In 863, Saint Cyril and Saint Methodius, the apostles to the Slavs, travelled northward to undertake missionary work beyond the frontiers of the Byzantine Empire. Their efforts led eventually to the conversion of Bulgaria, Serbia and Russia, with subsequent expansion to other Eastern European countries. Today there are substantial Orthodox immigrant communities in Western Europe, North and South America, Australia, and other parts of the world.

D. Government

The Orthodox Church is a federation of several self-governing or "autocephalous" churches held together, not by a centralised organisation or a single prelate with absolute power, but by a bond of unity in faith and the sacraments.

There is no one in Orthodoxy with a position equivalent to that of the Pope in the Roman Catholic Church. The Patriarch of Constantinople (known as the "Ecumenical" or Universal Patriarch) has a position of special honour among the Orthodox communities, but he does not have the right to interfere in the internal affairs of the constituent churches. His position is comparable to that of the Archbishop of Canterbury in the worldwide Anglican communion.

The decentralised system of independent regional churches has the advantage of being highly flexible and is easily adapted to changing conditions. It is composed, at present, of the following self-governing or "autocephalous" churches:

- (i) *The four ancient Patriarchates:* Constantinople, Alexandria, Antioch, Jerusalem. The head of each of these four churches bears the title Patriarch.
- (ii) *Eleven other autocephalous churches:* Russia, Romania, Serbia (Yugoslavia), Greece, Bulgaria, Georgia, Cyprus, Czechoslovakia, Poland, Albania and Sinai. All except three (Czechoslovakia, Poland, and Albania) of these churches are in countries where the Christian population is entirely or predominantly Orthodox. The churches of Greece, Cyprus, and Sinai are Greek. Five of the others (Russia, Serbia, Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, Poland) are Slavic. The head of the Georgian church is called Catholicos-Patriarch. The heads of the other churches are called either Archbishop or Metropolitan.
- (iii) *In addition, there are several churches which, while predominantly self-governing, have not yet attained full independence.* These are termed "autonomous": Finland, China, Japan. There are also three autonomous church administrations among expatriate Russian communities.
- (iv) *There are ecclesiastical provinces* in Western Europe, in North and South America, and in Australia, which depend either on one of the autocephalous churches, or on one of the three jurisdictions outside Russia.

E. Stages in the History of Christendom

There are three main stages in the fragmentation of Christendom:

- (i) *The first stage* occurred during the fifth and sixth centuries when the Nestorian Church of Persia and the five Monophysite churches of Armenia, Syria (the co-called "Jacobite" Church), Egypt (the Coptic Church), Ethiopia, and India separated from the main body of Christianity.
- (ii) *The second fragmentation* took place in 1054 when the Great Schism divided the Roman Catholic Church of the West, under the Pope of Rome, from the Orthodox Church of the East under the Patriarch in the Byzantine Empire. Thus between the semitic Eastern churches and the Western Latin churches there was the "Greek-speaking world" with its Orthodox faith.
- (iii) *The third stage* came in the sixteenth century when the Protestant Reformers separated from the Church of Rome.

2. Historical Development of Orthodox Theology

A. The Church of the General Councils: (325-787 A.D.)

After the conversion of the Emperor Constantine, the age of persecutions and martyrdom drew to an end, and the church of the Catacombs became the church of the Empire. Three important events marked the Church's coming of age: the Edict of Milan, issued by Constantine the Great in 312, proclaiming the official toleration of the Christian faith; the foundation of Constantinople in 330 as the capital of the Byzantine Empire; and the first Ecumenical Council of Nicaea in 325.

The life of the Church in the earlier Byzantine period is dominated by the seven General Councils or "Ecumenical Synods." These councils fulfilled a double task.

First, they clarified and articulated the visible organisation of the church, crystallising the position of the five great sees or Patriarchates (as they came to be known).

Second, and more important, the councils defined once and for all the Church's teaching about the fundamental doctrines of the Christian faith—the Trinity and the Incarnation. All Christians regard these things as "mysteries" which lie beyond human comprehension and language. The bishops, in drawing up the council definitions, did not presume to have explained the mysteries; they merely sought to exclude certain false ways of expressing them. Christ is fully God and fully man. Every tendency to undermine one aspect of this vital affirmation leads to heresy and error. Each council defended this affirmation. The first two were held in the fourth century and concentrated on the fact that Christ must be fully God. They formulated the doctrine of the Trinity. The next four, held during the fifth, sixth, and seventh centuries, turned to the fullness of Christ's humanity, and also sought to explain how manhood and Godhead could be united in a single person. The seventh council, held in the eighth century, in defense of the Holy Icons, seems at first glance to stand somewhat apart. Like the first six, however, it was ultimately concerned with the Incarnation and with man's salvation.

(i) *The Council of Nicaea in 325 A.D.* condemned Arianism. Arius, a presbyter in Alexandria, maintained that the Son was inferior to the Father. The famous Arian phrase, "There was a time when he was not," placed the Son among created beings, superior but still a creature. The council retorted that only if Christ is truly God can he unite us to God. Christ is "one in essence" (homoousios) with the Father, true God from true God. The bishops proclaimed in the Creed that Christ was "begotten not made, being of one substance with the Father."

(ii) *The Council of Constantinople in 381 A.D.* expanded and adapted the Nicene Creed, developing in particular the teaching upon the Holy Spirit. The latter was affirmed to be God (even as the Father and Son are God) and "proceeds from the Father, who with the Father and the Son together is worshipped and glorified." Behind the definitions of the Councils lay the work of theologians, who gave precision to the terminology employed. It was the supreme achievement of Saint Athanasius of Alexandria to draw out the full implications of the key word in the Nicene Creed: "homoousios," one in essence or substance, consubstantial.

The three Cappadocian Fathers—Saints Gregory of Nazianzus, the Theologian (329-390); Basil the Great (330-379); and his younger brother Gregory of Nyssa (died 394)—stressed God's threeness. The Father, Son and Holy Spirit are three persons (hypostases). The Council preserved a delicate balance between the threeness and oneness of God and gave full meaning to the classic summary of Trinitarian doctrine—"three persons in one essence." The Bishop of Constantinople, Saint John Chrysostom ("the Golden Mouth") (344-407), a fluent and eloquent preacher, expressed in popular form the theological ideas put forward by Athanasius and the Cappadocians. A man of strict life-style, he was inspired by a deep compassion for the poor and by a burning zeal for social justice.

(iii) *The Council of Ephesus in 431 A.D.* centred on the person of Christ, with differing descriptions of his manhood and explanations of the union of God and man in a single person. Nestorius, Bishop of Constantinople, representing the Antiochene school, upheld the integrity of Christ's manhood; but distinguished so emphatically between the manhood and the Godhead that he seemed in danger of ending, not with one person, but two persons co-existing in one body.

Saint Cyril (died 444), protagonist of the opposite tradition of Alexandria, started with the unity of Christ's person rather than the diversity between his natures. Either approach taken to the extreme could lead to heresy, but the Church needed both emphases in order to form a balanced picture of the whole Christ. It was a tragedy for Christendom that the two schools, instead of balancing each other, entered into conflict.

Further controversy was precipitated by Nestorius who declined to call the virgin Mary "Mother of God" (Theotokos, Giver of birth to God). He argued that Mary did not mother Christ's divinity, and thus could be called "Mother of Man" or at most "Mother of Christ." The council supported Cyril, who argued that the text "The Word was made flesh" (John 1:14) makes Mary God's mother, since she bore the Word of God made flesh. Cyril believed that the name "Theotokos" was a safeguard to the unity of Christ's person. Thus, at Ephesus, the issue was not only titles of devotion but the very message of salvation.

Another Alexandrian victory at the second Council at Ephesus in 449 was not accepted by the church at large. Pressing Cyril's teaching to extremes, Dioscorus and Eutyches maintained that in Christ there was not only a unity of personality, but a single nature (Monophysitism). Such a theological expression threatened the full humanity of Christ because it appeared, to opponents of the viewpoint, that Christ's manhood was "swallowed up" by his divinity. The same council also declared that nothing could be added to or subtracted from the Apostles' Creed.

(iv) *The Council of Chalcedon in 451 A.D.* was a fresh gathering of bishops which, in reaction against Monophysite terminology, proclaimed Christ one person with two natures, "one and the same Son, perfect in Godhead and perfect in manhood, truly God and truly man." They affirmed that the difference in natures is not minimised in the union, but both are combined in one person or hypostasis. The Definition of Chalcedon, we may note, is aimed not only at the Monophysites ("in two natures, unconfusedly, unchangeably") but also at the followers of Nestorius ("one and the same Son ... indivisibly, inseparably"). Ephesus and Chalcedon were a milestone for Orthodoxy, but also a great stumbling block. The Arians have been gradually reconciled and formed no lasting schism. But, to this day, there are Nestorian Christians who refuse to accept the decisions of Ephesus, and Monophysites who do not accept those of Chalcedon. The Nestorians lay for the most part outside the Empire, and little more was heard of them in Byzantine history. But large numbers of Monophysites, particularly in Egypt and Syria, were subjects of the Emperor; and repeated, though unsuccessful, attempts were made to bring them back into communion with the Byzantine Church. As often happens, theological differences were made more bitter by cultural and national tensions.

Egypt and Syria, both predominantly non-Greek in language and background, resented the power of Greek Constantinople in religious and political matters. Thus, ecclesiastical schism was reinforced by political separatism. Had it not been for these non-theological factors, the two sides might perhaps have reached a theological understanding after Chalcedon. Many modern scholars are inclined to believe that the difference between Monophysites and Chalcedonians was basically one of terminology, not of theology. The two parties used different languages, but ultimately both were concerned to uphold the same truths.

(v) *The Council of Constantinople in 553 A.D.* re-interpreted the decree of Chalcedon from an Alexandrian point of view, seeking to explain in more constructive terms how the two natures of Christ unite to form a single person.

(vi) *The Council of Constantinople in 680-681 A.D.* condemned "Monothelitism," a new form of Monophysitism which held that though Christ has two natures, he has only one will since he is a single person. The council maintained that if he has two natures, then he must also have two wills. For the fifty years prior to the meeting of the sixth council, Byzantium had been faced by a sudden and alarming development, the rise of Islam.

The most striking fact about Muslim expansion was its speed. When the Prophet died in 632, his authority scarcely extended beyond the Hejaz. But within fifteen years his Arab followers had taken Syria, Palestine, and Egypt; within fifty years they were at the walls of Constantinople and almost captured the city. Within a century, they had swept across North Africa, advanced through Spain, and forced Western Europe to fight for its life at the Battle of Poitiers. The Arab invasions have been called "a centrifugal explosion, driving in every direction small bodies of mounted raiders in quest of food, plunder, and conquest." The old empires were in no condition to resist them.

Christendom survived, but only with difficulty. The Byzantines lost their eastern possessions, and the three Patriarchates of Alexandria, Antioch, and Jerusalem came under infidel control. Within the Christian Empire of the East, the Patriarchate of Constantinople was now without rival. Henceforth, Byzantium was never free very long from Muslim attacks, and although it held out for eight centuries more, in the end, the "God-protected city" succumbed in the year 1453.

(vii) *The Council of Nicaea in 787 A.D.* dealt with different forms of the dispute concerning the Person of Christ. The struggle centered on the holy icons—pictures of Christ, the Mother of God, and the saints which were kept and venerated both in churches and in private homes.

(a) *The Iconoclasts or Icon-smashers* were suspicious of any religious art which represented human beings or God, and demanded the destruction of icons.

(b) *The Iconodules or Venerators of Icons* vigorously defended the place of icons in the life of the church. The struggle was not merely a conflict between two concepts of Christian art. The deeper issues involved were the character of Christ's human nature, the Christian attitude towards matter, and the true meaning of Christian redemption.

The Iconoclasts may have been influenced from the outside by Jewish and Muslim ideas. Significantly, three years before the first outbreak of Iconoclasm in the Byzantine Empire, the Muslim Caliph Yezid had ordered the removal of all icons within his dominions. Within Christianity itself, however, there had always existed a "puritan" outlook which condemned icons because it saw in all images a latent idolatry.

The Iconoclast controversy lasted some 120 years, and is divided into two phases. *The first period* began in 726 when Leo III began his attack on icons, and ended in 780 when the Empress Irene suspended the persecution. The Iconodule position was upheld by the seventh and last Ecumenical Council (787). The Council proclaimed that icons are to be kept in churches and honoured with the same relative veneration as is shown to other material symbols, such as "the precious and life-giving Cross" and the Book of the Gospels.

Leo V the Armenian began a *new attack* on icons in 815, which continued until 843 when icons were again reinstated, this time permanently, by another Empress, Theodora. The final victory of the Holy Images in 843 is known as "the Triumph of Orthodoxy," and is commemorated in a special service celebrated on "Orthodox Sunday," the first Sunday in Lent. During this service anathemas are pronounced on all who attack the Holy Icons or the seven General Councils. "To those who reject the Councils of the Holy Fathers, and their traditions which are agreeable to divine revelation, and which the Orthodox Catholic Church piously maintains, Anathema! Anathema! Anathema!"

What do icons signify, and why were they regarded as important? In answer to the Iconoclasts' charge of idolatry, the Iconodules maintained that reverence is shown to material symbols and not worship, which is due to God alone. When an Orthodox kisses an icon, or prostrates himself before it, or burns candles in front of it, he does not feel guilty of idolatry. To him, the icon is not an idol but a symbol. The veneration shown to images is not directed toward stone, wood, and paint, but toward the person depicted. Icons are regarded "as part of the church's teaching," which are "open books to remind us of God," and are one of the means the Church employs in order to teach the faith.

"The Scriptures of the illiterate," icons are considered necessary because they contain "doctrinal significance," essential to safeguard a full and proper doctrine of the incarnation. The Iconodules agreed with the Iconoclasts that God cannot be represented in his eternal nature since "no man has seen God at any time" (John 1:18). However, the Iconodules continue, the Incarnation made possible a representation in religious art. The person of the Son of God can be depicted because he became man and assumed flesh. Material images, argued Saint John of Damascus (675-749), can be made of him who took a material body. The Orthodox

doctrine of icons is bound up with the Orthodox belief that the whole of God's creation, material as well as spiritual, is to be redeemed and glorified.

The triumph of Orthodoxy in 843 marks the end of the second period in church history (i.e., the period of the seven Councils), which is actually the start of the Orthodox Church. The first period was common to all Christendom. These councils are of immense importance to Orthodoxy. For members of the Orthodox Church, their interest is not merely historical but also contemporary. They see in the period of the councils the "great age of theology"; and together with the Bible, it is the seven councils which the Orthodox Church takes as its standard and guide in seeking solutions to the new problems which arise in every generation.

B. The Church During the Byzantine Empire (324-1453)

Not without reason has Byzantium been called "the icon of the heavenly Jerusalem." Religion entered into every aspect of Byzantine life. The Byzantine citizen's holidays were religious festivals, the races which he attended in the circus began with the singing of hymns, and his trade contracts invoked the Trinity and were marked with the sign of the cross.

(i) *The Byzantine Bishop* was not simply a distant figure who attended councils. He was also, in many cases, a true father to his people, a friend and protector to whom men confidently turned when in distress. The concern for the poor and oppressed which John Chrysostom displayed is found in many others. For example, Saint John the Almsgiver, Patriarch of Alexandria (died 619), devoted all his wealth to helping those whom he called "my brethren, the poor." When his own resources failed, he appealed to others. The church in the Byzantine Empire did not overlook its social obligations, and one of its principal functions was charitable work.

(ii) *Monasticism* played a significant part in the religious life of Byzantium, as it has done in all Orthodox countries. The monastic life first emerged as a definite institution in Egypt at the beginning of the fourth century, and from there it spread rapidly across Christendom. The monks, by their withdrawal from society into the desert, fulfilled, according to the Orthodox, a prophetic and eschatological ministry in the life of the church. They believed that this reminded Christians that the kingdom of God is not of this world. Monasticism occurred in three main forms, all of which had appeared in Egypt by the year 350, and all of which can still be found today in the Orthodox Church.

First, there are the *hermits*. These men lead a solitary life in huts or caves, and even in tombs, among the branches of trees, or on the tops of pillars. The great model of the hermitic life is the "father of monasticism" himself, Saint Antony of Egypt (251-356).

Secondly, there is *community life*, in which monks dwell together under a common rule and in a regularly-constituted monastery. Here the great pioneer was Saint Pachomius of Egypt (286-346), author of a rule later used by Saint Benedict in the West. Basil the Great, whose ascetic writings have exercised a formative influence on Eastern monasticism, was a strong advocate of the community life. Giving a social emphasis to monasticism, he urged that religious houses should care for the sick and poor, should maintain hospitals and orphanages, and work directly for the benefit of society at large. But, in general, Eastern monasticism has been far less concerned with social work than Western monasticism. In Orthodoxy, a monk's primary task is the life of prayer, and it is through this that he serves others. It is not so much what a monk does that matters, as what he is.

Finally, there is a form of monastic life intermediate between the first two—the *semi-hermitic life*. This form is a "middle way" whereby instead of a single highly-organised community, there is a loosely-knit group of small settlements, containing between two and six brethren living together under the guidance of an elder. The great centres of the semi-hermitic life in Egypt were Nitris and Scetis, which produced many outstanding monks.

In the fifth and sixth centuries, leadership in the monastic movement shifted from Egypt to Palestine, with Saint Euthymius the Great (died 473), and his disciple Saint Savvas (died 532). At the monastery in the Jordan Valley was John of Damascus. Another important monastery is that of Saint Catherine of Mt. Sinai, founded by the Emperor Justinian (reigned 527-65), where German Bible scholar Constantine Tischendorf discovered the famous "Codex Sinaiticus" in May of 1844. Since the tenth century, the chief centre of Orthodox monasticism outside Egypt has been Athos, a rocky peninsula of Chalkidiki (in Northern Greece) jutting out into the Aegean and culminating, at its tip, in a peak 6,000 feet high. Known as "the Holy Mountain," Athos contains 20 "ruling" monasteries and a large number of smaller houses, as well as hermits' cells. In the days of its great expansion it is said to have housed nearly 40,000 monks. One of the 20 ruling monasteries has, from its confines, produced 26 Patriarchs and 144 bishops. This gives some idea of the importance of Athos in Orthodox history. Today Orthodox monasticism is flourishing in Romania, Egypt, and other parts of the world.

(iii) *The Emperor* was the heart of the Christian policy of Byzantium. He was no ordinary ruler, for he was God's representative on earth. The earthly monarchy of the Emperor was an image of the monarchy of God in heaven. The Emperor had a special place in the church's worship. He could not, of course, celebrate the Eucharist, but received communion "as priests do." He preached sermons and on certain feasts he censed (perfumed with incense) the altar. The vestments which Orthodox bishops now wear are the vestments once worn by the Emperor in church.

The life of Byzantium formed a unified whole, and there was no rigid line of separation between the religious and the secular, between church and state—the two were seen as parts of a single organism. Hence, it was inevitable that the Emperor played an active part in the affairs of the church. Yet, at the same time, it is not fair to accuse Byzantium of Caesar-Papism, of subordinating the church to the state. There were two distinct elements: the priesthood and the imperial power. Between the two there was a "harmony," but neither element exercised absolute control over the other. "I recognize two authorities," said the Emperor John Tsimiskis, "priesthood and empire. The Creator of the world entrusted to the priesthood the care of souls, and to the empire the control of men's bodies. Let neither authority be attacked, that the world may enjoy prosperity." Bishops were appointed by God to teach the faith, whereas the Emperor was the protector of Orthodoxy, not its exponent. In Byzantine history, church and state were closely interdependent, but neither was subordinate to the other. There were considerable shortcomings within the Empire, but the Byzantine vision was to establish here on earth a living icon of God's government in heaven.

C. The Great Schism (1054)

One summer afternoon in the year 1054, as a service was about to begin in the Church of the Holy Wisdom (Agia Sophia) at Constantinople, Cardinal Humbert and two other legates of the Pope entered the building and made their way up to the sanctuary. They had not come to pray. They placed a Bull of Excommunication upon the altar and marched out of the church. As he passed through the western door, the Cardinal shook the dust from his feet with the words: "Let God look and judge." A deacon ran out after him in great distress with the Bull and begged him to take it back, but Humbert refused. It is this incident which has conventionally been taken to mark the beginning of the great schism between the Orthodox East and Latin West. The schism came about gradually as the result of a long and complicated process, commencing well before the eleventh century and not coming to completion until some time after. Many different influences were at work. The schism was conditioned by cultural, political, and economic factors. Its fundamental cause, however, was not secular but theological. In the last resort, it was over matters of doctrine that East and West quarreled.

Two matters in particular stood out: the papal claims and the "filioque." The "filioque" issue questioned whether the Holy Spirit proceeds from the Father alone, or from both the Father and the Son. The Western church chose the latter interpretation and added the words "and from the Son" (Filioque) to the Nicæan Creed. The filioque issue involved much more than a technical question of the source of the procession of the Holy Spirit. It was based on their two different views of the trinity. While the West found the unity of the trinity in the essence of God, the East found the same unity in the person of the Father. For this reason the East had to exclude the possibility that the Holy Spirit could proceed from both the Father and the Son. Since then, there has been no meaningful relationship between the church in the East and the church in the West.

Under the wise leadership of the ecumenical Patriarch Athenagoras, a dialogue recently started again (in 1964) with the Pope of Rome. This dialogue is being continued by the former's successor, the ecumenical Patriarch Demetrius I. The last meeting was held on the islands of Patmos and Rhodes in June of 1980. Further attempts to "bridge the gap" in Christendom include a similar dialogue between the Anglican and Orthodox churches, which began in 1920. The most recent meeting of members of the Joint Theological Commission was held in Thessaloniki in April of 1977. The Orthodox Church became a founding member of the World Council of Churches at the first council held in Amsterdam in 1948. There is a hope and expectation among the Orthodox that in our generation the Synods, which ceased after the seventh council, will be resumed. They believe that such a unity of the main bodies of Christendom will further the gospel as they view it.

D. The Orthodox Church under Islam

For more than a thousand years, men had taken the Christian Empire of Byzantium for granted as a permanent factor in God's providential dispensation to the world. Then in 1453, the "God-protected city" fell, and the Greeks were under the rule of "the infidel."

It was not an easy transition. Islam regards the Bible as a holy book and Jesus Christ as a prophet. In Muslim eyes, the Christian religion is incomplete but not entirely false, and Christians, being "people of the Book," should not be treated as if on a level with mere pagans. According to Muslim teaching, Christians are to undergo no persecution, but may continue without interference in observance of their faith, as long as they submit quietly to the power of Islam. Such were the principles which guided the conqueror of Constantinople, Sultan Mohammed II. Learning that the office of the Patriarch was vacant, Mohammed summoned the monk Gennadius and installed him on the Patriarchal throne. Gennadius (1405-72) was a determined opponent of the Church of Rome, and his appointment as Patriarch meant the final abandonment of the Union of Florence, which had been formed by the Council of Florence, held in 1438-39. This union between the Eastern and Western churches had as its twofold principle unanimity in matters of doctrine, and respect for the legitimate rites and traditions peculiar to each church. Doubtless for political reasons, the Sultan deliberately chose a man of anti-Latin convictions. With Gennadius as Patriarch, there would be less likelihood of the Greeks seeking secret aid from Roman Catholic powers.

Thus, Christians were assured a definite place of inferiority. Under Islam, Christianity was a second-class religion, and its adherents second-class citizens. They paid heavy taxes, wore a distinctive dress, were not allowed to serve in the army, and were forbidden to marry Muslim women. The church was not allowed to undertake missionary work, and it was a crime to convert a Muslim to the Christian faith. From the material point of view, there was every inducement for a Christian to convert to Islam.

The Muslims drew no distinction between religion and politics, and if Christianity was to be recognised as an independent religious faith, it was necessary for Christians to be organised as an independent political unit, an empire within the Empire. The Orthodox Church, therefore, became a civil as well as a religious institution; it was turned into the "Rum Millet," the Roman nation. The bishops became government officials; the Patriarch was not only the spiritual head of the Orthodox Church but also the civil head of the Greek nation, the "ethnarch" or "millet bashi." This situation continued in Turkey until 1923; and, in Cyprus, it prevailed until the days of Archbishop Makarios. The millet system performed one valuable service: it made possible the survival of the Greek nation as a distinctive unit throughout four centuries of alien rule. But it had two other effects on the life of the church.

First, it led to a confusion between Orthodoxy and nationalism. With civil and political life organised completely around the church, it became all but impossible for the Greeks to distinguish between church and state. The Orthodox faith, being universal, is not limited to a single people, culture, and language. But to the Greeks of the Turkish Empire, "Hellenism" and "Orthodoxy" became inextricably intertwined. The effects of this confusion continue to the present day. Only recently have certain political and religious factors been inclined to move towards separation of church and state.

In the second place, the church's higher administration became caught up in a degrading system, due to involvement in worldly affairs and political matters. The bishops frequently became entangled in problems of ambition and financial dealings. Each new Patriarch required a document called "berat" from the Sultan before he could assume office, and for this document he was obliged to pay heavily. The Patriarch recovered his expenses from the episcopate by exacting a fee from each bishop before enthroning him in his diocese. The bishops, in turn, taxed the parish clergy and the clergy taxed their "flocks." When there were several candidates for the Patriarchal throne, the Turks virtually sold it to the highest bidder, and they were quick to see that it was in their financial interests to change the Patriarch as frequently as possible, in order to increase the opportunities for selling the "berat." Patriarchs were removed and reinstated with kaleidoscopic rapidity.

Of 159 Patriarchs who held office between the fifteenth and twentieth centuries, the Turks have on 105 occasions driven them from their throne; there have been 27 abdications, often involuntary; six Patriarchs suffered violent deaths by hanging, poisoning, or drowning; and only 21 died natural deaths while in office. Not only did clergymen and notable laymen suffer many dreadful things at the hands of Turkish rulers, but the whole of Christendom, under their dominion, endured untold hardships, especially the Armenian and the Greek people.

In spite of this situation, the Patriarch of Constantinople had more authority than the other Patriarchs, and was the head of all Orthodox Christians in the Ottoman Empire. The Patriarchates of Alexandria, Antioch, and Jerusalem remained theoretically independent but were, in practice, subordinate. Romania, Bulgaria, and Serbia also came under Turkish rule. By 1767, the national churches in these lands had all lost their former independence and were entirely under the Ecumenical Patriarch's control. But, in the nineteenth century, as Turkish power declined, the frontiers of the Patriarchate contracted. The nations which gained freedom from the Turks found it impracticable to remain subject ecclesiastically to a Patriarch resident in the Turkish capital. The Patriarch resisted as long as he could, but, in each case, eventually he bowed to the inevitable.

National churches were carved out of the Patriarchate: the Church of Greece (organised in 1833, recognised by the Patriarch of Constantinople in 1850), the Church of Romania (organised in 1859, recognised in 1885), the Church of Bulgaria (re-established in 1870, not recognised by Constantinople until 1946), the Church of Serbia (restored and recognised in 1879). The Church of Macedonia (Southern Yugoslavia) became autonomous in 1959, but this has not been recognised by other Orthodox Churches. The diminishing of the Patriarchate has continued in the present century primarily as a result of the two world wars, the negative policy of the Turkish government, and the problem of Cyprus. Thus, not only its membership, but also the Greek remnant itself in Istanbul today is very small compared with what it once was in the days of Ottoman Suzerainty.

The Turkish occupation had two opposite effects on the intellectual life of the church; on the one hand it was the cause of an immense conservatism; and on the other of a certain westernisation. Orthodoxy under the Turks felt itself to be on the defensive. The great aim was "survival"â€"to keep things going, in hope of better days to come. The Greeks clung with miraculous tenacity to the Christian civilisation which they had taken over from Byzantium. In dark and difficult periods, the Greeks did, in fact, maintain the Orthodox tradition substantially unimpaired through the "hidden school" system. But, along with this traditionalism, there was another and contrary current in the Orthodox theology of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuriesâ€"that of Western infiltration. It was difficult for the Orthodox under Ottoman rule to maintain a good standard of scholarship. Greeks who wished for a higher education were obliged to travel to the non-Orthodox world, under Roman Catholic or Protestant influence, to Italy and Germany, to Paris, and even as far as Oxford. Keeping in mind this twofold background of conservatism and Westernisation, let us consider the challenge presented to the Orthodox world by the Reformation and Counter Reformation.

F. The Orthodox Church and the Reformation

The forces of reform stopped short of the borders of Russia and the Turkish Empire, so that the Orthodox Church has not undergone either a Reformation or a Counter Reformation. Yet it would be a mistake to conclude that these two movements have had no influence whatever on Orthodoxy. There were many means of contact: Orthodox went to study in the West; Jesuits and Franciscans, who had been sent out to the Eastern Mediterranean, undertook missionary work among Orthodox (the Jesuits were also at work in the Ukraine); at Constantinople the foreign embassies of both Roman Catholic and Protestant powers played a religious as well as political role. During the seventeenth century, these contacts led to significant developments in Orthodox theology.

(i) The first important exchange of *views between Orthodox and Protestants* began in 1573 when a delegation of Lutheran scholars from Tübingen, led by Jakob Andreae and Martin Crusius, visited Constantinople and gave the Patriarch Jeremias II a copy of the Augsburg Confession translated into Greek. Doubtless they hoped to initiate some sort of Reformation among the Greeks. Jeremias, in his three Answers to the Tübingen Theologians (dated 1576, 1579, 1581), adhered strictly to the traditional Orthodox position and showed no inclination to Protestantism. In his third letter the Patriarch replied: "Go your own way, and do not write any more on doctrinal matters; and if you do write, then write only for friendship's sake." The main matters discussed by Jeremias were free will and grace, Scripture and tradition, the sacraments, prayers for the dead, and prayers for saints. During the Tübingen interlude, Lutherans and Orthodox both showed courtesy to one another.

(ii) A different spirit marked the first major contact *between Orthodoxy and the Counter Reformation*. This occurred outside the limits of the Turkish Empire in the Ukraine. After the destruction of Kievan power by the Tartars, a large area in the southwest of Russia became absorbed by Lithuania and Poland. The crowns of Poland and Lithuania were united under a single ruler from 1383. Thus, while the monarchâ€"together with the majority of the populationâ€"was Roman Catholic, he had an appreciable Russian and Orthodox minority among his subjects. These Orthodox in Little Russia or Ukraine were in an uncomfortable predicament. The Patriarch of Constantinople, to whose jurisdiction they belonged, could not exercise effective control in Poland. Their bishops were appointed not by the church, but by the Roman Catholic King of Poland.

More than once, the Roman Catholic authorities in Poland had tried to make the Orthodox submit to the Pope. With the arrival of the Society of Jesus in the land in 1564, pressure on the Orthodox increased. The Jesuits began by negotiating secretly with the Orthodox bishops, who were, for the most part, willing to

cooperate. The Jesuits hoped that in due course, the whole Orthodox hierarchy in Poland would agree to submit *en bloc* to the Pope. But matters did not go entirely according to plan. In 1596, a council was summoned at Brest-Litovsk to proclaim the union with Rome, but the hierarchy was divided. Six out of eight Orthodox bishops, including the Metropolitan of Kiev, Michael Ragoza, supported the union. However, the remaining two bishops, together with the large number of the delegates from the monasteries and from the parish clergy, desired to remain members of the Orthodox Church. The two sides concluded by excommunicating and anathematising one another.

Thus, there came into existence in Poland a "Uniate" church, whose members were known as "Catholics of the Eastern Rite." The decrees of the Council of Florence formed the basis of the union. The Uniates recognised the supremacy of the Pope, but were allowed to keep their traditional practices (such as married clergy), and they continued, as before, to use the Slavonic liturgy, although in the course of time Western elements crept into it. Many of them explained the matter by saying that the Pope had now joined the Orthodox Church. Persecution invigorated the Orthodox Church in the Ukraine. Although many Orthodox nobles joined the Uniates, the Brotherhoods stood firm and expanded their activities. To answer Jesuit propaganda, they maintained printing presses and issued books in defence of Orthodoxy, also organising schools of learning.

One of the representatives of the Patriarchate of Constantinople at Brest in 1596 was a young Greek priest named *Cyril Lukaris (1572-1638)*. His experiences in *Little Russia* inspired him to a lifelong antipathy of the Church of Rome, and when he became Patriarch of Constantinople he devoted his full energies to combating all Roman Catholic influence in the Turkish Empire. He turned naturally for help to the Protestant embassies at Constantinople; while his Jesuit opponents, for their part, used the diplomatic representatives of the Roman Catholic powers.

In addition to the political assistance of Protestant diplomats, Cyril also fell under Protestant influence in regard to his theology. He knew much of Western ways, for he had studied in Venice and Padua. He could read and write Latin with ease, and had served the Orthodox church in Poland as Rector of the Vilna Academy. This service in Poland transformed his outlook, for in controversies with the Roman Catholics, he found allies in the Protestants. Appointed Patriarch of Alexandria in 1602, he became Patriarch of Constantinople in 1612. Cyril's reign as Patriarch was one long series of stormy incidents for the Ecumenical Patriarchate under the Ottomans. Six times deposed from office and six times reinstated, he was finally strangled by Turkish Janissaries, (troops of Sultan Murad), and his body was cast into the Bosphorus. In retrospect, there is something deeply tragic about his career, since he was possibly the most brilliant man to have held office as Patriarch since the days of Saint Photius. Had he but lived under happier conditions, free of political involvement, his exceptional gifts might well have been put to better use.

Lukaris tried to bring the Orthodox church closer to a Calvinistic theological position. He entered into cordial relations with the Archbishop of Canterbury and other important Protestant leaders. As a sign of this friendship he gave the "Codex Alexanrinus" to Thomas Roe, the English Ambassador to Constantinople, who presented it to Charles I (it is now in the British Museum). He sent some of his ablest young priests to study at Oxford, Helmstatt, and Geneva.

He also allowed his "Confession of Faith" to be printed in Geneva in 1629. This thoroughly Calvinistic document taught that the church was subject to the Scriptures and could err, that predestination to eternal life is irrespective of good works, and that justification is by faith. It defined just two sacraments, and taught a Reformed doctrine of the Eucharist. This statement caused a reaction in Europe. The Confession's effect upon the Orthodox church was limited, however, since it was repudiated shortly after Cyril's death. Cyril's Calvinism was sharply and speedily rejected by his fellow Orthodox, and his Confession was condemned by no less than six local councils between 1636 and 1691.

In direct reaction to Cyril, two other Orthodox hierarchs, Peter of Moghila and Dositheus of Jerusalem, produced Confessions of their own. Peter's Orthodox Confession, written in 1640, was based directly on Roman Catholic manuals, and was approved by the Council of Jassy in Romania (1642). Dositheus, Patriarch of Jerusalem from 1669-1707, also drew heavily upon Latin sources. His confession, ratified in 1672 by the Council of Jerusalem, answered Cyril's Confession. The chief matters over which Cyril and Dositheus diverge are fourfold: the question of free will, grace and predestination; the doctrine of the church; the number and nature of the sacraments; and veneration of icons. Finally, the great Orthodox Synod of Jerusalem formally condemned the "error" of Protestantism, but without really coming to grips with the positive biblical emphases of the Reformation.

F. Theology and Worship

The Orthodox churches, except Nestorians, call the Virgin Mary "Mother of God" (Theotokos). As far as the divinity and humanity of Christ are concerned the Orthodox are divided into three groups:

- Eastern Orthodox, who accept the Chalcedonian formula of perfect God and perfect man.
- The Nestorians, who emphasise the two distinct natures of Christ.
- The Monophysites, who believe in the fusion of divine and human aspects to form one nature.

All these churches practise infant baptism and believe in the Nicene Creed. All the Orthodox churches believe in seven sacraments:

- Baptism
- Chrismation (anointing of oil in baptism, confirmation and ordination)
- The Eucharist
- Repentance or confession
- Holy orders
- Marriage
- Anointing the sick

The Nestorians do not include marriage or Chrismation; instead they count Holy Leaven and making the sign of the Cross as sacraments.

The Liturgy of Eucharist is ancient. The Orthodox churches use the liturgy of Chrysostorn or Basil or Saint James. The Jacobite (Syrian) Orthodox churches use the liturgy of Saint James. The Nestorians use the liturgy of Addai and Mari with the alternate "Anaphoras" of Theodore or Nestorius.

The Liturgy (or Mass) as a whole has two parts: 1. The liturgy of the word. 2. The Eucharist. It consists of chanting; and now, in some churches, there are sermons along with liturgy. The liturgies are all ancient. Even the lectionary prepared many centuries ago is repeated without change. The liturgy is usually long. In some cases, local language translations are used. Festivals and memorial days, prayer to the saints and for the dead are observed in Orthodox churches. Icons are used in the Orthodox churches in general. However, Nestorians object to the use of any images, icons, or crucifix. The Orthodox Christians consider sacramental worship as essential for salvation. Private confession to the priest is compulsory in all Orthodox churches, except the Nestorians.

Regarding the calendar, many of the Orthodox churches follow the ancient Julian calendar, while some have changed to the Gregorian calendar made by Pope Gregory in the seventeenth century, and followed by all Catholics and Protestants.

3. Contemporary Situation

The Orthodox church in different cultures numbers 155 million. Immigrants found churches of the same kind as in their homelands following their mother church in doctrine, and are connected somehow to the policy or government of their homeland church.

A. Eastern Europe

Political and Cultural: Culturally, if not politically, the lands of Eastern Europe present such a varied "mosaic" of diversified elements that no generalisations are possible. There are countries which prior to 1939 were characterised by high industrial development (East Germany) and Western democracy (Czechoslovakia), while others contained some of Europe's most backward communities (Albania, Bulgaria). Stalin attempted to impose by force the same form of totalitarianism on all, but the results varied in each case.

Approaching the Orthodox in these countries need not, however, involve us in a detailed political examination of each main relevant country (USSR, Poland, Romania, Yugoslavia, Bulgaria, and Albania). It is much more important to know the religious/cultural background of each country; and, for practical purposes, the shortcut to this is the study produced by the British Council of Churches, written by Trevor Beeson in 1974 and entitled "Discretion and Valour: Religious Conditions in Russia and Eastern Europe." To understand the cultural background of Orthodoxy, however, more extended study is necessary, and not only study,

but a willingness to empathise, such as very few Evangelical Christians have ever been willing to do.

To generalise, there are probably about 120 Protestant missions active in Eastern Europe today. Of course, many of these are very small, and, among them, there is hardly anyone well enough versed in Orthodox theology to make a meaningful approach possible.

In the USSR, with a population of 257 million, there are 50 million Russian Orthodox, 3 million Protestant (number unknown but could be higher), 30 million Muslims, and 4 million Jews.

In Poland, with a population of 35 million, there are 31 million Catholics, 600,000 Orthodox using the Slavonic language and liturgy, and 200,000 Protestants.

In Romania, with a population of 22 million, there are 17 million Orthodox, 1 million Catholics, 200,000 Baptists, 150,000 Pentecostals, 30,000 Brethren, 500,000 Lutheran and Reformed, 200,000 Muslims, and 45,000 Jews. There is an evangelical movement within the Orthodox church known as "The Lord's Arm" with a membership of 300,000. Each year 6,000 converts are baptised in the Evangelical churches.

In Yugoslavia, with a population of 22 million, there are 9 million Orthodox, 7 million Catholics, 200,000 Protestants, and 2 million Muslims. The Orthodox believe in the Bible and use liturgies. There is a spirit of nationalism and involvement in politics.

In Bulgaria, with a population approximately of 9 million, there are 6 million Orthodox, 45,000 Catholics, 55,000 Protestants, and 800,000 Muslims.

In Albania, with a population of 2 million, pre-World War II statistics of the religious groups indicated 1.25 million Muslims, 497,500 Orthodox, 250,000 Catholics and 2,500 Protestants. Since 1967, all forms of religion have been outlawed.

B. Western Europe

In almost every country of Europe there are flourishing Orthodox churches. There is a permanent representative of the Ecumenical Patriarch Demetrius I at the World Council of Churches in Geneva; in England there is a large Orthodox Church of Thyatira and Great Britain, with the Archbishop Methodius. There are approximately 200,000 Greeks in England, mostly Cypriots and living in London. In Germany there are almost 300,000 Greek workers. In Finland there are approximately 66,000 Orthodox.

C. Greece, Cyprus and Istanbul

Greece:

Political Situation: From April 21, 1967, to July 24, 1974, there was a military dictatorship, which terminated with the Turkish invasion of Cyprus. Now there is a multi-party parliamentary democracy.

Economic Situation: An important development that took place on May 28, 1979, was the decision for Greece to become the tenth member of the European Economic Community, which took effect in January, 1981. This is bringing changes in Greece, not only economically, politically, and socially, but also religiously.

Religious Situation: According to the new Constitution, freedom of religious conscience now exists in Greece, but proselytism is still illegal.

The population of Greece is approximately 10 million people. Ninety-six percent are Greek Orthodox, 0.5% Roman Catholics, 0.3% Evangelicals (95% attend church regularly), 2% Muslims, and others 0.12%.

At present, in Greece there is a striving among some priests for both higher educational standards and also more contact with source material and clerics outside their own church. Another sign of change is *the activity of laymen*. Through the associations, Zoe (Life) (1907); *Apostoliki Diakonia* (Apostolic Ministry) (1930); and Soter (Saviour), the laity is struggling for a greater share in the propagation and shaping of contemporary Orthodoxy. This lay involvement is predominantly a modern phenomenon. There are also other movements such as *Pharos* (Beacon); *Christian Student Action*; *Christian Student Union*; *Stavros* (Cross); *Apolytrosis* (Redemption); *St. Chrysostom's Movement*; *Orthodox Movement for Renewal*; *Go Ye Orthodox Mission*; *Christian Socialistic Movement* (Christian Democracy); *Humanistic Society of Theologians*; and others.

The word "Evangelical" is largely used in Greece rather than "Protestant," and nearly all who adhere to that term are conservative in their theology. Among the various Protestant denominations in Greece, the main ones are: The Greek Evangelical church, the Free Evangelical church, Pentecostal churches, and Independent churches. The most active of the sects is the Jehovah's Witness.

There are two evangelical bookstores (Logos) — one in Athens and the other in Thessaloniki, under the auspices of AMG Int'l (Advancing the Ministries of the Gospel). AMG also has the first and only Evangelical hospital in Greece, St. Luke's Hospital (established April 1975). The Greek Evangelical Alliance was formed on October 28, 1977.

There are a number of Christian organisations and ministries working in Greece, some of which are the following: Campus Crusade for Christ (Christian Movement of Love); Child Evangelism Fellowship (Movement for Children's Christian Education); Christian Renewal Fellowship; Christian Students' Fellowship (potential of IVCF); Eastern European Mission; European Christian Mission; European Missionary Fellowship; Gideons International; Good News Movement (Overseas Crusades); Gospel Missionary Union; Greater Europe Mission (Society of Biblical Studies/Greek Bible Institute); Greek Bible Society; Hellenic Bible Centre; Hellenic Missionary Union; International Correspondence Institute (Assemblies of God); OMS International (formerly Oriental Missionary Society); and Scripture Union.

Finally, change is most clearly seen in the field of ecumenism. A high degree of unity has been achieved with Rome. Since the sixties, the Orthodox churches have become full participants in the World Council of Churches. By means of frequent contacts with Protestant leaders, such as the Anglican archbishops, Orthodoxy is broadening both its basis of unity and its influence in other parts of Christendom. During the year 1964, *Athenagoras I*, the Ecumenical Patriarch of Istanbul, and *Pope Paul VI* took the first tentative steps toward the reunification of the two great Christian churches by removing the anathemas. In announcing the "*Great Synod*" in 1968, Athenagoras summarised his eminently successful dual purposes: the "renewal of the church and the establishment of the unity of all Christian churches."

Cyprus: Of the population of 670,000, 536,000 are Greeks (80%), 120,000 are Turks (18%), 14,000 are Armenians (2%), Greek Orthodox 80%, Muslims 18% and Protestants 0.04%. Since July 1974 (after the Turkish invasion of Cyprus), almost half of the island has been occupied by the Turks, causing a difficult refugee problem (about 200,000). The religious situation is similar to that of Greece. There are also Armenian Christians in Cyprus and Greece.

Istanbul (Constantinople): Istanbul today is the ecumenical seat of Eastern Orthodoxy, under the leadership of the Patriarch Demetrius I. Although he is the head of all Orthodoxy in the world, his position is purely symbolical. At one time there were 4.5 million Christian Greek and Armenian Orthodox people in Turkey, but now there are only 7,000. This decline in numbers is due primarily to political tensions between Turkey and Greece.

D. India

Christians in India represent only 2.7% of a total population of 666 million (i.e., about 20.5 million Indian Christians). However of 20.5 million Christians, 9 million are Roman Catholics, 7 million Protestants, 1.5 million Orthodox, 2.5 million Syrian Orthodox, and 500,000 of the Mar Thoma Church, which has had a separate existence from the Orthodox since the nineteenth century as a result of the Reformation led by Abraham Malpan. Numerically speaking, Indian Christians are only the third religion, the first being Hindus with 80%, and the second Muslims with 11%.

India is a secular state, and there is freedom of religion. Marxists rule in Western Bengal, and a coalition government, with Marxists as a leading partner, is in power in Kerala State where the largest Christian community lives. As a result of the Indian elections held in January, 1980, 22 Christians are in the Lok Sabha with 12 in the Rajya Sabha. A member of the Orthodox church is on the Central Cabinet at New Delhi, and another member of the same church is the governor of Andhra Pradesh. Since India is a secular state, Christians by constitutional guarantee can practise and propagate their faith. In spite of attacks by some fanatical Hindus against Christian evangelistic endeavours in North India, where Christians form a minority, the political situation does not condone any interference in evangelistic efforts to reach the Orthodox or others. As far as cultural conditions are concerned, the Orthodox church, the Mar Thoma Syria

Church, the Nestorian Church and the Syrian Catholic Church, all totalling 45 million, mainly in Kerala, have developed a "Syrian Christian culture" of their own. Although it is not as binding as the caste system among Hindus, Syrian Christians usually avoid intermarriage with Latin Christians or Protestant Christians who do not belong to the Syrian tradition.

E. Middle East

Most of the Middle East countries are predominantly Muslim—with upwards of 90% of the population belonging to the Muslim faith (91% in Jordan, Syria, Iran, and as high as 97% in Iraq and 99% in Turkey). The notable exceptions are Lebanon with about 50% Muslims, and Israel with 60% Jews and 35% Muslims.

In Iran, the single largest Christian community is the Nestorian Church with about 100,000 followers, a mere token of the once-strong missionary-minded church which was nearly wiped out with the Muslim conquest of Persia. Several other ancient Eastern churches, including the Armenians, number a total of about 100,000 followers; Protestants number about 8,000. As a cultural minority, Christians enjoyed special privileges under the Shah, and have requested the new government to accord the same privileges to them. Christians claim that they are safe in Iran at present. Iraq counts about 100,000 Nestorians, 70,000 other Orthodox, 125,000 Roman Catholics, and about 4,000 Protestants. The President tolerates the Christian minority. But certain Nestorians who call themselves Assyrians often demand autonomy and privileges as a cultural minority, thus creating suspicion in the minds of the authorities. Ayatollah Khomeini of Iran, a Shiite Muslim, does not like Saddam Hussain of Iraq, a Sunni. Although Shiites are more numerous in Iraq, the rulers are Sunnis. Iran wants a change in rule. The poor Christians who live in both countries may suffer as a result of these political rivalries between the two nations.

Culturally, the Nestorians in Iraq and Iran are the same as Assyrians, and claim to be the descendants of King Nebuchadnezzar.

In Syria, the four Orthodox communities number a total of about 300,000—with 150,000 Roman Catholics and 14,000 Protestants. Political instability and laws prohibiting Muslims to change their religion have kept the Christian witness small.

In Lebanon, the Orthodox churches number about 600,000—with about 900,000 Maronites (Roman Catholics), and 26,000 Protestants. Lebanon is the only state in the Arab world with a Christian majority, and is somewhat strategic for Christian missions in the Middle East.

Jordan's Christian community, including Orthodox, Roman Catholic, and Protestant, is about 8% or 200,000 followers. Christians in *Turkey* number less than 1% (250,000 followers) and are mostly the non-Turkish minorities.

As a whole, Christians in the Middle East live under Muslim control. They have freedom to worship, but are not permitted to convert Muslims. Nestorian communities are found in Iran, Iraq, Syria, and Lebanon. Armenian churches are found in Iran, Iraq, Syria, Lebanon, Egypt, and Soviet Armenia. Jacobites are found in Syria, Lebanon, Iran, and Turkey. There are representative bodies of Orthodox in the Holy Land. Some Orthodox churches favour the Julian calendar and are known as Old Calendarists.

F. Egypt

The population is 42 million—with 8 million Coptics, 200,000 Evangelicals, 200,000 Catholics, and 33.6 million Muslims.

Islam is the state religion. Christians are free to worship but not to proselytise. The Coptic Orthodox Church recognises 7 Holy Orders; Reader, Sub-Deacon, Deacon, Archdeacon, Priest, Archpriest, and Bishop. Candidates for ordination to the parish priesthood must be married, since marriage is forbidden after ordination. The Order of Deacon is open to both men and women, and other Orders to men only. The leader of the church is known as the Patriarch, (locally he is called the Pope, but he does not have the kind of authority which the Pope of Rome has). In Coptic Orthodox theology, the church is the Corporate Body of Christ. Thus no individual can make theological pronouncements. The theology of the church is defined by a group, after carefully studying it in a council. The Patriarch must be a monk. Monasticism has given the Coptic Orthodox Church an unbroken line of 117 Patriarchs, beginning, it is claimed, with Saint Mark, the author of the Gospel. It is traditionally held that Mark was the first organiser of the church in Egypt.

The Coptic church is conservative, going back to the church of the martyrs. It has a Coptic calendar which started on the 29th of August 294 A.D., when persecution of Egyptian Christians was at its height.

Islam is slowly turning into a "missionary" religion. The Muslim missionary zeal became strongest with the economic boom in the Arab oil countries, a boom which has given Islam a great boost in recent years. Partly because of this missionary zeal, but perhaps mainly because of leftist political agitators masquerading as religious reformers, Christians have once again found themselves the target of attack.

It was perhaps the challenge of Islam which started several leaders (both Coptic Orthodox and Protestant) to a realisation of how far their churches had fallen away from Christ's standard. They studied the example of the early church and noticed that it was marked by a spontaneity, warmth, and witness lacking in modern times. They went back to the Word of God and began to rediscover it in a fresh way. They began to pray for the cleansing power of the Holy Spirit.

Today, one sees the beginning of revival and renewal in Egyptian churches. It is especially noticeable in the Coptic Orthodox Church where new emphasis is being put on the necessity of personal renewal and on a disciplined study of the Word.

G. Ethiopia

Of Ethiopia's 25 million people, most of them (96%) are involved in agriculture. They are of a diverse ethnic composition, and about half of the population are Christians—most of them, members of the Ethiopian Orthodox Church, which is the state religion. Orthodoxy predominates in the Northern provinces, but all of the Southern provinces have Muslim majorities. About 20% of the people are animists, living mostly in the South and West.

Within the Orthodox Church, the Patriarch is the highest authority, and the Synod of bishops is his body of counsellors. They have limited authority to innovate. Bishops are elected by the ecclesiastical electoral college, but because of heavy government pressure, the church is largely dominated by secular authority and of illegality as far as canon law is concerned.

Over 30 mission agencies have been sponsoring about 900 missionaries in the country. Foreign workers confront a very difficult climate, as well as prejudice, fanaticism and opposition from the State church.

H. United States and Canada

In North America there are more than 6 million Orthodox, subdivided into at least fifteen national or jurisdictional groups, with a total of more than 40 bishops. The Greek Orthodox in North America number approximately 3 million, with more than 400 parishes. They are headed by Archbishop Jakobos, who exercises leadership of 10 auxiliary bishops (one living in Canada, and the others in South America). The Greek Theological School of the Holy Cross at Boston has about 110 students, all candidates for the priesthood.

The Russians have four theological seminaries in America: St. Vladimir's in New York; St. Tikhon's in South Canaan, Pennsylvania; Holy Trinity Seminary at Jordanville, New York; and Christ the Saviour Seminary in Johnstown, Pennsylvania. Orthodox life in America today displays vitality. New parishes are being formed and new churches built.

The chief problem of the Orthodox communities in North America is that of nationalism and its place in the life of the church. There is danger that excessive nationalism will alienate the younger generation of Orthodox from the church. This younger generation has known no country but America; their interests are American, and their primary language is English. It is likely that they will drift away from the church if she insists on worshipping in a foreign tongue and acts primarily as a repository for cultural relics of the "old country."

Another problem is that of materialism, which occupies the mind and interest and absorbs the energy of many immigrants in America.

I. Australia and New Zealand

There are 600,000 Orthodox, mainly Greeks. Melbourne, with 135,000 Greeks, is one of the largest Greek-speaking cities in the world. The situation is similar to

that of North America. Some Orthodox churches are deliberately promoting the distribution of modern translations of the New Testament to their people, and encouraging them to study it. There are about 14 Greek-speaking Evangelical churches in Australia with good evangelistic ministries. The most effective methods seem to be personal evangelism and home Bible studies.

J. Other countries

In addition to immigrant Orthodox communities found in countries such as South Africa and Kenya, there are also Orthodox churches planted among the nationals established in recent years by Greek Orthodox missionaries. There are 200 churches in Uganda and Kenya, with a theological seminary in Nairobi. There are small national Orthodox churches both in Korea and Japan. There are also Orthodox churches in Latin America.

4. Strategy of Witnessing to Nominal Christians Among the Orthodox

In dealing with the issue of a Christian witness among nominal Christians from any tradition, one must have a deep sense of the lostness of religious people. Just because a person is named among Christian peoples and has a form of godliness does not mean that he has the life-changing power of the gospel. The most subtly lost people are those who rely on the thought that they are Christians, without really knowing what that means. Orthodox people are hard to reach with the gospel message, because most of them believe they do not need to be reached. Working with the rough nominal Orthodox will require positive, definite means and a carefully planned strategy.

A. Hindrances from Without

(i) Political Hindrances:

(a) In communist countries the political hindrance is paramount. While some East European countries have become more open, the signs are disturbing in that the opposite is taking place in the USSR. The recent history of 60 years of persecution of the Russian Orthodox Church has led her to hold tenaciously to her own traditions and to resist any infiltration from outside. Nevertheless, there is, alongside this resistance to change, a growing number of outgoing Orthodox who are ready to look at the meaning for them of Protestant theology. Atheistic Communism is a threat to Christianity and, therefore, it has put the fear to believe in the hearts of the people. To believe in Christ is stupid and a sign of weakness. In some countries, Christians are not accepted into the university, and the better jobs are withheld from them. Churches have been infiltrated by communists posing as priests, including some who have become church leaders.

(b) The Nationalistic Problem appears in some countries because church and state are united and inter-related. This makes it difficult for the people to separate themselves from their church without being accused of denouncing their national and cultural heritage. The confusion of religious and patriotic zeal also detracts from the average person's understanding of the gospel.

(c) In countries where governments are influenced by other religions (Muslim, Hindu, Buddhist, etc.) the authorities often put pressure on Christians, in order to hinder the progress of Christianity.

(ii) Material Hindrances:

Many of the Eastern Orthodox churches exist in underdeveloped countries. Their members are struggling to make a living. Their low financial status is a burden to them. A number of them cannot think about their salvation, for they are looking for a better life in the here and now.

In countries, such as Greece, which are developing economically, people are striving to improve themselves financially and socially. Because hearts and minds are set on material goods, they are more secularistic and materialistic than religious. Immigrants from underdeveloped and developing countries are sometimes hard to reach because they have been attracted abroad by the more affluent life of their new country. For them, the Orthodox Church is often more a cultural association than a spiritual one. If they have spiritual motivations, these are sometimes turned into bigotry and fanaticism.

B. Hindrances from Within Orthodoxy

(i) Cultural Hindrances:

Eastern Orthodox churches have a religious life closely related to their own culture. They have specific days on which they honour their saints. They have their own vocabulary. They have their own way of expressing their faith. There may be good and bad elements in their rituals of worship. Believers go through motions such as crossing themselves, kissing icons, and lighting candles, which are barriers to them in hearing and understanding the simple gospel message. Close family ties in many cases create a difficult situation for those who enter a living experience of Christ, as they have to face the opposition and ostracism of relatives and friends.

(ii) Pride, Ignorance, Prejudice and Fanaticism:

Most of the Orthodox people feel that they belong to the only True Church, because historically the Orthodox Church is the oldest one. The leaders of the Orthodox Church emphasise again and again to her adherents that they should be proud of their church and that everyone else is either heterodox or heretic. Thus the average Orthodox has been prejudiced against Christians of all other traditions. Fanaticism is supported by the ignorance of most Orthodox about their faith and the truth of the gospel. Being religious at the sacramental and ritual level, they develop a form of godliness which often denies the power of God to transform them.

(iii) Credibility of the Priests:

While the church teaches that the priest is God's representative on earth, many Orthodox adherents reject religion at a personal level because of inconsistencies in the lives of some priests. Some believers differentiate between the office and the man; but, in some cases, the wealth of the clergy and the riches of the church have become a great obstacle to the reception of the gospel, especially in the poorer countries.

(iv) Cardinal Doctrinal Differences:

(a) True Christianity must declare within its theology the uniqueness and exclusiveness of the One who said, "I am the way, the truth and the life." Whereas liberal theology, whether Protestant or Catholic, by *subtraction* (of the deity of Christ), abolishes the uniqueness and exclusiveness of Christ, Roman Catholicism and Eastern Orthodoxy, by *addition* (deification of saints), nullify the same truth. Once the uniqueness and exclusiveness of Christ's Person are lost (either by subtraction or addition), the uniqueness and exclusiveness of his work on the cross is lost.

In the present day, official interpretation of the Eastern Orthodox Church, the New Testament word "synergoi" (co-workers) is used to indicate that salvation is a partnership of Christ's work on the cross *and* our works. However, the word *co-workers*, whenever it is used in Scripture, is always used in the context of the Christian's *service*, and never with reference to salvation. Christians believe the Bible teaches that there are rewards for faithful Christian service, as the Christian labours together with God for the fulfillment of his will on earth. We firmly disagree, however, with any indication that the Christian's work is related to salvation or eternal life, which is a gift and not a reward. As Evangelicals, we strongly and without apology declare that salvation is by grace through faith. It is God's free gift. Any other teaching on this must bear the title which is given it, not by us but by God's Word, that is: "another gospel."

(b) Because of the Orthodox sacramental and legalistic tradition, there is no clear finality to the atonement. To the Orthodox, the cross of Christ does not mean the atonement accomplished completely so that salvation can be offered once-for-all as a free gift. Rather the sacrifice is spiritualized and is continually offered in the Eucharist. Thus Christ (i.e., salvation) is not received once for all, but is continually received in the sacrament of the Eucharist.

(c) The vicarious nature of the atonement (i.e., the substitutionary aspect) is taught doctrinally in Eastern Orthodox theology, but it is missing in practice. The fact that Christ took upon himself our nature so that he could die in our place is the heart of the gospel message.

(d) Not only is the Orthodox emphasis, in practice, on Christ's deity, almost to the total exclusion of his humanity while on earth, but this concept is also perpetuated to a greater degree now that our Lord is in his glorified state at the right hand of the Father. They forgot that the one and only Mediator preserves his human nature throughout eternity (1 Tim. 2:5). Because his deity is emphasised, he is somewhat beyond our reach; and therefore, there is the need for many lesser mediators, especially the Virgin Mary, if our petitions are to get through to God.

(e) The biggest doctrinal problem in evangelizing the Orthodox is his belief in salvation by infant baptism and good works.

Christian Influence Considered Foreign:

Through the years, the Lord used missionaries from other countries to bring the gospel to Orthodox countries. Thousands of people have been saved, and hundreds of churches have been established, Foreign missionaries are still needed today, according to local circumstances and cultures. (They cannot reside in most countries of Eastern Europe, and there is a limited scope of what they can do.) However Orthodox people have a pride which inhibits their welcoming foreigners, who are considered, by many, to be agents of foreign propaganda. We realise that missions have helped very much in spreading the gospel through institutions, literature, schools, hospitals, orphanages, and in other ways. Missionaries who come from abroad should not ignore the culture of the people, but rather need to adjust themselves to the local situation. We see the need for a closer co-operation between churches and missions.

C. Hindrances from Within the Evangelical Community

(i) Fragmented witness:

There are many Evangelical denominations with small churches in Orthodox countries. That situation creates a negative impression to the Orthodox, who do not distinguish between the Body of Christ and the institutional church. The formation of Evangelical Alliances will help to overcome fragmentation within the Body of Christ.

(ii) Lack of zeal and readiness:

We must confess a lack of world vision and missionary zeal, as well as an unpreparedness in Evangelical churches. This hampers outreach and results in failure to effectively witness to the Orthodox.

(iii) Spiritual immaturity:

Pride, narrow-mindedness, and denominational fanaticism hinder the progress of evangelism. There is a lack of unity, and thus a lack of revival, in many countries among Evangelical believers. Poor testimonies given by some Evangelicals scandalise the nominal Orthodox.

(iv) Lack of knowledge and respect for Orthodoxy:

Among Evangelicals, even in Orthodox countries, there is widespread ignorance of the tradition and faith of the Orthodox church. Often wisdom is not used in evangelism. Many Evangelicals ignore that which is positive in Orthodox theology and practice, assuming that everything in Orthodoxy is wrong.

Protestants in Western Europe and North America are almost totally unaware of the recent history of the persecuted church in Eastern Europe. They do not help the persecuted church as much as they would desire because of government restrictions. A major educational and support programme needs to be undertaken by the Christians who subscribe to the Lausanne Covenant.

(v) Lack of co-ordination of mission efforts:

Well meaning, but often ill-informed, amateurs from perhaps 120 missionary societies are working in countries with significant Orthodox populations. Sometimes there is needless duplication of effort, and often workers not only do not work together, but sometimes even act in damaging rivalry.

As we believe in Almighty God, we live with the expectation of seeing both Evangelicals and born-again Orthodox reaching nominal Christians in those nations with the gospel.

D. Overcoming the Hindrances

(i) By showing love and respect to nominal Orthodox, we will overcome their pride, ignorance, prejudice, and fanaticism and be in a position to evangelize them.

(ii) By showing respect to the Orthodox tradition as the oldest Christian church with her rich history which is beneficial to Christians of all traditions.

(iii) By exploiting things we share in common with Orthodoxy. We could use teachings common to both faiths, use Orthodox editions of the Bible, and refer to the writings of the Church Fathers (and quote them in our preaching!). We should use the Apostles' Creed and biblical Christocentric hymns, and take advantage of religious celebrations, holy days and festivals to visit Orthodox, sharing spiritually with them. We should use Orthodox religious terminology rather than Evangelical jargon where this will not lead to misunderstanding of the concepts involved. We should be sensitive to their beliefs, avoiding arguments about doctrine, and we should refrain from attacking harmless Orthodox practices.

In many countries, from the beginning of missionary work, both missionaries and national Evangelicals in general had the tendency to separate themselves from the culture of the people. The churches that were established were Western churches with Western singing and decoration, Western literature and mentality, Western ways and means of spreading the gospel. There is not much in many Evangelical churches to remind people of their cultural and religious heritage. Study of the Christian church in Communist lands is needed (the experience and life of the whole persecuted church, not only the Orthodox Church). Inside the USSR, fellowship in suffering (prison camps) has already overcome some barriers. Solzhenitsyn, for example, learned about prayer from a Baptist while in prison, but he remains a loyal Orthodox—indeed an enlightened one.

Radio broadcasting is one medium which evades political barriers. There are 16 radio stations preaching to the USSR—a magnificent opportunity. However, there needs to be a greater amount of offering co-ordination and co-operation for producing better programmes to reach all classes. There also needs to be a better co-operation in literature programmes for Eastern Europe. The needs are immense, demanding major resources from our mainline denominations and faith missions. Due to over-all confiscation of vehicles carrying literature into the Soviet Union in the past few years, there has been a proportionate decrease in the amount of literature that has entered the Soviet Union, and tourists have been frightened to use the opportunities which do exist.

(iv) By presenting the gospel to the Orthodox. In dealing with the nominal Orthodox, many of whom do not know the major doctrines of the Scriptures, there is the danger of compromising our beliefs in our zeal to identify ourselves with them for the purpose of winning them to Jesus Christ.

In order to communicate the gospel to the Orthodox mind, we must emphasise the exclusiveness of Christ's person and the finality and substitutionary aspects of his unique work. This is the essence of the gospel. If these truths are excluded or minimised, the end result is "another gospel" which is, in reality, not the gospel at all. It takes much preaching to make clear to an Orthodox that repentance and faith bring salvation.

In general, there are several stages that the Orthodox mind goes through in the process of accepting Christ. They are:

(a) *The stage of ignorance:* The Orthodox mind has not been preconditioned to understand the concept of salvation by faith. Either he does not know how to be saved, or he believes he will be saved by works and by participating in the sacraments. Even if an Orthodox reads the Scriptures, he still is not sure about his salvation.

(b) *The stage of confusion:* After hearing much preaching and reading of the Word of God, the average Orthodox confuses salvation by faith with salvation by works. You can hear him saying, "Certainly salvation is by faith! But we must do good works in order to go to Paradise."

(c) *The stage of clarification:* After much exposure to the teaching of the Word of God, eventually comes the understanding that salvation is indeed by faith.

(d) *The stage of trusting Christ:* This stage usually comes very soon in time after the third stage, or else it may never come at all. Generally speaking, much time is needed to make clear the gospel to an Orthodox person.

(e) *The crisis of identity:* Many nominal Orthodox are not converted through the liturgy or the efforts of the priest, but from reading literature given to them by a non-Orthodox, or through Bible study or evangelistic preaching. For a time, there is a devout loyalty to Orthodoxy, accompanied however, by a frustration that he is not being fed spiritually through his church.

(f) *Estrangement from Orthodoxy:* As the person grows in spiritual understanding, there is often a disillusionment with the church and resentment of the institution which, for so many years, claimed to be the only source of spiritual truth yet failed to make it clear to him. Many Christians from an Orthodox upbringing, having trusted Christ, become hostile toward the church. This makes it hard for them to relate to the priests and properly appreciate the tradition of the church, which now seems meaningless to them. Often, during this stage, ties are cut with nominal Orthodox acquaintances, limiting the future possibility of evangelizing them.

E. The People Who will Evangelize the Orthodox

In our study we find that three main groups of people are reaching, and will continue to reach, the Orthodox.

(i) *The national Evangelical churches in the Orthodox world*

Effective evangelism is done when the Evangelical churches in a given country work in a united way. These churches are a permanent voice of the gospel in these countries. Church growth principles can be of great assistance in helping the Evangelicals to reach the Orthodox world. They should be careful to observe the following principles:

(a) *Right Attitudes*

Evangelicals must be sensitive not to offend the Orthodox when they present the gospel to them, whether in personal conversation, in publications, in church meetings, public halls, or open-air meetings. The Apostle Paul set such a precedent when he was in Athens (see Acts 17:22-23).

(b) *Clear Message*

Evangelicals must be careful of their vocabulary and terminology, which may be familiar to an Evangelical but have a completely different meaning to an Orthodox. For example, the word "confession" is understood by an Orthodox to mean the sacrament of disclosing his sins to the priest, whereas to an Evangelical it means private confession to God. A word such as "regeneration" may be used by an Orthodox without understanding what it really means.

(c) *Winning Opportunities*

Evangelicals must use, in an uncompromising way, the Orthodox holy days, such as saints' days, Christmas, Easter, national events connected with the Orthodox church, the use of the Scripture portions used in the liturgy and church calendar, and even the biographies of the saints and the writings of the Church Fathers. They should also attend church services occasionally in order to understand the Orthodox liturgy, worship, and mentality, to help in finding a common ground of spiritual communication.

(ii) *Parachurch Ministries*

Interdenominational Christian movements which aim to reach the Orthodox on neutral grounds, adopting the principle of the Apostle Paul, "I have become all things to all men, that I might by all means save some" (1 Cor. 9:22). Such movements can prove to be effective in winning the nationals.

(a) They can offer acceptable fellowship through such things as Christian clubs and organisations, household gatherings, etc.

(b) They can produce Christian literature, such as Bibles, Christian books, newspapers, tracts, Bible lessons, etc.

(c) They will help deal with social problems, such as working with hospitals, orphanages, schools, refugees, victims of physical disaster, etc.

(iii) *Born-again people and movements which are inside or under the umbrella of the Orthodox Church*

Although some people and movements are facing problems and difficulties with the leaders of their church, some persevere and witness to their own people (1 Cor. 9:13-23). Unfortunately, these people continually face the problems of compromise. Yet we Evangelicals can be an encouragement to them.

(a) We can help them to grow up spiritually through Bible study, prayer, and fellowship.

(b) We can share with them helpful Christian literature.

(c) We can encourage them to witness to others within the Orthodox Church so that, in God's appointed time and by the visitation of the Holy Spirit, the way may be prepared for a mighty Reformation and spiritual renewal within the Orthodox Church.

F. Methods and Means

The methods and means that can be used to evangelize nominal Orthodox people vary according to the particular circumstances. Following are suggested methods which we believe are especially effective, with comments on where certain methods may be more useful than others.

(i) *Personal Evangelism*

(a) *Person-to-person Evangelism* is the most effective evangelism among the Orthodox. Essentially all mass media and impersonal means should be geared to bring the interested nominal Orthodox into personal contact with someone who can follow him through the steps to conversion.

(b) *Telephone Evangelism* takes several forms. Dial-in-ministry involves posting a number in public places, and callers hear a recorded message with another number to call for personal counseling. Direct phone evangelism, done in a spirit of friendliness, wisdom, positiveness, and great courtesy, can locate those who are interested in spiritual things.

(c) *Door-to-door calling* with witnessing and literature distribution. In these canvassing attempts, the evangelist should make his position known right from the start so as not to be misidentified.

(ii) *Mass Evangelism*

(a) *Mass Evangelistic Campaigns* can be used effectively when the local situation permits it. It is most effective when done on a united interdenominational level, and whenever it is possible to get Orthodox circles involved.

(b) *Open-Air Meetings* and beach evangelism can be very helpful. On the occasions of Orthodox holy days and festivals, Evangelicals should be encouraged to hold open-air or other public meetings, appealing to the religious instincts that are more intense at those times.

(iii) *Media Evangelism*

(a) *Radio and Television Evangelism* can be very effective in communicating the gospel, especially in those countries which are closed to missionaries. Evangelicals should be encouraged to offer good religious films to secular theatres and TV stations.

(b) *Distribution of Christian Literature* cannot be carried out among certain Orthodox peoples, but, where permitted, proves to be a very good vehicle of evangelization. There is a great need of Christian literature and Bibles among Eastern Orthodox peoples.

(c) *Newspaper Evangelism*. A monthly evangelistic family newspaper has proven to be a very good way to witness to thousands of people in Greece. Also evangelistic messages in paid advertising space in secular newspapers and magazines which are read by thousands of Orthodox people, have sowed the seeds over a period of years with reopening by personal contact later on.

(d) *Films and Visual Aids* are good tools to gain an entrance into Orthodox families, circles, schools, prisons, and other institutions. Many of the cultures where Orthodoxy flourishes do not have the sophisticated visual productions of the West, and even simply produced materials have great appeal.

(iv) *Establishing Small Groups and Churches*

(a) *Establishing churches and centres*. In reaching the nominal Orthodox, we must have long and short-range goals. In the book of Acts, we read about thousands of people being saved and many churches being established. We must encourage believers and churches to enlarge their vision and set up goals to reach many Orthodox and establish local churches.

(b) *Home Bible Studies* have been a very productive tool among the nominal Orthodox, serving to guide them through the stages of confusion, clarification, and conversion.

(c) "*Tentmaker*" witness involves sending Christians to work in new areas in their professions, with the purpose of evangelizing and starting churches (see Acts 18:3-4). This technique overcomes the suspicions about the paid "professional" missionary.

(d) *Prayer Cell Groups* for revival and evangelism, cultural and recreational centres. Such groups and activities provide opportunities for nominally Christian friends to attend and to be exposed to Christian life outside of the preaching/worship context.

(v) *Special Ministries*

(a) *Youth and Student Evangelism*, including youth camps, rallies, seminars, and on-campus ministry, must be done with much wisdom in Communist countries, but can be very effective means of evangelizing nominal Christians, at the same time as teaching those evangelized. Helpful tools for these and other kinds of ministries are drama presentations, Christian athletic teams, and music groups.

(b) *Child Evangelism*, Bible clubs, camps, beach ministry, etc., may require caution according to the local political and legal situation.

(c) *Evangelism through institutions*, such as hospitals, orphanages, schools, old peoples' homes, etc.

(d) *Christian Women's Evangelistic Clubs*

G. To What Church Should a Born-Again Orthodox Belong?

The born-again Orthodox is faced with the problem of staying in or leaving the Orthodox Church. He may feel uncomfortable in his church because he is not being fed spiritually, and he has to attend the liturgy that contains unbiblical sections. We recognise that the degree of faithfulness to the Bible or dedication to dead ritual formalism within Orthodoxy may vary from one geographical area to another, as well as from one congregation to another, depending on the political and cultural circumstances, the degree of apostasy, the enlightenment and boldness of the individual priest, the extent to which the church community consists of sincere God-fearing members, and the stigma attached locally to identifying with other Christian groups. For this reason the following alternatives may be variously implemented, according to local circumstances. The born-again Orthodox may choose among three alternative solutions to the problem of what church to attend.

(i) *To leave his church and join an Evangelical church.*

By leaving the church, he is saying that he no longer trusts her sacramental system, nor fears the consequence of abandoning her. His boldness and clarity of decision arouse the curiosity and attention of his family. There could be no better evidence of the enormous change Jesus Christ has brought to his life in setting him free from the legalism and "righteousness of Orthodoxy" than to leave her. There are instances of Orthodox who have taken a strong stand by joining the Evangelical church, and have led a number of their close relatives and friends to the Lord as a result. Part of the reason for this is that the step shows the absoluteness and finality of trust in Christ, since there is a great anathema pronounced on all those who leave "the one True Church."

(ii) *To stay inside the Orthodox Church.*

In some areas of the world, those who come to personal experience of salvation can remain in their own churches with the hope of bringing reformation and renewal to the church. The Orthodox believer can continue to have fellowship with his Evangelical brothers for growth and edification. The things he learns from the Evangelicals can be passed on to his own friends in the Orthodox church.

(iii) *To identify with a parachurch Christian group.*

A number of Orthodox believers have joined parachurch organisations that have been established by either Evangelical or Orthodox believers and leaders. They are thoroughly evangelical in doctrine and maintain certain harmless practices of the Orthodox church in their meetings, thereby making points of contact with other Orthodox. Also, by keeping some kind of contact with the Orthodox church, there are many opportunities to witness and lead to Christ their Orthodox relatives and friends. These Christian movements meet in homes or halls and are not stigmatised as much by the Orthodox as are Evangelical churches. These groups sometime function as churches. Their contribution is that they provide places for brothers and sisters to fellowship, and centres for systematic discipleship programmes. They are proving to be very effective for nurturing and teaching the new Orthodox believer.

Some Christian movements in Greece, whose members are Orthodox believers, are growing considerably. They are deeply-rooted in the Scriptures and they participate very actively in establishing centres in big cities. Their programmes include home meetings and distribution of large quantities of literature among young people and university students. If, by the grace of God, these groups come together, they could be a great force for evangelism in this land and perhaps will gather the people who will establish a Reformed Orthodox church!

5. Case Studies

A. Russian Orthodox Church

The Russian Orthodox Church (ROC) today has far more new "prophetic" tendencies within it than is generally realised. This is not a new development. The patriarchal, formalistic aspect of an Orthodoxy dominated by the state was always uppermost, but beneath the surface there were the holy men, *the startsy*, hermits whose enlightened guidance inspired generations of intellectuals (see Father Zosim in Dostoevsky's book *Brothers Karamazov*).

But the state tried to suppress enlightened tendencies. In 1721, Peter the Great replaced the Patriarch with a holy synod governed by a layman who was a civil servant. As Russia saw an increasing vigor of social and reforming ideas in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, enlightened Christians planned to free the church from state dominance. A democratic "Sobor" (meeting of representatives) elected a new patriarch Tikhon as the Revolution broke. In the devastation which followed Lenin's death, persecution hit the reformers even more than the conservatives (a point always falsified by communist propaganda).

The prophetic tradition did not die with Tikhon, a victim of the communists in 1925. It lived on in prisons and exile, while the church as an institution was virtually liquidated. In 1941-43, when the Soviet Union was locked in mortal combat with Germany, Stalin performed a "volte face." He reconstituted the church, but put it firmly in the hands of a small group who were prepared to compromise politically in order to gain freedom of worship. They were also deeply conservative theologically. Once again the "prophetic" tradition was outlawed, but it lived on in secret. There was no schism between the tendencies, though there have been many tensions.

In 1960, Khrushchev unleashed another period of persecution. One direct effect of this was to bring the prophetic tradition out into the open for the first time since the Revolution. See, for example, the life and witness of Father Dimitri Dudko (for youth ministry-preaching), Father Gleb Yukunin (for human rights activity), Anatoli Levitin (for presentation of Orthodoxy to the modern world), and Lev Regelson (for Orthodox history of twentieth century written for the first time). All of these are now in prison or exile, as a result of the latest period of persecution beginning in 1979.

Vladimir Poresh, 31 years of age, was arrested on the 1st of August 1979, and has been held since then in prison in Leningrad. He was born in 1949 in Smolensk and was brought up in an intellectual, atheistic family. His father was for many years rector of the Smolenski Institute of Physical Culture, and his mother teaches political economics in an institute: both are Party members. When he left school in 1966, Poresh entered Smolenski Pedagogical Institute. Three years later he transferred to Leningrad University, graduating in 1972. He then worked in the Academy of Sciences Library in Leningrad; first in the bibliography department, then in the department of the history of books. He has published works on Romance philology. In 1966, Poresh was a pupil of Tatyana Shchipkova (another member of the Christian Seminar now serving a term in labour camp), who describes him at that time as being sceptical about religion but a good and thoughtful student. However, his views changed after he went to Leningrad University. From thinking that everything was totally meaningless, he began to find meaning in life. In 1974, he was baptized by Father Dimitri Dudko (now also imprisoned and awaiting trial) into the Russian Orthodox Church.

In that same year, together with Alexander Ogorodnikov, he started the Christian Seminar and devoted himself to public religious activity. This adult baptism makes him virtually a "born-again" Christian in evangelical terminology. Poresh looked upon his activity in the Seminar as putting his Christian beliefs into practice in the world. Together with Ogorodnikov, he has been one of the leaders and inspirers of the Christian Seminar, which provides a forum for discussion and education for young intellectuals who have recently become Orthodox. Poresh was the editor of the Seminar's journal *Obshchina* ("Community"), and this forms the basis of the charge against him under article 70 ("anti-Soviet agitation and propaganda") for which the maximum sentence is twelve years.

An unusually detailed description of Poresh by 18 Christian friends reveals the deep affection he has inspired in others. They say he reminds them of "the Knight of the Sorrowful Countenance" (Don Quixote). He has "expectant eyes, sparking with irony, the bold eyes of an honest man... the eyes of an intelligent and good man ... the pale face of an ascetic with the imprint of enthusiasm. The high forehead of a wise man immersed in deep tragic thoughts." He is an "unusual, vivid personality," but could be difficult company because he demands the maximum from a person. He is a person of harmonious beauty, made so by his faith.

Poresh is married to Tatyana Kupatadze, and they have two young daughters—Olga, aged 2, and another whom he has never seen, born after his arrest.

Evangelicals can "reach" the Orthodox in the USSR (perhaps 40 million of them) by beginning to offer moral support to people from such groups who may still be at liberty. Understanding is a prelude to any action. Any attempt to "convert" someone who has seen such faith through life-experience and suffering would be counterproductive, looked on by the Orthodox as insulting. Yet, at the same time and in a wonderful way, it is these very people whom God is leading in providence, to make contacts with other denominations in the USSR and outside. There is here for Evangelicals a new opportunity, which needs to be prepared for and seized.

B. India

Some factors that helped the spread of revival in Orthodox churches in Kerala, India.

(i) Mission Institutions:

CMS College Kottayam and Madras Christian College are examples of institutions started by the missionaries which admitted into their fold some students from the Orthodox Jacobite church. These students were from prominent Orthodox families who could afford higher education for their children. The youngsters appreciated the Christian life of the missionaries and began to attend their chapel.

(ii) Protestant Speakers:

In 1918, when Sadhu Sundar Singh visited Kerala, he was invited to speak in Orthodox churches. Other Protestant speakers and Anglican bishops also have spoken in Orthodox churches or conferences.

(iii) Orthodox Preachers:

Laymen and clergy who had opportunity to learn the Bible began to preach in their conferences. This instigated a challenge for other Orthodox Christians to study the Bible.

(iv) Prayer Groups:

Small groups of people, without denominational differences, began to meet in many places. They did not have any official recognition from the Orthodox Church. However, Orthodox members, though in small numbers, have participated in these interdenominational prayer groups.

(v) Maramon Convention:

The largest annual Christian convention in the world is now the Maramon. It is attended by many members outside the Mar Thoma church, whose evangelistic association is conducting the convention. Many revival preachers from India and abroad bring the gospel messages in this convention. Many Orthodox members are renewed at Maramon.

(vi) Inter-marriage:

Inter-communion between the Orthodox and others does not exist, but there are inter-marriages. A corollary of these inter-marriages is a spiritual revival. Many women of the reformed churches become wives of the prominent laymen of the Orthodox Church. These women gradually become office bearers of the women's organisation in the Orthodox churches, thus having an opportunity to bear witness within the Orthodox Church.

(vii) Thadagam Ashram:

Bishop Pakenham Walsh of the Anglican church in Assam, who was the principal in Bishop's College in Calcutta, started an Ashram at Thadagam near Coimbatore for the Orthodox Church. Father K.C. Varghese and others worked with Bishop and Mrs. Walsh. The saintly bishop gave leadership for a spiritual renewal. The Managanam Ashram near Kottayam, under the late Sadhu Matai, influenced many laymen in the Orthodox Church.

(viii) Interdenominational Seminaries:

Bishops and clergy of the Orthodox Church were trained in seminaries of Serampore, Jabalpur, Bangalore, and Calcutta. This helped fresh light to enter the Orthodox Church.

(ix) Servants of the Cross:

Pathrose Mar Osthatus Metropolitan organised Servants of the Cross long before he became a bishop. This society did evangelistic work among the lower caste Hindus. It gained about 25,000 converts for the Orthodox Church. This, being a missionary movement, helped many young people acquire a new vision.

(x) Billy Graham and Akbar Abdul-Haqq:

Evangelist Billy Graham preached in Kottayam, Kerala, in 1956 and 1978, conducting crusades in many towns and villages in Kerala. All these crusades were well attended by members and leaders of the Orthodox churches. Akbar Haqq, an evangelist with the Billy Graham Evangelistic Association, continues to carry on this evangelistic outreach.

C. Egypt

It was reported that students who belong to the Coptic Orthodox Church were reached with the gospel by student-to-student evangelism. They were in turn, nurtured and trained to reach their own people. A team was formed by this group of Christian students in order to witness. Songs were composed using Bible passages which were sung to Eastern music familiar to the audience. The response was found to be very encouraging.

D. Greece

(i) *The Greek Evangelical Church*, founded in 1858 by Dr. Michael Kalopothakis, was not an attempt to establish a competing denomination, but sincerely looked for the conversion of Orthodox nominal Christians who would remain in their own church. Many of its early leaders had significant impact in witnessing to the Orthodox community. This also could be said of the founders of the *Free Evangelical Church* in the beginning of this century (such as Dr. Constantine Metallinos). A century of expansion and development has seen some rising and falling of numbers, but we believe that God is preparing a host of evangelists to witness to nominal Orthodox through the *Evangelical Youth Movement* (KEN), the nation-wide fellowship of young people in the Greek Evangelical church.

This preparation has taken place in several stages. Initially, in 1949, there was the need to create a family atmosphere to strengthen the morale of the often-isolated youth. The movement was challenged to pray for renewal and revival. Seasonal camps and conferences were organised to promote mature discipleship and broaden the scope of evangelism. During the difficult years of political dictatorship (1967-1974), the young people took the initiative, despite restrictions on religious expression, to actively communicate the gospel. Since 1975, strong leadership has encouraged initiative, the use of talents and a concern for missions, with the corollary that many young people are remaining current in their social environment in order to relate the gospel more effectively to their Orthodox contemporaries. This new missionary interest which has caught fire within the Evangelical Youth Movement has given them a new love, interest, and spiritual compassion in their witnessing to their Orthodox friends. This movement is already being used by God, and it holds great potential, along with other Christian movements, in the evangelization of Greece.

(ii) *Advancing the Ministries of the Gospel International*

(AMG)â€”formerly known as "American Mission to Greeks, Inc." has ministered and continues to minister to the physical and spiritual needs of Greeks (Orthodox and Evangelical) in many parts of the world. Clearly, there is a special emphasis on Greece itself, where the following operations have been established:

(a) *Relief work* assisting many orphanages and hundreds of children from poor families. AMG International founded the "Evangelical Orphanage of Katerini."

(b) The 220-bed *St. Luke's Hospital* in Thessaloniki which undertakes a holistic ministry among the patients by providing both physical and spiritual ministry.

(c) "*O Logos*" publishing house in Athens has produced numerous Evangelical and Orthodox books in Greek which many Orthodox people use and read.

(d) *Christian bookstores* ("*O Logos*") in Athens, Thessaloniki, and Cyprus are selling their publications with a wide circulation.

(e) *The Voice of the Gospel* monthly Christian magazine and "Daily Bread" bi-monthly devotional, both in the Greek language, have a world-wide circulation.

(f) *Newspaper evangelism* (gospel messages as paid advertisements) in secular Greek newspapers and magazines. The Evangelicals have become more known to the Orthodox than before. A number have come to a personal knowledge of Jesus Christ, and many others have been enlightened. These are factors which are influencing the Orthodox Church. This type of ministry in Greece, as well as in many other countries, was pioneered by the present President of AMG International, Dr. Spiros Zodiates.

Ministries similar to the above have been established in many other countries, representing all six continents. As in Greece, the emphasis is upon a ministry to the whole man's spiritual and physical needs.

(iii) *St. Luke's Hospital*

St. Luke's Evangelical Hospital, Thessaloniki, was established in 1975 by AMG International with the two-fold purpose of providing patients with the most effective treatment available and giving them the opportunity of hearing the good news of Christ. It has been said, "More people pass through the doors of hospitals than through the doors of churches." The 220-bed hospital, with its six wards, is equipped with modern medical facilities and communication system. The Christian personnel, under the leadership of the Director, Dr. Demosthenes Katsarkas M.D., and the ministry of the Chaplain Rev. Apostolos D. Bliates, endeavour to make the gospel known both through their professional abilities and their testimonies for Christ. All the patients hear two short messages of encouragement each day, and they can attend special services each Sunday. They have seen good results. St. Luke's conducts an essential ministry of service to Greeksâ€”Orthodox and Evangelicalâ€”by providing for their physical and spiritual needs. More than 20,000 patients have passed through the doors since its establishment, with many having been touched spiritually by the Great Physician, Jesus Christ. As such, it is potentially an effective instrument in God's plan for the evangelization of Greece.

(iv) *The Good News Movement*

During the dictatorship period of Greece (1967-1974), the Lord led Michael Kantartjis, a missionary of Overseas Crusades Ministries Inc., to work among Greek Orthodox young people and establish, in 1974, in Thessaloniki, a group of born-again people with the name "Good News Movement" (GNM). The main strategy wasâ€”and still isâ€”for a born-again Orthodox person to give the water of life to a nominal Orthodox person in an Orthodox cup.

The work grew in spite of the problems and trials that the new believers were facing. Teenagers were pressured by their parents. High School students were the object of sarcasm from their teachers. Wives and husbands were facing problems from their unsaved mates. Fanatical religious leaders attacked the movement publicly, and through the press. But the Good News Movement is spreading steadily. It has members in all four major cities of Greece (Athens, Piraeus, Thessaloniki, Patrai), and in 6 smaller towns and villages. The believers, mostly young people, meet in homes or in their own centres and remain members of the Greek Orthodox Church performing all ceremonies in this church. They respect and love the church, and they offer their help anywhere it is accepted.

Their plan to reach the land of Greece is twofold: (a) by developing a discipleship programme, and (b) by spreading the gospel as much as possible by literature. The movement is printing the only evangelistic newspaper for the whole familyâ€”"The Good News." Every month 15 to 20 thousand copies are sent by mail or distributed to homes, offices, stores, squares, and streets. The paper advertises the dial-in ministry which is something completely new to Greece. Many people are calling every week to hear the evangelistic message of "comfort and love," and a number of them are asking for literature and prayers for their problems. This paper is the cheapest and most successful way of reaching thousands of people of all ages. Through it, the attendance at Good News centres in Athens has almost tripled in one year. A number of people have found Christ. The discipleship strategy of Good News and the effort to sow extensively has inspired and influenced other Christian groups to work the same way in Greece.

The future goal of GNM is to spread the gospel in many parts of Greece. Their interest is to lead mostly young people to Christ. As they grow in the midst of many difficulties, they have discovered that the more they work closer to the Orthodox reality, the better they present the gospel by using more biblical truths of the tradition of the Orthodox church. The more they give themselves to the diligent work and prayer, the more the movement will grow and be blessed.

(v) *The Greek Bible Institute*

The Greater Europe Mission (GEM) was founded in 1949 by Robert P. Evans with the motto of "Training Europeans to Evangelize Greater Europe." In the early 1950's, Evans visited Greece regularly with the prayer that God would help the church in North America to be able to witness to those in Greece. Realising that the task of reaching so many people with the gospel could not be done entirely by foreign missionaries, the vision took root for national training institutions which could offer systematic Bible training in their own country and in their own language.

God worked simultaneously in the lives of many people, and, in 1966, North American personnel began arriving to prepare the ground for a Greek Bible Institute.

Bible classes began twice each week in offices in downtown Athens in 1973. Response to the lessons was good, even though there were trials, including change of government, increasing nationalism, and anti-American demonstrations, etc. The vision continued as preparations were made for a full-scale residential Bible Institute. In 1980, the Greek Bible Institute began functioning as a two-year full-time Bible school with eleven resident students. The curriculum includes courses in personal evangelism, church history and missions, and the theology of the Orthodox Church—all geared in a special way to prepare graduates for witnessing to nominal Christians within Orthodoxy. Besides the academic learning, a number of practical courses are combined with regular weekly field work assignments, thus giving opportunity for the students to discover and exercise their gifts during training. We see this as a very practical and useful application of Paul's principle in 2 Timothy 2:2, "The things which you have heard from me in the presence of many faithful witnesses, the same commit to faithful men who will be able to teach others also."

(vi) The Christian Renewal Fellowship

The Christian Renewal Fellowship was created in October 1974, under the leadership of Rev. Angelos Damaskinides. The CRF is non-denominational in character, and its primary aim is to help the Greek Orthodox people know Christ personally, thereby promoting a process of renewal within the Orthodox church. Converts are not discouraged from attending any local Bible-believing church. The Fellowship incorporates, in its presentation of the gospel, some biblical, Orthodox truths and methods, such as Christ-exalting hymns. Weekly meetings take place both in Athens and Thessaloniki with a particular emphasis upon scriptural teaching and discipleship. Home gatherings have proved fruitful and, on occasions, the local priest has been of assistance. Special public meetings are held in cinemas and other auditoriums, and a regular state prison ministry has presented some marvelous opportunities. The CRF publishes tracts as well as a monthly magazine, "New Breath." Many people are being reached through the cassette ministry. Through all of these endeavours, the hope is that people may give their hearts to God, and that the Orthodox church may be influenced to return to her biblical foundation and simplicity of worship.

(vii) Hellenic Missionary Union

The Hellenic Missionary Union initially evolved from the vision of a Greek missionary who had previously spent 16 years in the remote jungle region of Irian Jaya (formerly Dutch New Guinea). With the assistance of a number of lay believers from many churches, the first Greek inter-denominational missionary society committed to both home and foreign mission was established in 1979.

The H.M.U. has two principal emphases: First, Christian unity, expressed by loving practical service to the local churches; second, communication of the gospel to the modern Greek individual employing methods and means which are relevant to his own 20th-century culture.

The activities of the H.M.U. include evangelistic campaigns in halls, theatres, and stadiums; the publication of books and literature promoting missions ministry, using the media of films and cassettes; the encouragement of any church or societal evangelistic strategy; and the challenge to young people to accept the call of God for world missions (mission prayer groups have been set up). In all of these endeavours, it is the burden, love and sacrificial offer of labour by the people of the local churches that the H.M.U. helps to channel, direct and lead, in order to reach the nominal Orthodox for Christ.

(viii) Scripture Union

The literature production of Scripture Union in Greece is a significant factor in the Christian witness among Orthodox. For 25 years, materials produced for many aspects of Christian ministry have been invaluable aids to both Evangelical and Orthodox alike.

The "Sunday School Library" was formed as a service to the children of Greek families and has, over a period of years, produced over 200 titles. Encouraging results have been seen from "Children Echoes"—a well-presented (with colour format) collection of monthly Bible study notes for children.

For adult Bible study requirements, the S.U. publish "Family Altar." These daily study notes are an encouragement to the Christian and also a challenge to the nominal Orthodox to study the Bible. The four-volume Biblical Encyclopedia, compiled by S.U. Greece director Mr. Miltiades Anghelatos, has been acknowledged by both Orthodox and Evangelical leaders and is widely used by both them and their lay people along with quarterly booklets of sermon outlines and other pulpit aids.

The ministry also operates a conference centre, "Bethel," throughout the year for training courses, camps and Bible retreats; and an old peoples' home, "Lois," established over 10 years ago, allows some senior citizens to spend their last days in a Christian environment.

In all of these endeavours, the emphasis is upon a positive approach to giving the real and uncompromised message of the Bible to the Greeks.

6. Recommendations

We recommend:

- A. That the needs of the Orthodox countries of the world be brought before the world Evangelical community for prayer and action.
- B. That Bible schools, Christian colleges and seminaries include in their curriculum studies about the Orthodox church.
- C. That Evangelicals show a more practical interest for the mission work of national and foreign missionaries who are evangelizing among Orthodox people.
- D. That Evangelicals show more practical interest in the Orthodox by inviting them into their homes for meals, visiting the sick and the lonely, by showing practical Christianity, such as taking food, cleaning their houses, and doing other charitable deeds for the sick and elderly.
- E. That Evangelicals be more active in supporting their oppressed brothers and sisters of any denomination in the Iron Curtain countries.
- F. That the Evangelical churches and missions from abroad help the nationals by training them to reach their own people.
- G. That the motive of the Evangelical Christians be to give the gospel of salvation to the nominal Orthodox (Rom. 1:16).
- H. That Evangelical Alliances be formed for the furtherance of the gospel.

7. Conclusion

It is clearly God's will to evangelize, disciple and nurture the nominal Christians in Orthodox churches. Although they are members of the same branch of Christendom, there are geographic, political and cultural differences which affect evangelization from within and outside the church. The message of the gospel must be communicated in a manner that is understandable and acceptable, through familiar cultural and religious media, considering the context of each segment of the church. Give the water of life to the Orthodox people in the Orthodox cup whenever possible. What is advocated for those in countries where they experience religious freedom should not be confused with the recommendations for those who do not enjoy such freedom. Wherever possible, the evangelization needs to be carried on without adversely affecting the sentiments of church members. The sound teaching of the Word of God and the application of its principles in all aspects of life will help to cleanse the church from all things contrary to the Word of God. Evangelicals must understand the social, cultural and political situation of the Orthodox and keep seeking God's will in devising strategies for helping this group of "church members" to become Bible-believing, Bible-obeying, and Christ-honouring disciples of the Lord.

Appendix A Pre-COWE Study Group Conveners

Rev. Apostolos D. Bliates, International Co-ordinator, Thessaloniki, Greece

Conveners: (Those who contributed in writing)

- Bishop Mar Aprem, Metropolitan, S. India
- Rev. Bill Baldwin, Athens, Greece
- Rev. Michael Bourdeaux, England (Russia)
- Mr. K. V. Chetrian, S. India
- Rev. Roger Cowley, England (Ethiopia)
- Rev. Angelos Damaskinides, Athens, Greece
- The Very Rev. Derek L. Eaton, Egypt

Mr. Mark Diavastes, Thessaloniki, Greece
 Dr. George A. Hadjiantoniou, Canada
 Mr. Nabil Jabbour, Egypt
 Rev. Michael Kantartjis, Athens, Greece
 Mr. Spero Katos, Australia
 Rev. Josif Ton, Romania (of assistance in Thailand)

Appendix B In Attendance

Bishop Mar Aprem, Metropolitan Bishop, Kerala, India
 Rev. Bill Baldwin (Recorder) Teacher, Athens, Greece
 Rev. Apostolos D. Bliates (Chairman), Minister-Evangelist, Thessaloniki, Greece
 Rev. Michael Bourdeaux (Consultant) Kent, England
 Rev. Colin Chapman, Regional Secretary for Islamic Lands, Beirut, Lebanon
 Miss Sheila Clement (typist) Church Planting Missionary, Thailand
 Rev. Angelos Damaskinides, Evangelist, Athens, Greece
 Mr. Nabil Jabbour, The Navigators, Cairo, Egypt
 Rev. Michael Kantartjis, (Secretary) Evangelist, Athens, Greece
 Rev. Costas Macris, Missionary, Athens, Greece
 Dr. Mufeed Ibrahim Said, Professor of Surgery, Cairo, Egypt
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 Rev. Ioachim Tunea, Pastor & Editor, Bucharest, Romania

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