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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS AND PREFACE

This project would not have been possible without the help of many people. First of all, Brazilian working-class Christians taught me and helped shape my life and foreign mission career. So pervasive and profound was their influence that when I left the mission field at the end of 1985 and candidated for a call from our North American churches, I was perceived as foreign and strange in my native country. I thank Rev. Vande Kieft, the New Era Christian Reformed Church and Newman Chapel, who in spite of my foreignness, extended me a call in the fall of 1986. I know that their patience and understanding had to be stretched as my philosophy of ministry was brought to bear upon a thirty-year old chapel ministry. For both pastor and congregation, the journey has not been easy. Nonetheless, we have seen God pour out his blessing upon Newman Chapel by bringing unsaved workers to Christ and incorporating them into the church as active participants in ministry and leadership. Further, I want to thank Dr. Roger Greenway for his invaluable aid as Westminster Seminary's faculty advisor for this project. All through my missionary career he has been a friend and colleague. His presence at Westminster Seminary led me to Philadelphia. I started this project with something else in mind in January of 1986; but when it seemed that I would not get a call, I took a leave of absence that last two years. When I resumed the project, it was Dr. Greenway who helped me define where my real interests lay and where I could make a valuable contribution. Dr. Harvie Conn read my course work and was a real encouragement. The personnel of the libraries of Westminster Seminary, Calvin College and Seminary and Christian Reformed World Missions were always kind and helpful. Others, too numerous to mention, helped with interviews, gave suggestions, answered questions, and ministered to my physical needs. Last, but not least I want to thank my loving wife, Clarice, my three daughters, and my widowed mother for their never-failing support and encouragement.

Even after the project was revised and approved in August of 1989, I was forced to make changes. I narrowed the scope from urban strategies in general to urban church planting among the working class. The project was broadened to include the Brazilian Pentecostals because they are effectively reaching the poor and the laboring class. No study would merit the reading if it did not deal with the reasons for their dynamic growth. In a very real sense, the project now focuses on what the Christian Reformed Church in North America can learn from Brazilian Pentecostals. The Presbyterian Church of Brazil, however, has not dropped out of focus. It is a denomination representing traditional Protestantism and composed largely of the middle class. Its struggle to remain faithful to its Reformed heritage and at the same time to work out indigenous church-planting strategies among the working-class multitudes of Brazil show us the problems and tensions that will inevitably arise if we take seriously the task to reach North America's lower-income workers. As a result of the clarification of the focus of the project the thesis outline was rearranged to better fit our purpose. The new outline is delineated in the "Introduction."

Problems in the administration of the project forced changes in the schedule. That the competency examinations took longer than expected was not a serious problem. A more serious problem, however, was gathering data from Brazil. The questionnaires for gathering data from Brazilian Presbyterian Churches envisioned a rather complete church growth study of each growing church. I had hoped that during the school break of December, 1989 to February, 1990 a seminarian could be hired to gather the data for the questionnaires through personal interviews with the pastors. This proved impossible to arrange through the contacts available to me. Having failed in this I sent the questionnaires directly to the pastors. None of the pastors filled out the questionnaires because they were too long and time-consuming to do. As a result, I

conducted the interviews myself during my trip to Brazil in 1990. That made my trip much less productive. While I lacked concrete data in some instances; I was able, nevertheless, to get the pastor's personal evaluation of his own ministry. The ideal would have been to gather data and then get the pastor's reaction. As it was, I had to gather as much data as possible and get the pastor's evaluation or "feedback" during the same interview.

The all-day seminar scheduled for February, 1991 for Christian Reformed Church pastors, sponsored by Classis Muskegon's Home Missions Committee did not prove to be a realistic goal. Some of the conclusions of the thesis did not come together until November of this year. The overriding concern for the conclusion and for a seminar was to make the lessons from Brazil realistically applicable to a North American setting. The goal is for my colleagues to react in a positive way: "Hey, there's some good ideas here. They might work." Last February any presentation would have been incomplete and would, I believed, been considered foreign. I was not yet ready to answer how these foreign ideas could fit into our Christian Reformed Church's evangelistic outreach.

I have not been unmindful of my goal to bring indigenous church-planting principles to bear on the North American situation. On September 29, 1988 I presented the social context of our Brazilian mission endeavor, our philosophy of ministry, and its positive results to colleagues of Classis Muskegon and their wives at an Internos fellowship meeting in New Era, Michigan. The core of the thesis was presented at that time and received a favorable reaction. Since then I was elected to the Classical Home Missions Committee. I believe that in the near future the door will be open to present the conclusions of my project in a more cogent way. A copy of my notes of the September, 1988 Internos meeting can be found in the Appendix.

Charles D. Uken

New Era, MI
December, 1991

INTRODUCTION

It is generally accepted that in order to win people of another nation and language to Christ the church must engage in cross-cultural evangelism. Cross-cultural evangelism meets prospective converts at their cultural level. We do not expect an unbelieving foreigner to come to the United States to hear the Gospel. Rather the American church must send missionaries to foreign countries to bear witness there. Once in the foreign country the missionary learns to speak the national language. He might engage in giving English lessons for a time, but he would want to learn his listeners' language in order to speak to their hearts. They should not have to learn a foreign language in order to hear the Gospel. If the Bible has not already been translated into the native tongue, the missionary devotes a good part of his time to the task of translation and teaches the people how to read.

In cross-cultural evangelism the missionary does not limit himself to moving to the foreign country and learning the native language, but he also adapts himself to the cultural ways of that society. He cannot change the color of his skin, but he can change the manner in which he dresses. He understands that gestures, manners and patterns of behavior carry meaning. He will want his "body language," his habits and actions, to complement and reinforce the spoken word. The Apostle Paul wrote that among the Jews he lived like a Jew even to the point of circumcising Timothy (Acts 16:3) and shaving his head and paying his vow in the temple (Acts 18:18; 21:24).

Paul understood that these were but a mere "shadow" of the "reality" that was revealed in Christ (Col. 2:17) and were not necessary for salvation; but when among his countrymen, he did not want to impede the Gospel message by giving the impression that he was godless and lawless. But while among the Gentiles Paul lived as a Gentile. Among them he did not allow Jewish Christians to impose circumcision so that the gospel of grace would not be misinterpreted (Gal. 5:2). Obedient to the law of Christ (I Cor. 9:21) Paul did not yield to pagan idolatry (Acts 17:16) even though in his message to the men of Athens he quoted a pagan poet (Acts 17:28). What we see emerging on the pages of the New Testament is a church united in its faith in Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior, but variegated in its cultural expression.

Cross-cultural evangelism makes use of the homogeneous unit principle (McGavran 1970, 84-87) and goes on to promote the multiplication of "tribal, caste and language" churches (McGavran 1970, 289-290). The church has no problem with this when foreign mission work is the topic under discussion, but it is harder to think this way when the objects of evangelistic effort live near us in our own city and speak our own language. Because people live nearby and speak the same language, we assume that the only thing they need to do is respond in faith to the message of the gospel. And then they should join our church. We assume that the reason for a lack of success is a lack of faith, either theirs or ours. But it could very well be that a cultural barrier inhibits their acceptance of the gospel and we are completely unaware that it exists. Our faith and culture may be so intertwined that we are requiring prospective church members to accept not only the gospel but also our cultural mores. Are we ready to admit that when 90% of the people in our church have a Dutch surname and have gone to Christian Schools where 90% of the children have Dutch surnames, we are a homogeneous unit quite distinct from American culture around us? Could it be that while we consider ourselves fully American, others consider us a closed-knit ethnic group in relation to our religion?

It would be well to step outside ourselves and ask ourselves who we are. In relation to our Dutch heritage that has been done capably over the years by several authors (Beets 1923, 1946; Kromminga 1957; James Bratt 1984). But socially are we ready to admit that many, if not most, Christian Reformed Church members belong to the middle and upper middle class as a result of an emphasis upon the covenant, family solidarity and Christian stewardship that leads

large numbers of our youth to pursue a higher education and which puts them in positions of responsibility and leadership in their communities? Even though we may not be aware of it, we are an elitist ethnic homogeneous unit in American society, sociologically similar to American Judaism. We may not see ourselves that way, but that is probably the way that our neighbors see us. We are a group of believers who strengthen our ties with one another through meeting new friends who are bound to us by a common faith and ethnic background. But with regard to the assimilation of new members into our fellowship, it is almost necessary for someone literally to marry into the "clan." Unfortunately, our churches are often perceived by outsiders as tightly closed family cliques.

If this homogeneous-unit church is to assimilate new members, it will have to change itself to accommodate the surrounding culture (Boer 1957; 59-60, 91) or it will have to start satellite mission churches that reflect the target culture. The former is especially difficult to do because many of our customs are buttressed by our religious heritage and generations of preaching, catechism teaching and Biblical proof texts. The latter is not much easier since communication barriers must be overcome and questions of trust, authority and control of the new church have to be addressed.

This thesis assumes that local Christian Reformed churches are predominately homogeneous units. While exclusivism and pride must always be fought, it is often not within the realm of possibility to change a whole congregation. A church blessed with solid families, a Christian school and a zeal for the historic Reformed faith should not hope that its homes be broken, should not abandon its Christian school nor the Reformed faith in order to be assimilated into the mainstream of North American culture. As any group has a right to rejoice in its cultural heritage, so our people should have that same right. We conclude that while the church should work at breaking down barriers and creating structures within itself to assimilate new converts, it should also consider planting new churches that can more readily witness to and assimilate converts from their environment.

The focus of our discussion is the Christian Reformed Church and its mission to the outside world, not the outside world in general, but the world of the blue-collar and service-sector worker. Our thesis in this Doctor of Ministry project is that large numbers of blue-collar workers cannot be won and assimilated into Christian Reformed churches as traditionally understood, largely composed of the middle-class descendants of Dutch Calvinists, because these two groups belong to different socioeconomic classes of American society. Because of this cultural gap new churches must be started that can win and enfold these people into a fellowship of their own, where their talents are recognized, appreciated and employed in ministry and outreach. The nature of this type of mission effort will be similar to cross-cultural evangelism, akin to the situation a missionary would face by going to a foreign country to establish a church. In this effort indigenous church-planting methods should be followed.

Further, it is our thesis that patterns of evangelical, especially Pentecostal, church growth among the urban working-class poor of Brazil can help us in North America to win and enfold lower-income blue-collar and service-sector workers into their own churches.

I worked as a missionary of Christian Reformed World Missions in Brazil from 1967 through 1985 among Brazil's working-class poor in three urban centers: Goiânia, Araçatuba and Bauru. This experience had a profound affect upon my life and ministry. During all those years as a representative of historic Protestantism I competed in the same field to win converts not only to Christ but to fellowship in the church I represented, the Igreja Presbiteriana do Brasil. I also had to more clearly define and forcefully explain the gospel as it related to the issues of poverty, vice, idolatry, spirit possession and the working person's life situation. Trying to counter Pentecostal teaching I gained a deeper understanding of the book of Acts, Paul's epistles and the work of the Holy Spirit. I have never spoken in tongues nor dramatically cast out a demon; but I have seen spiritists come to Christ and join our churches, I have seen more than one person

completely healed in answer to prayer, and I have seen our churches in working-class neighborhoods grow at a healthy rate. In the end, although still competing and still maintaining our distinct identities, we came to see each other, I believe, as fighting side-by-side in Christ's army against the forces of darkness and unbelief. Cross-cultural evangelism among Brazil's working-class poor has become part of my very life and soul and I am convinced that some of the principles of church growth that we used very profitably in Brazil have direct application to the North American scene.

In Chapter One we will explore the culture and mind set of United States' blue-collar and service sector workers. No book, least of all a short chapter in this thesis, will adequately describe this segment of American society. Personal contact and a sympathetic, listening ear are essential as we bear witness to the gospel. This is the only way we will know our audience. When we do this, we discover that workers see reality from a different perspective, are suspicious of white-collar professional and managerial types and are alienated from many established churches.

While their cultural origins lie in their rural peasant roots, we see in Chapter Two that Brazilian workers are often alienated from the established Catholic religion and from the middle and upper classes who politically and socially shape the country to their own self interests. In rapid social change Brazilian workers, steeped in superstitious idolatrous Folk Catholicism, have not always been carried along by the new currents of change in the Catholic Church.

In Chapter Three we learn that many are finding their roots in the Afro-Brazilian Umbanda cult. At the same time multitudes have entered the small group Ecclesial Base Communities (CEBs) of the Catholic Church only to discover that confrontational political involvement is not in their best interest. In these small groups others have learned from the Scriptures and came to a realization that they are closer to the evangelical faith than to Catholicism.

In Chapters Four and Five we learn why Pentecostalism is growing by leaps and bounds.

Some traditional, historical Protestant churches are examined in Chapters Six and Seven. These have been heavily influenced by North American missionaries and are often tied to the small Brazilian middle class. With limited success they have been able to reach the poorer working class by establishing satellite churches.

Interestingly the basic patterns of Brazilian Pentecostal church growth were first established in the eighteenth-century Wesleyan Revival in a rapidly industrializing England and on the American frontier during settlement of virgin land to the West. This is shown in Chapter Eight.

In Chapter Nine we show that the Christian Reformed Church, with only a vague sense of what it was doing, launched into cross-class evangelism with the chapel movement.

In the last two chapters I want to show that a new chapel movement, a new impulse for church planting among America's working poor can be initiated by local Christian Reformed Churches that are led by evangelistically-minded pastors who tap the missionary impulse of large numbers of dedicated laymen and who follow some of the methods and strategies that have proven successful in Brazil.

CHAPTER ONE – UNITED STATES BLUE COLLAR DEMOGRAPHICS

The Laboring Class Defined

When we refer to blue-collar workers, we must not think of them as being a monolithic homogeneous unit. Not only do many cultural differences separate them from white-collar workers, but many cultural differences separate workers from one another. Among their ranks large numbers of African Americans and Hispanics can also be found. Portuguese female garment workers fall into a different homogeneous unit than Hispanic auto workers. Both Christians and non-Christians are to be found among the ranks of blue-collar workers. Those who grew up in Christian homes as members of Christian churches will be closer culturally to the predominate local church culture than will be their unbelieving fellow workers.

For the purpose of this study, we will focus predominately on white, male, factory workers but not exclude females and members of other races or those doing manual labor in service industries. It may be argued that low-skilled, low-paid and irregularly employed workers also should be included even if their job is white-collar clerical in nature. Although there is a great amount of heterogeneity among manual, blue-collar, and service-oriented workers, we are definitely excluding managerial, professional (doctors, lawyers, etc.) and scholarly (teachers, scientists, etc.) types.

Economically blue-collar workers may be part of the middle class if both husband and wife hold good paying jobs; but where only one parent is employed, the family would belong to the lower-middle class and might not live far above the poverty level.

Blue-Collar and Service-Sector Demographics

Between 1972 and 1982 manufacturing jobs increased a scant two per-cent, but in the 1980s declined 1.2 million by one estimate (Kane 1991, 1D), three million by another (Dentzer 1991, 40). In the period between 1972 and 1982 jobs in the service sector grew 39 percent (Robey 1985, 155). According to the Labor Department, of the 18 million jobs created in the eighties, 14 million were in the low-paying retail-trade and service industries (Kane 1991, 1D). While manufacturing jobs once accounted for almost half of non-farm employment, they represent less than 20 percent of the job market today (Thomas 1990, 54). In 1988 there were 45.5 million (41 per-cent of the total work force) white and black workers employed in "precision production, craft, and repair;" as "operators, fabricators, and labor-ers;" and in "service occupations." If the 17.7 million "administrative support" (including clerical) workers are added to that figure, the total jumps to 57 percent of the total work force (Johnson 1989, 61). More than half of all white-collar workers are in lower-level clerical and sales occupations (Johnson 1989, 61). Blacks comprise 15.4 percent of those listed as "operators, fabricators and laborers," while they make up only 6.4 percent of those in managerial and professional specialty careers (Johnson 1989, 61). In 1977 women and minorities were 36 percent of the blue-collar labor force (Miller 1979, 35), a figure that certainly has increased since then.

The American worker's income on the average, after inflation, has increased only \$140 per year over the 1965 level and now stands at just over \$17,000 (Tooley and Bernstein 1989, 66). Between 1973 and 1989 young men with only a high school diploma saw their average real wages fall 18.3 percent (Kane 1991, 1D; Dentzer 1991, 40). Manual working families do not feel that they are doing well or that they have much discretionary income. Hope for future improvement is not substantial since workers' incomes vary little with increasing

experience after the age of 25, unlike those of professional and managerial employees (Miller 1979, 37).

This flattening of worker wages and the diminishing percentage of factory laborers in the total work force is due to technological change, advances in bulk transportation and a freer world economy. The productivity of American firms increased 3.9% annually during the last decade. Theoretically this should have translated into higher earnings for employees, but instead manufacturers lowered prices in order to compete with foreign-made products (Dentzer 1991; 40, 42). Technological change has made it possible for multinational companies to automate the production process sufficiently in order to employ barely literate first-generation rural-urban migrants in third-world countries. The American factory worker today competes directly in a global labor market where third-world employees live on the wage of a paper-boy (Rosen 1987, 23). Competition on the "global assembly line" (Ehrenreich and Fuentes 1981, 52-59) has closed factories and broken the power of the unions (Rosen 1987, 24). In order to compete with foreign imports many large corporations like General Motors and Ford are outsourcing much of their production to small, non-unionized companies who are able to find people willing to work in a saturated labor market for wages that range from \$5.00 to \$10.00 an hour. Sweat shops have reemerged among immigrants to the U.S. (Rosen 1987, 40) and low-paying service jobs now employ about a third of the work force (Johnson 1989, 61).

The American labor force, like that in many third-world countries, is now tending to split into two distinct levels: those following careers in high-status, high-paying professional, technical and managerial positions; and those working in low-status, low-paying clerical, service and factory jobs. On the pay scale manufacturing jobs that were once the mainstay of the middle-class are now tending to gravitate towards the pay level that service jobs offer (Dentzer 1991, 42; Robey 1985, 166).

The manual or blue-collar labor force is financially affected by whether its employer is a "mainstream" or secondary, marginal industry. Mainstream industries or factories are characteristically large, high in profit, fairly secure, and unionized. Secondary industries are small, low in profit, often unstable, non-union and trying to survive in a highly competitive market (Miller 1979, 35). A higher percentage of young, minority and female employees is to be found in marginal than in mainstream industries (Miller 1979, 36).

Because of the relative decrease in both the availability and wage level of manufacturing jobs, many blue-collar men are not able to maintain the same standard of living for their families as in the past. This, plus changing mores, has brought increasingly more women into the work force, mainly into the service sector where they dominate the labor force as clerks, secretaries, store attendants, and nurses. In 1979 Gabriel Kolko, drawing conclusions from 1967 statistics, wrote that "for wives with children the economic difficulty of their husbands is the most fundamental factor pushing them into the labor market" (1979, 100). Fifty years ago the service class of women would have been employed as household servants, but today they are "checkers" and "packers" (Kolko 1979, 105).

Women now comprise 44.5 percent of the work force with 65 percent of women with children under the age of 18 working outside of the home (Johnson 1989, 61). If the wife's job pays more and carries a higher status, the husband can have a serious identity problem, especially if he becomes unemployed from a good paying job and has to start out again with another company on the "ground floor." Disparity between husband and wife in type of employment is the exception rather than the rule, however. When wives go to work, they generally find jobs at the same socioeconomic level as their husbands. "Eighty-three percent of the working wives of professional-technical men are employed as professional-technical, managerial, and clerical workers. Operatives, service workers, and household workers among wives are overwhelmingly married to blue-collar or 'white-hat' (service-sector) men" (Kolko 1979, 107).

The Blue-Collar and Service-Sector World

Blue-collar workers and millions in the service sector, who only have jobs, can be distinguished from those who have careers (Halle 1984, 58). Their work is often dirty and dangerous, repetitive and dull, and they are supervised by others (Halle 1984; 187, 205) "For eighty million Americans there is no such thing as an interesting job" (Lasson 1971, 3). Working men definitely prefer leisure to work (Halle 1984, 34). They work in order to live (support the family, hunt, fish, remodel the house); not live in order to work. In other words, work is something to be endured, not something to be enjoyed and in which to be fulfilled.

Workers carry a prevailing suspicion of management, whom they feel will only use their expertise and knowledge of production techniques for the company's benefit and not for their own job security and well-being. At considerable risk to themselves they learn new, shorter procedures that work and they are reluctant to share this "inside" information with management. By using these streamlined techniques, they can create free time on the job to socialize with fellow employees. By keeping this information to themselves they can make it difficult for management to run the plant during a strike. Workers also conceal information from each other for reasons of power and job security. In this dog-eat-dog environment they feel that if they had to learn the hard way, why should they make it easier for those who just arrive. "Let them learn the hard way just like we had to," they reason (Halle 1984, 120-124).

Advancement in the factory through the various blue-collar ranks is possible but upper-management positions generally are not open to them. As a result some of the more entrepreneurial who want to get further ahead leave the factory to start their own business, like a bar or a small construction firm, go into maintenance jobs, become truck drivers or enter the ranks of firemen or policemen (Halle 1984, 165). Sometimes management requires a worker to train his own white-collar supervisor, something that is especially resented by workers. Sometimes a worker is offered a supervisory position. In this case he loses his union membership and protection and is put in a position to discipline other workers. For this reason some of these positions go begging (Halle 1984, 157).

Because many manufacturing processes cannot be shut off after eight hours, factories employ men on shifts. The same is true for those employed in 24-hour shopping centers, convenience stores and janitorial services. This is very disruptive to family and social life and disturbs their bodies (Halle 1984, 81). If both husband and wife work, they may elect to work different shifts so as to share child care and household chores. In these homes the only time when the couple can enjoy each other's company is on Sunday. The rest of the week they are by themselves or only meet "on the run." Those men who have a mortgage, children and a wife who does not work take on as much overtime as they can, also limiting the amount of time they can spend with the family (Halle 1984, 43).

Blue-collar workers live with a considerable amount of insecurity. In a 1971 University of Michigan survey 28 percent had no medical or hospital coverage. Thirty-eight percent had no life-insurance while 39 percent were not enrolled in a pension plan. They try to have at least one member of the family work at a company that provides medical insurance. More than other workers they are dependent upon physical health and strength to perform their duties. Workers are too affluent to receive government subsidies for food, medical or day care centers, but not well off enough to secure their property through savings and investments. They are the first to feel the effects of unemployment during a recession (Lasson 1971, 6-8).

In relation to leisure activities there are two types of workers: those who spend a lot of time in an all-male environment at a tavern or in sports, both participant and spectator; and those who shun the bars and spend most of their leisure time at home with their families (Halle

1984, 44). Besides sports, many men invest almost all of their free time in remodeling and improving their home, which is their chief investment. To do this, workers help each other at specialized jobs, borrow tools and buy and swap new and used materials (Halle 1984, 43).

The "working man" is central to the blue-collar man's image of him-self (Halle 1984, xvii). He does "real" work, with his hands. Others literally do not work. Big business men don't work. They hire people who do (Halle 1984, 205). People on welfare don't want to work. They are seen as lazy and parasitic (LeMasters 1975, 179). Factory workers describe their work as making "an honest living" rather than "shuffling papers" or earning a living "with your mouth" (LeMasters 1975, 24).

Few workers did well in school and were generally classified as nonacademic. For most of them "school was a period when their self-esteem was under continual attack" (1984, 49). The most frequent way that the men accounted for their failure in school was to blame teachers and the curriculum which was judged to be irrelevant to their interest or needs (Halle 1984, 49).

Several white-collar professions were especially looked at with mistrust and hostility: the lawyer, doctor, teacher and union leader. The lawyer charges exorbitant fees when the workers are going through tough situations like divorce or filing accident claims. Doctors, too, charge huge fees, misdiagnose illnesses and enjoy the use of privileged parking areas. Teachers remind the worker of his own sad experience in school and are seen as the fault for his own children's problems with study. Further, workers see themselves as paying the teacher's salaries through property taxes, thus hurting their own standard of living (Halle 1984, 208). Most workers value the union for the job security it provides, but they are completely cynical in their distrust of white-collar union leaders whom they feel work in collusion with management (LeMasters 1975, 34). Housing encompasses trailer homes, older frame houses of pre-World War II construction, apartment complexes or row houses, prefab modular homes and the more modest suburban homes.

Family Life and Sexual Mores

David Halle found that among the workers that he studied 35 percent were happy to be married and spoke highly of their wives. Many of these credited their wives for rescuing them from a wild life-style. Twenty-five percent had mixed feelings, some having been on the verge of divorce. For the remaining 40 percent relations with their wives were a source of considerable frustration and anger (1984, 55).

Family and marital happiness was directly related to how the men spent their off-work time. Those happily married spent most of their free time with their families. In her study on the working woman Ellen Rosen found that her happiness in marriage was not enhanced by her husband's making more money, but by his helping her with household chores (1987, 108). Those blue-collar workers who reported a high level of conflict in the home tended to spend a great deal of time drinking, gambling, or playing pool with their male buddies at the tavern or in immersing themselves in sports activities like hunting or fishing. For the wife a working man's time spent with his buddies was a pure loss, unlike the pattern among white-collar men where outside time spent with others could frequently enhance a career (Halle 1984, 56-58; LeMasters 1975, 45).

A macho self-image was at the heart of much marital discontent. Except for sex--understood as physical relief of passion, not an expression of tenderness and love--these men found women and women's interests dull and uninteresting (LeMasters 1975, 94-97). For them the woman's place was in the home with the children, yet most were quite willing that the wife take outside employment to help with finances (LeMasters 1975; 37,84-85), as long as she knew "her place" (LeMasters 1975, 81).

Even though the workers want to leave the house and kids to the wife, they still wish to influence their sons to become like themselves. Sons are to learn how to defend themselves physically. Any boy who grows up a sissy is a failure. The son must also learn how to handle women. He ought to learn how to seduce them, so proving his prowess and domination. If he is resisted, it could mean that he will later be henpecked. Fathers want to get their boys out from under women teachers and into the athletic program of the school. The son must not become a sucker nor should he be spoiled, something that the wife is often seen as doing. Girls learn from their fathers that they are not to trust men. The fact that wives are socializing their sons to assume family roles while the husband is social-izing them for occupational, military and manly roles generates a good deal of conflict and misunderstanding between husband and wife (LeMasters 1975, 111-114).

To the wives this is an anachronistic view of the woman's role in marriage and society. With her husband gone most of the time, home life with kids and "soaps" is seen as a drag (LeMasters 1975, 42). Modern appliances have sped up many household chores thus making it possible for more women to take outside employment. In the market place women often work in a sexually mixed environment where they talk with other women, exchange home experiences and compare their men to the men with whom they work. They become more socially adept and deal in a world of ideas while their husbands tend to work in an all-male environment and work with things (LeMasters 1975, 46). They are attracted to the egalitarian marriage and seek companionship and partnership. Women who stay home to care for the family are very aware of this concept of marriage not shared by their husbands. They are introduced to it through TV serial shows and women's magazines (LeMasters 1975; 85,89-90). Women are also aware of their options. Outside employment gives them independence, leverage and power. They know what social welfare in both cash and other benefits is available to mothers of dependent children. Increasingly these factors make divorce a real, and even attractive possibility to many unhappy women (Ross & Sawhill 1975, 5). Faced with their wives' independent spirit, men are likely to seek out extra-marital affairs, especially with women who accept their concept of sex and marriage and are willing to be so dominated.

Another source of dissatisfaction for the wives is the gross and profane language of their blue-collar husbands (Halle 1984, 60). This is especially embarrassing if the wife has more formal education than her husband, works in a white-collar environment and attends church with the children.

When marital problems arise, the men are generally unwilling to seek counseling even if the wife is willing. Blue-collar workers have no respect for psychologists and psychiatrists to serve as counselors either for themselves or for their children in school. They call these representatives of the educated, white-collar culture "head shrinkers" (LeMasters 1975, 116). Because of their mistrust of professional counseling, blue-collar men go through divorce with only the informal counsel and support of male friends who share the same code of ethics and view of marriage.

How They View Religion

In Halle's study almost all of the workers were Catholics, most going to church at least once a month and about half going every Sunday. In spite of this, Halle wrote, "Their religious beliefs are fragmented and full of doubt and avoid many of the important issues in their lives. Their attitude toward the church and clergy falls far short of the respect often associated with religion, and their attitude toward God cannot be described in terms of awe and the sacred" (1984, 253). Even though one would expect God's representatives among them to be honored, disrespect for the clergy was widespread. Their complaints focused on financial greed and

sexual misbehavior (Halle 1984, 254). The men complained that the church was always asking for money (Halle 1984, 258-259).

Conversations about God and theology were rare (Halle 1984, 254). The problems of pain, sickness, accident and misfortune were never answered and God was often equated with luck. When asked about the afterlife one worker expressed himself this way, "I'm too busy to worry about that shit. . . . That garbage is the kind of thing you do when you're in a wheelchair" (Halle 1984, 261). Some got answers to religious questions from television shows. To show that he believed in life after death one worker said, "Like there was a movie on television about this woman. Her husband died and the spirit wouldn't leave. It haunted the house" (Halle 1984, 262). When Halle asked the men what God means or what God does, it provoked considerable perplexity and thought and proved difficult to answer. The workers did not see any way of drawing on God's power for their personal benefit (Halle 1984, 265-266).

None of the workers that Halle studied held to Christianity as a "primary cosmology," "a set of beliefs that a person considers to be true and that explain an aspect of the world that is of central relevance to that person" (Halle 1984, 267). Matters of primary relevance like the power brokers of America (rich businessmen and crooked politicians) who control the workers' position in society, medical science which explains and heals physical and mental ills and the body of practical knowledge related to their jobs (Halle 1984, 267) were not integrated into a Christian world-view. "Christian beliefs about life after death are of central relevance but for most workers are uncertain or untrue" while the set of beliefs about the birth and life of Jesus are considered true but have little or no relevance to their current lives (Halle 1984, 268). When talking about marital problems no worker ever mentioned the church's position on divorce, yet large numbers expressed fear of losing their property because of New Jersey's divorce law (Halle 1984, 268).

Many men were content to leave religion with the women and children. They were quite willing to let the church exist as long as it made no great demand on them. "One cannot imagine any of these men missing the first day of deer hunting because of some religious function, but then it is hard to imagine their missing the first day of deer hunting for any other reason either" (LeMasters 1975, 192).

LeMasters sees the tavern as a functional substitute for the church, playing the same role in a secular culture that the church once played in a religious society (1975, 146). At the Oasis Tavern the proprietor bar-tender played the role of benevolent father heading a large household and who knew a large amount of information about people in the town (1975; 11, 17). In this accepting environment the divorced and widowed found new mates (1975, 79). By sharing experiences and commenting on events of importance in their lives the workers reconfirmed their self-identity and provided emotional protection against an impersonal mass society (1975, 6).

Summary

1. American blue-collar and service workers have seen their buying power and relative status erode as they compete with third-world workers in a global market. Those working in smaller, highly competitive industries may not have health insurance, are the first to be laid off in an economic downturn, and are acquainted with and detest the welfare system.

2. Factory and service workers perform physical labor, often in dangerous factory settings. Their security depends upon good physical health. Their social lives are disrupted by shift work.

3. They are suspicious of people in managerial, professional and political positions. They believe that these people look out for themselves and disregard the rights, welfare and interests of the laboring class.

4. The male blue-collar worker lives in a macho world. He does "real" work, work with his hands. Others aren't really productive. He produces something concrete while others earn money by sitting down or by talking. Except for on the job, he's the boss, an outdoorsman, physical. Outside the realm of faith wives live in the shadow of "their men," either accepting it or resenting it.

5. Blue-collar and service workers generally use rough, profane and obscene language, are often blunt when they tell other "their mind," and would rather be fired than have their honor trampled upon. They do not easily share inner feelings to people of the managerial and professional class whom they do not trust.

6. The tavern provides an accepting social network for irreligious men while others are "home bodies." Family and God have saved many men from a dissipated life style. Many, like Americans of all classes, profess a belief in God but know little about Biblical teaching and do not orient their daily lives by it. The unchurched are quick to say that they would rather believe in God and live the way they please rather than go to church and be hypocrites. For much of blue-collar America the church is irrelevant and the basic tenets of Christianity are not clearly understood.

7. Because of their background, economic and educational level and work experience America's lower-income workers do not see reality in the same way that their middle-class fellow citizens do. Cross cultural, cross-class adaptation of the gospel, both in message and church organization, will have to be made in order for a middle-class congregation to plant a church that ministers to lower-income blue-collar and service workers.

The Need for Cross-cultural Evangelism

There is little disagreement among Brazilian Presbyterian leaders about the need and divine mandate for established churches to start satellite congregations. Working-class people make very little money and generally cannot own their own automobile. They must either take a bus or walk. While public transportation is both reliable and cheap by United States standards, a family of five or more members can hardly afford the burden of bus fees to attend worship twice on Sunday and participate in other mid-week activities. For purely economic reasons a neighborhood congregation within walking distance is a necessity if a church desires to minister to and conserve its working class families.

It is not readily recognized, however, that in order to minister to another social class, the church must use cross-cultural evangelistic principles. Middle-class people often are unaware of how a very limited income affects a family's participation in church programs. Few working-class families can buy the denominational publication. The expense of a holiday youth retreat at a vacation resort will cost too much. Scheduling is another problem. Young people who must work to support themselves or help supplement the family income are unable to spend three or four days at a retreat even if they could pay.

Although Brazilians are very sociable, love to be near each other and mix well, fellowship between members of different classes can be very stressful under certain circumstances. Imagine a working-class mother taking a year-old child without diapers to a prayer meeting held in the carpeted living room of a middle-class home. A child's accident could wet the mother's dress, soil an expensive sofa or rug and disrupt the meeting. To avoid such humiliation, poor mothers are unlikely to attend a meeting in the home of someone belonging to a higher class.

It would be wonderful if the unity of the body of Christ could be expressed across class lines, but separate congregations are necessary if members of the working class are to develop their gifts for worship and ministry. In a middle-class church they will never have a chance to preach (Elders in the Presbyterian Church are allowed to preach with the pastor's permission) because they "slaughter" the Portuguese language. Once an educated Brazilian heard a "we was believin' . . ." from an uneducated person leading a meeting, he probably would not hear anything more. A person with a four-year, primary education would not be able to teach a Sunday School class having more highly educated youth or professional people. A man could very well be a spiritual giant, have a pastoral heart and become a leader of a congregation among his own people, but be only a spare body taking up space in a predominately middle-class church.

Cultural differences that would lead a church to start satellite congregation might be as subtle as an uncomfortable feeling when one is in strange surroundings. In Bauru, Sa~o Paulo State we worked in some of the working-class neighborhoods in cooperation with the oldest, largest and wealthiest Presbyterian Church. Elders or deacons of that church were appointed to serve on the steering committees of the satellite congregations and involve themselves in their ministry. Some accepted the job as if it were penance and couldn't wait for the year to end. Others gingerly and dutifully applied themselves for Christ's sake, and after about a year could sincerely say that they loved the work. Some know-it-all, middle-class volunteers (none were elders) were rebuffed or finally gave up when their ideas were not accepted or followed. People can live in the same country, in the same city and speak the same language and yet feel like a foreigner among another class of people. Courageous, self-confident souls can overcome such

obstacles, but most people cannot. What is needed are a few people with the Spirit of Pentecost and a willingness to cross a cultural, linguistic, class or socioeconomic barrier to bear witness to the saving grace of Christ (Acts 1:8). In many ways the Presbyterian Church of Brazil is facing the same challenge that the Christian Reformed Church is in North America. It is an educated Christian elite who have the call to evangelize the less enlightened masses in her environment.

McGavran writes, "Men like to become Christians without crossing racial, linguistic, or class barriers" (1970, 198). Cross-cultural evangelism implies that the burden of crossing a racial, linguistic or class barrier belongs to the missionary or Christian witness and not to the prospective convert or target population. The spirit of witness is the spirit that recognizes cultural differences and adapts to them in order to bring the gospel. Eventually that will result in a unity of faith where men of the different classes can praise God together and understand each other.

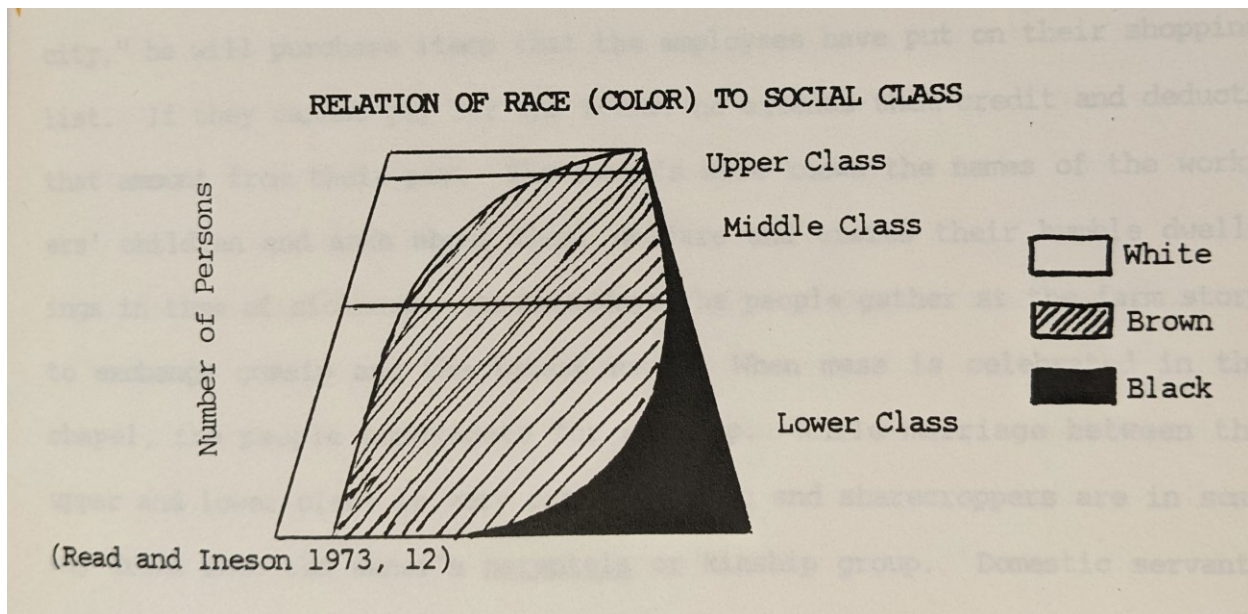
The Cultural Origins of the Brazilian Working Class

The Brazilian working class has its roots in the social structure established by the Portuguese during the colonial period (1500 - 1822). The first Brazilians were Portuguese soldiers, mercenaries from other European countries, adventurers and exiles. Most of the exiles were common criminals of the worst sort. In the absence of Portuguese women these men found wives among the indigenous peoples. Low-class Portuguese and Portuguese-Indian mestiços (mixed breeds) came to form the core of peasants, sharecroppers, hired hands and soldiers.

About the middle of the sixteenth century men from the Portuguese nobility and their families arrived to establish sugar-producing plantations. In time the importance and profitability of sugar declined and the land-owning class involved itself in cattle, gold mining, and then coffee by the early nineteenth century. The Portuguese crown and then the nineteenth-century Brazilian monarchy ruled the country through these landholding families. While the landowner often had mulatto children as a result of liaisons with slave women, he and his wife, the white senhora, "would not hear of marriage except between ethnic, social, and economic equals" (Freyre 1963, 101). This effectively kept the landholding elite racially pure. The owner's mulatto children, nonetheless, were often freed from slavery, became slave overseers or were given an education. Some entered the clergy while others played important roles in the government or became well-known writers (Freyre 1963, 368-74).

These Portuguese-Brazilian landowners depended upon slaves to provide the manpower for their enterprises. They organized armed bands of adventurers and mixed breeds to explore for gold, lay claim to more land and capture Indians who would be sold into slavery. Three hundred thousand were enslaved in this manner between 1619 and the end of the seventeenth century (Mazzolenis 1983; 8,9). The indigenous peoples often did not bear up under slave labor, so land owners increasingly turned to the African slave trade to supply their need for workers. From 1550 to the abolition of slavery in 1888 Roberto Simonsen estimates that 3.3 million Africans were brought into the country (1937, 205). During colonial times slaves, mostly African, formed the most important, stable segment of the laboring class.

Even today there is a fairly strong correlation between race and social class. The landed gentry and the traditional upper class came from Caucasoid ancestry. Slaves, peasants, manual workers and the landowner's other dependents, on the other hand, came from Negroid, Amerindian or mixed ancestry. "In modern Brazil, the newly formed classes and social segments continue to have racial overtones. In general, as one moves down the social hierarchy, the number of racially mixed and otherwise nonwhite individuals gradually increases" (Wagley 1971, 121). At no point, however, does one encounter a racially homogeneous group.



Traditionally "there were only two social classes in Brazil: an upper class consisting of landowners, merchants, professionals, government officials and bureaucrats, and a lower class of manual laborers and artisans. The upper class consisted of patro~es (employers), while the lower class included their extrafamilial dependents--household servants, field hands, sharecroppers, and other employees" (Wagley 1971, 93).

Up to the 1970s in rural areas and small towns the relationship between the upper and the lower classes has been that of patron-client, a personal, exploitive and paternalistic bond between employer and worker, landlord and tenant, creditor and debtor. In many cases the large land owner is simultaneously employer, landlord and creditor to those who live on his land, till his soil for shares or work for him. In the absence of farm labor legislation this system gives the worker a form of social security when sickness or hard times strike (Wagley 1971, 98-99).

In some of the communities of northern Brazil both the upper and lower classes form tight-knit communities. Servants and laborers pay all due respect to the landowner and his family. When the owner goes to "the city," he will purchase items that the employees have put on their shopping list. If they cannot pay for the items, he extends them credit and deducts that amount from their pay. The owner's wife knows the names of the workers' children and asks about their welfare and visits their humble dwellings in time of sickness. On Saturdays the people gather at the farm store to exchange gossip and the latest news. When mass is celebrated in the chapel, the people congregate for worship. While marriage between the upper and lower class is very rare, laborers and sharecroppers are in some way drawn into the owner's parentela or kinship group. Domestic servants can be the children of a former generation of domestic servants. A widespread custom of taking filhos de cria~ao (children to raise) from the lower classes is still practiced. These serve partly as servants and partly as children. Often the landowner and his wife become the godparents of their workers' children at baptism, confirmation or marriage (Wagley 1971, 171-172). On his own birthday and on Christmas Eve the owner organizes a festival for all the workers. "Under these patriarchal conditions it was rare for a worker to leave a plantation and seek work elsewhere" (Wagley 1971, 100).

As long as the plantation remained stable and productive, the patron-client relationship served the interests of both the upper and lower classes. In the case of the coffee plantations in the South, however, the soil was depleted soon after the land was cleared. In many cases the

landowner abandoned coffee for cattle-raising. Since the cattle industry is much less labor intensive, the laborer and sharecropper were forced to move on, either to clear land for another patrão or move to the city. At other times drought and deep poverty forced people off the plantation. At these times not even the owner's goodwill would be able to keep his workers on the land. With rain and the return of prosperity, some of the workers would leave city employment and go back to the patrão and the home and way of life they so much love.

This traditional class system has been under attack starting with the dictatorship of Getulio Vargas (1930-45, 1951-54) and accelerating after the Second World War. With a glut of coffee on the world market coffee barons and landowners turned to less labor-intensive agriculture, like cattle raising, or channeled their capital into urban industry. The landowners were no longer kindly disposed towards the surplus labor force (Curry 1968, 93) which had nowhere to go but to the cities. Populist dictator (Mazzolenis 1982/83; 29, 83) Getulio Vargas gained support of the working masses by instituting labor legislation that basically is still in place today. He created the Ministry of Labor, Industry and Commerce, decreed that two-thirds of the employees of all foreign firms must be born Brazilians, created a separate labor court to deal with labor-relation conflicts, issued a professional identification booklet, reduced the working day to eight hours, guaranteed a paid weekly day of rest, fifteen days of a yearly paid vacation and a minimum salary (Young 1967, 91). The central government with Vargas as president took over the role in the life of the urban proletariat that the patriarchal landed gentry played in the life of farm laborer or sharecropper.

The paternalistic aristocratic family plantation is rapidly becoming a thing of the past. Mechanization has taken over much of agricultural production. Upper-class families may pool resources to form a corporation and hire managers who operate the land as a factory or industry. A time-clock is installed and laborers are paid according to the norms of current labor legislation. Trucks or buses are sent to the nearest town or city to pick up field workers at their homes early in the morning and bring them back at the end of the day. When seasonal work has ended, the workers are laid off and given severance pay if it is due. The personal relationship and community ties between the upper and lower classes is coming to an end and is being replaced by impersonal labor-management agreements that must conform to the government's labor legislation (Wagley 1971, 103-5; Realidade 1972, 101-5). The protection and safety net provided by the association with a wealthy patrão is being replaced by socialized medicine and the government pension plan.

It is important to realize that the social origins of traditional, non-Pentecostal, mainline Protestantism in Brazil have their roots in the incipient middle class of the nineteenth century while Pentecostalism took root starting in the early twentieth century among the proletariat. Culturally the incipient middle class identified with the aspirations and values of the upper class. It was composed of the petty bourgeoisie that engaged in commerce, handicraft and small-scale manufacturing, administrative bureaucrats, intellectuals, clergy, members of the liberal professions and lesser military officers. These were joined by Iberian and Italian indentured servants who earned their freedom and along with other Brazilians opened new lands for agriculture in the interior of Espírito Santo, Minas Gerais and other southern states. The incipient middle-class of the nineteenth century was attracted to the Positivist ideas coming from France and the United States (Frase 1975, 71-72).

In this segment of society small, independent landowners were the most receptive to the evangelical message of North American missionaries. There was a scarcity of priests in rural areas where Catholicism was under the patronage of the large landowners. Economically frustrated and politically marginalized by the elite, the small landowners were open to a new message. Being property owners, they also had enough wealth to put up church buildings and maintain a Protestant clergy. They had enough independence to prevail in an often hostile, all-Catholic environment (Willems 1967, 28).

Besides their controlling of most of Brazil's wealth, the upper and middle classes pride themselves on their "pure," white, European ethnic lineage. They value education and learning and use it to maintain their position in society. They are culturally trained and conditioned to assume positions of rule, management, administration and direction over the lives of those in the lower classes, and they disdain manual labor.

Working-Class Demographics

Brazil has an estimated 1990 population of about 150 million people (IBGE 1985; 74, 76). How many of these belong to the working class? Social origin, race, occupation and income all influence an individual's class standing. Nevertheless salary is a fairly accurate method to determine this figure since the correlation between occupation, income and social class is quite strong. Because of ever spiraling inflation wages, pensions, and commodities are indexed. People calculate their earnings and purchasing power by the number of "minimum salaries" they receive. Under the presidency of Getulio Vargas a minimum salary was calculated as that salary which a family of four needed to buy the basic necessities to maintain life. That value has eroded to the point where a minimum salary was worth only about \$60 in 1986 (Vesilind 1987, 352). The upper class makes 20 or more salaries (\$1,200 or more) per month and comprises 1.4 percent of the population. Members of the middle class earn from five to 20 salaries a month (\$300 - \$1,200) and make up 11.7 percent of the population. Those making from three to five salaries may belong to the lower ranks of the middle or white-collar class or the upper end of the lower, blue-collar class. Truck drivers and skilled factory workers would fit in this group along with bank tellers and elementary school teachers. This group comprises 9.7 percent of Brazil's workers. Those making three salaries or less make up 77.2 percent of the labor force (IBGE 1985, 168). In short, about 82 percent of the population belongs to the working class of rural and urban workers.

Where does the laboring man live and work? Predominately in urban areas. Sixty-seven percent of the population lived in urban areas in 1980 and if the rural-urban rate of change in the eighties continued at the same pace as it did since 1950, that percentage is about 80 percent today (IBGE 1985; 78, 146).

A significant part of the labor force is made up of women. In 1980 thirty-six percent of all women above ten years of age are gainfully employed comprising 27 percent of the total work force. For urban residents eight percent of the girls ten to fourteen years of age were counted as earning some income. That jumped to 37 percent of those in the fifteen-to-nineteen age bracket. About one half of the women aged twenty to forty were gainfully employed. After age forty the percentage of women in the work force drops roughly about ten percent for each decade of increasing age (IBGE 1985, 162-165).

The following table lists the types of activities engaged in by men and women, irrespective of income or social class (IBGE 1985, 163):

MEN		WOMEN
35.5 %	Agriculture, farm labor & fishing	14 %
16.5 %	Manufacturing	15 %
10 %	Construction and building trades	0.5 %
9.5 %	Service industry	33 %
9.5 %	Commerce	9 %
5 %	Transportation	1 %
4 %	Public administration	3 %
3 %	Social service	17.5 %
7 %	Other	7 %

From this table it can be seen that traditional male-female roles continue to dominate the culture. Men predominate in jobs requiring strong physical labor like agriculture, the construction and building trades and transportation. Women fill clerical positions and jobs that require nurturing and caring roles. Manufacturing, commerce and public administration are more egalitarian.

The Working-Class World Described

Like their North-American counterparts, Brazilian employees work with their hands, but even more so. To a much greater degree North Americans use tools to increase a worker's productivity. Because manual labor is extremely cheap, it does not pay for the employer to buy expensive mechanical, hydraulic or electrically powered tools, especially if the employee is ill equipped to run them.

Manual labor is despised by those in the upper and middle classes, but almost everyone has someone they can look down on. Economically clerks and salesmen may even earn less than skilled carpenters, masons or truck drivers, but they would consider themselves somewhat better because they are involved in "clean" work. Truck drivers don't load and unload cargo. Masons don't mix mortar, which belongs to his "servant," the hod carrier. And everyone who is gainfully employed making an honest living can look down on the beggar and the drunk in the gutter.

Labor legislation provides for a pension upon retirement or in case of disability, severance pay upon losing a job. There is health insurance coverage for all who have a contract registered in their labor identification booklet. But there is no government welfare or unemployment compensation. Hunger is often but a pay check away. Those in the worst situation are maids, baby sitters, and manual laborers who take work by the job, like those who load and unload trucks. Some days they earn good money while on others they just wait around. Some workers, like the newly emancipated slaves of the late nineteenth century, buy leisure. They work hard and make good money, get drunk, buy what they need and "hang around" until the cupboards are bare. Then they're out looking for work again.

During the military regime that lasted from 1964 to 1985 the government contracted enormous debts with foreign banks and accumulated huge trade deficits because of oil imports. The country was able to build up its infrastructure tremendously with the construction of roads, dams, and electric and telephone networks. It transformed itself from a monoculture (coffee) agricultural nation to a predominately urban, industrial country with a diversified, mechanized agriculture. But the debts have come home and the present generation is left to pay the bill. Workers are not enjoying a rising standard of living as in the early years of the military regime. The buying power of the minimum salary has gone down and people must work harder and longer to make it. One morning in August of 1990 on a 350-kilometer stretch of freeway I saw two semi-trucks that ran off the road and an accident where one truck rear-ended another. All three accidents certainly were caused by overworked drivers sleeping at the wheel.

Most children of working-class parents get a primary education that goes through the first four grades. After that many drop out because children start working as delivery boys, maids, etc. to "learn how to make a living" and to contribute towards their own support by augmenting the family income. This is an extension of rural farm life where the number of hands working in the field determined the amount of well-being and prosperity that the family enjoyed.

The corner bar is a characteristic feature of every working-class neighborhood. It is here that the men have a drink of rum on their way home from work and catch up on the latest news. Like American convenience stores the bar usually sells some groceries, lottery tickets, candy and cigarettes. And it is here that the unemployed and the alcoholics congregate. Here tempers flare

and violence can erupt. Like its North American counterpart, the bar functions socially like a secular church where men affirm their masculinity and drown out their troubles.

Rural migrants have tremendous social adjustments to make when coming to the city. They can generally count on family or friends who have paved the way for their coming. These provide a place to stay, help in getting a job and sincere advice to help make adjusting to the new world easier. Nonetheless the cultural adjustment is enormous. Instead of a personal relationship with the patrão, the worker must now deal with an impersonal corporation that operates through a foreman who is unconcerned with the worker's personal life and well-being. When the family comes to the city, the children go to school and watch television where they learn to be disrespectful. They become a financial burden instead of an asset and they seem to know more than their parents and are not afraid to let them know it. They question the father's authority. And he does not have enough education to know what is happening. From an almost medieval position as a landed serf, dependent upon a patriarchal landowner, he is catapulted into urban individualism and self-reliance. From cultivating the land with a mule, he suddenly finds himself on a bus in the gridlock traffic of a city with millions of inhabitants. Miraculously by far the greatest number adjust well and would never return. They find the rural life totally devoid of interest or excitement.

Shift work is not as common in Brazil as it is in the United States, except for large multinational corporations. Even cities of up to a million inhabitants practically shut down from midnight to 5:00 a.m. and on Sundays.

Working-class families find places to live on the urban fringes where land is cheaper. Here they build their own homes as money becomes available. If they can put up the brick walls, cover it with a tile roof, and close the openings with doors or shutters, they will move in. Later they can put in the electricity, the plumbing, a floor, plaster and paint the walls, and install glass windows. During the military regime hundreds of thousands were able to buy small homes in government housing projects where the monthly payments were very low. That program ran into financial difficulty, so newcomers to the city more than ever find themselves a place to live in favelas (unregistered slum housing) along creek banks, steep hills, along highways and under overpasses.

Favela dwellings are made of building materials discarded at construction sites. Internal walls are often made of cardboard, a material that also serves to cover window holes. Some older favelas have had their property legalized and what once was a cardboard shack has turned into a two-story four-bedroom brick home. People in the newer favelas don't have it so good. Electricity is bought from the favela boss or from a homeowner bordering the slum. Pathways between huts often serve as open sewers.

While favelas serve as a way station for the upwardly mobile who are moving into the city, they also attract those who have hit bottom and have nowhere else to go--the unemployed, drug addicts and pushers, the criminal element and prostitutes. As a result they are often subject to police raids to check documents, confiscate guns and round up wanted criminals (Pedrosa 1990, 4). Those who are able leave the slum do so as soon as possible to buy a legally registered lot on which to build their own home.

In a foundational study on favelas in Rio de Janeiro Janice Perlman refutes the myth that favela communities are a "disorderly agglomeration of unemployed loafers, abandoned women and children, thieves, drunks and prostitutes" (1976, 15). Over ninety percent belonged to a nuclear family. Another myth is that the favelas are filled with crime. She writes,

I can make two points about crime within the favela itself. First, many favelados have televisions, radios, and bicycles and leave their barracos [shacks] relatively open during much of the time. Yet there is little complaint of robbery. Second, despite the fact that taxi drivers were afraid to drop me off even at the foot of the favela, and that most Cariocas [residents of Rio] could simply not believe I was

living in the favelas, I felt safer walking around the favela at night, and living there, than I ever had in Cambridge or New York. (1976, 135-6),

Family and Sex Mores

Male-female and husband-wife roles are similar to the other classes of Brazil and also similar to other Latin American countries. Prevalent is a double sex standard, where men engage in premarital and extra-marital affairs while the woman is expected to be a virgin before marriage and a faithful wife and mother after marriage. Men do not involve themselves with housework. That is the realm of the mother and girls. The Virgin Mary is the protector and ideal of Catholic wives and mothers. Most Catholic men are content to leave religion to the wife and children. The church is seen as a haven for the suffering wife and mother and the defender of the institution of marriage. In traditional Roman Catholicism men have but an emasculated Lord hanging on a cross as a male role model while women are attracted to a living, tender, warm, receptive and glorious Virgin (Nida 1974, 17).

Brazil did not have a divorce law until sometime in the late 1970s or early 1980s. A divorce goes into effect after a three-year legal separation. Because the process involves lawyers and the court, it is quite expensive and out of the reach of the lower classes. Concubinage is a common arrangement for people who have severed marital ties. Middle and upper-class married men often have a darker-skinned lover from the lower class whom they maintain along with any children that are produced from the relationship.

Religion among the Working Class

Every major Brazilian religion has its "lower" form. Official Roman Catholicism is adhered to by the upper classes while Folk Catholicism, filled with the worship of the images of saints and pilgrimages to shrines, is associated with the lower classes. Kardecism, an intellectual spiritualism, is predominately middle-class while Quimbanda worships African deities and is associated with blacks and the lower classes. Umbanda is a middle-class refinement of the latter that also is attracting the lower classes. Traditional Protestantism, the mainline denominations founded by missionaries, finds its greatest following among members of the middle-class while Pentecostalism, growing at twice the rate of the overall population, is undoubtedly the most vigorous and widely represented Christian expression among the lower classes (Maier 1991, 69).

Mainline Protestantism came to Brazil in the latter part of the nineteenth century, when over ninety percent of the people lived in rural areas. It took root among members of the incipient middle class, especially among small landowners. Pentecostalism arrived in 1910 and penetrated the rural and urban poor. As long as these people were in subjection to the landed aristocracy, Pentecostalism had little more success than traditional Protestantism. However, the reforms initiated in the Vargas Era provided for the basic welfare of the urban masses. Basic social and labor guarantees substituted the paternal care formerly provided by the landowner, but without imposition of the landowner's religion. When peasants moved to the cities, they were free to make their own choices. Afro-Brazilian cults came out into the open with increasing prominence (Bastide 1971, 96). And Protestantism, especially its Pentecostal variety, attracted an increasingly larger number of adherents. This was especially true after the Second World War when rapid industrialization and urbanization began to revolutionize the Brazilian landscape (Read 1965, 177).

Liberation theology which comes to its most popular expression in the Catholic Church's "option for the poor" and structurally in ecclesial base communities, seems unable to define the needs of the poor as the poor would define them (Stoll 1990, 317). Scholarly liberation theologians define the needs of the poor as material, social and political. In their view the challenge is to organize the poor to fight for broad social reform, but the poor have opted for supernaturalism as expressed in Umbanda or in Pentecostalism. Henrique Mafra Caldeira de Andrada, head of the Protestant program at Rio de Janeiro's Institute of Religious Studies, thinks that advocates of the social gospel failed to realize that "these people were hungry for more than just food" (Maier 1991, 69). Apparently, liberation theology is an expression of scholarly values and its attempted imposition upon the poor. The striking thing about Pentecostal church growth is that "It's a bottom-up thing, spreading spontaneously among the poor rather than coming down to them from privileged intellectuals" (Marcom 1990, 66).

The religious cleavage between the classes is so great that some traditional Protestants openly say that Pentecostal tongue-speaking, exorcism and emotionalism are the work of the devil. To the serious Catholic Folk Catholicism is filled with superstition and old-wives tales. Upper-class Spiritists who invoke the dead or only good spirits charge that those in the African cult work with demons and lower spirits. There is considerable embarrassment among the upper classes at the religious expression of the lower, working class. Since the openness of Vatican II many educated Catholics have a good word to say about Presbyterians and Methodists. "At least they have serious teaching and good order and aren't like those fanatical Pentecostals."

In my work in lower-class neighborhoods, I have picked up a sense of alienation with middle-class religion. Answering questions in a community survey young Catholic mothers said they didn't go to mass because a priest publicly reprimanded a mother with a crying child. Many Brazilians, especially among the lower classes, find traditional Protestant worship services dull and uninteresting.

Summary

1. The traditional class structure of Brazil is breaking down, but the cleavage between the elitist segment of the population and the masses is still a prominent part of society. Mission-minded people in traditional, mostly middle-class Protestant churches must cross cultural barriers created by class differences in order to start churches in working-class neighborhoods.

2. The growth of industry in urban areas, the transformation of agriculture through mechanization and a move to less labor-intensive crops have produced enormous urban growth since the Second World War.

3. The move of rural peasants from rural areas to urban centers and the enactment of labor legislation has given the masses the opportunity to make their own choices. There is unparalleled opportunity to preach the gospel to the poor in Brazil. The church should be sending workers, both clergy and mission-minded laymen, into the harvest rather than spending an inordinate amount of energy on itself.

4. Ignoring the religious traditions of the elite and middle-class, the working poor are turning increasingly to supernatural, emotional religion--Christian Pentecostalism and Spiritist Umbanda. Evangelization and church planting in working-class neighborhoods brings traditional Protestants into competition with these groups. Success depends more upon love, faith, dedication and zeal for the Lord than on intellectual and material resources. As we will see later, the educated sophistication and financial resources of the sponsoring church can be more of a hindrance than an asset.

CHAPTER 3 – BRAZIL’S RELIGIOUS FERMENT AMONG BRAZIL’S WORKING CLASS

Pentecostalism is Brazil's fastest growing Evangelical group. It is gaining members from all walks of life and competing successfully for the allegiance of the masses. Its growth, instead of plateauing as some had predicted, is continuing to accelerated and gain momentum. It is principally from this movement that we can learn several principles of church growth that can be applied to evangelism and church planting among North American low-paid blue collar and service sector workers.

It would be a mistake, however, to conclude that just because Pentecostals are successful in Brazil, their methods can be imported in toto to North America and be equally successful. Cultural conditions and historical traditions are different and these require different doctrinal emphases and evangelistic strategies. One thing is certain, however: Pentecostals are reaching the impoverished working class of Brazil and they are doing so successfully. What is their secret? What are some of the transcultural principles that can be adopted in North America?

Before describing the Pentecostal movement (Chapters 4 and 5) and then traditional Protestant outreach (Chapters 6 and 7) I will briefly sketch the religious context in which they minister. Brazilian Pentecostals do not witness in a vacuum. Other religious currents swirl around them. In this chapter we will look at Umbanda, the Afro-Brazilian spiritist cult and the Catholic Church which is struggling to maintain its influence and standing and keep the allegiance of the people. Conclusions can be drawn about the effectiveness of their approaches and these will reinforce the lessons that will be learned from the Pentecostals.

Umbanda

Umbanda is a modern, dynamic, urban religion that has proliferated among the working class. It started in the 1920s by one or more middle-class military officers in the city of Rio de Janeiro (Bastide 1978, 319; Brown 1986, 38). Umbanda is a syncretistic Brazilian religion that combines three elements: 1. French Kardecist spiritualism that found a following among elements of the nineteenth century incipient middle-class; 2. African animism that renewed itself among the slave population through three centuries of forced immigration; and 3. Folk Catholicism, a superstitious Christianity largely untouched by the spirit of the Reformation and brought by colonists of Portuguese nobility.

Kardecism taught that an individual's spirit inevitably evolved from a state of ignorance and darkness to one of enlightenment in the astral sphere beginning with a series of earthly incarnations. A spirit's progress, however, is retarded by wrongdoing, which must be expiated in a future reincarnation at a lower social level, with physical or mental deficiencies or through a life of suffering (Brown 1986, 17-19; 1979, 284). Kardecism also taught that consultation with the enlightened spirits of the dead through mediums helped less developed human spirits gain illumination and help in their spiritual evolution.

The African animism provided Umbanda with its world view. A benign but distant Creator who presides over the astral spirit world inhabited by spirits of light--pure spirits such as angels, archangels, cherubim and seraphim, with the orixás and Catholic saints at the highest level. Lesser spirits, those of the dead, reside near the earth (Dann 1979, 211) and visit the earth through mediums. The underworld is a negative, dark mirror of the astral realm, inhabited by exus (demons) and organized like the astral realm into legions, phalanxes and lines (Brown 1986, 54-59). Supernatural fluids or spiritual emanations surround everyone's body and affect one's well-being. Good spirits emit good fluids and evil, darkened spirits emit harmful ones. Harmful

fluids can cause men to shrink towards the earth, like in states of depression, and must be neutralized through proper ritual (Bastide 1978, 329; Brown 1986, 54-59; Pressel 1973, 287).

The spirits who descend to earth and possess humans are the spirits of the dead, who need to evolve further towards eternal glory. Spirits evolve through works of charity, defined as helping needy, suffering human spirits through spiritual counsel given through possessed mediums. Four principle types of spirits possess mediums and clients at Umbanda sessions: 1. caboclos, the spirits of Brazilian Indians--men and women at the height of their powers, vain, proud, arrogant, authoritarian, aggressive, intelligent, and talented--who use their powers to help people succeed; 2. pretos velhos (old blacks), the spirits of dead African slaves--humble, subservient, good and loving, idealized "Uncle Toms"--who help people survive in a hostile environment through ingenuity, patience and stamina; 3. child spirits, who skip, roll and tumble through an Umbanda center when possessing people; and 4. exus (demons) who exhibit a base nature through cursing, off-color stories and can use their powers to break up marriages and crush business competition (Brown 1986: 65, 67-71, 91; Pressel 1973, 281-282).

Umbanda centers, as their houses of worship are called, proliferated and spread to the city of Sao Paulo and now are established in every state and regional urban center. In 1980 there were 1.5 million self-identified spiritists, probably active mediums (IBGE 1985, 74). One observer, Abra~o de Almeida, a leader of the Assemblies of God, estimated that up to fifty million or 40 percent of the population practice some form of spiritism even while they consider themselves Catholic (Unpublished speech 1983). Umbanda is largely an urban phenomenon (Pressel 1977, 334) and is concentrated especially in the industrial cities of the South. According to a survey of Umbanda centers in Rio de Janeiro only 22 percent of their adherents came from a rural area (Brown 1986, 132, 276).

Umbanda has penetrated every class of Brazilian society. Several modern-day presidents are known to have consulted mediums regularly. The middle-class has been especially influential, first in accepting Kardecism and then excising the "barbaric" elements (sorcery, black magic, and blood rituals) from the more African cults, and finally in the legalization and promotion of the movement (Brown 1986, 39-45). In spite of this middle-class influence every favela and working-class neighborhood has an Umbanda center within walking distance. Some centers are nothing more than the humble shack that the center's "chief" lives in. Many of the poor do not attend the center in their own neighborhood but prefer to consult with a "chief" medium whose center is in a middle-class neighborhood who is better able to meet their needs. Mediums, having submitted themselves to a minimum of seven years of training analagous to lay discipleship, are specialists who listen to clients' complaints, diagnose the cause, perform the required ritual, recommend additional treatment and give practical advice. There is a certain recognition that a medium's success in normal life is related to the type of counsel that he or she gives while being possessed by a spirit (Brown 1986; 96,11).

Centers can be started in a medium's home with some images and several other ritual items. The fact that only a few basic needs are required facilitates the proliferation of centers (Brown 1986, 109; Bastide 1978, 332). Most leaders retain their full-time employment and do not consider the center as an additional source of income (Brown 1986, 176). Umbanda leaders are highly committed and sacrificially give towards the maintenance of the center and the promotion of the Umbanda faith.

The main reason why people turn to Umbanda is to seek a solution to problems like illness, financial difficulty, family strife and mental depression. This is especially true considering that medical, social welfare and psychiatric care for the poor are precarious at best. The suffering individual will often be encouraged to consult with a medium at the advice of a spiritist friend who gives a testimony of how it helped him. A person who has made a consultation then tests the results. If a cure or solution is understood as a miracle, this helps reinforce belief in the spirits and fosters continued participation (Brown 1986, 94). Experiencing

spirit forces either by being possessed or by seeing mediums in a state of possession tends to reinforce the idea that the spirit world is real (Johnson 1978, 262).

A great number of those who attend a center do so only in times of need and never join as regular clients or as mediums. This large group of inactive participants has adopted Umbanda's world view and defends it in casual conversation. This is a significant step especially if the client has been disappointed with other religions (Johnson 1978, 261).

The patron-client relationship between supplicants and mediums and between the mediums and their chief explains a lot about how Umbanda controls its adherents. The patron spirit received by the chief holds a great amount of authority and power, being able to summon or dismiss lesser spirits and compel their obedience (Brown 1986, 177). Through mediumistic possession the patron spirit gives protection in exchange for homage and loyal support (Brown 1979, 297-298; 1986, 190).

The more talented mediums enter into competition with their chief as they vie for spiritual consultations. If a medium's prestige challenges the power of the chief, the chief's patron spirit will demand a consultation. In this consultation the medium will receive a new, special mission to leave the current center and found a new one (Brown 1986, 107). When a medium leaves on this type of mission, he or she will be taking a rather large number of clients along (Brown 1979, 297-298).

Growth Principles at Work in Umbanda

1. Spiritist mediums deal with felt needs like illnesses that doctors cannot cure, depression, stormy personal relationships, disobedient children, unfaithful husbands, unemployment and the like.

2. Umbanda dramatically involves the suppliant in symbolic rituals that lead him or her to have an experience with a supernatural entity. Non-material, non-scientific power is invoked to solve human problems.

3. A personal master-servant relationship is established between the medium and the client. If the client submits to the spirits, he or she will be trained for mediumship. Apprenticeship, discipleship training multiplies the "ministry."

4. Most centers are small, but whether small or large, each individual gets personal attention from his medium and possessing spirit. Every practicing believer has a "pastor" who cares for him.

5. Most mediums do not receive a salary. They belong to a multitude of lay or tent-making priesthood who have full access to the spirits.

6. Umbanda spreads through the preparation of mediums for service who start their own centers.

7. Centers can be started in humble dwellings, with simple furnishings and inexpensive images and paraphernalia.

Catholicism in Transition

Charles Wagley could write in 1971 that "A large portion of Brazilians are Catholics by tradition rather than by strong faith. What else would one be? To be a Brazilian is to be a Catholic" (Wagley 1971, 213). The growth and vitality of Umbanda and Pentecostalism have seriously challenged this assumption, so much so that the Vatican decided in 1984 to investigate the causes, including the possibility of these movements receiving aid from the United States C.I.A. (A Fé 1989, 55). Rapid social change and the religious ferment among the

masses have put the Catholic Church on the defensive. How can it stop the hemorrhage of people leaving for other religions that reject the Church's teaching and do not submit to its authority?

The growth of Umbanda spiritism and Pentecostal Protestantism give a new urgency to Catholic reform, but it would be unfair to say that competition from the "sects" was the primary cause. Internal dissatisfaction with traditional form and doctrine, a new openness to peoples of other faiths and to the Bible and a desire to minister to the needs of its own poor certainly were driving forces from within Catholicism that led to change. Change and reform in the Catholic Church are so profound that we can classify it as one of the new religious movements trying to win and assimilate the mass of traditional and largely nominal Catholics who still cling to popular religiosity.

Thomas Bruneau gives a clear summary of popular Catholicism, the faith carried to the new world by Portuguese colonists, and nurtured and handed down from generation to generation in the context of the home and kinship ties. In popular Catholicism:

The most important relationship is with the saints. . . . In order to control his environment the individual must deal with supernatural beings, and he thereby develops a personal relationship with one or more, depending on its supplicants particular needs and on the saint's specialization. This relationship includes the making of promises, the offering of novenas and benedictions, the staging of processions, and so forth, for the particular saint whose intervention is sought. The system of making promises to saints in return for the granting of a wish is basically a reciprocity relationship of the client/patron variety (Bruneau 1982, 26).

This faith was nurtured by the patriarchal, landowning families who received it as a trust from the Crown, which previously had received the right of patronage from the Pope to govern the Church and conduct its mission in the newly discovered lands (Latourette 1970, 160). The landowning family was simultaneously the center of social, political and religious life. The Crown and the Church exercised its authority over the mass of sharecroppers and slaves through the filial loyalty of the heads of these families. As long as Brazil was predominately rural (up to about 1965), this system was reasonably effective in satisfying the religious and social needs of the people. In rural areas and small towns, the relationship between the upper and lower classes was, and in some regions still is, that of patron-client, a personal, exploitive and paternalistic bond between employer and worker, landlord and tenant or creditor and debtor. In many cases the large land owner is simultaneously employer, landlord and creditor to those who live on his land, till his soil for shares or work for him. In the absence of farm labor legislation this system gave the worker a form of social security in times of sickness or through a poor harvest. In such times the patrao was the protector of the laborer and his family (Wagley 1971, 98-99).

Up into modern times in some of the communities of northern Brazil both the upper and lower classes form tight-knit communities. Servants and laborers live in their own housing on the farm and pay all due respect to the land owner and his family. When the owner or a member of his family goes to "the city," he will purchase items that his employees have put on their shopping list. If they cannot pay for the items, he will extend them credit and deduct that amount from their pay. The owner's wife will know the names of the workers' children and will ask about their well-fare and visit their humble dwellings in times of sickness. On Saturdays the people will gather at the farm store to exchange gossip and the latest news. When mass is celebrated in the chapel, the people congregate for worship. Marriage between the upper and lower classes is very rare, but laborers and share croppers are drawn into the owner's kinship group when they ask the patrão and his wife, the senhora to become godparents of their children at baptism, confirmation or marriage (Wagley 1971, 171-2).

Through colonial times and up until the end of the Brazilian imperial rule, the government was the patron of the Catholic faith and at the same time served the interests of the

landowning families. The owner's youngest son was often trained to be the plantation's chaplain or to administer the parish of a nearby village while the unmarried daughters were sent to the convent (Wagley 1971, 214). Concubinage was common. The priest as member of the landholding family and supported by it discharged his religious duties for its interests. Stanley Stein (1985, 138), quoting literature of the time (1850-1900), writes,

As a complement to supervision, to discipline, and to fear of corporal punishment, fazendeiros [land owners] hoped that the local priest, on visits to plantations of his parish, would use the sermon to "rehabilitate the Negro's condition, to consecrate his relations with his master, who would thereby no longer appear as proprietor or tyrant but rather as father, as a portrait of God, whom he should love and serve with the sacrifice of his toil and sweat."

The isolation of the plantation, the almost familial bonds between land owners and their slaves, workers, or sharecroppers and the continued indoctrination of the lower class through festivals, processions, saints' days and sacraments were powerful means to bring conformity to the Catholic faith as then understood. Protestantism and even Pentecostalism faced an impenetrable barrier in reaching the masses in subjugation to and dependence upon the landowning families. In the absence of labor legislation, the worker without a patrao was a man without a protector in time of need (Endrueit 1975, 22).

As the country moved from a rural to an urban population base, from an agrarian to an industrial-commercial economy and from government patronage of religion to a secular state, the Catholic Church found itself without the means to minister to and give meaning to every sector of the population. In the cities slaves and free negroes had opportunity to meet in brotherhoods, "nations" and at spiritist centers (Bastide 1971, 2:207). The slaves were freed in 1888 and a year later the Declaration of the Republic separated the Church from state patronage. No longer dependent upon the patronage of the government nor hindered by its interference the Vatican began to exert direct control over the teaching and life of the Brazilian Church. This was a time of revitalization of the Church. Concubinage was eliminated and ecclesiastical development was patterned after the European model (Bruneau 1982, 17).

Reform did not come easily. Fewer Brazilians were entering the priesthood. It was no longer to the financial interest of the land owner to provide a son for the priesthood and maintain him in the ministry if that son was removed from the land and sent by the Church to a city or far-away parish. Strict celibacy also has had a hard time making headway in a society where an integral part of manliness is sexual prowess. Up through the early 1980's two thirds of the order priests were foreigners (Bruneau 1982, 17). European priests, sent to supply the lack of Brazilian clergy, began to teach an ethically responsible Catholic orthodoxy in both parish and school. The middle and upper classes, well integrated in and served by the Church, made the adjustment and adopted the new form of the faith. Only 38 percent of the upper class pray to saints as compared with 74 percent of lower-class Catholics (Bruneau 1982, 37).

The lower classes did not fair so well. The native clergy tended to gravitate within the more prosperous sectors of society while the foreign clergy was left to carry the load of pastoral and missionary work among the rural and urban masses. Upper class children were often taught algebra and Latin by priests while many rural parishes remained vacant (Willems 1967, 42). As a result soil depletion and economic conditions fazendeiros moved to less labor intensive crops--from coffee to cattle, for instance--and looked upon the excess labor with hostility. Some of the coffee barons plowed their profits into banking, commerce and the nascent industrial sector. Unable to survive on the land many rural workers and peasants moved to the cities. There government labor legislation with its benefits served the secular function of being the material protector of the masses. There the working class was on its own and free to make an independent choice, either to humbly seek out churches where the middle and upper classes were well served or to opt for religious alternatives like Pentecostalism or Umbanda.

Trying to neutralize evangelicals, especially the Pentecostals, as competitors the Catholic Church adopted some of their ways, promoted reform and tried to fill the social and spiritual voids exploited by evangelicals. They started to promote Bible reading and train lay catechists. Both charismatic renewal and liberation theology infused Catholicism with new ideas and energy and may have blunted Protestant growth in some areas, but it also proved divisive because these movements challenged authority as traditionally understood (Stall 1990, 27). The Catholic Church of Brazil has solidly taken a stand to side with the poor and minister to their material, social and spiritual needs. The "poor and oppressed are the church's preferred target in an environment characterized by injustice and repression, and the tasks at hand are the reorientation and mobilization of the remaining resources of the church to assist in the liberation of the people" (Bruneau 1982, 75). It no longer automatically legitimizes the established order with its spiritual focus on the after-life (Ugalde 1990, 127). "Option for the Poor," the national pastoral plan of the Brazilian bishops from 1976-79, called for action in four priority areas: 1. the organization of Comunidades Eclesiais de Base (CEB's or Base Ecclesial Communities), small groups that meet to link faith and life in understanding and action; 2. political action to fight for human rights (This pastoral plan was elaborated when the country was ruled by a military regime that censored the press, restricted the political rights of the opposition, and abused the human rights of suspected individuals.); 3. the Workers' Pastoral to help organize laborers; and 4. a Pastoral to build community centers for neighborhoods on the periphery of the cities (Bruneau 1982, 91; Arns 1981, 12).

Bruneau writes, "It can be argued . . . that the active adoption of CEBs as a pastoral strategy is an indication of the extent of change in a particular diocese. The CEBs presuppose an opening up to the lower classes" (1982, 128). CEBs are small, face-to-face group communities of 10 to 30 individuals who regularly meet for various purposes. They are base, grass-roots communities due to the fact that they are composed and led by members of the working class and focus on their needs and interests as they see them. Nonetheless they are ecclesial, church sponsored and organized communities. They don't emerge spontaneously but are organized through the official sanction and leadership of parish priests and nuns. Over 80,000 CEBs had been organized in Brazil by 1980 (Libano 1980, 324).

In his book The Expectation of the Poor, Guillermo Cook gives a typology of Catholic CEBs in his thorough study of both Catholic and Protestant base communities in Latin America (1985, 79-81). Charismatic and evangelical leaning Catholics meet in Bible circles for study and reflection on the Scripture. They see the church as a historical community acting under Christ, the head of the Body, and focus their study on the book of Acts and the Pauline Epistles. They are the people of God trying to recover a prophetic koinonia. They celebrate the eucharist as well as study the word and their goal is to re-evangelization of the people in their community. It is Stoll's opinion that on the local level charismatic Catholics who embrace the evangelical principles of "devotion to the Bible, personal relationship with Christ and the priority of evangelism" are probably more influential than liberationists (1990, 30).

The second type is composed of people who are reactionary in their outlook and try to restore the church to its position of prestige and social control. These people, while recognizing the church as the people of God, look at Christ as the enthroned king of his church and cannot conceive of its existence apart from the clergy and hierarchy. Under the proper auspices liturgy is celebrated in homes as well as in the sanctuary. Scripture is interpreted through church tradition for the defense of the status quo. Those representatives of this mind set would use the CEB structure as a means to reestablish control over the masses of nominal Catholics.

The third type is closely identified with liberation theology. Through a process called conscientização (conscientization), a type of teaching elaborated by Paulo Freire (Hennelly 1990, 31-32), the poor and the peasants come to an awareness that traditional modes of life, existing structures and long-accepted, exploitive practices are not God-given or immutable. In other

words this process is designed to help the workers "cut themselves loose from the habit of thinking in terms of requesting personal favours from the locally powerful"; teach "them to formulate their own problems and find their own solutions without waiting for directives from above or outside"; and make them see that united they can "achieve much that was impossible to isolated individuals" (de Kadt 1970, 236-7). Biblical themes from the Exodus, Old Testament prophets and the Gospel are brought to bear upon concrete issues like land tenure, lack of public transportation, sanitation, and water supply (Brunaeu 1982, 131; Hennelly 1990, 35). The aim of these groups is to liberate the oppressed poor by prophetic diaconia, by organizing for the establishment of social justice and fighting for new socio-economic structures (Cook 1985, 80). These would identify themselves with Christ as the Suffering Servant, the One who is near them, the One allied with them in their struggle and the One who suffers in their tribulation.

Theological reflection by Brazilian liberation theologians places primary emphasis upon "prophetic contextualization" and "orthopraxis." Cook writes (1985, 124),

Unlike the functionalist contextualization of the gospel that is much in vogue in one stream of present-day North American Evangelicalism, the "prophetic contextualization" of the comunidades is highly dysfunctional for the dominant structures of Latin American society and for the international system that they represent. . . . In fact, this kind of contextualization is not even immediately functional for the grassroots communities themselves, because its consequence are often persecution and on occasion torture and death! The only functionality in the new structures that the CEBs strive to implement is their capacity to provide justice for those who have never known justice and hope for a better future in their lifetime.

Orthopraxis would not replace correct thinking and doctrine with error but it would give the primacy to right action, based on correction doctrine, rather than on correct thinking that is unrelated to life and action. As a result, the "anthropological, utopian, critical, and social elements of the gospel" are emphasized "over the ecclesiastical, factual, dogmatic, and personal dimensions of the faith" (Cook 1985, 124). Quoting Leonardo Boff Cook writes, "We know . . . that for Christ and for the primitive church the essential did not consist in the reduction of the message of Christ to systematic categories of intellectual comprehension but in creating new habits of acting and living in the world" (1985, 125).

There is no doubt that the Catholic Church of Brazil has given the most thought and has developed the broadest most well-rounded strategy to address the situation of the working class. Its strategy involves both Word and deed, theology and life, church and politics, the individual and society, and clergy and laity. It has devoted its resources to integrate into its life and ministry the 85 percent of the population that belong to the working class and the poor. Yet there is no way that the Catholic Church, traditionally understood as an ecclesiastical organization, can come out ahead in terms of church growth, understood as the number of people that are enfolded under its wings.

Many faithful, traditional Catholics, often members of the middle and upper classes, have difficulty accepting the changes in the church. For example, 18 percent of all Catholics do not agree with parishes that remove the images of saints (Bruneau 1982, 39). Others are disgruntled because most parishes now require preparatory courses for confirmation and marriage and refuse to bury nonpracticing Catholics. These ask, "If what we learned in our youth was divine, infallible, and immutable truth; what are we being taught today?" Traditionalist will seek out a priest or parish congenial to the way they were brought up or, not finding that, are apt to stop participating.

Further, the impoverished masses prefer to listen to evangelicals than to the rhetoric of liberation theologians (A Fé que Move 1990, 46). Pentecostalism is "a bottom-up thing, spreading spontaneously among the poor rather than coming down to them from privileged

intellectuals" (Marcom 1990, 66). Liberation Theology is a "vital creation of the oppositional culture of clergy and university," not necessarily that of the poor. It does not necessarily speak to the real, felt needs of the people who would much prefer stability and moderation to insecurity and extremism. Rather it originates in the crisis of the church and its attempt to recover its popular base (Stoll 1990, 312). Interestingly Bruneau observes that "it is in the middle class that religious and sociopolitical progressivism are most clearly associated" (1982, 119). Many of the poor have undergone conscientization and organized themselves in opposition to the powers that be only to experience failure, and even martyrdom. Religion has always been a refuge and sanctuary from oppression. Used as the vehicle of resistance and rebellion by liberation theology, it demanded life and death commitments from the people to be liberated. "Christianity is about sacrifice, of course, but it is not about putting other people on the line" (Stoll 1990, 313-314). Just one bitter, disillusioning experience is likely to drive the members to even deeper apathy and subjection (de Kadt 1970, 136). In the struggle against political oppression evangelical values are often lost. When anger lashes out charity towards Christian brothers is often the victim (Libano 1980, 336-7).

Rather than urge the poor on to political action, evangelicals appeal for a moral conversion to a disciplined life free from the clutches of immorality, gambling and alcohol; which translates into an immediate increase in wealth and health ("A Fé que Move" 1990, 48). Tangible results and personal fulfillment are stronger motivators than a continued and often unsuccessful fight against a self-serving bureaucratic system. As Rev. Nelson Fanini, Brazil's leading Baptist, put it, "The Catholic Church opted for the poor, but the poor opted for the Evangelicals" (Ostling 1991, 69). Stoll writes, "I want to suggest that viewing liberation theology as the key to religious and social reformation in Latin America may be a mistake" (1990, 10). Conversion to evangelical Protestantism and the gathering of believers into house churches and home Bible studies and prayer meetings may be far more widespread and incorporate many more people than do the CEBs of liberation theology. "From what I have seen of the contests between the two, born-again religion has the upper hand" (Stoll 1990, 308).

Bible circle CEBs, designed to satisfy the desire of the faithful for a more Biblical faith, often unwittingly are the doorway out of the Catholic Church. These groups are often started by an evangelical-leaning priest who is an inspiration to the members. After a period of time the priest is replaced by a more conservative, reactionary one who decides to clamp down on charismatic "excess" and on believers who vocally demand changes in the operation of the parish. A young male clerk at the Edicoes Paulinas Catholic bookstore in Sao Paulo told me in August of 1990 that a crisis of this nature in the life of a Bible study CEB will prompt its members to join an evangelical church where they have friends who hold similar beliefs and where their gifts and talents will be appreciated and used.

A practical purpose of Catholic CEBs is to provide for the pastoral needs of the people through lay leadership considering the paucity of clergy. At the same time these leaders are to serve as catalysts to bring to expression the "energies and faith already existent among the people" (Libano 1980, 325). Predictably, in some places the result has been a resurgence of spiritism (Bruneau 1982, 125) and popular Catholicism with its feasts, saints days, promises, processions, pilgrimages, etc. (Libano 1980, 326).

The opening of community centers, like the operation of hospitals and day-care centers lies almost entirely in the secular realm of life. The buildings are put up by public funds and their programs are run by "friends of the neighborhood" elected by the residents of the area. Evangelicals, spiritists and Catholics are all eligible for election and any group whether religious or secular can use the building if it receives permission from the directory. Programs ranging from adult education to dances to Pentecostal revivals can all be held there. Without a doubt a community center benefits a neighborhood but it is largely neutral as to the advancement of any

one religious group and can even be a negative influence if the dances under the influence of alcohol become disorderly, as is often the case.

In spite of the secularizing influence of modern technology and first-world movies and television programs, Brazilians and especially members of the working class are religious people. They are often superstitious and idolatrous, but almost everyone believes in God and his supernatural power, his ability to work wonders and his direct action in the lives and affairs of men. This power is tapped through secular means if one belongs to the affluent or educated classes, through the spirits if one is an adherent of Umbanda, through faith in Christ and the power of the Holy Spirit if one is an evangelical or through the church, sacraments and saints if one is a Roman Catholic. This is not to say that everyone is a practicing member of a religion. The multitude of people, especially young men who are on the soccer field each Sunday morning instead of in church, is eloquent testimony to this fact.

Summary of Catholic Renewal

1. Lay led, church sponsored, small groups (CEBs) that meet for reflection on the Bible's relevance to the concrete human situation have slowed but not stopped the exodus out of the Catholic Church.

2. The Church's integration of word and deed, gospel and political action has been a powerful force for human rights and democracy in Brazil.

3. The poor don't see political action as a solution to their predicament if it only makes their insecure lot even worse. A message that challenges to action within the scope of their abilities is more likely to be accepted. The evangelical message to forsake idols and demons; to give up alcohol, smoking, drinking and immorality; to turn to the Lord Jesus in faith, if accepted, is life-transforming and brings an immediate improvement in a convert's general well-being.

4. As the Church changes to meet changing circumstances, it gains and loses. My prayer is that the Bible and the gospel of Jesus Christ may continue to unseat superstition, idolatry and worldliness among practicing and nominal Catholics.

CHAPTER 4 – PENTECOSTALISM: BRAZIL'S DYNAMIC PROTESTANTS

More than ten percent of the Brazilian people, over 16 million of them, belong to a Protestant church (Veja 1990, 46). The Catholic National Council of Brazilian Bishops estimates that 16 percent are evangelicals (Veja 1990, 46). Others estimate it to be as high as 20 percent (Marcom 1990, 57), considering that many practicing crentes ("believers" as Protestants are commonly known in Brazil) do not admit to government census takers that they are evangelicals (Veja 1989, 55). The movement is growing at more than 600,000 people a year and shows no signs of slowing down with the passage of time. Eighty percent of all evangelicals belong to Pentecostal denominations (Veja 1990, 48). Eighty percent of all evangelicals belong to the lower, working class that earns between one and two minimum salaries (\$60 - \$120) a month. A majority of them came from the field to try to make a living in the city (Veja 1990, 51). The greatest evangelical growth comes through the Pentecostal church that multiplies among the urban poor, whose toil and sweat are exploited by modernity and progress.

In this chapter and the next we want to explore the dynamics of this growth in greater detail and then outline some church growth principles that might be applicable to evangelism among North American blue-collar workers.

Two Americans of Swedish origin brought Pentecostalism to Brazil in November of 1910 as an outgrowth of a Pentecostal revival that broke out in South Bend, Indiana in 1902. Gunnar Vingren, a Baptist minister, and Daniel Berg were among those who were filled with the Spirit. At a small home prayer meeting a friend prophesied that Berg and Vingren were to go to a place called Pará to preach the gospel. The two went to a library to search maps of the world for a place by this name. They discovered that a state in Brazil had this name and they took this to mean that it was the Lord's will that they go there. They booked passage as third-class passengers on a freighter and arrived in Belém, Pará with all their money gone (Read 1965, 121). In miraculous answer to prayer their needs were supplied and they started to fellowship at a small Baptist church. The church's missionary pastor put them in charge of the meetings while he was away on a trip. When he returned, he discovered a Pentecostal movement in progress and expelled Berg and Vingren from the church. When they left, they took most of the congregation with them. A large number of Brazilians dedicated themselves to the Pentecostal ministry and were instrumental in starting churches throughout the interior of Northeastern Brazil. These congregations formed the beginning of the Assemblies of God. A movement among Brazilians was begun that from the beginning did not suffer the affects of dependency on foreign assistance (Read 1965, 121-122).

Growth, like that of other Protestant churches, was slow before 1930. In twenty years there were 122 local churches with a total membership of 13,511 (Endruweit 1975, 19). The semi-feudal paternalism of the plantation system with its patronage of Catholicism in a time when the country was predominately rural was the greatest hindrance to Pentecostalism just as it was to Protestantism generally. A peasant who converted to Pentecostalism could expect to be expelled from the fazenda and then would discover that none of the neighboring landowners would give him employment (Endruweit 1975, 31). Those who braved the ire of traditional society and persevered formed the backbone of the Pentecostal movement.

During the presidency of Getulio Vargas rapid social change was taking place. Wherever traditional patterns were losing their grip, Protestantism experienced growth. Willems summarizing his findings lists four areas where this was true: (1) in growing urban areas where industrialization was making an impact (Gates 1972); (2) in rural areas where the fazenda, plantation system was not established and an independent peasantry of small landowners was allowed to develop; (3) in agricultural frontier regions where the population was very heterogeneous and (4) where migration from one region to another was creating an openness for

new ideas (Willems 1967, 248; Read & Ineson 1973, 142). After the Second World War the Assemblies experienced astronomical growth from 105,000 in 1948 to 950,000 in 1964 (Read 1965, 120). As older Pentecostal groups have ascended the social scale through the influence of their religious discipline (Niebuhr 1929, 28), other more radical groups like David Miranda's "God is Love" Church and Edir Macedo Bezerra's Universal Church of the Kingdom of God, which grew from six to over 500,000 members in 13 years, are attracting the impoverished from the lowest economic level of society (Veja 1990; 46,49).

Theology: Supernatural Power

Pentecostals are distinguished from other Protestants by their doctrine of baptism in the Spirit. In order to be saved a person must believe in Jesus and experience water baptism by immersion. Pentecostals do not use the screening procedures and catechetical training that traditional Protestant churches use to admit members. In some churches visitors will answer the altar call and be baptized immediately at the same service. They understand water baptism to be an external rite. Many who receive it continue to live according to their fleshly, carnal nature. The downside of this teaching is that Spirit-baptized Pentecostals consider all traditional Protestants as carnal and worldly, and therefore subject to proselytizing. Admission is extremely easy but the participation expected and the responsibilities placed upon the individual member are equal to, if not more than, that required of traditional Protestants (Willems 1967, 157). What is needed to overcome the flesh, become a "real" Christian, live in obedience to God's word and be admitted into the ministry of the church is to be baptized in the Spirit and in power. Proof of the baptism in the Spirit and God's supernatural power is glossalalia, the gift of tongues.

In Pentecostalism the kingdom will come at Christ's return at the Rapture. Tongue speaking is the sign that the heavenly kingdom is breaking into this world's reality. It gives the believer the conviction that his sins are forgiven today. The kingdom also breaks into this world through the demonstration of miracles of healing and deliverance (Lalivie d'Epinau 1969, 47).

Spirit baptism is an experience that releases spiritual power for the Christian life and witness that other Christians do not have (Wagner 1973,34). Sociologically tongue speaking is an identity-altering experience, especially for illiterate or semi-literate people who are normally very inarticulate and who are not expected to speak in public. Tongue speaking not only gives evidence of God's work but is the doorway to full acceptance into the family of faith (Frase 1975, 544). It is the seal of divine approval and fills the believer with self-worth. No matter how poor or uneducated the Spirit-baptized believer is, he has a power and acceptance that no worldly person enjoys, no matter how prestigious (Endruweit 1975, 80).

The vertical relationship between God and the believer is emphasized rather than the horizontal. Spirituality is the emptying of oneself to be filled with the divine rather than an emptying of oneself in service to one's fellow man (Endruweit 1975, 80). To be a blessing is to preach to others, to tell them that God loves them, that Jesus died for them, and, if necessary, to tell them that they're of the devil and headed for hell. It's not Dale Carnegie's recipe of "How to Win Friends and Influence People" by appealing to someone's ego. To be a blessing is to pray for someone that he might be healed. The imposition of hands and the anointing with oil for healing demands a response of faith on the part of the afflicted to be effective. Healing goes with preaching because, in order to be healed, the sick person must believe. To be a blessing is to cast the demon out of a possessed person. Loving acts to unbelievers are part of the Christian life, but not unconditional. Unbelievers have to know that these acts are done in service to God and will only make their condemnation the worse if they do not turn in repentance to God.

Evangelism is more power encounter than indoctrination. Books of a polemic nature written against spiritism to expose its fraud and superstition rarely if ever sway the spiritist who has experienced supernatural power. Pentecostals recognize the reality of supernatural, demonic activity, but they believe that the power of God is more powerful and like Elijah on Mt. Carmel, they are ready to demonstrate it (Wagner 1986,128). Demons enslave, lead into sin, bring on depression and suicidal feelings; but God's power frees and brings gozo, or "pure joy" (Willems 1967, 109).

Illustrative of this is the story of Sr. Orlando as told me by Cláudio Germano, an atypical Presbyterian lay evangelist. Sr. Orlando was Catholic and owned a brick factory in Bandeira do Sul in Minas Gerais. In 1987 he took a trip to the United States and stayed for a year. While in the States he visited a Satanist cult meeting. Shortly after he returned home, he was attacked by the evil one. His wife sent word to Sr. Cláudio, "Hurry, come, my husband is dying!" The believers prayed for deliverance, but nothing happened. When Sr. Cláudio realized that they were facing the work of an evil spirit, he commanded it to come out in the name of Jesus. Immediately Sr. Orlando jumped up and shouted, "I'm free, I'm free!" Sr. Orlando said that when he got off the bus at the station in Bandeira a man asked him about his identity and where he lived. It was "that man" who was in his living room choking him to death and who was commanded to let go in the name of Jesus. Sr. Cláudio went on to tell Sr. Orlando that he had to accept Jesus into his life or the spirit would be back to attack him again. During three hours of confession, of sorrow, of prayer and song Sr. Orlando accepted the Lord and the very next Sunday he walked down the street openly carrying a Bible in hand to the Presbyterian Church. Shortly afterwards he put a gift of \$2,500 U.S. dollars into the offering plate that paid the church's debt on a youth camp and covered what it owed to denominational causes (Germano 1990). Sr. Germano is Presbyterian but knows Pentecostal power.

Some consider Pentecostal preachers' methods to differ little from pagan magic. Not only do people bring the sick to healing services but they also bring white handkerchiefs (Acts 19:12) to be blessed by the minister. Radio preachers will ask their listeners to place a glass of water on the radio so that it will receive the power of healing prayer. When the prayer is over, the sick person is to drink the water. Some churches hold a prayer chain similar to the Catholic novena. If seekers come to prayer meeting gospel services for seven weeks in a row without breaking the chain, their requests will be answered. But if Pentecostalism is nothing more than a superior form of magic, its followers will be carried off by the next wonder worker if their world view and heart allegiance is not addressed (Stoll 1990, 113). Superstitious people come for a miracle but before they expect an answer, they have already heard seven lengthy sermons about the way of salvation and have been challenged repeatedly to put their faith in Jesus Christ!

In many ways Pentecostalism in Brazil is in congenial territory, especially in relation to Folk Catholicism. Both are open to the supernatural and continuing work of the Holy Spirit. Both deal with the promessa or vow: "If God (or a saint) will answer my prayer, I will dedicate something to Him." For example a man might become a Pentecostal if he gets a desired job (Endruweit 1975, 99-100). In both broken promises are punished by the saint or by God (Endruweit 1975, 131). Both believe that sickness and moral defects are caused by evil spirits. Both believe in miraculous healing: Catholic benzedoras(blessing women) invoke images and mumble sacred words while Pentecostals invoke the power of the Holy Spirit (Endruweit 1975, 133-134).

Pentecostals see the kingdom of God as future and other worldly--and, as we have already seen, as breaking into this world through miracle. The world is a place of sin from which to flee. It is given over to the devil, damned and destined for destruction on the Last Day. A solution to the social order will only come when Christ returns to establish his kingdom (Fraser 1975, 558-559). There is nothing that Christians can do to transform it. The world cannot be saved, although people can be saved out of the world (Endruweit 1975, 139-140). Pentecostals

denounce drunks, criminals, prostitutes, gamblers and such, but do not address the institutions of drunkenness, crime, prostitution, and gambling. According to Frase they confuse victim with oppressor (1975, 561). For Pentecostals these wicked institutions will continue till the end of time, but people are responsible for their actions and the blood and power of Jesus can free these poor and helpless victims from the bondage of slavery. For this reason, Pentecostals have not addressed social problems and do not sponsor diaconal projects that might be of service to the wider community. They carry on a word and deed ministry, not after the European or North American Reformed model, but literally following Paul's words in Romans 15:18-19 (NIV), "I will not venture to speak of anything except what Christ has accomplished through me in leading the Gentiles to obey God by what I have said and done--by the power of signs and miracles through the power of the Spirit." Deed ministry is the action of the Holy Spirit acting through the faith and prayer of the believer. Those who have wealth will move a mountain with earth moving equipment; those who don't will move the mountain on their knees. In the better organized Pentecostal churches, the deacons care for the needy but only if they belong to the faithful. Pentecostals, however, do engage in rehabilitation programs of drug addicts and prostitutes, following the model of Teen Challenge. This is a type of social program that fits well into their definition of love as liberation from demonic oppression through divine power in accord with the Scriptures.

In spite of their view of the Kingdom of God Pentecostals have gotten involved in the political process. Politicians see pastors, leading a huge flock, as potential "colonels" who can make political deals and deliver votes. In the plantation social structure, the peon, the individual peasant, had only indirect relations with the nation-state. The patrão was the only one really integrated into the larger society and knew how the nation worked and understood its laws. Political party chiefs quickly realized that from their point of view the Pentecostal congregation was a plantation presided over by the pastor. To gain the people's vote they thought they had to reach them through the pastor (Lalive d'Epina 1969, 130). Some pastors have been burnt when politicians did not deliver on their promises after election (Endruweit 1975, 141). As a result some have eschewed the political process altogether while others, both pastors and laymen, have become candidates and been elected to high office. Pentecostal pastors who run for political office often have extended ties to labor in factories where they work, to their own local church and to fellow pastors. The art of gaining and keeping followers and being sensitive to peoples' needs and feelings puts them in a good position to establish a viable coalition (Stoll 1990, 118). Probably the reason why evangelicals and Pentecostals in particular have gotten into politics, which is usually considered totally corrupt, is that once empowered through their large numbers and a rise in social standing, they see political office as a way to help their own people and promote a way of life that they hold dear (Hodges 1968, 310). Among the Brazil's 500 congressmen 35 are evangelicals and of these 19 come from the Assemblies of God (Marcom 1990, 71).

From the point of view of the poor, radical liberation theologians ask too much from them when they want to mobilize the masses in defiant, confrontational, even suicidal resistance to the prevailing unjust system. Liberation theologians who come from an empowered, democratic tradition do not understand that the unempowered poor have grown accustomed to their own way of dealing with injustice, "a subtle combination of deference, foot-dragging, and evasion (Stoll 1990, 313). Fatalistic acceptance of the constraints on their continuous negotiation for survival is in touch with reality as the people see it. In Pentecostalism a person by a simple decision to accept Christ is urged to concentrate on what he can change within his own realm of power: his own personal habits and his own family life (Stoll 1990, 318).

Evangelism is a priority for every Spirit-filled believer. As agents of the kingdom they announce the saving and forgiving love of Jesus Christ and the indwelling power of the Holy Spirit to overthrow the forces of evil. They know 1 John 3:5 (NIV), "But you know that he

[Jesus] appeared so that he might take away our sins" and 1 John 3:8b (NIV), "The reason the Son of God appeared was to destroy the devil's work." Every church member is expected to evangelize (Stoll 1990, 109). Waves of witnessing soldiers go into the battle field. The saved believer goes as a representative of God and a bearer of truth.

The relationship established between the preacher and the convert is "a one-way vertical relationship going from God's representative, who knows the truth, to the ones who must learn" (Lalivie d'Epinay 1969, 79). Whether he is preaching, giving a personal testimony or exhorting to a colleague on the job, he is ultimately superior to the unsaved who hear him because he is on God's side. He shares a privilege that can only be shared by acceptance of Christ. This is discipleship, teaching those baptized to obey all the things Christ commands (Matt. 28:20). The one who represents Jesus on earth must be imitated and followed by the new convert. New disciples follow the example of those who led them to Christ and accompany them to open-air services, going to prayer meetings, teaching Sunday school and starting satellite churches. Evangelism does not follow a particular approach or packaged method. Rather it is a way of life that enfolds people into the fellowship of the church through baptism (Wagner 1973, 49) and motivates them for ministry.

Pentecostals are not very ecumenical. They are fanatically loyal to their own church. Some, like the Christian Congregation of Brazil, even go so far as to deny that anyone can be saved outside of their denomination. Converts give full allegiance to the pastor of their church. After all, he was the voice of God that brought them to salvation and his preaching carries Biblical authority. Some pastors are open, loving, broad minded towards other Christians and this is picked up by church members. Other pastors preach against the doctrines of other churches and as a result the members of these churches try to proselytize other Protestants, be they traditional or Pentecostal.

Vibrant, Participatory Worship

Peter Wagner lists eight reasons why Pentecostal worship is attractive (1973, 107-118; 1986, 100-112). First, huge gatherings create a rally type atmosphere. Crowds fill all available seats and late comers stand along the walls. The largest services are held on Saturday and Sunday nights when people from a large area converge on a mother church. Timid people can observe what is going on without being intimidated but can also participate as they feel led.

Second, small groups allow people to exchange warm abraços (hugs), inquire about their health, talk of job opportunities, and catch up on the latest news. Pentecostal churches have services every day of the week either at the church or in homes. There are prayer meetings, Bible studies, choir and band practice, evangelistic services, calling programs, hospital and nursing home visitation and more. When I canvassed the neighborhood where I pastored, a large percentage of Pentecostals said they went to church five to seven times a week.

Third, worship has a high noise level. People come into church, kneel and pray. Some pray silently, but others pray aloud. Congregational singing is lively. When the pastor leads in prayer, everyone joins in, praying aloud. Sermons are punctuated with amens, hallelujahs and praise-the-Lords. To a Pentecostal the solemn silence of traditional Protestant worship is like a funeral parlor.

Fourth, worship has a high degree of audience participation (Lalivie d'Epinay 1969, 53). The pastor runs the service, but the band accompanies congregational singing, the choir sings, special music is presented, testimonies are given, people come forward for healing and the casting out of demons, the newly converted bring their images or cigarettes to the platform as a

sign of turning from their old way of life, the people bring their offering to the front, and the minister may elicit response to questions during his sermon.

Fifth, the congregation is in motion during worship. The people stand up and sit down frequently, lift their hands in praise, kneel in prayer, sway or dance as they sing.

Sixth, congregational prayer includes the ecstatic speaking in tongues. A Pentecostal gets practice praying aloud in the noisy din of praise, whereas believers in a traditional church are extremely self-conscious of their "errors" of speech when praying aloud in the presence of a silent audience.

Seventh, music is vibrant and is sung in popular Brazilian styles. While some good old North American gospel favorites are still sung, many lyrics are written by the members themselves, gain popularity in churches, camps, and evangelistic campaigns and spread throughout the country.

Eighth, the preacher enters into dialogue with the audience and the people respond with shouts of praise. The preaching brings the message of Scripture directly into the people's daily lives. The people are taught to be joyful in spite of their present circumstances because of the certainty of salvation and of God's approval (Frase 1975, 543).

Another facet of Pentecostal worship not mentioned by Wagner is the voice of prophecy. The charismatic preacher reveals a hidden sin that must be confessed or an illness that God wants to heal. Invariably someone who needs healing will come forward to the praise of God and the utter amazement of visitors.

Pentecostal style worship is not appreciated by everyone. Paul Pierson writes of a Presbyterian who out of curiosity attended a meeting of the Assemblies of God in Belém and described what went on.

The preacher, who spoke incorrect Portuguese, read a Psalm, led a hymn, and gave a short exposition of the text which included much repetition of the phrase "Glory to Jesus." Then came a frenzied prayer for the healing of a woman who appeared to be blind, all accompanied by "infernally noise." Following this were testimonies which repeated the theme "Jesus is good, He saved me, He cured me. Glory to Jesus." The writer concluded that the meeting was blasphemy. (1974, 71)

While Pentecostals are being themselves as they understand God wants them to be, Presbyterians and Methodists are often trying to demonstrate to the broader society that Protestantism is intellectually respectable (Pierson 1974, 71).

Worship among Protestants and Pentecostals is not limited to church activities. In his study of Protestants Emilio Willems wrote that the "active Protestant family has assumed the new role of cult group" (1967, 172), incorporating both male and female family members into a worshiping unit. At the evening meal a parent leads in a reading of the Bible, prayers are said and hymns sung. This is in sharpest contrast with lower class rural eating habits where the men "seek to isolate themselves and swallow their food without uttering a word" (Willems 1967, 172). This has resulted in a new intimacy between husband and wife and between parents and children in the Protestant home (Willems 1967, 173).

Ethics and Moral Teaching

Pentecostals address a level of culture often forgotten by liberation theologians. Pentecostals direct their attention to the realm of personal morals and that has radically changed their outlook on life, their social standing and their personal health, wealth and well-being (Stoll 1990, 13). Pentecostals, along with Protestants in general, demand strict personal honesty,

dedication to work, thrift, and abstention from "worldly pleasures and vices," defined as premarital and extramarital sex, drinking of alcoholic beverages, and smoking tobacco or taking other drugs. Worldly entertainment like movies, gambling, social dancing, exposure of the body by both men and women, the use of cosmetics or wearing jewelry is also prohibited (Willems 1967, 45-46). Many Pentecostal groups also ban television from the home. Many churches have dress codes. Men wear suits and ties to church even on the hottest days. Women and girls must not cut their hair (seen as a covering to them, I Cor. 11:15), must wear dresses that go below the knees, and cannot wear slacks or short-sleeved blouses. Every member baptized in the Spirit is obligated to tithe for the support of the ministry and its full-time pastor (Stoll 1990, 109).

Moral asceticism is not altogether a stranger among Brazil's poor. Willems notes that in the nineteenth century not all the rural plebe was dependent upon or employed by rich land owners. Of the almost five million males between the ages of 13 to 45 recorded in the census of 1882, fifty-seven percent had no occupation of any kind. The countryside was filled with vagrants, beggars, bandits and fugitive slaves. This made traveling unsafe and threatened powerful landowners. Under these social conditions messianic movements arose like the Rebellion of Canudos (1897) led by Antônio Conselheiro, the "Holy War" in Contestado (1912) under the monk José Maria and the movement led by Father Cícero of Juazeiro (1911). These movements had two points of similarity to Pentecostalism. First, their followers belonged to a part of an underprivileged mass of people who were open to the message of a religious leader or "savior." Second, the leader's message invariably promised a better life and such betterment invariably required immediate changes that included the repudiation of the former weak and sinful ways, including all worldly vices (Willems 1967, 53).

The rich can indulge in worldly vices and somehow escape the full brunt of their affect. Not so the poor person. Alcoholism, cigarettes, "foreign women," and gambling literally put the wife and children on the street to beg for food and clothing. The conversion of a drinking father brings a dramatic change in his family's well-being. Not only has a lot of the fighting stopped but half of the income that normally was spent on his habit is now brought home for family needs. This change in personal behavior is a selling point in witness. To the question why she joined a Pentecostal church a woman replied, "Diogo was spending too much time drinking. . . . He was beginning to think too much about women. . . . But since he has been baptized, he doesn't drink any more, he doesn't gamble, and he doesn't run after women" (Endruweit 1975, 123-124).

Conversion in a Pentecostal church not only frees the new believer from "vices," but it also rids him of behavior that society, as a whole, holds in disrepute. "Drunken bouts, tavern brawls, wife-beating, illegitimacy, neglect of children and a disorganized home life, personal appearance suggesting neglect and uncleanness, failure to improve poor housing conditions, and similar traits are often held against the lower classes" (Willems 1967, 130). Although Pentecostals do not recognize wealth, family or education as criteria for advancement in the church, Willems detects a social desire to become respectable by adopting middle-class behavior (Willems 1967; 140, 130-131). Conversion brings a change of personal behavior and entrance into a church family support group. And this change has immediate consequences for home and work. Pentecostals are often the object of envy of unbelievers who cannot understand how wealth can suddenly appear only a short time after joining the church (Frase 1975, 546).

In his professional life the Pentecostal is taught to be honest, dedicated to work, and, following Romans 13:1-7, to be submissive and respectful to law and authority (Willems 1967, 174; Endruweit 1975, 175). They learned this submission first in relation to Christ and then to the pastor who disciplined them. Christians have a reputation for being dependable, honest and holding to high ethical standards (Willems 1967, 176). Industriousness, thrift and sobriety are taught as an antidote to abject poverty, which is believed to be a curse and inherently incompatible with the dignity of the Christian life (Willems 1967, 173).

Pentecostals are sometimes criticized for being overly submissive, lacking initiative, withdrawing from engagement with the political or social issues of the work place and community (Lalive d'Epina 1969, 128-129). Pentecostals generally refuse to get involved in labor disputes and are non-contentious on the job. One non-Protestant manager considered them inefficient "because they seem too preoccupied with the other world to care seriously about material things" (Willems 1967, 178). Pentecostals, however, can be very enterprising and resourceful in their personal lives and in the church.

Pentecostals are critically observed by their peers to see if they walk the path that they profess. Those who lapse even for a small drink at the bar on the way home from work are labeled hypocrites if their behavior continues. Evangelicals in Brazil live in a fish bowl observed by the curious and critical eyes of a syncretistic Catholic-Spiritist public. This has led evangelicals to be ever vigilant to maintain the standards they profess (Willems 1967; 46, 200).

How Pentecostalism Fulfills Needs

Rapid social change, the move from a rural or small town to a modern, highly industrialized urban setting, the physical separation from a familiar support network of family and friends can deprive a person of moral and spiritual moorings. When most needed, material and moral support is lacking in a hostile environment. That can result in "anomie," that feeling of being lost and rootless and empty. The family may be disintegrating. Long working hours separate the husband from his wife. The children don't respect parental authority and spend many unsupervised hours in the street. Personal morals may collapse in the breakdown of old ways and the creation of new ones. One of the most pressing felt needs in an individualistic society is a network of primary relations, a personal, family-like community that gives both meaning and support (Willems 1967, 125). The close-knit fellowship of the Pentecostal church admirably supplies this need. The church becomes the believer's extended family in an impersonal urban setting.

"Like the fazenda, the Pentecostal congregation integrates a man into a group; group involvement is reduced to direct, personal relationships of dependence, and the group serves as a buffer between the individual and larger social entities" (Lalive d'Epina 1969, 129). The church family takes the place of the rural peasant community dependent on the land owner for supervision of daily life and the provision of supplies that the owner brings from the city. The pastor fills the same role in the sacred community that the land owner filled on the fazenda (Curry 1968; 131, 163).

Folk Catholicism is associated with crops and animals, the forces of nature, spirits and demons and the problems that the peasant encounters in the field, wilderness or forest. Here the saints are not approached in the abstract or in their purely spiritual sense, but the worshiper enters into a pact with a particular saint of a particular locale. The move from a rural area breaks this relationship and separates the devotee from his "gods" (saints and their images) who remained in their place. (Willems 1967, 133). Conversion brings the poor Brazilian into a personal relation with Christ and His Spirit. Idols and paraphernalia are destroyed but replaced with the Spirit who is everywhere present and whose help is experienced and whose presence is demonstrated by speaking in tongues and marvelous answers to prayer. Folk Catholicism is preoccupied with the worship of the saints and the Virgin. Rural folk gather in the towns on feast days for processions, church services and festivities. The most celebrated and the one that most directly ties in with the Pentecostal movement is the feast of the Divine Holy Spirit.

On the Sunday of Pentecost the principal celebrations of the feast of the Holy Spirit take place, as the Church commemorates the descent of the Holy Spirit on

the Apostles. The principal celebration is preceded by a novena, a nine-day ritual of prayers conducted by the local priest. Each day is characterized by some ceremonies, such as, a banquet for the poor, visiting the prisoners and giving them food, or a banquet in general. There are processions early in the morning and others at night, in which images are carried, accompanied by music and people singing sacred chants especially arranged for this purpose. On Sunday the rite reaches its climax. Elaborate ceremonies are held in the Church in honor of the Holy Spirit, and thousands of people assemble in the patio of the Church where food and drink are available, and where people are engaged in games, dances, auction and other entertainments. (Endruveit 1975, 95-96)

During the feast of the Divine Holy Spirit long sections of Scripture are recited and memorized. For the Pentecostal the "lost elements of his own religious background are brought back to him" (Willems 1967, 133), purified of its idolatrous elements by a Biblical faith.

In both theology and morals Pentecostalism is ideally suited to the needs of the Brazilian working class. Yet we must not lose sight of the fact that Protestants are still a small minority of the population. Pentecostals carry the stigma of a sect. They are able to multiply with such speed only because of the tremendous investment of time and effort into evangelization.

CHAPTER 5 – PENTECOSTAL CHURCH STRUCTURE

For a time the Assemblies of God, the first Pentecostal denomination to be organized in Brazil, was under the control of North American missionaries, but in 1930 the problem of ecclesiastical control came to a head. A general meeting of national pastors and missionaries in September of 1930 upheld the principle of local church autonomy, removed all local churches from direct missionary leadership and turned them over to national pastors. The gathering affirmed that missionaries were necessary for consultation, guidance and advice and were needed to plant churches in new areas with a view to transferring them to national leadership as soon as possible. It also determined that national pastors receive all self-supporting churches to develop and also to organize others (Endruweit 1975, 34-35). This does not differ radically from agreements between other missions and their national churches. The big difference was that Pentecostal churches grew and proliferated so fast that it was impossible for the missionaries to control the church. Growth was not dependent upon foreign finances and personnel.

Discipleship Training for Ministry

Cut off from missionary funds and control the nationals had to develop ways of training leaders that were not dependent upon expensive schools and seminaries. Pentecostalism emphasizes experience and authority in ministry, not formal education (Frase 1975, 533-534). The main premise is that qualifications for ministry are spiritual, not academic. Any member is a potential minister. The filling of the Spirit, manifested by the gift of speaking in tongues, is a sign of divine approval. Sometimes this gift comes with water baptism, but often a year might elapse before the gift is received. Until the gift of tongues is received, the believer cannot be appointed to any office in the congregation. Further, the filling of the Spirit must be validated by energetic and fruitful evangelization (Willems 1967, 139; Wagner 1973, 96). The manifestation of the powers of the Spirit, healing and exorcism, is the only means by which human authority is recognized and accepted in most Pentecostal groups (Willems 1967, 139).

The Catholic Church puts young boys in a convent and raises them as priests, traditional Protestants send promising young men to seminary, while Pentecostals put unpaid laymen directly to work and give them on-the-job training (Wagner 1973, 84). In contrast traditional Protestantism discourages vocations among adult converts because of theological and educational requirements (Lalive d'Epina 1969, 70) and thus closes the door to the witnessing and exhorting talents of many mature and dedicated leaders.

Peter Wagner outlines the steps that a person must go through in order to be ordained as a pastor. First, a new convert is invited to give his testimony in church, at an evangelistic meeting or with a street-preaching group. Those with leadership ability are put in charge of an evangelistic team. Second, the person becomes a Sunday school teacher where he develops skill in Bible study and communicating its truth. Third, having gotten a basic knowledge of the Scriptures, he is invited to lead a worship service and give sermons at small meetings. Fourth, the lay worker is given the task to start a new preaching point. In order to do this he must mobilize other Christians to evangelize a certain geographical area. Fifth, if the "preacher" continues to demonstrate the working of the Spirit, sees fruit in his evangelistic endeavors, and is submissive and loyal to his pastor, he will be presented by his pastor to the Annual Conference where he comes under denominational supervision. At this stage ministries outside the influence of his local church are open to him. In stage six he becomes a "pastor-deacon" and is assigned a new area and charged with planting a new church. The final stage of fully ordained pastor is

attained only when he can leave secular employment and devote himself full-time to a pastorate that will supply his financial needs (1973, 96-98; 1986, 90-91). Most men are 40 years old before they attain to a full pastorate (Endruveit 1975, 184). The apprenticeship method of pastor training as outlined above has its variations from place to place and from denomination to denomination.

Lack of theological knowledge can be a problem, sometimes recognized and sometimes not. One church that has done something in this area is the Assemblies of God which calls pastors to a "home base" for Biblical instruction at regular intervals (Read 1965, 134-135; Endruveit 1975, 185). Because of the affect of salvation and social advancement among members of the Assemblies of God, that church has seen the need for some of its clergy to have a higher education and seminary training. Men so trained are not only leaders of local churches, but are giving leadership to the evangelical cause on the national level. Other groups like the Congregação Cristã do Brasil (Christian Congregation of Brazil) rely upon the immediate inspiration of the speaker during the worship service, thinking that preparation by reading, study and meditation on the Biblical text is a reliance on the flesh and not on the Spirit (Lalive d'Epinau 1969, 193).

Apprenticeship training has both its positive and negative points. On the positive side leaders emerge from among the people. Higher, formal education does not raise them to another social class thus separating them from the people they serve (Pierson 1974, 125). Through this training the apprentice must give devotion to leadership and in so doing learns leadership. He follows and expects to be followed by others. Apprenticeship training is not foreign to Brazil. The pattern was found in colonial Folk Catholicism on the plantation. Those ordained as priests were first choir boys, then catechists and sacristans (Nida 1974, 140).

Because discipleship training is so personal and the charismatic pastor wields a tremendous amount of authority, bossism is very real danger. Many leaders demand blind devotion from their people similar to the messianic movements of the nineteenth century (Endruveit 1975, 186). One missionary described a regional ministry of a large number of churches as an organization of a bishop and small popes (Willems 1969, 119).

Cell Groups and Satellite Churches

Before Pentecostal churches became giants with thousands of members, they were once a small group of believers meeting in a home, rented room or store front. Pentecostal churches arise from the evangelistic zeal and concerted action of the whole church whereas in historical Protestantism this work is assigned to specialists, trained pastors or evangelists. In traditional churches the evangelistic efforts of the more zealous members is not well organized nor continuous. Traditional Protestants tend to "consolidate" their position rather than absorb a continuous stream of new converts. In Pentecostalism every militant member is a missionary who devotes his spare time to spreading the gospel in united effort with others. Instead of spending leisure time in recreational activities the people visit hospitals, prisons, and fellow believers who are going through trials (Willems 1967, 145-147). Pentecostalism has found ways to mobilize all its human resources for ministry. "No matter how humble, unskilled or uneducated, the individual convert immediately feels that he is needed and relied upon" (Willems 1967, 149).

In their zeal to spread the word and gather in believers, local churches send their members outside the boundaries of their localities. For the Brazilian working class "beyond the boundary of the local church" means beyond walking distance for a family with small children. In starting a satellite congregation, the local church holds prayer meetings to seek inspiration where God wishes the new church to be developed (Willems 1967, 145). Consideration is

certainly given to a situation where new converts or strong church members live far away. God is sought to give a vision of the harvest and to bring forth willing workers by moving in their hearts.

Once a site has been chosen, the church develops intensive preaching activity in the area. Three or four times a week a group goes to the area and divides into subgroups that go to each block and try to attract people through preaching and singing (Willems 1967, 145; Read 1965; 132, 145). Most of the literature speaks of street preaching, but from my own observation this did not occur in residential neighborhoods. There just weren't enough people passing by or congregating out in the open. The groups instead met in the homes of believers who called their friends and neighbors to the meeting. The music style is close to folk music being played with guitars, banjos and accordions. Between numbers people step forward to give their testimony about how they were saved, healed, relieved of demon oppression and how happy they now are (Endruweit 1975, 190).

This type of witnessing at homes continues until the local church has enough funds to buy property. A building will be erected, often with the efforts of work bees with the women making meals for the men. This method of construction is feasible because so many of the members belong to the construction trades (Willems 1967, 146). At the dedication ceremony the sponsoring congregation shows up en masse. On this occasion the lay leader who directed the entire missionary endeavor is consecrated the worker or pastor of the new flock (Willems 1967, 147).

Pentecostal churches range in size from very small living-room size groups to mammoth assemblies with thousands in the audience. For every size and every location there are appropriate leaders, most of them unpaid laymen who minister under the supervision of a pastor. Everywhere the aim is to multiply and grow. Yet no matter how big, there are innumerable small groups for witness, healing and caring. It is the fellowship in the small group that gives dignity to the individual, something often denied him by the larger society. There every believer is called "brother" or "sister" and is an integral part of the family, receiving love and ministering it at the same time. Here the visitor is the object of interest and surrounded by human warmth. He learns that God is interested in him. People speak to him, the speaker shakes his hand and he is able to sing and pray with them (Lalive d'Epinau 1969, 49).

Leadership that Carries Weight

Pentecostal churches are popular in that they are open to all no matter what race or class. Even the lowest on the social scale can rise to a position of leadership and honor. Yet rising through the ranks of apprenticeship training is dependent upon submission to one's pastor or congregational leader. There is a sociological reason for this in Latin America. Pentecostalism had its roots in the Brazilian drought-and-strife-ridden northeastern backlands where Messianic movements captivated the allegiance of hundreds of thousands. Following in the Messianic tradition the pastor-presidente of a "mother church, owing to his charismatic leadership, is a commanding figure verging on veneration by his followers." The people do everything for him and he never denies help to any member. His counsel reverberates through the church as people recount at prayer meetings how the pastor's counsel or prayer brought them through a trying situation to a good outcome. However, he "controls everything, as much the finances as all the other activities. Nothing is done without his consent" (Stoll 1990, 110). He zealously guards his position from rivals and the possibility of a coup by rotating evangelists, elders and deacons from one satellite congregation to another. All offerings from daughter congregations must be turned over to the matriz, the mother church (Hoffnagel 1980, 115-117).

Eugene Nida writes that in Latin America men are not born equal. They are either higher or lower, patrons or peons and each must fulfill his unique gifts to the utmost. "Therefore, the potential caudillo can only be true to himself as he exercises fully his capacity to command. Each commoner needs a caudillo in order to fulfill his own potentiality, and similarly the caudillo needs followers if he is to demonstrate his abilities" (Nida 1974, 22). Lalive d'Epinay asserts that "missionary authoritarianism provides both the precedent and inspiration for Pentecostal caudillismo" (1969, 80). If this extremely strong leadership is not to lead to a church split, effective pastors must lead through a process of consensus, not strict democratic voting procedures. The pastor will wait until he is convinced that his assistants are committed to the cause before committing himself. His leadership is similar to the chief who depends upon the agreement of family heads if he wants to avoid splitting the clan (Lalive d'Epany 1969, 87).

Schism Means Growth

Two opposing principles are operative in Pentecostal groups, one democratic and the other authoritarian. Through the gifts of the Spirit and evangelistic effectiveness anyone can rise through the ranks to become a leader. The successful leader, especially the faith healer and miracle worker, is easily held in awe by his followers. His voice is revered as the voice of God. When two rival leaders with similar divine gifts enter into competition, they accuse each other of misusing their authority and a schism can result (Willems 1967, 115). Schisms often take on national scope with groups in all parts of the country following the separating faction. Schismatic groups are characterized by their appeal to the lowest classes and are led by charismatic leaders who have emerged through successful evangelizing (Willems 1967, 111).

In a dynamic situation a schism does not necessarily weaken the parent organization. As a congregation grows, it reaches a size that tends to destroy the effectiveness of primary groups or personal communities. In the anonymity of a large crowd the pastor becomes less accessible and upstarts with good evangelistic skill are able to voice discontent and recruit followers by offering services that the pastor no longer can provide (Willems 1967, 115). This recreates "the social intimacy and the personal bonds among the faithful which Pentecostalism seems to require." (Willems 1967, 115). Paul Yonggi Cho of Korea has managed to counteract this tendency to schism by subordinating all his pastors and family cell group leaders directly to himself, requiring that they retell his message to those under their care (Cho 1981, 34-35) and insisting that each group divide when it reaches the size of 15 families (Cho 1981, 65-66).

Summary and Growth Principles

1. The freedom of the Spirit has permitted Pentecostals to adapt to the needs of the Brazilian working class as they moved from a semi-feudal patriarchal rural society to an impersonal, industrial urban setting. Without the imposition of a foreign system by missionaries, Brazilian believers adapted the imported church order to their needs and culture. Spirit-led cultural adaptation is a key that can open the door to rapid growth within the target population.

2. Evangelism is a priority for Brazilian Pentecostals. Historic Protestantism tends to put the emphasis on perfecting itself, training its youth and preserving the truth. Because Catholicism has and still is the dominant religion of Brazil, it concerns itself with cultural, political, civic, and social justice issues as well as church and spiritual matters. Like American

Protestantism the focus of its energies is diffuse. A church that can clearly focus on and give priority to evangelism is more likely to reach its goal.

3. Every Spirit-filled member is utilized in some aspect of ministry, whether it be in worship or in some aspect of outreach. Every baptized believer is encouraged to become Spirit-filled.

4. The message of the gospel that is preached to the poor focuses on realizable goals. It is personal and concrete. The link between personal sin and suffering is pointed out. The way of deliverance is explained by laymen in laymen's terms so that the audience understands.

5. Social, political and ecological issues are not addressed; not because they are unimportant, but because the poor have so little power to do anything about them. A personal faith in Christ changes a convert's personal habits and family life. A Christian work ethic often raises the worker's standard of living. Once his sphere of social and cultural influence increases, so does his responsibility to address sociopolitical issues.

6. Good works and love for one's fellow man do not require expensive programs that require business management techniques and a college education for execution. Higher education and business management techniques might be appropriate for the middle-class, but they are not within everyone's reach. Brazilian Pentecostalism has empowered its people by showing them how to tap the resources of divine power through prayer and preaching.

7. The empowered believer has the confidence that he is in the right. On the Lord's side, the believer is right and stands in the light of the truth. The unbeliever is wrong and must come to see the light. If he does not respond in faith, it's his sin, blindness and rebellion. Brazilian Pentecostals do not fill their hearts with self-doubt about whether they are doing the right thing in the right way. The point is not whether they are well-adjusted and well-accepted, but whether they are on the Lord's side. Pentecostals are persecuted for this arrogance, but it is the source of their evangelistic power.

8. Brazilian Pentecostals recognize the Lordship of Jesus Christ. They teach that Christ demands obedience and that he gives power to overcome sin, heal disease and cast out demons. They know what it means to exercise that power through faith.

9. Evangelism is more power encounter than indoctrination. Church membership is attained by attendance at worship and submission to pastoral authority. In worship and through accompanying mature Christians as they minister and witness, the new convert learns doctrine.

10. The prerequisites for leadership are spiritual, not material or educational. The exercise of spiritual gifts, fruitfulness in evangelism and submission to pastoral leadership are the principal criteria used in choosing new leaders.

11. Brazilian Pentecostalism has a multitiered ministry where many small congregations are pastored by dedicated laymen under the supervision of the pastor of a matriz (mother church). A multitude of unpaid lay pastors care for and lead small congregations to growth.

12. While some men go to seminary, most full-time pastors have attained their position through apprenticeship training. They have not been removed from their social environment by going to college, but have moved up the various levels of ministry through the exercise of spiritual gifts and success in gathering converts. As a result, full-time pastors are proven evangelists, strong leaders, mature Christians and conservative in doctrine.

13. Even large churches that number into the thousands of members are filled with small groups. House churches, cell groups and fellowship groups are not static, no-growth groups formed by the church hierarchy. Small groups among Brazilian Evangelicals are almost always outreach oriented. They meet for prayer; prayer to heal, prayer to save, prayer to comfort, prayer to encourage, prayer to find a job, etc. They meet to preach and worship, to evangelize and give testimony. As a by-product they gain the fellowship and the mutual support of a close-knit family.

14. Every member is encouraged to develop his or her spiritual gift. The gift of tongues is required to be Spirit-filled. Even if one does not agree with Pentecostals on this teaching, it is well worth the effort to study its meaning. Always in seeking the filling of the Spirit the believer opens his heart to God, yields his will in obedience and delivers his body to Christ as a living sacrifice.

15. Pentecostals have lively, participatory worship that employs the people's gifts and uses contemporary lyrics and tunes.

16. The Christian ministry occupies the believer's spare time; and he makes more spare time for his faith than an hour a week. Television is often banned; but when it is not, the family doesn't have much time to watch it because they are at some prayer meeting, making a call on the sick or practicing with the choir.

Can these principles that are leading the Brazilian church to growth be used to plant growing, multiplying churches among North America's blue-collar and service sector workers? I believe they can. But before we answer this question more fully, I want to examine how the traditional Protestant church is ministering in Brazil. As we do this in our next chapter some of the problems that the Christian Reformed Church faces in North America will come into clearer focus.

CHAPTER 6 – BRAZIL’S TRADITIONAL PROTESTANTS: DYNAMIC EXAMPLES

In August of 1990 I made a trip to Brazil to gather data about fast-growing traditional Protestant churches. All those studied, except one, were Presbyterian. Before making the trip to Brazil, I asked several missionaries and Brazilian pastors what churches in the Reformed tradition in Brazil were experiencing rapid growth. Based on this information I sent over 50 questionnaires to about 35 pastors inquiring about the pastor himself and his church, about satellite congregations and their leadership and about new converts. Not a single one returned the questionnaires. On my trip I met with some of the pastors who answered the majority of the questions orally. The questionnaires were too time-consuming to fill out, didn't exactly fit their situation or were not well understood. The pastors did not know me personally nor did they feel any "debt" that they owed me. My trip to Brazil and a personal visit, however, demonstrated the importance I attached to gathering information from them and our conversations were in every case cordial and profitable.

Viçosa Presbyterian Church

Before drawing conclusions from the data, I believe it would be profitable to describe the growing churches that I visited. The first was in Viçosa, a city of about 30,000 (1985) in the eastern mountains of the State of Minas. The Presbyterian Church was started by Rev. Elbem Cesar in 1960 with 12 students who were studying at the Agricultural College. The Presbyterian Church was the first non-Catholic religious or civic group to organize in the city. Conservative Catholic influence was so strong that the group could not find anyone willing to rent them space for a meeting hall. When it was decided to build, the local builder reneged on the contract under pressure from the parish priest. This "ignorant" opposition actually helped the cause because the people started to sympathize with the "underdog," and the building was erected. Within five years the church was organized with 40 to 50 professing members. Except for the period from 1966-71 when his brother was the pastor, Rev. Elbem led the church till the end of 1986 when he dedicated himself full-time to editing the evangelical monthly Ultimato and to heading the Evangelical Missions Center, a training school for cross-cultural evangelism (Cesar 1990). From 1987 to 1989 the church plateaued while trying to adjust to new leadership. Rev. Cláudio Antônio Batista Marra is the third pastor to lead the church since Rev. Elbem left pastoring the church. In 1990 this largely middle-class congregation meets in a beautiful building on one of the main streets between the city center and the agricultural college. Rev. Cláudio, a secretary, a lay evangelist and a young woman who works with children comprise its paid ministry staff. During the school term 400 people attend the Sunday evening worship, the main worship service in Brazil, while less than half that attend Sunday school in the morning.

The lay evangelist supervises the meetings at five preaching points and at a congregation in the city of Ponte Nova (35,000 people), 50 kilometers away. This unorganized church has 60 to 70 in Sunday school and about 150 at evening worship (Marra 1990).

Rev. Elbem's strategy was not to have one large church, but many smaller ones. The focus of his ministry was with university students. Willing and talented students were sent out to start preaching points, that is, to hold regular weekly meetings in homes or small rented rooms. In 1986 three of these joined together to form the Second Presbyterian Church (Cesar 1990). Under the leadership of untrained laymen some of the preaching points are hardly holding their own and may never turn into organized churches.

Working-class people, many who were peasants before moving to the city, make up the bulk of the 108-member Second Church (Cesar 1990). It is led by a 71-year-old pastor, Rev. Milton Leitão. He has a small pension and receives a parsonage, gasoline money and \$150 a month. The pastor of the mother church probably receives five times as much. Second Church's land was purchased and a building erected by First Church. Four years after organization it still receives some financial assistance from First Church. Second Church has five other preaching points, one of which has a modest building where 40 meet for evening worship. More will be said about this congregation below.

Rev. Milton's evangelistic method is to make about 25 calls per week and hold two evangelistic campaigns each year. On his visits he leaves a tract, a Gospel or other literature, inquires about the family's needs, prays for that need and invites the people to church. At worship services he often closes his messages with an altar call. He will expel demons when he meets spirit-oppressed persons. Under this type of ministry eighteen people joined the church in 1989, fourteen of them through evangelism. In the first six months of 1990 twelve had already joined (Leitão 1990).

Counting First and Second Churches, the congregation in Ponte Nova and all the preaching points Presbyterians grew from 12 to over 700 people (Sunday evening worship) from 1960 to 1990. This includes about 200 students from out of town who hold membership in other churches. The First Church grows, in order of importance, through transfers, then conversions and finally through confirmations. Second Church grows mainly through conversions.

At the edge of Viçosa, on land donated by the city, Gert and Germana Stolk, a Dutch brother and sister team, head a day-care center for 90 children. In addition, twenty-four children come after school to receive help with their school lessons. Among other things the children hear Bible stories and play games. The center employs two teachers, one cook, three helpers and two laborers to till the large vegetable garden. Support for the project comes from a Dutch church and from the sale of vegetables.

Nearby is a very poor neighborhood where Second Church started a chapel. Gert Stolk, Rev. Milton, a young woman from Evangelical Missions Center, a young man from First Church and another from Second Church teach in Sunday school and lead evening worship. While 40 can be in attendance at the evening worship only 10 neighborhood adults form a faithful core. This preaching point was started in February of 1988 and has suffered from a lack of committed people. Many attended with a view to getting or assuring assistance from the day care center (Stolk 1990).

Eighth Presbyterian, Belo Horizonte.

The next stop on my trip was Belo Horizonte where I talked with Rev. Jeremias Pereira Silva, pastor of Eighth Presbyterian Church. We visited First Presbyterian Church of the city that was organized in 1912. It is the mother of 27 other churches in the region and at the present time houses a seminary with 88 students and has six pastors on its staff. Most of the daughter churches have unorganized congregations under their supervision and have lead several of these to become organized churches. The daughter and granddaughter churches now form nine presbyteries with 62 organized churches, 63 unorganized congregations and 52 preaching points (Supremo Concílio 1989, 15); yet net growth in 1989 for the Synod of Belo Horizonte was only 105 over the 6077 souls on the rolls at the beginning of the year and membership in the churches in the Presbytery of Belo Horizonte even slipped by 1.7 percent (Supremo Concílio 1989, 24).

In 1976, Eighth Church was in trouble with only 30 to 40 active members. It might have closed its doors had not a Rev. Wilson come to lead the church to growth. In 1990 the church had 650 in the Sunday school program and 550 adults at the two Sunday evening services.

Because the church had nowhere to expand, it bought a large piece of property and was in the initial stages of construction of a building with an auditorium to seat 1,200. Pastor Jeremias has the vision of reaching out to a million people who live on that side of the city, developing a pastoral team of seven to serve in the areas of education, youth, family life and church planting, and maybe developing home cell groups à la Paul Yonggi Cho of Korea.

After graduating from seminary in 1982 Rev. Jeremias went to work with Rev. Wilson as a youth worker. What attracted Rev. Jeremias to Eighth Church was Rev. Wilson: "I wanted experience in ministry with a man of God." From Rev. Wilson he learned to be pastor of God's people and to love the church. Rev. Jeremias is a powerful speaker. When he became youth leader, the number of adolescents and young people grew. He also led the mid-week Bible study that attracted up to 250 adults. In 1987, a year before Rev. Wilson's death, Rev. Jeremias at 31 years of age was elected to be senior pastor. The present assistant pastor does not have the same charisma and the mid-week Bible study has dropped to about 80. Rev. Jeremias teaches at the seminary at First Church in the areas of pastoral theology, exegesis of Acts and the Epistles and hermeneutics. There is no question about his leadership ability and his spiritual authority in the lives of church members.

In spite of his speaking ability Rev. Jeremias is not proud. After seminary he continued to attend conferences of great church leaders both Brazilian and American and now he is an invited conference speaker. He receives about 100 invitations a year to speak, but his council permits him to leave only once a month. When a new program is started at the church, the need is genuinely felt by all and the final decision is made together in prayer. Innovations to traditional Presbyterian custom like contemporary music (piano, drums, & guitars) and a period of praise using Bible choruses, the first Sunday of each month dedicated to prayer and fasting (from 9:00 a.m. till 10:00 p.m), the use of laymen's gifts in ministry, an altar call at any service as the Spirit moves, and the equipping of the deacons to cast out evil spirits have all come through contacts with other Christian groups and have been accepted by the whole church through a spirit of prayer, worship and praise.

An example of lay-led ministry, interdenominational in its openness, is the "Tabernacle of Faith," led by Elder Angelo and Sister Gilmar. It is ministry of preaching and prayer held at large home near the church every Monday, Wednesday and Friday evening. Here people's inner spiritual problems are revealed and sin and demons are confronted. Intercession and counseling occur as the group divides and meets in smaller rooms. Laymen are encouraged to take special training for various types of ministry and elders and deacons receive special orientation before assuming their responsibilities. The church does not use denominational Sunday school materials for the adult classes. Rather they study the text of the Westminster Confession and the Bible.

Rev. Jeremias preaches that every Christian has a field of labor where he must work and witness for the Lord. That field is in the home and at work. He tells his people, "Your neighbor or colleague will see and hear you before he hears me."

If Rev. Jeremias had opportunity to give advice to another pastor, he would urge him: (1) to be Christ-centered: totally accept the Lordship and authority of Christ, (2) to be Spirit-centered: don't be afraid of the spiritual gifts, (3) to not give intellectual messages, but rather messages that can be lived, (4) emphasize prayer, (5) keep preaching close to the Bible and not tradition, (6) be evangelistic starting at home (in Jerusalem) and extending to the masses, to the ends of the world, (7) to be parousia-centered, always being ready to meet the Lord at His coming.

About 15 percent of Eighth Church's members belong to the working class, 60% to the middle-class (teachers, white-collar workers, professionals) and 25% to the upper middle-class (business men and store owners). Those at the lowest level receive a basket of basic food stuffs each month from the deacons.

The church is growing first of all through conversions from nominal Catholicism and Kardecism (high spiritism), then through restoration of fallen believers and finally through transfers from other churches. The church is a youthful community: 280 children, 80 adolescents, 150 young people, and 80 married couples under the age of 35. Only a few older people are members (Silva 1990).

Eighth Church's contemporary worship style and adoption of various Pentecostal practices have created unrest in the Presbyterian circles of Belo Horizonte and brought Rev. Jeremias under a lot of criticism from some colleagues and church leaders. As one man said, "If they want to be Presbyterian, they ought to be Presbyterian. If they don't like Presbyterianism, they ought to get out and be something else" (Compart 1990).

Vila Mariana Presbyterian, São Paulo

After spending a weekend with Rev. Carl Bosma in Camboriu, Santa Catarina and taking part in his farewell to that missionary field, I traveled to the city of São Paulo (18,000,000 in metropolitan area) where I was hosted by Rev. David de C. Germano, assistant pastor of the Presbyterian Church of Pirituba, a neighborhood of about a million people. Not only was I able to be introduced to that church and its outreach, but Rev. David took me in his car to interview various other pastors of the city. I also accompanied Rev. David and Rev. Ricardo Agreste da Silva to a conference of national church leaders where I was able to interview several pastors of growing churches. The kindness and generosity of these brothers will long be remembered.

Rev. Jorge Alberto Canelhas is the pastor of the Presbyterian Church of Vila Mariana. When he was elected pastor in 1985 the church had 330 members on the roll, which had to be brought up to date, and one congregation or mission chapel in very poor spiritual condition. In 1990 the church had 550 professing members and two congregations. At one time between 1985 and 1990 the church had 13 family groups. One of them turned into a congregation and another became a preaching point. Two of them died out and nine continue to function as family groups.

Pastor Jorge leads a church of middle-class people while the larger of the congregations is composed of industrial and commercial workers who stand at a level between the lower and middle class. One of the assistant pastors leads the congregations and the other works with families, men, spiritual retreats and visitation. Rev. Jorge, in spite of a stutter, is the main worship leader. He uses his gift of music to lead the church in praise and is head of the ministry of evangelism visitation. He makes 20 face-to-face contacts each week, disciples new converts, has trained 30 members in the use of Evangelism Explosion (Dr. James Kennedy of Coral Ridge Presbyterian, Fort Lauderdale, FL). He has disciplined five members who can give evangelism training to others and who are also able to cast out demons. Visiting teams call on those who have visited the worship service and encourage people to take a simple correspondence course. The elders and deacons meet each Wednesday evening to visit the members of the church and those in need. Pastor Jorge upon occasion gives an altar call after the message: twelve came forward the Sunday before my visit. Along with traditional hymns the church sings choruses accompanied by stringed instruments. Worship is characterized as "traditional, but joyful." Rev. Jorge is a person who has gone through suffering and is able to reach out to those in need. He uses the telephone to contact the sick, those who miss church and those who have a birthday.

As do all the pastors interviewed in this chapter Rev. Jorge teaches the duty of each church member to tithe. Above and beyond the 10% that the believers give for the church, they are urged to give another 2% for diaconal aid. Why? New converts come with all kinds of problems and need help, much of it financial in nature. The church helps with two orphanages, an Indian Mission in South Mato Grosso and helps 20 families each month with a box of food (Canelhas 1990).

Vila Ipiranga Independent Presbyterian, São Paulo

Rev. Oswaldo Prado Filho is the pastor of the Independent Presbyterian Church of Vila Ipiranga. His father was a lay worker who helped start churches. Before entering the ministry Rev. Oswaldo worked with the Ford Motor Co. as a financial administrator, something that has helped him greatly in church administration. During the last 25 years the church planted seven other churches in the São Paulo area, four of these during the last eleven years. Its annual growth has been about 11-12 percent, but the size of the mother church has remained at about 250 in attendance at Sunday school and at evening worship. Within the last four years the pastoral team of three has put more emphasis upon outreach and mission so that more people are joining the church through conversion than through confirmation. Twenty-seven small groups of about 5 to 10 people in each group have been started and these have been the means God is using to bring in new converts. The groups focus upon inductive Bible study starting with Mark and going on into Acts and then I John. The groups do not divide, but new members form new groups.

Rev. Oswaldo is the recognized leader of the pastoral team. The two other younger pastors share in the ministry and in some ways can be considered apprentices. Each week they meet for prayer and planning. A series of Bible texts is elaborated both for worship services and Sunday school and each pastor develops the theme for the day wherever he is preaching, whether at the home church or in a congregation.

In 1990 the church was giving pastoral assistance to a recently organized daughter church that has about 80 members who belong to the upper working class. It is also leading a middle-class congregation towards organization. This congregation has 100 attending Sunday school and 70 go to evening worship.

The Vila Ipiranga Church also has an evangelistic outreach in a large favela several miles away. The work is carried out by a young married couple who live near the favela. This young Brazilian worker can be considered a lay evangelist who is studying theology in preparation for the ministry. Some supervision is given by an American missionary. There is some dissatisfaction on the part of the church as to the role played by the missionary in this work. The missionary sees himself as an administrator while the church wants him to be a worker subject to church administration.

Those in the favela have an income level of nothing to only one minimum salary (\$60/month), which means that most of the people are unemployed, drunks, beggars or thieves. The workers are instructed not to bring the people from the favela to the mother church (Prado Filho 1990). Each Saturday morning the children have a program like a regular Sunday school at two or three locations with about 40 children at each place. The couple makes home visits and studies the Bible with families. The evangelist leads a Bible study for about ten men Sunday morning. About 40 people attend the Sunday evening worship. At the time of the interview the church was trying to get a donation of land from the city for construction of a community center that the church could also use for worship.

The mother church helps in a limited way with some of the physical necessities of the people. There is an Assembly of God church in the favela, but the pastor does not live there. When a member of the Assembly of God needed a pair of crutches, her own church did not help. The Presbyterians however helped her when appraised of her need. The work is very discouraging and maintains contact with no more than about ten faithful adults. As soon as someone seems to be showing interest or demonstrating spiritual progress, he moves out. It is hard to find second generation Christian living in the favela. The Universal Church of the

Kingdom of God (Pentecostal) uses a different approach. Its radio messages are picked up by the favelados who are urged to come to a church nearby but outside of the favela (Kraft 1990).

Planalto Presbyterian, Brasilia.

At a conference on the unity of the church in Brazil I interviewed three pastors two of whom had something worth sharing in this paper. The first was Rev. Ricardo Barbosa of the Planalto Presbyterian Church of Brasilia, a congregation composed of people in the upper middle class. The church started at his home with informal meetings with eight to ten people. The church is not known for its rapid numerical growth, but for the role that lay people play in the ministry. The pastor plays the role of shaping the vision of the church and gently prodding the members to discover their gifts and develop them. Rev. Ricardo takes church leaders with him to conferences. Some of them have become heads of political action groups, Bible study groups, and more. Although the church has only about 180 at the evening worship, its influence goes far beyond its bounds. One woman personally provides full support for fifteen missionaries among the Indians, in translation work and in urban mission. A businessman has taken upon himself the payment of the outstanding debt of VINDE, the evangelistic and mission outreach of Brazilian evangelist Caio Fábio Jr.

The church started two ministries among the favelados nearby. The people of one of the groups were removed from the squatter settlement by the government to one of Brasilia's satellite cities. There another church assumed pastoral care over the people. The other work got started when Pastor Ricardo visited his maid and noticed the miserable conditions in which she lived. He built her a new house and in so doing became friends with some of the people near her house. A young man of the church went with the pastor to one of the services in her home and wanted it to continue. Now he heads up the congregation that meets there.

Ministries carried on at this favelado congregation provide worship services and Bible study, adult reading classes, organized work bees so that people can build their own homes and training for employment. In 1990 the congregation was forming a group that would work with migrants and make sure they had a roof over their head and food to eat during their initial period in the city. Only twenty percent of the people in the favela are legally married and the great majority of the women head single parent households where many have conceived children from various men. In light of this one of the congregation's aims is to form a church in which the women will have greater participation (Barbosa 1990). Time did not permit me to find out how many favelados are members of this congregation or how many have become active in the ministry, or if the ministry is being performed by middle-class church members for the favelados.

Central Methodist, Londrina

Rev. Luis Wesley de Souza, along with two other men, pastors the Central Methodist Church of Londrina, a large church with 900 members on the roll in 1990. Average Sunday evening attendance is 500. The ministers were called as a team in the beginning of 1987. In the process of coming to this church both the ministers and the church exchanged profiles with each other. A philosophy of ministry and a plan of action was already in place when the pastors came to the church. In 1989 they received 130 people into the Central church. The church maintains the ministry of four congregations (mission chapels) and three preaching points. In the last three years three congregations were organized into self-sustaining churches. The pastors hold training meetings for all of the lay leaders one Saturday per month from 8:00 a.m. till 4:00 p.m.

The church is divided up into ministries. One ministry treats family needs, another integrates new converts into the body by enrolling them into family groups (up to 25 families) and brings them under the ministry of a caring couple. In 1990 there were 12 ministries, including music, Christian education and more. The pastors lead, train and coordinate the workers in these various areas.

When the church decides to open a new preaching point with a view to organizing a church, it sends in a ministry team able to evaluate the needs of the area. In one neighborhood the church sent in a team to build 80 foundations on which the future residents put up their own walls and finished their homes. Another team established a day-care center at a Methodist Social Center. There a doctor sees patients and soup is served to peasants who have been driven off the land. The pastors are aware of the danger of paternalism, but two of the daughter churches are doing the same type of ministry and these, too, have daughter congregations and preaching points. In worship Central Church's music uses many choruses and contemporary hymns. It considers itself as "renewed," but not Pentecostal; that is, it does not equate being baptized in the Spirit with the gift of tongues. The church accepts the gifts of exorcism and faith healing, but these are not the principal reason that people are attracted to the church. (de Souza 1990).

The Perspective of a Lay Evangelist: Cláudio Germano

One afternoon Rev. David took me to visit his father Claudio Germano, a full-time lay evangelist hired in 1988 by the Korean Presbyterian Church to start a church among Brazilians in the Liberdade neighborhood. After three months of visiting from house to house, he had gathered 40 people who were attending the Sunday evening worship. After two years of work about 100 people are regular attenders and the work continues to grow. Ninety percent of the people have four or less years of formal study.

Several days each week Sr. Cláudio leaves his apartment and goes to the neighborhood where he makes about ten visits. Each time he gets off the subway, he asks that God will direct him to new people. After a month he repeats the calls and adds to his list of receptive people. Sr. Cláudio presents himself at the door of a home and tells the person who opens the door that God is very interested in her life. If invited, he will enter the home and tell stories of how God has helped others in poverty, sickness or other problems. He will pray for any problem that the people might mention. On a return visit he continues by telling what God can do for their life. He tries to use an illustration or cite a fact that will stay lodged in his listener's mind. He always invites the people the next worship service. Those who come forward at altar calls are enrolled in a profession class where the Westminster Shorter Catechism is taught.

At 61 years old Sr. Cláudio has been retired from service with Varig Brazilian Airlines for over ten years. Although he never finished high school, he took extra courses including trigonometry and English and became a navigator of Boeing 707s to New York. He never took a single Bible school or seminary course but read about Charles Finney, Dwight Moody and Billy Sunday. Sr. Cláudio prays and preaches like a Pentecostal, but holds to Presbyterian Reformed doctrine. On several occasions he has prayed for possessed people and in the name of Jesus freed them from demonic oppression (See Chapter 4). While living in Rio de Janeiro and still employed by the airline Sr. Cláudio was asked to preach evangelistic campaigns and played some part in starting fourteen churches. The large church of Niteroi, across the bay from Rio, was started in his living room by Rev. Antônio Elias (Germano 1990).

After retiring from the airlines, Sr. Claudio was hired as an evangelist by the Dutch Reformed Church of São Paulo to plant churches under the auspices of a neighboring Presbytery. After working for three years in the neighborhood of Jardim São Luiz, a church was organized with about 150 in Sunday school and about 100 faithfully attending the evening worship. During

this period, he started to open ten other congregations or preaching points. His work continued until the Presbytery and the Dutch Reformed Church could no longer agree to work together and the Presbytery decided that the works should be taken over by ordained pastors. Three of the congregations closed down and the others decreased in number under the new leadership (Germano 1990).

Pirituba Presbyterian, São Paulo

I cannot take leave of São Paulo before describing the work of my hosts. Rev. Ricardo Agreste da Silva graduated from the Presbyterian Seminary in Campinas and took a call to the Presbyterian Church of Pirituba in February of 1987. The church was losing members and looking for a leader. The church is sandwiched in on a small V-shaped lot at the intersection of two streets. Because the property owners behind the church will not sell, the church cannot enlarge its building. Sunday school has about 200 students and evening worship draws about 280. The night I attended all the benches were filled and people were standing along the walls and outside the doors. Worship was lively, but not at all Pentecostal. Almost all of the members belong to the lower middle class and to the upper working class. Thirty percent can be considered relatively well-off while the rest are struggling financially.

Rev. Ricardo has initiated changes and this has created opposition. Some think he is betraying the former pastor who led the church for 16 years. Nominal members feel threatened and some colleagues in the Presbytery are jealous. At first the church grew mostly from conversions but lately, because it has become well known, it is attracted dissatisfied members from other churches. These are not accepted with open arms. In order to become members, they must attend for at least ten months, become part of a ministry and be the instrument that brings someone to Christ and into fellowship of the church.

Under Pastor Ricardo's leadership this church has elaborated a philosophy of ministry that focuses on three priorities: Commitment to God, Fellowship in the church and Mission to the world. Permeating these three goals is the idea of discipleship, a conscious learning and faithful obedience to God in the exercise of spiritual gifts for the ministry and upbuilding of the corporate body of Christ.

The Pirituba church has divided the area into ten districts with an elder and a deacon responsible for 25 families in each district. Home fellowship groups meet weekly for Bible study in each district. Three districts have the beginnings of daughter churches. One has a building, 70 in Sunday school and 50 at evening worship. A seminarian living in the neighborhood is actively involved in preaching, teaching and evangelism. Another district has a Sunday school of about 80, mostly children, that meets in a school and the third is composed of about ten people who meet in a home quite far from the mother church.

The goal of the Pirituba Church is to have a one-celled church of 80 professing members giving full support to its full-time ordained pastor within two years. By the third year it is hoped that the daughter church will have 120 members and will have started its own one-celled daughter church. By the fourth year it is hoped that this church will have 180 members and will support a full-time missionary outside of its sphere of local ministry. Only after this stage does the Pirituba Church consider the daughter church ready to be emancipated from its supervision (Silva 1990). Normally in the Presbyterian system daughter churches are emancipated as soon as they are able to support their own pastor. At this point the church often flounders because of the change in pastoral leadership and philosophy of ministry. By keeping the daughter church within the "fold" and following the same philosophy of ministry until it has become a missionary church Pastor Ricardo hopes to assure that the daughter churches march forward with an evangelistic and missionary vision.

While I was at Rev. David's home, I was able to accompany him in his work as assistant pastor responsible for the satellite congregations and social service. I interviewed new converts and a long-standing member, attended a home Bible study, a home worship service, taught the adults at the Sunday school at a preaching point, attended two leadership training meetings, early morning prayer meetings and the Sunday evening worship service in the main church. What I saw led me to believe that the pastors are trying to lay a solid foundation of discipleship training for lay workers to fuel even more rapid expansion from 1990 to 1995.

Central Presbyterian, Ribeirão Preto

The next stop on my trip was to Ribeirão Preto where I stayed at the home of Daniel Martins, a man who accepted Christ in Araçatuba when I was pastor there (1972-78) and who later moved to Ribeirão. Although I was not able to interview Rev. Wilson Lopes de Souza, the pastor responsible for the expansion of the work during the decade of the eighties, Sr. Daniel was able to fill in many of the details. Because of disability retirement from .pathe telephone company, he was able to spend several hours every day in volunteer service for the church. He also served as deacon, office assistant, and the person who identified visitors at worship services. When Rev. Wilson accepted the call in 1981, the church had about 150 people who came to Sunday evening worship and had a Sunday school of about 130. It had two congregations, one of ten people in the neighboring town of Jardinópolis and another of 30 people next to a nursing home that it also maintained (Martins 1990). Rev. Wilson, now close to retirement, left the pastorate of the Ribeirão Preto Church at the end of 1989 to head a school in Lavras, Minas Gerais.

Rev. Wilson started his pastoral ministry in a rural congregation in the State of Espírito Santo which had several preaching points. After graduating from seminary, he studied law, school administration, philosophy and other courses to keep up to date with developments. He moved on to Cachoeiro de Itapemirim in the same state, organized preaching points and congregations and taught pastoral theology and homiletics at the now-discontinued Centennial Presbyterian Seminary in Vitória, Epírito Santo from 1959-69. In 1969 when the seminary was closed, much of it having to do with Presbyterian Church politics, Rev. Wilson became the pastor of a 1000-member church in Alta Jequitiba, Minas Gerais, a small community of 8,000. At the same time he was the director of the Evangelical grade school and high school (1,000 students strong) and the director of the state high school.

Rev. Wilson certainly was influenced in his ministry by a pioneer Presbyterian pastor of a former period who left his mark on that region of Eastern Minas. From 1908 to 1927 Rev. Anibal Nora evangelized this area. In only four years, by 1912, his field included five organized churches and 34 unorganized ones (Pierson 1974, 51). When he accepted another call in 1927, he left two Presbyteries with nine pastors, 33 churches, 194 unorganized churches and 5250 communicant members (Pierson, 1974, 128). To meet the need for pastors in this ripe field Rev. Anibal and his colleagues ordained several men to the ministry without the regular theological course. "The practice led to 'storms in the higher councils' of the church, where many denounced the 'Seminary of Jequitiba, the factory of crippled ministers'" (Pierson 1974, 129).

Upon coming to Ribeirão Rev. Wilson mapped the city and had the church members in each neighborhood meet as a group. The group coordinator encouraged, directed and made the schedule of worship leaders and meeting places. The meetings started with choruses, had a short message and closed with a round of intercessory prayer. As these groups grew a Bible study was started on another evening of the week always at the same home. Here the children were separated from the adults and given a Bible story and activity. As the meetings continued to grow in number, the church rented a meeting room and started a Sunday school and Sunday

evening worship services. At the appropriate time a building committee investigated the area, bought property, and put up a building according to the standards of that neighborhood. When the congregation became large enough, it was organized and encouraged to call its own minister (Martins 1990).

It was Rev. Wilson's goal to construct one church building and organize one church per year during the decade of the 80s. As a result of this work Ribeirão Preto now has a Presbytery with nine churches, each with its own pastor and financially supporting its own ministry and outreach. Even after spinning off eight churches, some with unorganized congregations and preaching points, Central Church continues to support six congregations. In the beginning Rev. Wilson did not have lay volunteers to get this awesome project going, but it had money, so the church hired laborers. That gave the church time to train people in visitation and evangelization. Seminarians were contracted to help on weekends and during summer break. At one time Rev. Wilson had 12 pastors working with him. Everyone was worked hard and the pay was low: full-time lay evangelists received 3.5 minimum salaries (about \$200/month) or about the same as a well-employed laboring man. Ordained pastors received five minimum salaries (\$300 to 350). The senior pastor received 12 salaries (\$800) while his assistant at Central Church received ten salaries (\$600). All workers received housing and were enrolled in the government medical and pension plan. It now has six pastors and three evangelists on its payroll. During Rev. Wilson's pastorate the church invested its financial resources into workers and into renting or building worship centers. In 1990 Central church still did not have a parsonage. (Emerick de Souza 1990). The church is now starting to think of planting a church in an elite section of the city.

Now that the decade is over and Rev. Wilson has left, it is possible to look back and evaluate the work. The churches planted in middle-class and upper-working class neighborhoods are doing the best. In fact, one of these is rivaling Central Church. Some of the people who used to attend downtown now come to the neighborhood church. Some of the congregations in the poorer neighborhoods and in a couple smaller neighboring towns have not grown. This lack of growth can be attributed to some workers who did more harm than good and to a lack of cross-class discipleship training for converts in lower-class neighborhoods. The admission of nominal members in some areas was a problem and has caught up with today's workers. A large, well-equipped and well-staffed day care center in a poverty stricken area serves the inhabitants well, but the church that meets there is not growing despite the labors of a young, dedicated pastor. The Assemblies of God Church in the same neighborhood with a working-class tent-making pastor is growing, however.

When Rev. Wilson left, his son Wilson Emerick de Souza was called by the church to take his place. Central Church no longer dominates the global outreach strategy as it once did. With the organization of other churches within the city limits, rivalry among them has sprung up. Transfers of members from one church to another have hurt some feelings. The daughter churches are now trying to define their vision and ministry and Central Church is taking stock of itself and trying to outline its goals for the 90s.

Christian Communication and Mission, Bauru

Before leaving Brazil, I visited Bauru, the city where I labored in several of its bairros in cooperation with the Presbyterian Church of Bauru from mid-1979 through 1985. There I talked with old friends and got caught up with some of the things that happened since we left the field. The year that I came to Bauru a small group of people interested in evangelism left Central Church to start their own church. Their group called Christian Communication and Mission (CCM) was forced out in a struggle for control of the church. At the time the leader of the

group, Abílio Pinheiro Chagas, a lawyer active in city administration, was an elder. Borrowing ideas from Argentinean Pentecostals and from American missionaries of Serviço de Evangelização para América Latina (Evangelism Service for Latin America), a branch of Overseas Crusades, the CCM began to grow through discipleship training and friendship evangelism. Through their influence in the city the leaders were able to get the free use of a school gymnasium. Since their capital outlay was small, they could channel their energy and resources into ministry. With one or two other men Sr. Abílio formed a leadership team and they matured together. Because these men had their own source of income, the church did not have the expense of maintaining a full-time professional clergy. Worship took a new style where the people raised and clapped their hands and even danced to contemporary Christian music. For a time converts were baptized by visiting ministers in Sr. Abílio's swimming pool, but after being chosen and commissioned by the group to be its pastor, Sr. Abílio and others on the ministry team baptize.

In the early stages the group was divided into discipleship groups where the group leaders received their orientation from the ministry team and transmitted it to their groups. Fastest growth occurred between 1979 and 1988. Seventy discipleship groups were operating and membership reached 650. As many of the believers matured in the faith their needs changed, so a change in strategy was called for. Since 1989 the CCM has been trying to organize home fellowship groups patterned after Paul Yonggi Cho's model. In 1990 there were 475 people participating in 20 groups.

About 1989 it was no longer viable for CCM to use the school gym. It got the use of land on a busy avenue by the city for the purpose of erecting a day-care center. It also put up an inflatable tent for worship services. In addition to the day-care center it has a ministry to about 300 street boys who get uniforms and training, are assigned to watch parked cars, and receive lodging from Friday night through Sunday and healthy breakfast Fridays and Saturdays.

The church has started preaching points in four outlying neighborhoods. The oldest of these was started in 1985 and now numbers about 80 people, 50 children and 30 adults. The ministry consists of a Bible School at the Community Center for the children and a mid-week worship with the parents. Six families have been converted and attend the evening worship at the mother church. They receive bus passes paid for by the church to help them get to the services. Another six families do not make the trip downtown (Chagas 1990).

When Central Presbyterian Church excluded Sr. Abílio and his group, they were barred from working in the church's two preaching points. In 1979 I assumed the ministry of one of those preaching points in Jardim Redentor and later the other one in Vila Santa Helena. Until then the church through Sr. Abílio's group held an afternoon Sunday school and gathered children and some adults by using clothing, candy and food as incentives. Some people were being saved, but were never trained to assume leadership positions. With a program almost entirely geared for children, adults joined other churches, mostly Pentecostal. Two neighborhood families took part in the afternoon Sunday school and then attended evening worship at Central Church. These formed the core of the new church that eventually developed. In five years the Jardim Redentor congregation grew to over 100 professing members and was organized as a church. It had a large strategically located building, a parsonage that used to be the old meeting place and it was financially strong enough to pay a pastor's salary. During those years Christian Reformed World Missions provided the missionary but did not provide any financial assistance for the buildings or local ministry expense. The church now has a full-time pastor and maintains a preaching point in another bairro.

When we arrived in Bauru only 12 adults were attending the Jardim Redentor congregation, the fruit of about ten years of labor. When we started to make changes that required faithful attendance and participation, half of these fell away. There were only three members at the other preaching point. Why was it that Sr. Abílio group were unable to lead

these satellite churches to growth while they were still part of the Presbyterian Church? Why did they experience rapid and spectacular growth as soon as they left?

First, these people were dealing with cross-cultural (cross-class) evangelism. They provided a ministry for the "uneducated" poor, provided them with the gospel and gave them things; but they did not see how these unfortunate converts could be the agents of salvation to others in the Presbyterian system. Middle-class educational and cultural standards were firmly fixed in their minds and the bairro residents just did not measure up.

Second, the preaching points never held services at the same time as the mother church. Workers could not miss at Central Church and so the only service to be offered was a Sunday afternoon Sunday school. Other bairro churches held services Sunday morning, Sunday evening and several evenings during the week. Central Church workers were not sufficiently in the bairro ministry to feel what was needed to make it a success.

Another reason is that after leaving the church Sr. Abílio had an experience with God, a humbling before the Almighty. On a trip to Argentina in a loaded bus, border authorities did not permit them to cross for three days. Without a hotel and without sanitary facilities they had to wait. God didn't give in to Sr. Abílio's wishes. Successful middle-class professionals are often filled with pride. They are proud of their professional achievements, and if evangelicals, are also proud to belong to a "respectable, learned" church like the Presbyterian.

As an elder Sr. Abílio was already a good preacher, but he was chafing under the traditional administration of the church and was fighting to turn the church in another direction. Once out of Central Church the CCM was free to adopt a contemporary worship model and learned the principles of discipleship evangelism from missionaries. If there had been peace in the church, if Sr. Abílio had been more humble, if the church had called a man like Rev. Jeremias of Belo Horizonte, the missionary spirit of CCM might have been retained for Central Church. The history of this church certainly would have been different; but then, I might never have worked in Bauru and Jardim Redentor might never have developed into a church. May God's name be praised.

CHAPTER 7 – TRADITIONAL PROTESTANTS: GOING BEYOND THE MIDDLE-CLASS

Each of the churches that I studied during my trip to Brazil merit a more profound and complete church growth study. Had complete data been filled out by church leaders prior to my going to Brazil, my study would have more value. Further, in the time allotted me I was unable to gather concrete membership data that the churches submit to their presbyteries each year. I believe however that the general picture is quite accurate and clear. In this evaluation we want to point out some general principles that led these churches to growth and then point out the areas of difficulty in relation to work among the poor and the working class.

Daughter Churches

Large wealthy middle-class churches can turn inward and bring themselves up to the highest standards of an elite and exclusive society; or they can turn outward to gather in a lost and dying world. All of the churches I studied were doing the latter.

Churches adopted two different approaches to this task. One approach is to gather people to the main church. The other is to send the people out to plant other churches. The two approaches do not have to be mutually exclusive. Ideally the church should be doing both at the same time, but in a real-world Brazilian church with a mission vision seem to concentrate on one or the other. Gathering in the lost to the main worship center implies that those gathered will be similar to the church members in culture, class and social standing. Going out to plant churches opens up the possibility of gathering people of a different social class into a church of their own that could be quite different from the mother church.

The Gathering Church

Representative of the first type is Belo Horizonte's Eighth Presbyterian Church pastored by Rev. Jeremias. It reaches out and attracts people to its worship services and enfolds them into the fellowship. Ministries like their "Tabernacle of Faith" are not meant to develop into churches. The "Tabernacle of Faith" is a structure created to meet the needs of unbelievers in a non-threatening atmosphere. It is openly interdenominational in the sense that no pressure is put on people to join an organization.

People are invited to come to let God solve their problems in the spirit of prayer. People are encouraged to establish a personal relationship with Jesus Christ, believe in him and repent of their sins, like in a church; but the focus is problem solving. As people solve their personal and emotional problems in God's way, they will generally move toward a church. The "Tabernacle of Faith" is a ministry that meets people where they are and directs them toward a church and that church often is Eighth Presbyterian. Similar North American structures are Twelve-Step meetings like Alcoholics Anonymous, Al-Anon and the like, seeker services that some churches are holding, and rescue missions like Teen Challenge and skid-row #missions.

Christian Communication and Mission early in its history formed discipleship groups. Group leaders learned basic Christian doctrine and passed it on to their home group. The members of each group invited their friends to come to the meetings. These groups strengthened new Christians in the faith but also reached out to the unsaved. In their initial stages

these groups were intermediate stages to full church membership. People could attend a home discipleship meeting without facing the stigma of entering a Protestant church. Once they felt comfortable in the fellowship of other evangelicals and had friends in the church, they could easily make the decision to join the church. A discipleship group is another structure that can bring people to the church.

In Chapter 4 of his book *#Assimilating New Members* Lyle Schaller (1978) treats the social dynamics of various types of church structures. Some are tight circles that exclude newcomers. Others are meeting places where Christians meet non-Christians and are able to draw outsiders in through the gospel and love of Christ. CCM created these new structures and grew by leaps and bounds. The groups grew, disciplined their participants and established them in the faith. These one-celled fellowship groups were then no longer able to assimilate new people into their "closed" group. The group wasn't officially closed, but new people no longer felt comfortable and the participants no longer had a pool of possible people to invite. Among friends and relatives, the lines had already been drawn. More invitations to resistant people did not bring new faces to the meetings. As a result, CCM's growth leveled off and now they are trying to restructure groups in a way that they can reach new people.

The churches like Belo Horizonte's Eighth Presbyterian and CCM place much more emphasis on a contemporary worship style. These churches use feeder organizations, but one of the principal ways that they attract outsiders is through their main worship service. People walk in and are saved. The preaching is lively and relevant to their felt needs. In the preaching God through the Scriptures addresses the issues of life and today's world. The people are often challenged to make a decision through altar calls. The music uses contemporary lyrics, tones and rhythms. Organ and piano are supplemented by or substituted for drums, guitars and horns. The people accompany praise selections with clapping and body movement and the words come from a song sheet or are projected on the wall for all to see. Styles vary, of course, from the near Pentecostal exuberance of Belo's Eighth Presbyterian to São Paulo's Vila Mariana Presbyterian Church's "traditional, but joyful" worship with its blend of old-fashioned hymns and contemporary choruses and its retention of organ and piano while adding strings.

The Church-Planting Congregation

The second model for reaching the lost is to send out teams who plant new churches in other areas of the city. The clearest examples of this type of church growth are the Central Methodist Church of Londrina in the State of Paraná and the Presbyterian Church of Ribeirão Preto in São Paulo State.

São Paulo's Vila Ipiranga Independent Presbyterian (Rev. Oswaldo Prado, pastor) and Pirituba's First Presbyterian (Rev. Ricardo Agreste, pastor) are also examples of this type. While Londrina's Central Methodist Church is "renewed," having a Pentecostal worship style, Ribeirão's First Presbyterian is traditional all the way but is not dead and boring. The organist plays, the choir sings and the congregation use hymn books just like hundreds of other traditional Evangelical churches. When Rev. Wilson Sr. was pastor, visitors were greeted and prayer requests honored. The liturgy followed the Reformed pattern, but Rev. Wilson's special treatment made it meaningful and come alive. For these churches worship is important and through it they gather the lost, but they also see themselves as a mother church, as a mission society, that has the calling to plant other churches.

These churches realize that they cannot expand their building where they are presently located. Once their building is filled, they can't hold any more. Pirituba's church is centrally

located but land-locked. In Brazil churches often don't have the option of finding an undeveloped ten acres to build a modern plant. Slums and working-class #bairros are like the tire that surrounds the business and commercial center hub and the middle-class residential rim. To relocate the church on the periphery would be analogous to middle-class suburbanites erecting a beautiful building in a slum. Relocation is out of the question. Further, not everyone can come to the church. The poor and the uneducated will not feel comfortable among the prosperous and educated. The solution is to plant churches in the bairros.

The pastors of Ribeirão's and Pirituba's Presbyterian Churches mapped their cities and appointed an elder and deacon to each section with the goal of starting a church. Both churches outlined ambitious goals. Ribeirão's Presbyterian reached the goal of one new church a year during the 1980s! Pirituba's Presbyterian may be able to match that if it can hold and expand its present ministry team.

The task of starting a new church begins with holding home meetings. Church members who live in the area gather and invite friends and neighbors to the meetings. The meetings start with a few songs, continue with a Bible study or lay preaching and followed by prayer for the needy. The pastor or one of the assistant pastors may lead, but most often a gifted layman will lead. At the first stage of development the new church is called a preaching point. The elder and the deacon provide the leadership under the supervision of the senior pastor and the mother church council.

As more people gather, the meetings move to a home that has a large open garage and here classes can meet in other rooms or they use the facilities of a school or rented building. As soon as possible resources are designated for buying land and constructing a suitable building.

At this stage it is no longer practical to have all the decision making done by the council of the mother church. A Sunday school is started and that requires a superintendent, teachers, division into classes, and literature. A building has to be rented or built, cleaned and supervised as to its usage. A Sunday evening service needs to be started and the expectations of the people will require better preaching so decisions have to be made concerning seminarians, evangelists or the schedule of the pastor. The group will organize pot-luck meals, evangelistic campaigns, and special programs. All of these things require some decision making at the local level. The group is organized as a "congregation" with a steering committee. The steering committee is similar to a church council, but does not have the full authority of a council. The appointed elder and deacon are still there, but members of the congregation are added either through appointment or election.

When the #bairro# congregation has enough members who are systematic givers and enough men who have spiritual maturity to serve as elders and deacons, the Presbytery will call an election and organize it as a church. At this point in the Presbyterian system the Presbytery replaces the mother church as the guardian of the new church.

In the Presbyterian Church of Brazil pastor-evangelists are appointed by the Presbytery to one or more churches. Other pastors are called and totally supported by their churches. These pastors are not obligated to give part of their time to weaker churches. They and their churches have more autonomy than financially deficit fields that are supervised by the Presbytery. The greatest job security and prestige goes to those pastors who are called by their churches. Pastor-evangelists are often subject to what the Committee of Field Assignments decides at the annual Presbytery meeting. Trying to conciliate the desires of pastors and churches is no easy task. The system can work well if the people involved are spiritually mature and genuinely love one another. If not, quarrels and hard feelings result from the political infighting that takes place.

The time when a congregation is organized into a church is critical for its future development. When the Presbytery removed Evangelist Germano and replaced him with ordained pastors, the congregations that he led did not fair well. In the effort to provide for new pastors the Presbytery interrupted the dynamic for outreach and growth. And the new church

stopped growing. Three congregations ceased to exist and those that were organized into churches shrank in size. Pastor Ricardo Agreste wants to keep Pirituba's newly organized churches under the mother-church's wing to assure that they continue as evangelistic, mission-minded churches; so that they will not have to deal with presbytery burdens and pressures and focus in on themselves as they try to meet them.

Rev. Wilson de Souza Lopes of Ribeirão Preto let the organized churches go to the Presbytery, but he also had been elected as president of the Presbytery. Rev. Wilson's strategy and philosophy of ministry in the mother church became the strategy and philosophy of ministry in the presbytery. When the Presbytery became too large, it was divided and the daughter churches along with the mother church formed the core of the newly-formed Presbytery of Ribeirão Preto.

Starting daughter or satellite churches is no easy task. Not every group in each part of the city grows into a congregation and then a church. Elders and deacons vary widely in ability, spiritual maturity and faithfulness. Some groups meet in resistant areas while others find great receptivity. The personalities of the leaders of some groups may even repel others and after a period of time the group ceases to meet. Even after putting up a building, congregations can fall upon hard times if the spiritual needs of the people are not met. If this happens, the building will turn into a shell that may be used at a future date by a team willing to start over again and dedicate itself to a relevant ministry. Elaborating a plan, starting home meetings, establishing preaching points and organizing a growing group into a congregation with a steering committee does not always result in a daughter church. Many preaching points are discontinued, but the hardiest make it. Sometimes the growth is rapid and a church can be organized within a couple years. Under circumstances of neglect and diverse ministry strategies at the mother church, organization of the daughter congregation can take fifteen or more years.

Central Methodist Church of Londrina uses a less haphazard method of starting daughter churches. It sends in a ministry team to investigate an area and elaborate a strategy to fill that neighborhood's needs. Then it marshals other ministry teams who buy land and build, to provide an attractive worship and to organize structures to disciple and enfold new converts and bring them into the leadership of the new church. This church has a well thought out strategy that almost guarantees successful completion of a project that is started.

Founding daughter churches opens the potential of ministering to people of a different race and class. The clearest example of this is that of a São Paulo Korean Presbyterian Church that hired Evangelist Germano to start a Brazilian Portuguese speaking church in the Liberdade neighborhood. A Brazilian evangelist was hired to do the work for them because the cultural distance was too great for the Korean church members to do the work themselves.

If the leaders and the members of the mother church who labor in the neighborhood are sensitive to the people's needs, they will disciple new converts and draw them into the ministry. As a result, the daughter church will be in tune with needs of the neighborhood and reflect its cultural and social make-up. This result is not always assured, especially if the cultural or social gap is large. Many of the churches examined in this study had problems in this area. When a church launches out to start daughter congregations in other parts of the city, it often naively assumes that if the people do what they've always done, a new church will result. What happens is that the preaching point has singing, but it's not as good as at the mother church. There often are no organ, piano, band or good singers. There may not even be a guitar player and the music must be started with a lead singer and sung a cappella. The preaching is often done by a layman who shares what is on his heart. It may serve, but it is not the same as the pastor who was trained in preaching. Laymen have their jobs and cannot make it to every meeting. While the leaders are at most of the meetings, they sometimes fail and their absence hurts the movement of immature newcomers toward the faith. All of these things seem to be tolerated and the fledgling congregation grows if love and fellowship overcome the amateur nature of the meetings. But if a

class or culture gap gets in the way of these personal fellowship bonds, the people of the bairro will not join. For example, if a poor mother feels that she is rejected by a middle-class woman because of her crying infant, she will not return. If the members dress too well, the visitors might feel uncomfortable. Even these things can be overcome, but the Christians who form the nucleus of the preaching point must be aware that these differences exist and must overcome them by overt and sustained love.

The Use of Laymen in Ministry

All the churches studied marshaled the resources of their congregation for evangelism. Willing people were identified, recruited and sent out to minister. Often that task was to meet in another part of the city, conduct a worship service and attract others to the meeting. Others had more specialized ministries like the Pentecostal-style Tabernacle of Faith of Belo's Eighth Presbyterian. Rev. Jorge Canelhas of São Paulo's Vila Mariana Presbyterian trained people in visitation evangelism and then went on to train some of them to be trainers of others. Laymen preach, lead home Bible studies, visit homes and hospitals, sit on governing boards, form building and finance committees, play instruments, sing, and more. Some pastors gave special training and others did not. Some churches like Londina's Central Methodist have monthly all-day training sessions for feeding and nurturing lay volunteers. Rev. Ricardo Barbosa of Brasilia's Planalto Presbyterian takes interested members with him to seminars and conferences. Lay ministry and lay witness is a vital part of the outreach and success of each of these churches.

A Strong Leader Pastor

Church growth was sparked by strong leaders who had a living relationship with Christ. Each in his own way has met the Savior and Lord. God is real for them. They didn't go to school as an intellectual exercise. The pastorate is not a display of intellectual acumen and leadership prowess. It is devotion to God and service to God's children already enfolded and to those lost sheep that God desires to become part of his family. They live with a consciousness of God in their lives and of his calling. They have a genuine love of God's people. They make tremendous personal sacrifices for the benefit of the church, the body of believers.

The other side of the love of God's people is a passion for souls, those who are lost and who by God's grace through the gospel will be brought into the fellowship. Evangelist Cláudio Germano says to those whom he visits, "God is interested in your life." If God is interested enough in our lives to send His Son to die for us and bring us to himself, certainly we should have that same interest in the life of sinners. Each pastor in this study has caught the vision of God's love for sinners. He has a mission vision. The Lord has opened his eyes to see a field ready to be harvested. He visualized new churches in various parts of the city, people being freed from demon possession, or young people loosed from fleshly passions, or missionaries being sent to foreign lands.

These men communicated the vision to the people. Rev. Elbem of Viçosa gathered the students together, and as soon as possible sent them out to lead meetings. Rev. Wilson of Ribeirão Preto did the same. Rev. Jeremias of Belo Horizonte has "Operation Andrew" where members pray for the salvation of people that they know and work with and invite them to the meetings of the church.

Each senior pastor has what can be termed leadership charisma. This is not immediately

obvious because some leaders are soft spoken while others are dynamic speakers and make an immediate impact. But no matter what the individual's personality, he has authority in his leadership. He is followed. Rev. Wilson, accustomed to leading a large church and directing schools, came to Ribeirão Preto with that same energy and high expectation. Rev. Ricardo of Pirituba has gained authority through solid Biblical preaching and wise counseling (D. Germano 1990). This has given the people a high degree of confidence in him. Through meetings and questionnaires, he forms a consensus upon which he builds a base for action.

Some, but not all, of the pastors have taken hold of God's promises and have not been afraid to use the power of Christ to cast out demons. Spiritual liberation and the power of prayer are weapons that God wants his church to use for victory over the evil one. While some pastors have pronounced Pentecostal leanings, others do not. All hold that the gospel of Christ liberates sinners and see it as the power of God for salvation.

As these churches have grown, they all added staff. The pastors work as a team, but the senior pastor continues to lead, define and clarify the vision. This is not team ministry in the sense that a group of men is put together and they meet together to try to define their vision and role, and then try to implement their vision. The leader was there first, or knows the church and field better, or he lays the ground rules for the discussion that goes on at the meetings of the ministry team.

Because these pastors have made tremendous sacrifices for the Lord, they are not afraid to ask their members to sacrifice. Believers are taught to be faithful by giving ten percent of their earnings to the church. With this faithfulness the churches have been able to build ministry teams that dedicate themselves to outreach and mission.

Other

Middle-class traditional Protestant churches are concerned with the poor around them. Some have established day-care centers, others provide food for the poor on a regular basis, still others support nursing homes and orphanages. Some have become involved in other social programs that minister to the needs of poor neighborhoods. Some residents have become part of the neighborhood action council and others volunteer their time to help children with their lessons after school hours. One day in Pirituba I accompanied Pastor David Germano as he went to a neighboring city to try to arrange custody for two street boys between seven and ten years of age who had run away from drunken parents. A member of the church saw them day after day sleeping under a bridge and had compassion on them. At first, she just gave them some food. Then noticing that they continued to stay around she took them to her home but was unable to keep them. Through an announcement in the church a family was found who was willing to take them in. The final step was finding the parents and arranging legal custody.

No matter how large the church gets, it is divided into smaller groups led by laymen. The leadership and members of these groups do a lot to pastor one another. Infused with the evangelistic zeal and a mission vision of the pastor they can become the focal points of growth.

The preaching point or unorganized congregation serves this function in more traditional-oriented churches while discipleship or home family groups do this in more contemporary churches.

Most but not all put the emphasis upon ministries, ministry teams, home cell groups and action groups rather than on men's, women's or youth fellowship and Bible study groups. Because these churches are able to afford it, here is often a minister of youth who organizes retreats, teaches the youth in Sunday school and mobilizes them for ministry including participation in contemporary music.

These churches are often at odds with the denomination. Often denominational Sunday

school material is abandoned for materials produced "at home." The home product usually sticks closer to the Biblical text and gives much less or no emphasis to denominational tradition. Some of the pastors teach or have taught in the denomination's seminaries, but feel pressure from colleagues in the Presbytery or from denominational leaders to conform with known traditional patterns. These churches are financially independent and do not have to submit to the Presbytery's appointment of pastor-evangelists. The denominational system is regarded as filled with traditionalism, legalism and self-serving political maneuvering. At the same time, in spite of the hardships or lack of companionship that their innovative strategies have created, these pastors play important roles in the denomination and do not separate themselves from her.

One of the most fruitful methods to assure church growth is home visitation. Milton Leitão of Viçosa, Jorge Canelhas and Cludio Germano of São Paulo are the prime examples of this. Most senior pastors are so busy with administration, leadership training, speaking and teaching that they cannot be out on the street. As a result, visitation is delegated or relegated to others and often it never gets done. I heard a speaker at a Chicago conference of the Institute of American Church Growth (Win Arn) on small churches make the statement that if the pastor made twenty new contacts each week, the church would grow. When I began my ministry in Goiânia, I had no pastoral experience except for summer assignments during seminary. I was a foreigner in a strange land just out of language school and could not be considered well-versed in either the language or the customs of the people. Would I make it as a missionary pastor? A Brazilian encouraged me by saying that if I was faithful in visiting the people, the church would grow in spite of my other deficiencies--and it did! The Apostle Paul reminded the pastors of the church in Ephesus when he saw them for the last time that he preached the gospel publicly and "from house to house" (Acts 20:20). This is a method especially appropriate for poorer people who often invite the stranger at the door to come in "sight unseen!" "Respectable" and "dignified" people don't walk the streets like Jehovah's Witnesses and peddlers. It's not especially exalting to get your shoes dusty or muddy, to have the neighborhood "kennel" announce your arrival or to have someone else's "best friend" nip at your ankles. Nonetheless a visitor meets the people and gets to know the neighborhood. He becomes visible to the people. Some wealthy people put up high walls around their homes and guard them with watch dogs. Others live in apartments where you have to announce your arrival through an intercom. Still there are acceptable ways of making contact with these people at their level on the social scale.

Raymond Bakke in his book *#The Urban Christian#* urges pastors to work at making primary relationships with neighbors of the church (1987, 59). He points out that urban people are swamped by an overload of secondary relationships, like with clerks at the check-out. They are also swamped by the media, salesmen, telephone hustlers and street vendors. Bakke says that the only effective evangelism is personal (1987, 146-147). Every pastor that takes some time from his busy schedule to meet non-Christians on their turf in an evangelistic and or pastoral way will have material to make his preaching relevant, will be kept humble (unbelievers do a good job at taking the halo away), and will be able to train others in this important ministry.

All of the above factors are positive elements stimulating the growth of traditional Protestant churches in Brazil. Yet it must be said that these churches were geared to minister to the needs of the middle and lower-middle classes. No church or satellite church was able to experience growth among the masses of urban workers like the Pentecostal denominations. One of the main reasons is that a middle-class church will view the poor as objects of mercy to be ministered to and to be helped in their misery. Poor people are rarely if ever seen as potential agents for the salvation of others. They are not seen as preachers, singers, deacons, tithers, and helpers. Middle-class people have difficulty seeing them as resources except for menial and humble tasks.

Another reason touches the heart of traditional Protestant ministry. Churches in the Reformed tradition require their pastors to have seminary training. Apprenticeship training, if

accepted in rare exceptions, is frowned upon. As a result, the full-time paid clergy belongs to the middle-class by reason of his education. How does a person feel when he is called to give his sacrificial tithe to support a pastoral standard of living that is two, three or more times higher than his own? Elders and deacons who head a preaching point in effect are tent-making pastors but lack any official status as such. Further, they generally do not have any ambition to become pastors. While they play the role, they do not have the same drive that Pentecostal deacons have when they are put in charge of a preaching point.

MIDDLE-CLASS BONDAGE OF TRADITIONAL BRAZILIAN PROTESTANTISM

Part II: [Not in final thesis: Analysis of data gathered in August, 1990]

Before leaving Brazil, I visited Bauru, the city where I labored from 1979 through 1985 in several of its neighborhoods in cooperation with the Presbyterian Church of Bauru. There I talked with old friends and got caught up with some of the things that happened since we left the field.

The year that I came to Bauru a small group of people interested in evangelism left the Central to start their own mission (Christian Communication and Mission: CCM) when they were forced out in a struggle for control of the direction of the church. At the time the leader of the group, Abilio Pinheiro Chagas, a lawyer and active in city administration, was an elder. Borrowing ideas from Argentinian Pentecostals and from American missionaries of SEPAL (Servico de Evangelizacao para America Latina) [Overseas Crusades] the group began to grow through discipleship training and friendship evangelism. They met in a rented hall where their capital outlay was small and they could channel the energy and resources into ministry. With one or two other men Sr. Abilio formed a leadership team and they developed together. Worship took a new style where the people raise and clap their hands and even dance to contemporary Christian music. For a time converts were baptized by visiting ministers in Sr. Abilio's swimming pool. Believer's baptism by immersion is still practiced, but after being chosen by the group and commissioned by the group to be its pastor, baptisms are done by him and other pastors on the ministry team. In the early stages the group was divided into discipleship groups where the leaders received their orientation from the ministers and transmitted that in smaller groups. Fastest growth occurred between 1979 and 1988 when membership hit about 650 and there were 70 discipleship groups. But as many of the believers matured in the faith their needs changed. Since 1989 the church has been trying to organize home fellowship groups, after the pater of Paul Yonggi Cho of Korea. In 1990 there were 475 participating in 20 groups. The CCM got the use of land on a busy avenue from the city and has put up an inflatable tent for worship services and is starting a day care center. It has a ministry to about 300 boys who get uniforms and training, are assigned to watch parked cars, and receive lodging from Friday night through Sunday and breakfast Friday and Saturday.

The church has started preaching points in four outlying neighborhoods. The oldest of these works was started in 1985 and now numbers about 80 people, 50 children and 30 adults. The ministry consists of a Bible School at the Community Center for the children and a mid-week worship with the parents. Six families have been converted and attend the evening worship at the mother church. These families receive bus passes paid for by the church to help them pay for the expense of getting to a church that is distant from their home. Another six families do not make the trip to downtown.

When Sr. Abilio left the Central Presbyterian Church they were excluded from working in that church's two preaching points. In 1979 I assumed the ministry of one of those neighborhoods (Jardim Redentor) and later the other one in Vila Santa Helena. Until then they held an afternoon Sunday School and gathered children and some adults by using clothing, candy and food as incentives. People were being saved, but were never trained in discipleship and given leadership positions. With a program almost entirely geared for children adults joined other churches of the area, mostly Pentecostal. Some members attended both in the neighborhood and evening worship at the Central church. These formed the core of the new church that eventually developed. By 1984 the church was organized with elders and deacons and a year later I left. After some rough times adapting to pastors, it now has a full-time pastor and a parsonage and ministers to another neighborhood with a preaching point.

It was through ministry in close cooperation with the Central church as pastor of the congregations in working-class neighborhoods that I began to feel the tremendous social distance between the middle-class and the working class as it related to ministry and church growth. When we arrived in Bauru only 12 adults were attending, the fruit of about ten years of labor. When we started to make changes that required faithful attendance and participation, half of these fell away. There were only three members at the other preaching point. Why was it that Sr. Abilio and his group were unable to lead to the ministries to growth while they were still part of the Presbyterian Church? but as soon as they got on their own, their growth was both spectacular and rapid?

One reason is that their rapid growth was from people in the middle-class. The other reason is that after leaving the church and search of a better ministry model Sr. Abilio had an experience with God, a humbling before the Almighty as he had to wait in much discomfort a couple days in a bus on the Argentine boarder. Successful middle-class professionals are often filled with pride. They are proud of their professional achievements, but also proud not to belong to a "respectable, learned" church like the Presbyterian, if they are evangelicals. As an elder Sr. Abilio was already a good preacher, but was chafing at the traditional administration of the church.

A third reason is that this group adopted a contemporary worship model and learned the principles of discipleship evangelism from missionaries. If a man like Rev. Jeremias of Belo Horizonte had gotten the call just prior to my coming to Bauru, the energies of this group probably would have been retained for the Central church and it might have experienced rapid and sustained growth.

Each of the churches that I studied during my trip to Brazil merit a more profound and complete church growth study. Had complete data been filled out by church leaders prior to my going to Brazil, my study would have more value. As it is, I was unable in the time allotted to gather concrete membership data that the churches submit to their presbyteries each year. I believe however that the general picture is quite accurate and clear. In this evaluation we want to point out some general principles that led these churches to growth and then point out the areas of difficulty in relation to work among the poor and the working class.

First of all, church growth was sparked by strong leaders who had a living relationship with Christ. Each in his own way has met the Savior and Lord. God is real for them. What I am saying is that they didn't just go to school to learn knowledge about God and methods of church government and expansion, etc. They live with a consciousness of God in their lives.

2. They have a genuine love of God's people. They make tremendous personal sacrifices for the benefit of the church, the body of believers.

3. The other side of the love of God's people is a passion for souls, those who are lost and who by God's grace through the Gospel will be brought into the fellowship. As evangelist Claudio Germano says, "God is interested in your life." If God is interested enough in our lives to send His Son to die for us and bring us to Himself, certainly we should have that same interest in the life of sinners. Each pastor has a mission vision. The Lord has opened their eyes to see a field ready to be harvested.

4. These men communicate this vision to the people. Rev. Elbem of Vicosia gathered the students together, and as soon as possible sent them out to lead meetings. Rev. Wilson of Ribeirao Preto did the same. Rev. Jeremias of Belo Horizonte has Operation Andrew where members pray for the salvation of people that they know and work to bring them to the meetings of the church.

5. These pastors have made use of the talents and resources of the layman in the church. Because these pastors have made tremendous sacrifices for the Lord, they are not afraid to ask their members to sacrifice. Believers are taught to be faith by giving ten percent of their earnings to the church. With this faithfulness the churches have been able to build ministry teams that

dedicate themselves to outreach and mission. Laymen preach, lead home Bible studies, visit, sit on governing boards, form building and finance committees, play instruments, sing, and more.

6. Each senior pastor has what can be termed leadership charisma. This is not immediately obvious because some leaders are soft spoken and while others are dynamic speakers and make an immediate impact. But no matter what the individual's personality, he has authority in his leadership. He is followed. Rev. Wilson, accustomed to leading a large church and directing schools, came to Ribeirao Preto and with that same energy and high expectation and with a clear vision of what he wanted to happen, had the church approve his plan, hired men to recruit volunteers, etc. Rev. Ricardo of Pirituba has gained authority through solid Biblical preaching and wise counseling and through meeting and questionnaires forms a consensus upon which he builds a base for action.

7. As these churches have grown, they all added staff. The pastors work as a team, but the senior pastor continues to lead and define and clarify the vision. This is not team ministry in the sense that a group of men is put together and they meet together to try to define their vision and role, and then try to implement their vision. The leader is there first, or knows the church better and the field better, or he lays the ground rules for the discussion that goes on at the meetings of the ministry team.

8. Most of the churches have started or are starting satellite churches. The motivation is to spread the Gospel. More and more there is an awareness that people of a certain neighborhood are attracted to their own kind and like to meet near their home. In a country where few are able to afford a car, it is necessary that a worship center be accessible. Further, a multiplicity of congregations can minister better to local needs.

9. The church are concerned with the poor around them. Some have established day-care centers, other provide food for the poor on a regular basis, other are involved with nursing homes and orphanages. Some have become involved in other social programs that minister to the needs of poor neighborhoods. Some residents have become part of the neighborhood action council and other volunteer their time to help children with their lessons after school hours. One day in Pirituba I accompanied Pastor David as he went to a neighboring city to try to arrange custody for two boys between 7 and 10 years of age who had run away from drunken parents and who had been taken in by a woman of the church who saw them day after day sleeping under bridge and had compassion on them.

10. Some but not all of the pastors have taken hold of God's promises and not been afraid to use the power of Christ to cast out oppressive demons. Spiritual liberation and the power of prayer are weapons that God wants his church to use for victory over the evil one.

11. Worship is lively and participatory, some more so than others. Each pastor has his own style. Some use a lot of contemporary music with national rhythms, all use simple choruses to some extent. Traditional hymns are not necessarily abandoned, however. People come forward to altar calls and make prayer requests.

12. No matter how large the church gets, it is divided into smaller groups led by laymen. The leadership and members of these groups do a lot to pastor one another and infused with the evangelistic zeal of the pastor are focal points of growth. The preaching point or unorganized congregation serve this function in more traditional oriented churches while discipleship or home family groups do this in more contemporary churches.

13. Most but not all put the emphasis upon ministries, ministry teams, home cell groups and action groups rather than on men's, women's or youth fellowship and Bible study groups. Because these churches are able to afford it, there is often a minister of youth who organizes retreats, teaches the youth in Sunday School and mobilized them for ministry including participation in contemporary music.

14. These churches are often at odds with the denomination. Often denominational Sunday School material is abandoned for materials produced "at home." The home product

usually sticks closer to the Biblical text, gives much less or no emphasis to denominational tradition. The leaders teach in seminaries, but feel pressure from colleagues in the presbytery or from denominational leaders to conform with known traditional patterns. These churches are financially independent and do not have to submit to the presbytery's appointment of pastor-evangelists. The denominational system is regarded as filled with traditionalism, legalism and self-serving political maneuvering on the part of some pastors while others of weaker character coast along. At the same time, these pastors play important roles in the denomination and do not separate themselves from her in spite of the hardships or lack of companionship that their changes have created.

15. One of the most fruitful methods to assure church growth is home visitation. Milton Leitao of Vicosã, Jorge Canelhas and Claudio Germano of Sao Paulo are the prime examples in this study. Most senior pastors are too busy with administration, leadership training, speaking and teaching that they cannot be out on the street. As a result, this type of work is delegated or relegated to others and often it never gets done. One speaker at a conference of the Institute of American Church Growth (Win Arn) on small church made the statement that if the pastor made twenty new contacts each week, the church would grow. When I began my ministry in Goiania, without pastoral experience a foreigner in a strange land and just out of language school, a Brazilian pastor told me that if I was faithful in visiting the people, the church would grow in spite of my other deficiencies--and it did! The Apostle Paul reminded the pastors of the church in Ephesus when he saw them for the last time, "You know that I have not hesitated to preach anything that would be helpful to you but have taught you publicly and from house to house" (Acts 20:20). This is a method especially appropriate for poorer people who often invite the stranger at the door to come in "sight unseen!" "Respectable" and "dignified" people don't walk the streets like Jehovah's Witnesses and peddlers. It's not especially exalting to get your shoes dusty or muddy, to have the neighborhood kennel announce your arrival to have someone else's "best friend" nip at your legs. But a person does meet the people and get to know the neighborhood and he becomes visible to the people. More wealthy people put up high walls around their homes and guard them with watch dogs. Others live in apartments where you have to announce your arrival through an intercom. But there are acceptable ways of making contact with people no matter what at what social level they live. I am convinced that every pastor should take some time from his busy schedule to meet non-Christians on their turf in an evangelistic and or pastoral way so that his preaching will be relevant, so that he will be kept humble (unbelievers do a good job at taking the halo away), and so that he will be able to train others in this important ministry. Ed Bakke makes these same points in his book..... (his experience as a home missionary in Chicago).

All of these things are factors in the growth of the churches studied. Yet it must be said that they are by and large geared to the middle and lower-middle classes. No satellite church or ministry has been adapted to the lower classes as have the Pentecostal denominations.

The reasons:

1. Educated clergy: unable to enter ordained ministry through apprenticeship methods.
2. Full-time clergy paid at middle-class levels
3. The poor are seen as poor in need of help and not as resources for church expansion.
4. A lot of progress has been made in the area of lay leadership/ministry
5. Ibid; discipleship by pastors
6. Ibid; gifts of the spirit
7. Naive approach to contextualization: Until recently, however, zealous traditional evangelical church took a rather naive approach. No matter what the social level of the neighborhood it was assumed that the church structure would be the same and that the message would be the same. In the poorer neighborhoods the people just didn't meet the expectations of middle-class controlled churches.

CHAPTER 8 – ENGLISH AND N. AMERICAN ANTECEDENTS OF BRAZILIAN PATTERNS

Now that we have examined some of the patterns of church growth in Brazil among urban working-class people, it is time to ask ourselves if these same principles might apply to North American blue-collar and service sector workers. We would expect that different cultural, economic and social patterns demand different methods. Yet I believe that there are enough similarities that the application of some of these principles in North America has merit. In order to do this, I will show that some of these church growth principles were used in England and North America before Protestant missionaries were allowed to work in Latin America. While the Pentecostal Revival in Brazil is taking place in a Latin Catholic culture, the Wesleyan Revival broke in Protestant England. This brings our study closer to our own cultural tradition even though it took place in a different historical time frame.

What principles of church growth do Brazilian Pentecostalism and the Wesleyan Revival of eighteenth-century England share? First, both reached and ministered to the lower, laboring class, a class marginalized and neglected by the established church. Second, both were counter cultural movements. John Wesley was concerned with the truth and with holy, righteous living. He didn't tailor his message to attract large crowds. The saving of souls and their perfection in following the Lord was uppermost in his mind and everything was a means to this end. They are in a spiritual battle to seek and to save the lost. Third, both used apprenticeship, discipleship training methods to discover and then train men for the ministry. Successful evangelism was the criteria for ecclesiastical advancement and authority. Fourth, both Wesley and Brazilian Pentecostal pastors kept their disciple-assistants directly and personally responsible to themselves. Those in apprenticeship training had to be obedient to their teacher-leader. Fifth, small groups were formed for new converts where they were pastored and nurtured in the faith. In the context of a small group, spiritual discipline was exercised and believers cared for one another and were accountable to one another.

The Wesleyan Revival in England

From the time that he began "field preaching" in 1739 to his death fifty-two years later John Wesley traveled some 225,000 miles by horse or carriage, preached more than 40,000 times to some crowds that numbered more than 20,000 people. Through his tireless preaching, the organization of societies, bands and classes and the appointment of itinerant lay preachers, Wesley created an organization that numbered 72,000 in Great Britain and a fledgling denomination of 57,000 in America by the time he died in 1791 (Synder 1980, 3).

The remarkable thing about this movement is that it mostly reached the poverty-stricken and exploited workers of a country in the process of rapid industrialization and urbanization. England then was going through a social revolution similar to that of the United States in the latter part of the nineteenth century and to that of Brazil and many third-world countries today. It was a time when coal miners and factory workers filled the ranks of the lower classes, lived in crowded urban tenements and suffered from rising rents and food prices while cut-throat industrial competition reduced their wages. Synder compares England's eighteenth-century laboring class social conditions to Chicago's worst ghetto of today (1980, 2).

All his life John Wesley intended that Methodists continue in the Church of England, continue as members of their parish and receive the sacraments from the ordained clergy. He did not want to start a new denomination but hoped to revitalize the one to which he belonged. Wesley was an innovator in his development of a discipling and nurturing system through small groups, in his use of lay evangelists and his efforts for social reform, but his aim was not

structural or social, but spiritual and theological. In 1734 he wrote his father, "My one aim in life is to secure personal holiness, for without being holy myself I cannot promote real holiness in others" (Synder 1980, 14). After returning from Georgia in 1738 Wesley met the young Moravian missionary Peter Bohler and came to the conviction that he lacked true saving faith. At this time he reread the New Testament in Greek and found evidence of instantaneous conversions in the early church. While attending a small group meeting of the Moravian brethren in Aldersgate Street, he had the famous "heart-warming experience" that so dramatically altered his future. He wrote, "I felt I did trust in Christ, Christ alone for salvation; and an assurance was given me that He had taken away my sins, even mine, and saved me from the law of sin and death" (Snyder 1980, 26).

Wesley was concerned that he and his followers know God and his will and that they obey it. He believed in disciplined living. In fact the reason that he kept a private diary was to measure and record his progress in holy living and to promote his spiritual growth through the management of his time (Heitzenrater 1988, 12). Methodism derives its name from the methods that his followers used to promote discipline in the Christian life. Wesley broke with the Moravians in 1740 not only because he felt that they did not give the sacraments their proper place but also because, in his opinion, they did not balance their emphasis upon inward spirituality with a proper regard to the ethical side of Christianity. "He saw that works were worthless in attaining the new birth, but he was equally persuaded of the absolute moral necessity of good works as the evidence of regeneration and the inevitable expression of holy love" (Synder 1980, 46). "Band members were expected to abstain from doing evil, to be zealous of good works, including giving to the poor, and to use all the means of grace" (Snyder 1980, 59). One of the rules for their meetings was "To speak each of us in order, freely and plainly, the true state of our souls, with the faults we have committed in thought word, or deed, and the temptations we have felt, since our last meeting" (Snyder's italics not shown; Synder 1980, 59).

This concern with the will of God was complemented by the experience of personal conversion, faith in Jesus Christ that gives complete forgiveness and a new life in intimate fellowship with a living Lord. Frances Young states that after his conversion Wesley began to pray for his enemies. The total sense of security that all his sins were paid for and that the perfect righteousness of Christ was credited to his account freed him from worry about his own personal salvation and his own respectability (Young 1988, 39). Until he met Whitefield in Bristol and witnessed his field preaching to "inferior" people of society, Wesley had been, to use his own words, "so tenacious of every point relating to decency and order, that I should have thought the saving of souls almost a sin if it had not been done in a church" (Snyder's italics not shown; Snyder 1980, 33). The love of Christ compelled him to think of the eternal welfare of others and to make the personal sacrifice that was necessary for a servant of Christ to win the lost.

In eighteenth-century England someone had to cross a cultural barrier for the gospel to reach the colliers (coal miners) and factory workers who lived in urban slums. George Whitefield discovered this receptive audience. Soon after his return from preaching in America Whitefield was barred from London pulpits. He left for Bristol where in February of 1739 he preached for the first time in the open air to about 200 miners. Within three weeks the crowds exploded to 10,000 and Whitefield appealed to the Wesleys, former Oxford colleagues, for help. Would John Wesley--son of a minister, Oxford trained, and holding proper class credentials--be willing "to be more vile" and preach in the open air to these commoners? Would he like Whitefield, in the words of London gentleman, give "charitable Lectures" to these "Vulgar," "inferior People" and "detain" them "from their daily Labour," thus creating a rise in the price of coal and bringing "a Loss ... to the Publick"? (Snyder 1980, 32). Would he become "poor" in order to win the poor? We know the answer. A powerful evangelistic movement arose because

a man of God was willing to cross a cultural barrier and recognize that workers were loved by God. In God's eyes they counted for more than merely a means of production in the new factory system.

Evidently the churches were not a place where poor laborers would feel welcome. The well-to-do bought their pews while the poor were expected to "know their place." In order for the poor to feel welcome both the place and the style of worship would have to be adapted to their needs. This is what John Wesley's mother discovered at Epworth during her pastor husband's prolonged absences on trips to London. She started a small meeting at the parsonage. It first started when a few neighbors asked to attend the family devotional time that she held for the children on Sunday evenings. In a short time the group grew from thirty to over 200 people. Susannah Wesley would read a sermon, pray and then talk with the people. As a result of these meetings, church attendance jumped dramatically, but the Rev. Samuel Wesley had them stopped when he returned from London. The fact that the meetings were led by a woman and could be seen as a conventicle or private religious gathering seems to have caused him considerable embarrassment (Synder 1973, 16-18).

Class meetings were first held in homes until they required larger meeting places. The new buildings were simple structures and called "preaching houses" to distinguish them from churches (Campbell 1991, 34). When Wesley needed to find a meeting place in London for the large number of people who were gathering, he did not build an imposing church sanctuary but moved his headquarters to an abandoned and burned-out foundry. After remodeling, the old hulk housed a galleried chapel to accommodate 1,500 people, a large room that held 300, a free school, a shelter for widows and a free dispensary. In the chapel the people, both rich and poor, sat on plain benches instead of pews (Synder 1973, 48). At Methodist meeting places, whether large or small, humble people could feel comfortable and welcome.

In order to care for new converts Wesley created "a system of discipline-in-community" (Synder 1980, 53). It was a system of classes, bands and societies served by itinerant lay evangelists under the direct supervision of Wesley himself. In other words, it was a system of larger and smaller groups. Wesley mobilized and trained laymen for leadership roles. They became leaders but continued accountable to him as disciples are to their master.

Class meetings were house churches that were open to the public and membership was granted to "any person determined to save his soul. . . . This desire must be evidenced by three marks: Avoiding all known sin; doing good after his power; and, attending all the ordinances of God" (Synder 1980, 55). At the meetings, held on a mid-week evening for about an hour, each person reported on his or her spiritual progress, shared particular needs or problems and received the prayers and support of the others (Synder 1980, 55). Because pointed inquiry and exhortation was bathed in genuine love and concern, the class meeting became the place where the great majority of conversions took place (Synder 1980,56). The class leader had two main duties:

- (1.) To see each person in his class, once a week at the least, in order to inquire how their souls prosper; to advise, reprove, comfort, or exhort, as occasion may require; to receive what they are willing to give, toward the relief of the poor. (2.) To meet the Minister and the Stewards of the society, in order to inform the Minister of any that are sick, or of any that are disorderly and will not be reproved; to pay the Stewards what they have received of their several classes in the week preceding. (Synder's italics not shown; Synder 1980, 54-55)

Each member of a class was issued a small card that carried his name and the signature of Wesley or one of the preachers. This card or ticket was proof of membership and admitted the carrier to the quarterly love feast. Exclusion from the society resulted if the minister did not renew the card. This was never done for doctrinal differences but mostly for failure to take their

religion seriously enough which always involved one's conduct to his neighbor (Snyder 1980, 58).

Offerings, "A penny a week and a shilling a quarter," were handled by the stewards and destined at first to help the poor and later provided the main support for the itinerant preachers (Snyder 1980, 55).

Bands were smaller (five to ten people) and generally divided by ages, sex and marital status. They were restricted to people who had the assurance of remission of sins. Some member of the group was chosen to lead the meeting and start the discussion by laying bare his own spiritual condition and then by inquiring into the state of the others present. "Questions to be asked each week were: (1) What known sins have you committed since our last meeting? (2) What temptations have you met with? (3) How were you delivered? (4) What have you thought, said, or done, of which you doubt whether it be a sin or not?" (Snyder 1980, 59-60). While classes were more disciplinary in character, the bands were to aid the spiritual progress of their members.

An even more intimate cell group called a Select Society was organized for those who had made marked progress toward inward and outward holiness. Those who lapsed in faith or practice and who wanted to return joined a group of penitents (Snyder 1980, 61-62).

Wesley's system of classes and bands continued till 1912 in England and 1866 in the United States. Well before its demise the class system had lost its vitality. Without their previous evangelistic zeal and life-transforming power, classes became legalistic or moralistic (Snyder 1980, 62). When they functioned as intended, they resembled Alcoholics Anonymous and other similar Twelve-Step small group programs. The classes and bands fulfilled a real need as people came under conviction and relied on the stimulus and encouragement of fellow believers so as to walk the Christian life.

Wesley brought his thought and disciplined life to bear upon every member of the classes and bands through his itinerant lay preachers, who were under his direct supervision (Snyder 1980, 63). "The itinerants were taught to manage difficulties in the societies, to face mobs, to brave any weather, to subsist without means, except such as might casually occur on their routes, to rise at four and preach at five o'clock, to scatter books and tracts, to live by rule, and to die without fear" (Snyder 1980, 63). Snyder estimates that through the appointment of class and band leaders and traveling evangelists that "Wesley put one in ten, perhaps one in five, to work in significant ministry and leadership" (Snyder 1980, 63).

It was unauthorized preaching that brought John Wesley into conflict with church authorities. The canons of 1603 had said, "Neither the minister, churchwardens, nor any other officers of the church shall suffer any man to preach within their churches or chapel, but such as by showing their license to preach, shall appear unto them to be sufficiently authorized thereunto" (Lawson 1963, 21). This rule was broken when Wesley and his friends preached in fields and open places to the "rabble." When Wesley organized the converts into small groups, he appointed helpers from among the people to give these groups spiritual care and oversight, and one of their duties was to "expound" (Lawson 1963, 25). In other words, he appointed people to preach who did not have the proper ecclesiastical credentials. When the classes and bands became too numerous for personal oversight, Wesley appointed the most capable band leaders as itinerant evangelists to take his place. Except for their preaching they were functionally similar to "readers," the assistants to bishops, who were allowed to read the Scripture and bury the dead but not administer the sacraments.

There were two main objections to Wesley's lay preachers: they were unordained and they were "ignorant" and "illiterate." Countering the first, Wesley made a distinction between the ordinary office of ordained pastors of churches and the extraordinary office of traveling preacher-evangelists. To the second objection, Wesley wrote, "I am bold to affirm, that these unlettered men have help from God, for that great work, the saving of souls from death; seeing

he hath enabled, and doth enable them still, to turn many to righteousness" (Lawson 1963, 23). "Turning many to righteousness" was proof of the validation of a man's ministry (Lawson 1963, 83). Wesley would say that they have "a competent knowledge of the Word of God and of the work of God in the souls of men." Proof of their calling was given by their "converting sinners from the error of their ways" (Lawson 1963, 101).

Wesley never founded a seminary, but had a list of books from which the lay preachers read (Lawson 1963, 34). Wesley's assistants were to spend the mornings from 6:00 till noon in reading writing and prayer. He kept his lay preachers on the move with no more than one year spent on any circuit. "Itinerants must be itinerants if they are to remain in connexion with him [Wesley]. The societies would become as dead as stones if men remained in the same place too long" (Lawson 1963, 103-4). Wesley required that his assistants travel just as he did. Workers were kept on trial for a year or more and appointed to a circuit only if they proved worthy. Wesley put his men to work, gave them the "Twelve Rules of a Helper" and supervised their work. They could not publish without Wesley's permission nor were they allowed to confer with him unless they had been first invited by him. Wesley considered his lay-preachers to be learners rather than teachers. Their training and study was directed towards preaching what they learned (Lawson 1963, 104-5). Methodist circuit riders received obedience oriented, discipleship apprenticeship training in ministry.

In the end the artificial distinction between church and class, and between lay evangelists and ordained clergy could not be maintained. In America the War of Independence so disrupted the Church of England that the English clergy had to return to their homeland. As a result the Methodists, who were dependent upon the clergy of the Church of England for the sacraments, were deprived of this means of grace. Shortly afterwards Wesley, along with two ordained clergymen associated with him, ordained two representatives of the American church first as deacons and then the next day as elders. Wesley also revised the Thirty-nine Articles, reducing them to 24 and excising all reference to Calvinistic teaching (Sweet 1950, 194). Having been ordained as superintendent of the Methodist Societies in America by the two elders, Thomas Coke sailed for America where he and Francis Asbury organized the Methodist Episcopal Church on December 24, 1784 in Baltimore (Sweet 1950, 194-5). Wesley resisted separation from the Church of England until his death, but after he was gone the will of his followers and preachers prevailed and in 1795 they reorganized themselves as a separate church (Campbell 1991, 35).

At their second conference in 1745 the Wesleys, another clergyman and eight assistants, expressed themselves on church government and in so doing outlined a philosophy of ministry that gave the priority to evangelism and discipleship. Wesley posited the principle that ecclesiastical authority and advancement is a consequence of evangelistic fruitfulness, something that comes to practical expression in the Pentecostal churches of Brazil.

The plain origin of church-government seems to be this. Christ sends forth a preacher of the Gospel. Some who hear him repent and believe the Gospel. They then desire him to watch over them, to build them up in the faith, and to guide their souls in the paths of righteousness. Here then is an independent congregation, subject to no pastor but their own, neither liable to be controlled in things spiritual by any other man or body of men whatsoever.

But soon after some from other parts, who are occasionally present while he speaks in the name of Him that sent him, beseech him to come over and help them also. Knowing it to be the will of God he consents (complies), yet not till he has conferred with the wisest and holiest of his congregation, and with their advice appointed one who has gifts and grace to watch over the flock till his return.

If it please God to raise another flock in the place, before he leaves them he does the same thing, appointing one whom God has fitted for the work to watch

over these souls also. In like manner, in every place where it pleases God to gather a little flock by his word, he appoints one in his absence to take the oversight of the rest, and to assist them of the ability which God giveth. These are Deacons, or servants of the church, and look on their first pastor as their common father. And all these congregations regard him in the same light, and esteem him still as the shepherd of their souls.

These congregations are not strictly independent. They depend on one pastor, though not on each other.

As these congregations increase, and as the Deacons grow in years and grace, they need other subordinate Deacons or helpers; in respect of whom they may be called Presbyters, or Elders, as their father in the Lord may be called the Bishop or Overseer of them all. (Lawson 1963, 35)

Someone has suggested that Wesley should have been ordained bishop by the Church of England in the mid-eighteenth century, soon after he started organizing classes and bands and using itinerant lay preachers, so that his movement might have been kept within the Church of England instead of leading to schism (Lawson 1963, 168). The fact of the matter was that John Wesley was ostracized by the establishment of the church. If Wesley's contemporaries among the clergy would have shown appreciation for his evangelical zeal and empowerment of the laboring poor, they not only would have ordained him as bishop, but other bishops might have used the same principles to win the lost.

Without a doubt the Methodist revival changed the spiritual and social climate of England and made social reforms and the abolition of the slave trade possible, but Wesley did not regard it the task of a religious worker to play the role of social reformer by agitating for land and tax reform, or dealing with questions of wages and working conditions (MacArthur 1936, 34). His "social gospel was one of redeeming society by means of redeemed individuals" (MacArthur 1936, 80). He did not believe that social ills would ever be fully remedied by government intervention (MacArthur 1936, 34). He didn't talk about government financial policy, but for his followers he gave the following financial advice: "Gain all you can without hurting either yourself or your neighbor, in soul or body. . . . save all you can, by cutting off every expense which serves only to indulge foolish desire--give all you can" to help those who are in need (MacArthur 1936, 100-101). He personally exemplified this philosophy in his own life.

John Wesley was a Tory, a monarchist who loyally supported the policies of King George III, and taught obedience to the king. But this did not affect Wesley's prophetic preaching to members of every class. He called everyone to true discipleship and experiential religion, and many went away sorrowful because they had great possessions. "The challenge was not so much in what he said as in his readiness to say it to duke as well as dustman, and those who became uneasy when they heard ladies and gentlemen included among lost sinners that Jesus came to save were right to be worried, for this was a leveling Gospel and socially subversive in the true sense" (Guy 1988, 118). While it is true that Wesley had great compassion for the laboring poor, "he made no fundamental critique of the free enterprise system" and the emerging industrial, factory system, something that Karl Marx would do a century later in England from a non-Christian standpoint (Snyder 1980, 159).

The American Frontier: Methodists and Baptists

After the War of Independence waves of immigrants reached American shores and settlers crossed the Alleghenies moving westward into Kentucky, Ohio and Indiana. The

churches that could meet the needs of the settlers and adapt to a rapidly moving population "were the ones destined to become the great American churches" (Sweet 1950, 208).

On the frontier Baptists were generally the first to establish a church because their preachers were one of the settlers. A typical Baptist preacher worked his land five or six days a week except when called upon to hold weekday meetings or funerals. He often lacked much formal education. Because of the deep-seated prejudice against educated and salaried ministers, the farmer-preacher usually worked without compensation although some of them received some support in kind (Sweet 1950, 217).

How did these men become pastors? They were first permitted to "exercise their gifts" by a vote of the congregation. After a period he would become a licensed preacher if his ministry was accepted and blessed with conversions. Sometimes there would be several ministers in a congregation although one would be chosen as the "pastor of the flock." When a licensed preacher was chosen as the leader of a regular congregation he would be ordained (Sweet 1950, 217).

Baptist churches were organized with as little as six to ten members with the average being no more than twenty. The first meeting places were the rude cabins of the settlers. When numbers grew larger, a church building would be erected. Churches were started by licensed or ordained farmer-preachers who settled in a new area. Sometimes several ministers would band together to form new churches (Sweet 1950, 217-8).

At first Wesley's American unordained preachers were dependent upon Anglican clergymen for the administration of the sacraments, but in 1784 they organized themselves into the Methodist Episcopal denomination. All the early Methodist preachers were itinerants. The system that Wesley organized to minister to the "classes" and "societies" among English urban workers was ideally suited to the frontier. Each preacher was appointed to a circuit that included twenty to thirty classes. He preached almost every day with the possible exception of Monday and it took him about four to five weeks to visit all the classes on his circuit. The circuit rider did not wait for Methodists to move into new communities within his assigned area. His task was not to find the Methodists but to make them out of the raw material that he found on the frontier. He preached in log cabins, barrooms of taverns or even under a tree. Whenever there were enough believers to be gathered into a class, he would appoint leaders who conducted the meetings and pastorally cared for the people until his next visit (Sweet 1950, 218-9).

The Methodist system of lay or "local" preachers also lent itself to the spread of Methodism.

A young man who gave any evidence of ability in public speaking was urged by the class leader and by the circuit preacher to "exercise his gifts," and if he proved useful, when the presiding elder came around to hold the "quarterly meeting conference" the young man was recommended to receive and "exhorters license." Some of these lay preachers joined the "conference" and became regular traveling preachers, but many of them remained lay preachers, preaching frequently in the vicinity of their homes, and were often instrumental in organizing classes in new settlements. These men, like the Baptist farmer-preachers, had little learning but were full of zeal and earnestness. (Sweet 1950, 219)

Even though they made the largest contribution toward the educational and cultural life of the frontier, the Presbyterians and Congregationalists did not fare so well in winning large numbers to their churches. Sweet lists several reasons why. First, the Presbyterian minister was inclined to limit his responsibility to those of Presbyterian background. That is, he went looking for people of Scottish and Scotch-Irish descent. Second, the Presbyterian pastor was called. New churches were formed by laymen and since they were often small, two or three of them had to enter into an agreement on who to call and how they should support him. On the other hand, Methodists were sent while Baptist "farmer" preachers simply came with the people. Third,

many Presbyterian pastors divided their time between teaching school and their pastoral activities; and fourth, Presbyterian preaching tended to be more theological than practical (Sweet 1950, 214-5). Further, Presbyterians required the prerequisite theological education for ordination and entrance into the ministry.

When revival came to Kentucky, the Cumberland Presbytery, formed in 1802, decided to license and then ordain laymen who exhorted and catechized in vacant congregations. Soon there were seventeen men, who traveled circuits, similar to the Methodists. Opponents to the revival opposed the ordination of these "illiterate exhorters with Armenian sentiments," and when the Kentucky Synod of 1805 appointed a commission to examine the situation, a schism resulted and the Cumberland Presbyterian Church was formed. "The rapid growth of the new church was due to the fact that it adopted the camp meeting as well as the circuit system, while its warm evangelical preaching of a radically modified Calvinism made a large appeal to the frontier people" (Sweet 1950, 233).

During the space of three generations the Methodist and Baptist churches that once so admirably ministered to the common people prospered and grew in numbers, wealth and social standing. These denominations "noted with obvious satisfaction that they were becoming churches of status, with soaring budgets and splendid buildings made possible by millionaire members" (Greenway 1973, 25). In the second half of the nineteenth century when European immigrants swelled the ranks of factory workers and fueled the growth of cities, American Protestantism with its cultural roots on the rural frontier looked with alarm at the hoards of Catholics from southern and eastern Europe that were filling city slums and served as cheap labor in America's rush towards industrialization and urbanization.

It would seem that those principles of evangelism and church growth that were lost as denominations moved up the economic and social ladder must be revived in order to reach America's lower income blue-collar and service workers.

What about today?

Are these principles of church growth applicable to our twentieth-century context? They certainly have worked in Korea where Rev. Paul Yonggi Cho has led his church to denomination size (over 600,000) through the use of family groups. This zealous pastor led his church to rapid growth to over 2,000 members when he faced total mental and physical exhaustion from overwork. He divided his church into family groups of not more than 15 families each, lead by a dedicated person, either man or woman. Each group leader receives the message directly from the pastor to be transmitted to the group. Upon reaching the size of fifteen families, the group is divided and a new leader chosen for the new group. With the multiplication of groups Pastor Cho has gathered around him hundreds of assistant pastors who supervise a certain number of family groups in an area of the city (Cho 1981).

The following principles used by Wesley have resurfaced in Brazilian Pentecostal denominations and in Korea in Cho's Full Gospel Church: (1) an ardent love of God and a zeal to win lost sinners for Christ, (2) the organization of small groups, each with its own lay leaders, (3) with the leaders equipped and trained for ministry under the direct supervision of the head pastor, and (4) the acceptance of people into the ministry who were trained "in house" through an apprenticeship program.

Addendum not in thesis manuscript

St. Mark's Episcopal Church in the Frankford suburb of Philadelphia discovered that it did not have a single wage-earner in its fellowship. The church appointed four committees to work with specific groups in the neighborhood: young people, the aged, working men and housewives. Through the personal involvement of laymen with the people, first with housewives and then with their husbands, barriers were broken down and two hundred people were enrolled in Bible classes and nearly 700 working class families began worshipping at the church (Greenway 1973, 49).

Probably one of the reasons that St. Mark's Episcopal experienced marked success is that it made a conscious effort to cross a cultural-social barrier and avoided the condescending "alms-giving" approach. The more sophisticated approach of the institutional church with its many social programs did not result in working-class people being enfolded into the fellowship of the church. Greenway writes, "But the recipients among the urban poor did not move on to church membership as had been expected. Nor was the basic alienation of the laboring classes over against Protestantism overcome" (1973, 55).

CHAPTER 9 – CHRISTIAN REFORMED CHURCH GROWTH PATTERNS

Considering the differences in cultures it is unlikely that Brazilian patterns of growth can be adopted wholesale in a North American environment. We have observed however similarities between the Wesleyan revival of eighteenth-century England and Pentecostal church growth of modern Brazil. Some of the same patterns were also observed among the Baptists and Methodists on the American frontier of the nineteenth century. This type of church growth has also been replicated in other countries like Korea and the house-church movement of China. The question we want to ask ourselves in this chapter is whether some of these same principles can be used by the Christian Reformed Church among lower middle-class blue-collar and service workers of North America at the end of the twentieth century. More important, we want to ask whether the adoption of those methods will lead to solid and rapid church growth.

Growth through Immigration

In order to answer these questions, it is necessary to examine patterns of Christian Reformed home mission church-planting effort. Efforts to gather immigrants into congregations was "the exclusive concern of Christian Reformed 'home missions'" from about 1878 to 1953 (Van Halsema 1953, 22). In the early years this was very successful. Between 1880 and 1915 the church grew from four to 13 classes, from 39 to 223 churches, from 2,014 families to 16,407 and from 3,566 communicant members to 34,608 (Beets 1923, 72; 1946, 87).

The most obvious reason for this growth was the heavy immigration from the Netherlands during those years, hitting a peak from 1880 to 1890. During those ten years 53,701 people entered the United States from the Low Countries (Beets 1923, 73). Many of the immigrants of Reformed persuasion might have been absorbed into other churches had the denomination not expended its energies to provide an American-trained clergy for the emerging congregations. Instead of only looking to Holland for pastors to care for the flock the early immigrant pastors who accompanied the flock to America were strong leaders who worked for the establishment of a school to fill this need. Congregations needed pastors and that need was met through the establishment of the Theological School founded in 1876. It started with only one professor and several students who met in rented quarters, and eventually developed into Calvin College and Seminary. By 1900 the number of ministers had climbed to 98. In 1880 there were two churches for each minister, but by 1900 that number had been reduced to one and a half churches for each. The clergy of the early 1900s was better trained and displayed a more unified spirit because of their American training. As a result the regional factionalism prevalent in the Netherlands was largely overcome (Beets 1923, 74).

The anti-Masonic stance of the Christian Reformed Church (CRC) over against the Reformed Church in America won the endorsement of the Christelijke Gereformeerde Kerk in 1882. With this endorsement the majority of the new immigrants tended to choose the CRC as their church home (Bruins 1983, 69-70). Until 1953 the concern of denominational home missions was "to see that immigrants settled where they could form CRC congregations" (Kromminga 1957, 41). In establishing congregations home missionaries met the boats, provided temporary shelter, and helped the men find jobs in the community (Bouma 1984, 14).

Dean Kelley attributes the more rapid growth of the CRC in relation to the Reformed Church in America immediately after the Second World War to its conservative theological stance (Kelley 1972, 29). Gary Bouma, however, shows conclusively that this growth stemmed

primarily from immigration from the Netherlands to Canada from 1948 to 1964 (Bouma 1984, 16-19). Bouma lists three reasons for this: (1) the CRC was more widely represented in Canada before the Second World War, (2) the CRC more aggressively helped new immigrants, and (3) at this late date more of its clergy could speak Dutch (Bouma 1984, 19). While the CRC was reaching out in Canada to its own kind, the RCA was busy gathering American suburbanites into "community" churches "in unprecedented numbers" (Van Schapen 1989, 126).

Continuing immigration from the Netherlands, even though greatly diminished between the First and Second World Wars, ensured strong relations with the "old country" and inhibited faster acculturation with the American stream. For over a century the denomination's theology, its church order and institutions were all rooted in Reformed currents of the Netherlands. The Dutch language predominated in the churches until the First World War, was employed in the Acts of Synod until 1932 (John Bratt 1955, 348) and was still used by some United States churches for a second service into the 1950s. The Christian School movement taught generations of youth to view the world from a Christian perspective but it also isolated the church from its environment (Kromminga 1957, 38-40, 43-44).

The commemoration of the CRC centennial in 1957 provided the opportunity for a new group of leaders to reflect on the past and to outline the challenges for the future. The perils of isolation and ethnocentrism were laid bare especially as it negatively influenced the church's evangelistic effort to win fellow Americans to the Reformed faith (Kromminga 1957; Boer 1957). Harry Boer showed that a narrow Calvinistic interpretation of the doctrine of election inhibited concern among the faithful for the lost (Boer 1957, 48-49) and Harold Dekker in two Reformed Journal articles (1962, 1964) challenged the church's understanding of "Limited Atonement" by stating that Christ died for all men.

Modern Home Missions Emphases

In the 1970s the Board of Home Missions gave leadership to the denomination in church planting and parish evangelism. Many innovations were adopted by Home Missions and introduced to the churches. The "Coffee Break" women's inductive Bible study and preschool "Story Hour" program has been adopted by many churches. The "Idea Series," a collection of 36 how-to manuals, was printed in the early 1970s. Other training manuals and seminars provided orientation for congregations interested in discovering and using the gifts of their members. Training in personal evangelism, following the model of James Kennedy's "Evangelism Explosion," was offered to the churches. Home Missions redirected the efforts of its home missionaries towards the goal of starting churches in areas where no Christian Reformed Churches were located. Churches among ethnic minorities (African Americans, Hispanics, Koreans and Vietnamese) were started and the Synodical Committee on Race Relations (SCORR) was established to sensitize the denomination and give leadership in assimilating these groups into the fellowship and providing means to train ethnic leaders for their churches. Home Missions also developed Missions Analysis and Projection (MAP) to evaluate the ministry and viability of its missions and missionaries (Van Schapen 1989, 150ff). In 1976 Home Missions inaugurated SEED, a mission planning process to bring 25 churches to maturity and plant 25 more churches. By 1979 this commitment to church planting among the general American population was firmly in place (Van Schapen 1989; 166, 171).

Early in this new phase of its church planting effort Home Missions found much of its resources eaten up by unproductive, non-growing churches. These were started when several CRC families in a city asked Home Missions to provide means (pastor and building) for them to start a church. The missionary often had evangelistic vision and zeal but the core group desired

to be ministered to like they had been while still in the "colony." This experience led Home Missions to approach church planting with more wisdom and caution and less blind enthusiasm for helping "our own kind." Now in the "Begin Process" CRC members are not enrolled in the emerging church until they understand its evangelistic vision and the personal cost and commitment that it will take. In its church planting ministry the Board of Home Missions has largely adopted the principles of church growth. Through the use of telemarketing techniques churches with 200 or more people at their opening worship service are emerging in areas of rapid population growth.

The Chapel Movement

While denominational home missions expended its resources in establishing churches in areas where no other CRCs were located, local churches were expected to evangelize their immediate neighborhoods and plant churches within the scope of their possibilities (The Satellite Missions n.d., VI-2). Early in the twentieth century mission minded leaders had a concern for the lost in their neighborhoods and yet realized that native Americans would not fit into the regular CRC congregation. They intuitively recognized that the average congregation was a homogeneous unit outside the mainstream of American culture. They never heard the term "homogeneous unit" but they knew something of the implications of cultural difference.

Under the leadership of Rev. William Van Wijk, pastor of the Oakdale Christian Reformed Church in Grand Rapids and with his publication of a sixteen-page booklet in 1913, "Stadsevangelisatie, Waarom en Hoe" ("City Evangelism, Why and How") the CRC chapel movement was begun. The mandatory love of God, love to self and love to one's fellow man was the "why." The local church through its consistory and using the talent of the congregation to carry on the work was the means (John Bratt 1955, 103). In his little book Van Wijk called for each consistory to have a standing evangelism committee composed of the pastor, an elder and a deacon. This committee was to enlist all qualified and available members of the church and organize them for the effort. Volunteers would work in the area of family visitation and colportage, gospel meetings, Sunday school and inspirational programs. One lay representative from each of these areas would serve with the pastor, elder and deacon on the evangelism committee and be responsible for overseeing the work (Van Wijk 1913, 12-16; 1928, 57-59).

From the beginning there was a realization that newly converted unchurched Americans would not fit in an established Christian Reformed Church. Rev. Arnold Brink wrote in 1948, Our churches are usually too large to permit the pastor to pay as much personal attention to the spiritual needs of evangelization converts as is necessary. Our own people are relatively independent in their religious understanding. They have the background of years of covenant catechetical training. They are better equipped to solve their own problems. The preaching in our churches is usually more abstract and philosophical. The convert in the gospel hall has been accustomed to a far simpler, more practical message. (Brink 1948, 111)

Brink continues, "if a convert is to feel at home in one of our established churches, either he is an unusual convert or it is an unusual church" (Brink 1948, 112). The ethnic, extended family, the Christian school and the church with its systematic catechetical training formed the three systems that nurtured Christian Reformed people in their faith. The missions labored among people who lacked these nurture systems.

Other systems had to be put in place to minister to the outside world. To fill this need the local church erected chapels, often under the charge of paid lay evangelists. If the chapel was located in the immediate environs, its purpose was to channel converts to the sponsoring church

proper. Feeder chapels would elevate new members to a doctrinal, spiritual and social level that would let them fit into the established church. Chapels started in slum areas ministered to addicts and were similar to skid row missions. When a chapel was located some distance from the supporting church, it was called a branch church and the aim was to make it into a full-fledged, self-supporting congregation (John Bratt 1955, 349). The chapels were a kind of substitute for the nurture provided by the home in the Christian Reformed Church. They were small and the teaching was practical and down to earth.

Brink outlined the "Branch-Congregational Plan" in its 1948 form, after the denomination had gained considerable cumulative experience. (1) A central board, like the classical committee or regional evangelism board, should plan the overall strategy and supervise preliminary canvassing to determine the fields. (2) The actual work would be undertaken by a strong established church as near to the field as possible. (3) The staff of workers would come from this church. (4) Whenever possible the staff of volunteers would be replaced by converts. (5) New members will be accepted into full communion by the mother church council but exercise their membership in the branch congregation. (6) While the sacraments at the time had to be administered under the supervision of the mother church at the hands of an ordained clergy, Brink spoke out for the administration of the sacraments by the lay evangelist. (7) New members of the branch church should receive training in financial giving for the support of the ministry, in evangelistic outreach, in the spiritual authority of the church and in the use of church discipline (Brink 1948, 113-114).

Mission-minded Christian Reformed people were highly committed to Reformed doctrine as they understood it. Theology controlled the method from beginning to end. In Reformed Evangelism: A Manual on Principles and Methods of Evangelism, a book that certainly was used as a text to train lay evangelists and serve as a guide to consistories, Rev. Martin Monsma writes that Reformed evangelism stands on the solid foundation of the distinguishing features of the Canons of Dordt, more popularly summarized by the acronym T.U.L.I.P.: total depravity, unlimited election, limited atonement, irresistible grace and the perseverance of the saints (Monsma 1948, 22-29). In another chapter Rev. D. H. Walters, for many years president of the Reformed Bible Institute, affirmed that T.U.L.I.P. determines the method. "These great truths determine our utterances in our witnessing" (Walters 1948, 73). It was the Christian's task to witness but it was God's task to do the soul-winning. Emotional appeals, altar calls and other revivalistic tendencies were clearly tainted with Armenianism and detracted from God's sovereign freedom. Walters lays down two rules: "Do not encourage public testimony meetings. . . for not all that may be inclined to speak may be entrusted to speak," and "Do not press for a decision, . . . [for] conversion is far more than a decision. It is fundamentally a change of heart which God alone can give" (Walters 1948, 85). Reformed evangelism was Calvinistic, God-centered with redemption entirely the fruit of God's almighty hand and loving heart. It fully adhered to the inerrancy and authority of Scripture. The gospel was understood to be antithetical to the systems of this world just as God was at war with Satan. When the gospel delivered a convert from sin, it laid claim on the total man and impeded him to serve God with all that he is and has. Further, Reformed evangelism was understood as covenantal, enveloping the whole family since the promise is to believers and to their children (Monsma 1948, 33-38). The chapel movement flourished in a time when principle prevailed over method and when the above doctrinal principles were widely accepted as indisputable truth. Whether successful or not the principle is what mattered.

Chapels were established in areas of need. Some were skid-row gospel missions but many were located where others had already left. The church should search for an area where no other church or group was working (Walters 1948, 87). In the work of Classis Holland, begun in 1933, the chapels of Fennville, New Richmond, and West Olive met in abandoned church

buildings. Other groups met in rural school buildings or community halls. The more successful missions merited their own new building (Classis Holland 1949).

In the above text on Reformed evangelism in a chapter entitled "Ecclesiastical Organization for Evangelism" (1948, 119-133) the Rev. Izard Van Dellen strongly defended the local church's responsibility in starting missions to minister to the people in its own vicinity. Even though some classical mission boards, like that of Classis Holland, seem to have hired and supervised the work of the evangelists, Van Dellen states that the mission work is not to become a classical affair even though various churches of classis support it. Classes should not do the work that is the domain of the local church (1948, 130-131).

In order to start and maintain an evangelistic branch church the consistory of the mother church appointed an evangelism committee. This committee implemented the vision of the consistory and regularly presented reports. Van Dellen outlines in detail the structure and function of this committee. The consistory exercised tight control of the administration. It appointed the members and hired the lay evangelist who presided over the committee's meetings (125-129). The evangelist's salary and the committee's budget had to be approved by the consistory (129).

Initially all the members of the committee came from the mother church, but as the work grew, some were replaced by representatives of the daughter church. Tensions often sprang up especially if the sponsoring church consistory did not understand the needs or feelings of the emerging congregation.

The chapel method from the beginning was plagued with problems caused principally by the denomination's lack of evangelistic experience. Almost all of the members were raised in a covenant home and lived most of their lives in a covenant community. Those who entered the mission enterprise of the church caught the vision from the Bible, were influenced by other groups or were trained outside of the denomination. Even though a vocal minority among the clergy pushed evangelism, the work of local chapel evangelism was a lay movement (John Bratt 1955, 164). The need for training lay workers and professional lay evangelists was acutely felt by those involved in the ministry.

In 1920 the first missionary training school with classes at night was started in Chicago under independent auspices. In 1922 Classis Illinois recommended that Synod adopt it as its own, but the proposal was turned down. The school was discontinued in 1930 because of small enrollment (Bratt 1955, 274). An Eastern Reformed Bible Institute was organized by the Patterson, New Jersey churches in 1939 and reorganized independently three years later. In 1945 it had 89 students who were taking courses in church history, Sunday school teaching, personal evangelism, Reformed doctrine, church music and Bible study (Beets 1946, 129). Efforts at providing courses to meet the needs of lay workers and evangelists at Calvin College were frustrated by ecclesiastical bodies. The prevailing view was that the quality of education for the ministry must not be lowered and the position of Calvin Seminary as the one pastoral training school should not be threatened. Frustrated at the impasse Miss Johanna Timmer, dean of women at Calvin College, resigned her position in 1939 to set up the Reformed Bible Institute in Grand Rapids (Bratt 1955, 277). The Eastern RBI endured for a short time but the Grand Rapids RBI, now called Reformed Bible College, completely supplanted it.

In 1918 there were only seven city missions but by 1939 there were 120. Almost every large city congregation had a work among the underprivileged (Bratt 1955, 163). Of the many chapels and missions sponsored by Grand Rapids churches at least 25 were organized into churches (Knight 1989, 86-93) and one, the Sunshine Ministry Center, is now the largest in the denomination. In 1957 the Yearbook of the CRC listed 64 neighborhood evangelism preaching centers that engaged the services of forty full-time lay evangelists and ten full-time "lady workers" (Boer 1957, 77). Yet all of this effort brought in only 506 converts in 1955 in a denomination of 500 organized churches (Boer 1957, 60).

Using middle-class standards and ideals mission-minded leaders saw a substandard church develop in the established church's shadow. The chapel building was smaller and used less costly materials. Its "pastor" was a lay evangelist who did not have seminary training. His messages were simple "Sunday school" messages that even children could understand. There were many children but often few adults. The people sang choruses and gospel hymns instead of Dutch Psalm tunes. The chapel was governed by a steering committee, a "consistory" without elders and deacons, under the tutelage of the sponsoring church consistory. Its budget had to be approved by the sponsoring church and its worker was hired, paid and supervised by the mother church. Converts were given a long period of indoctrination in order for them to meet "Reformed standards" and then examined by the elders of the mother church. The ordained pastor of the sponsoring church came to administer the sacraments, something that irritated many evangelists who taught the Word and pastored the people.

In his book That My House May Be Filled (1957) Harry Boer strongly criticized the paternalism of the chapel movement (Chapter 6, 71-84). The prevalent view among mother church members was, "We minister to them, those poor, ignorant and wayward souls." Commenting on current practice, not written theory, Boer wrote,

There is, to the best of my knowledge, no serious intention that these chapels, as well as those in other parts of the denomination, shall become churches. . . . We are content with a situation in which hundreds of people remain spiritual minors. We are not concerned to eliminate the dualism, the ecclesiastical imperialism, that separates the Christian Reformed community into a church part and a "chapel" part, into ecclesiastical "have's" and "have-not's." The church does not grow by adding ecclesiastical colonies. She grows by multiplying herself, with all that that means in the way of freedom, responsibility, authority, status.
(1957, 78)

By the mid-1960's the chapel movement, largely discredited, had lost its vitality.

After a long history of dispute, chronicled in Richard De Ridder's Lay Workers in Evangelism and The Office of Evangelist collating the study reports and overtures and synodical decisions from 1914 to 1982, the office of evangelist was finally created by the Synod in 1978. That decision allows the evangelist, whether trained in a Bible college or seminary, to administer the sacraments, but only in the emerging church that he serves. Evangelists still cannot serve duly organized churches, which creates a situation in which the chapel that is organized into a church will lose the evangelist who led it to maturity. So at this crucial stage in its development the young church is left pastorless (De Ridder 1982, iii). I personally know of a chapel, now called an "emerging church," that does not want to be organized for fear that it will be forced to release its ordained evangelist. In 1990 the CRC had 44 lay evangelists laboring in special ministries, on foreign mission fields, and in emerging churches among ethnics and Anglos.

In Echoes of Mercy, Whispers of Love by John Knight commemorating a century of community outreach in the Grand Rapids area by Christian Reformed Churches Dr. Donald Griffioen states that "between 1900 and 1978 some 52 chapels were started in the Grand Rapids area. Only four have been started in the last two decades. Chapel outreach was the primary method of CRC evangelism for many years" (1989, 75). Changing neighborhoods with whites moving to the suburbs and ethnics replacing them in the cities begged for new methods. The chapel outreach gave way to the "diaconal agency approach." Diaconal ministries came to the fore to minister to the needs of the poor, racial minorities, and the less educated. Organizations sprang up to deal with alcoholism and drug abuse, racial discrimination, food and clothing needs, decent housing for the poor, unemployment and job training and more (Griffioen 1989, 76). During the period of transition from the chapel method to the diaconal agency approach, according to Griffioen,

the attempt was to mainline evangelism and its results into the life of established churches. Although much progress was made in this effort, we find few congregations today which are as concerned about reaching the unsaved as the chapels once were. In the process of de-emphasizing, even criticizing, chapel outreach, one of our denomination's prime means of church planting was lost.

(1989, 75)

Lay people at the local church level still involve themselves in outreach. Men work with adolescent boys in the Cadet program and women work with girls in Calvinettes, but the families of neighborhood children who participate in these programs seldom if ever enter the church for worship. The deacons minister to the needs of community families, but the beneficiaries of this love and concern feel out of place in the established church. The inadequacies of the chapel movement are still with us, but now the gospel is not transmitted in the context of worship and the aim is no longer to create a believing church community.

The chapel movement had many faults, but structurally and organizationally it parallels many patterns of church growth in Brazil. It was an outreach of the local church and employed the gifts of lay people in evangelism. It was a church planting movement for people who were socially, culturally or economically different. With modification I believe the method is still valid today. In the next chapter I will try to outline some of the changes I think that are necessary to meet today's challenge.

CHAPTER 10 – CONTEXTUALIZATION FOR NORTH AMERICAN WORKERS

American lower-income blue-collar and service-sector workers need churches in which they will feel comfortable and in which their talents and gifts will be recognized, appreciated and employed. The socioeconomic and cultural gap between them and long-time members of middle-classes churches is too great for them to be readily absorbed unless separate congregations are started that are geared to their needs and aspirations.

Work that is started among lower-income workers by a traditional middle-class church must start by using cross-cultural mission principles. Our goal will be a church composed of lower-income blue-collar and service-sector workers who are filled with the Spirit, who witness to their family, friends and colleagues and enfold them into their fellowship. New converts will learn the principles of stewardship of their time, talents and financial resources. In order for the emerging daughter church to take on this character the first evangelistic workers (pastor and lay people of the mother church) will have to include the new converts in the decision-making process from the beginning. The faith and vision of new converts will have to be challenged. They must also ask the question, "Can we pay for the project that we so much want?" Right from the beginning the goal will be to establish congregations that are culturally relevant, self-propagating, self-supporting, and self-governing.

These principles were outlined and widely disseminated in the second half of the nineteenth century by Henry Venn, Secretary of the English Church Missionary Society, and Rufus Anderson of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions. Anderson wrote, "The grand object of foreign missions is to plant and multiply churches, composed of native converts, each church, complete in itself, with presbyters of the same race, left to determine their ecclesiastical relations for themselves, with the aid of judicious advice from their missionary fathers" (McGavran 1970, 336-7; citing Beaver 1967, 107). Once such a church was established by the missionaries, they could trust God to care for her and they could move on to other unevangelized areas (Neill 1964, 260). Perpetual missionary tutelage was not healthy on the foreign missionary field nor is it healthy in-home missions. Perpetual dependency of the emerging congregation upon the personnel and financial resources of the sending mother church must be strenuously avoided.

The goal is not to establish a "feeder church," where mission subjects are taught, nurtured and provided for until they become mature enough, knowledgeable enough and morally good enough to transfer to the established mother church. Instead, new converts must be disciplined to the point where they are able to teach, lead, manage, visit, evangelize and reach out to others in the context of their own fellowship.

In this chapter I want to show how an established church should relate the gospel to the contextual situation of lower-income workers. Our message must be both faithful to Scripture and culturally relevant. Then in the final chapter I want to discuss structural and organizational steps that might be taken by an established mother church to start a work among lower-income workers, lead it to growth and eventual organization.

The Perils of Paternalism

If our aim is to plant a church among lower-income workers, we must be on our guard against a condescending, paternalistic approach. Paternalism is an inadvertent way of controlling and manipulating the less fortunate by doing them good. "Doing good" can come to expression in any type of diaconal ministry where there is a transfer of things from those who have to those

who don't. It can also come to expression through the message that is communicated. Paternalism sets up a patron-client relationship similar to the patriarchal fazenda (plantation) system of colonial Brazil. The master is the great provider-protector while the slave gives unquestioning service and loyalty. Paternalism can bring temporary success but long-term fruitfulness is rarely attained.

Materialistic paternalism as practiced by some American missionaries in Brazil went something like this. The missionary was assigned a field. He and his family needed adequate housing so the mission built a house. It would also serve as a parsonage for a future native pastor. A meeting place for worship was needed so the mission provided funds for a church building. The missionary was friendly and preached the Bible. Although he had difficulty with the language, he was kind to everyone. When he saw someone in need, the mission provided a fund from which he could draw to help the poor. The goal of the mission was to establish churches that would continue the ministry after the missionary left. In order for that to happen, young men had to be educated and trained in a seminary. But the church people were too poor to pay for required higher education so the mission provided a scholarship fund for this purpose.

After a period of several years of hard labor the church was filled with people. It was time for the missionary to move on to a new field and time for the local believers to assume their responsibilities. A Brazilian pastor took the missionary's place. He had to teach the people to tithe in order to maintain his own salary and all of the church's other expenses. This was a hard message to hear and some people left. Poor people came to his house, the big house where the missionary used to live, and asked for help. The native pastor didn't have the mission diaconal assistance fund and his own salary barely supported his own needs. How could he help? The poor church people were accustomed to receiving, so the deacons were not equipped to judge whether or not someone was really in need nor did they have the spiritual and material resources to bring help to the point of need. In a very short time after the missionary's departure the church that was so prosperous was losing members, it was getting a bad reputation because it couldn't maintain the ministry and the pastor was neither loved nor respected by his own people. Under these circumstances some churches actually disbanded. More often, though, a faithful core rallied behind the Brazilian pastor and the church ministry had to make a new start using indigenous evangelistic principles.

What I just described is paternalism because the foreign mission through its missionaries established the standards of the ministry. The trouble was that they were the standards of the foreign missionary, not those of the first native believers. Things would have been much different if the missionary had preached at a school or in an open city square and challenged the new believers to contribute towards a building. They would have been different had he challenged the church to help the poor when a need arose. The people of the church would have had to determine who really needed help and who didn't. They would have had to collect from their own resources to help those who really were in need. The definition of a "needy person" would have been culturally relevant to the people. As it was the missionary's sense of a "needy person" was conditioned by his materially rich North American culture. Things would have been different too had the missionary trained leaders in the church to preach, evangelize and lead the congregation.

In this story the missionary seems so stupid. He should have known better, we say. But let's put ourselves in his shoes. He goes out to the city square and he preaches, but no one listens. He asks himself, "What's the problem? If I had a meeting place where people could sit down, they would come." So the mission builds and the people come, and the missionary is confirmed in his decision. It's hard to see clearly in a cross-cultural situation especially if conversions are hard to come by. The mission board wants to see fruit and so do the donors. The pressure is on to send in results.

Paternalism is still more insidious when it comes to the message. Let's bring it closer to home in the context of lower-income workers. The message that we bring will be a message of God's love and we will confirm that message by our own acts of love. Considering that the people are poor, we may be afraid to talk about money. We may think that we can't ask those who have so little to give. We may be afraid that by preaching on giving we will drive the poor away. But by not challenging the people to give, we miss the opportunity to teach about God's promises to "throw open the floodgates of heaven and pour out so much blessing that you will not have room enough for it" (Malachi 3:10 NIV). Nor will we be able to teach about stewardship, which, if practiced, will affect every area of life and make believers productive and successful in facing life's difficulties.

Another paternalistic invention is to blame poor people's problems on their lack of self-esteem. Lack of love, lack of respect, and abuse of all types does, indeed, negatively impact the poor and disadvantaged. This approach, however, goes too far when it hinders the messenger of God from preaching about disobedience and rebellion to God's will and the inevitability of God's wrath and punishment against anyone who chooses to continue in sin. Complementing people even when they are doing wrong, only confirming them in negative life-style. If the pastor always complements people and tells them how good and how privileged they are to receive God's unconditional love, he will be loved by almost everyone. But if the only result is that people feel good about themselves whether they've repented or not, we have fallen short of our goal entirely.

Self-esteem programs have hit the America's schools. Children take part in affirmation exercises where they say nice things about themselves, such as "I'm a good person; I'm special." The following is John Leo's U.S. News & World Report commentary the self-esteem movements effect on education:

The self-esteem literature is clotted with dismissive references to achievement. The self-esteem research book, mentioned above, [The Social Importance of Self-Esteem] contains many darts aimed at competition, achievement and success. After all, if people are perfect and lovable just the way they are, why should anyone need to change or strive?

This is why the obsession with self-esteem ultimately undermines real education. When the self-esteem movement takes over a school, teachers are under pressure to accept every child as is. To keep children feeling good about themselves, you must avoid all criticism and almost any challenge that could conceivably end in failure. In practice, this means each child is treated like a fragile therapy consumer in constant need of an ego boost. Difficult work is out of the question, and standards get lowered in school after school. Even tests become problematic because someone might fail them.

This becomes a parody of self-esteem. Real self-esteem is released when a child learns something and develops a sense of mastery. It is a byproduct of, and not a substitute for, real education. And until we grapple with the real agenda of the self-esteem movement--ersatz therapeutic massage instead of learning--there will probably be no educational reform a all.

(Leo 1990, 16)

In the realm of religion, as it is in education, self-esteem is a byproduct. It is not the byproduct of a competitive, achievement oriented, self-made salvation. Rather it is the byproduct of repentance and conversion from sin and trust in God for forgiveness and allegiance to Christ as Lord.

In this thesis I have consciously avoided using the idea of planting churches "to meet the needs" of lower-income workers. While psychologist A. H. Maslow's hierarchy of needs can be of some value (Engel and Norton 1975, 69-72), it is erroneous to believe that we must meet

everyone's felt needs and desires. It is said, "The hungry man, for example, will not be very much interested in ideological discussions until he has had a good meal" (Engel and Norton 1975, 70). If we have plenty of food and refuse to share with someone who has nothing, it is true that the poor man will have difficulty hearing our pious words. But if the messenger of the gospel has no material riches and he is a bearer of a message of faith and hope, the poor man might find this "ideological discussion" the most relevant thing to his situation.

To design a mission outreach strategy around meeting people's needs, whether material, social or psychological, is bound to fail. Sooner or later we will fail to meet others' expectations. We will sin against them and will need to be understood and forgiven. Further, if the self-centeredness of the unrepentant heart is not addressed, needs and desires grow as they are being fulfilled. Lust fulfilled demands more--it's addictive.

Many times as a missionary in Brazil I have asked myself why the poor and ignorant Pentecostals, who have so little resources with which to meet people's needs, are the very ones who captivate their imagination and bring them to obedience to Christ and to active church membership. Middle-class churches, on the other hand, who have material, educational and other resources and who indeed fulfill the needs of the poor through diaconal aid and other helps, are not bringing people to Christ. They have met so many needs and yet the needy continue in their sinful ways. Have we lost sight of the fact that the deepest and most urgent need of any person is a relationship with God, a covenant relationship of peace and faithfulness? And isn't it true that the source of "real" poverty is the lack of relationship with God. Isn't there a curse on mankind as separated from the Creator and Savior?

A Liberating Message: Obedience through Faith

One of the most useful concepts to cut through a paternalistic or superficial evangelistic approach is that of "obedience through faith." The first word in the Bible addressed to man was a command, "You are free to eat from any tree in the garden; but you must not eat from the tree if the knowledge of good and evil, for when you eat of it you will surely die" (Gen. 2:16,17 NIV). The first word on record that came to Abram from God was, "Leave your country . . . and go to the land I will show you" (Gen. 12:1). This is followed immediately with God's promise of blessing (Gen. 12:2-3). Then we read that "Abram left, as the LORD had told him" (Gen. 12: 4). Abram obeyed because he believed in God. Had he believed, Adam, too, would have obeyed. Unbelief leads to disobedience and to the curse (Rom. 5:12) while faith leads to obedience and results in God's favor (Rom. 4:3-7; James 2:21-23).

Much later King Zedekiah was challenged to obey God's command. When the Babylonian army was threatening Jerusalem, he called for Jeremiah. Jeremiah told him, "This is what the LORD God Almighty, the God of Israel, says: 'If you surrender to the officers of the king of Babylon, your life will be spared and this city will not be burned down. . . .'" But Zedekiah objected, "I am afraid of the Jews who have gone over to the Babylonians, for the Babylonians may hand me over to them and they will mistreat me." But Jeremiah replied, "Obey the LORD by doing what I tell you. Then it will go well with you . . ." (Jer. 38:17, 19, 20 NIV). Zedekiah was urged to obey and believe God's promise of blessing. Because he feared his officials more than he feared God, he did nothing and soon afterwards Jerusalem was destroyed. Zedekiah was captured and saw his sons slaughtered before his eyes were put out (Jer. 39:3-10).

This same concept recurs in the teaching of Jesus. Even to the poor Jesus gives a command that is followed a promise. In Matthew 6 Jesus was telling poor people not to worry about what to eat or drink or about what to wear, about the bare necessities of life. The pagans, Jesus said, worry about these things, but God's people "seek first the his Kingdom and his righteousness" and trust that God will provide for all of their earthly needs (Matt. 6:32-33).

God's will and his salvation must come before our own needs. People are commanded to obey and put their trust in God's promise. The fact that someone is poor must not hinder us from delivering the message that God wants them to hear. It is through their faith and obedience to God that God will bring them blessing.

Going to worship is an act of obedience. Getting together with two or three to pray is an act of obedience. Forgiving a wayward brother is an act of obedience. And so is giving to the poor, putting in an honest day's work, disciplining one's children in love and reading them Bible stories. All of these acts of obedience must be done in faith. They take time and sacrifice but they come with wonderful promises. The promise of answered prayer, of reconciliation, of prosperity and of heaven all lie in the future. It takes faith to obey God when a storm of affliction is raging around us, but God still calls us to obey him. That demands a great amount of faith, but this is the faith that the Bible talks about and the faith that must be instilled in our listeners. God's desire must be our first desire and then we can trust that all of our needs will be met by the means that he has prepared for us.

Obedience by faith makes sense only in the context of discipleship. We are not saved by our own works of righteousness. Salvation is by grace through faith (Eph. 2:8), but believing and following Jesus demands that we take up our cross (Luke 14:27). To profess Jesus openly may bring death, but exercising faith the believer trusts God for help in this life and in the life to come and he will not be intimidated by threats (Matt. 10:28).

The Christian worker, whether pastor, evangelist, lay preacher, Bible teacher or visitor must see him or herself as one who makes disciples (Matt. 28:19), one who proclaims Christ, "admonishing and teaching everyone with all wisdom, so that . . . [he might] present everyone perfect in Christ" (Col. 1:28). The Christian witness must not be satisfied with North American Protestantism's ritual confession and absolution, the "sinner's prayer." Too many nominal Protestants are assured that they will go to heaven when they die because they have prayed to accept Jesus into their hearts. Yet they never let their shadow darken the entrance of a church, will not forgive those who sin against them, have no interest in knowing God's will for their life and proudly declare that they are closer to God than most church people. In public these people don't profess to be Christians but are ready to call churchgoers "hypocrites" and use that as an excuse for not joining God's people. The pastor and church that makes discipleship a priority will not only proclaim God's saving grace through faith (Eph. 2:1-10) but will not be afraid to warn that every branch (professed Christian) that does not bear fruit, will be severed from Christ, the vine, and will be cast into the fire to be destroyed (John 15:1-6).

Jay Adams devotes a whole chapter in his The Christian Counselor's Manual to the topic of homework and how it is used in pastoral counseling (1973, 294-343). People find themselves in every type of problem because of their disobedience to God's law. In their distress, what is the word of the Lord to them? What is God's solution to their problem, hurt, pain and suffering? The Christian worker must identify with his listener, stand in his shoes, listen to God's command and promise, and then transmit that message. The counselee will find help to the extent that he or she accepts and believes, not only, but also obeys God's command.

What we are saying is nothing more nor less than preaching repentance from sin, faith in Christ for forgiveness and submission to God's will. By calling this process "obedience by faith," we are trying avoid the pitfall of using an intellectual formula or rote gospel presentation that is divorced from concrete, daily living. We do not present a little booklet with the bare bones of the gospel and a prayer. Rather, we meet people who have marital problems, who have to contend with disobedient children, who find it difficult to hold down a job, who lose their temper, who are threatened with eviction for not paying the rent, who lose a close friend through death, etc. In every situation man is called to believe in God and do what God wants him to do. In his sin and failure, he finds forgiveness and strength by putting his trust in Jesus Christ. Our goal in evangelism is experiential Christianity, an integration of faith and daily living.

Calling men and women to obedience through faith in Christ is appropriate for every social class and every culture, not just for the working class of America. I mention it, however, because the constant presentation of a cheap grace accepted through a rote prayer has left a deep mark upon the American worker. To him Christianity is for intellectuals and white-collar people. For him it's impractical; and in addition, it's hypocritical because he sees so many churchgoers continually practicing things that he knows in his heart and conscience are wrong. He has felt the pain of being sinned against by "good, church-going people."

The Shape of a Working-Class Church

Organized religion doesn't have a very high rating among unchurched workers. If school experiences were an assault on their self-esteem, many churches unwittingly compound the insult with injury. Workers arrive in the parking lot and notice all the late-model cars while they are driving a vehicle that has undergone a back-yard engine swap and carries some rust spots. They step into the foyer only to see most of the men in suits and women in dresses. They're used to jeans and slacks and associate suits with management, weddings or funerals. The minister cites unknown theologians and scholars in his illustrations and uses words they don't understand. In Sunday school their kids are too boisterous. In the adult class the leader asks them to read a passage from the Bible. They're embarrassed because they can't find the passage, their eyes water and their minds go blank as they struggle to pronounce unknown words. People share their opinions and in the end they are left hanging without a solution to conflicting opinions. It's all meaningful to the "in" group, but for the worker it's a place he doesn't like to be. One worker asked me to tell him what heaven was like, so that it would be worth wanting to go there; because, as he put it, if heaven were like going to church, he would have none of it.

It would seem that a school gym or dining hall would be a good meeting place. Instead of a "holy" silence, a tolerable amount of noise should be allowed before the service begins. Preaching should be done in easily understood language and be practical without becoming condescendingly simplistic. Because workers can be quite frank and hurt each other with cutting remarks, the leaders of Bible discussion groups must help people to love and accept others in the group. A tremendous love for others and sensitivity to their needs goes a long way in making people feel welcome.

Considering the worker's distrust of white-collar scholarly types, it will be necessary for the church to train workers on how to win and disciple other workers. As the pastor visits in working-class neighborhoods and trailer courts, he would be wise to take along church members who are factory workers and train them in the art of visitation. Workers maintain family and social networks. They help each other repair cars and add on to houses. They go fishing and hunting together and more. It would seem that in these informal contacts outside of the context of organized worship or Bible class would provide the ambience in which the gospel could be transmitted with the greatest degree of acceptance by the unchurched worker.

This does not mean that the task for the Christian factory worker will be much easier than it is for the seminary-trained clergy. While believers hold the same type of jobs, enjoy the same type of sports, and go hunting and fishing, they do not swear or tell dirty jokes and they don't join the gossip circles. They are called "party poopers" and other uncomplimentary terms. The Christian worker may feel the sting of ostracism more poignantly than any minister who tried to make a cold-turkey house call. Nevertheless, conditions are more favorable for personal contact with the unchurched. The biggest advantage is that the Christian's conduct is a visible, living testimony.

A church composed of and ministering to factory workers will have a great deal of difficulty maintaining a neat program schedule. Shift work upsets the life and schedule of many

workers. If the wife works, and increasingly this is the case, the couple may have a very limited amount of time together and with their children. A ministry to young blue-collar workers will find it impossible to organize a traditional ladies' aid society. Men and women blue-collar workers are conspicuously absent from the traditional church's society meetings and social functions. The obstacles to regularly scheduled meetings are many; but if workers can get together to work on their houses and cars, they can arrange to get together to study God's word, make visits or worship together. I know of two couples that went out for pizza late Saturday night and then went to one of the homes and talked about the Bible till after 3:00 a.m. That killed Sunday school for them the next morning, but it was probably more needful at the time to help them take another step of faith.

To meet the needs of the worker and his family and to train him for ministry outside of the church building, the church should have as many services and types of meetings as possible on Sunday. If there is any day that workers have free, it is Sunday. But even then some get home at 7:00 a.m. tired and exhausted from working the previous night. They go to bed and find it impossible to get up at ten to make it to the eleven o'clock service. Several services each Sunday both morning and evening would make it possible for them to attend something. A variety of training courses should also be held at various times so that men and women will be prepared to lead meetings with others as the Spirit leads them.

Ministry to Lower-Income Worker Families

In his study of blue-collar tavern-goers LeMasters wrote that the slaves (wives) are in revolt (1975, 85). The wives have seen the world through the eyes of television "soaps" and women's magazines; in large numbers they've entered white-collar jobs and work as equals along with other males and expect to be treated as such. They are tired of being used for sex by their macho, overbearing husbands. Halle found that the men whom he studied, almost entirely Catholic, associated Christianity with an "increasingly unpalatable version of the nuclear family" (1984, 268). Presumably the workers largely ignored the Church's teaching on birth control, abortion, and premarital sex and were unable to see how a professed celibate, sometimes known for his philandering ways, could know anything about the realities of family life. This picture emerges: women are entering a freer, egalitarian culture while the working man is threatened by both the loss of good manufacturing jobs and the loss of traditional male prerogatives. Meanwhile the church is ruled by a college of cardinals, has capitulated to female values or is relevant only to the rural farm family where husband and wife form a team headed by the husband.

Does the gospel have anything to say to the current situation? Do passages like I Corinthians 7 and 11:3-16; Ephesians 5:22-33; Colossians 3:18-21; and I Peter 3:1-7 have anything to do with family living today? Are these passages only relevant in a cultural setting, like the first century, where wives had the same social status as slaves? Is every relationship determined by the force of the participants' individual personality, character and talent or are relationships regulated by social norms? Are these norms to be regulated by the Bible or does each culture have the right to set its own standards? If the Bible is relevant for today's cultural setting, what is its message in regard to male and female, their sexual and social relationship, and their responsibility to their children?

It is quite clear that God created man, male and female, both in his image, both equal before him but each with clear sexual roles. Homosexuality is forbidden as something contrary to nature (Romans 1:26-27). While social scientists may consider "inflamed lusts" as a given of human nature, the Bible considers it abhorrent to the Creator's original intent. Both adultery and

fornication are prohibited, even lustful fantasies (Matthew 5:28). Not only is the man to be pure, but he is also called to be protector and provider (Eph. 5:25-28). As head, having authority over his wife, he is to be totally submissive and obedient to Christ (I Cor. 11:3), thus giving an example of submission to be followed by both wife and children. This submission is both tender and sacrificial. And if this rule is broken, the injured person is not to take vengeance, but to return good for the evil received (Matt. 5:39-42; Rom. 12:17-21).

This all too brief Biblical outline is unpalatable to large sectors of our society. To Hollywood it is too Puritanical; to achievement oriented, socially climbing women it is altogether too restrictive and limiting, to male factory workers it turns them into sissies. Battle lines have been drawn in our society and bitter wars are being fought over the role of men and women. Almost every TV sitcom brings across some moralism designed to touch the listener's feelings about himself and his role in society. Because so many have "bought into" a naturalistic, secular view of man, they are unable to understand what the Bible is talking about.

Even if a person does not want to abandon the biblical view of marriage held by a previous generation, he or she still finds it impractical. As never before the dynamic, contextual character of the gospel must come into play. Is there good news to the unwed or divorced mother on welfare? Is there good news for a man whose earning power is shrinking and whose self-esteem is eroding? Is there good news for a woman abused by her father and taken for granted by a chauvinistic, beer-drinking husband? Does Christ have good news for a working mother, and for latch-key children? Yes, indeed He does! And can the church itself be faithful in communicating that good news? It is difficult, but it must do so.

While continuing to teach the ideal norm of the gospel, the church must be willing to touch the lives of those who live so out of sync with it. Somehow, we must be like Jesus, who sinless as he was, nevertheless allowed a prostitute to kiss his feet (Luke 9:45). Jesus did not change his position on adultery to reach out to an adulteress (John 4:18; 8:1-11). Even while the church is vigorously teaching God's will as a rule for Christian living, it must be receiving into its fellowship those who have had their eyes opened to see the consequences of their sin, repented of it, turned to Christ in faith and are taking steps to bring their lives into harmony with God's will. No church can afford to cling to a static legalism where only the righteous are accepted, lest it displease "God our Savior, who wants all men to be saved and come to a knowledge of the truth" (I Tim. 2:4).

A Message for the Workplace

Factory workers clearly get satisfaction and meaning from their work. Otherwise, why would they say that they do "real" work when others like preachers, teachers, politicians, lawyers, and management make money with their mouths, i.e., get paid for not working? Yet, at the same time, many workers hate their work. For many it's the same grinding, drudgery day after day. Management treats them like machines and sometimes replaces them with robots. Some have a hard time taking orders from three engineers, each with his own agenda. Shift-work disrupts their lives and the physical work is often dangerous. They work not because they enjoy work, but because they earn money to do other things. Life is "fooling around," sports activities or enjoying the family. They don't devote themselves to the job as white-collar people give themselves to a career.

In this important area of life, the worker should be helped to work "as working for the Lord, not for men," since he "will receive an inheritance from the Lord as a reward" (Col. 3:23-24 NIV). Working with one's hands, in contrast to sloth (II Thess. 3:6-10), is honorable and leads to prosperity and generosity (Eph. 4:28). Peter exhorts his readers to submit to their

masters, not only when they are good and considerate, but also when they are harsh (I Peter 2:18) and thus show themselves to be faithful followers of Christ who suffered for them. Christians are encouraged to work not only for Christ, but to so identify themselves with Christ that they can bear patiently the abuse that is heaped upon them even when they are innocent.

Further, the worker should be shown how our heavenly Father will provide for the needs of all those who follow him. The Spirit of Christ is the constant companion of every believer and must not be grieved by our willful sin (Eph. 4:30). If Christ is in us, what have we to fear? The poor are commanded to actively seek the kingdom and submit to God's rule in everything and are assured that every physical needed will be provided (Matt. 6:33). Therefore, we are not to be angry, worried or anxious.

The church must also have a message for the wider context of the working man and woman. Professional people earn more and look for ways to invest their money with an eye for getting the greatest return. Driven by the expectation of stockholders, brokers and managers involve themselves in leveraged buy-outs and other deals. In the process of becoming more competitive and profitable companies are also becoming leaner and meaner. Workers are laid off and those who are kept are forced to work longer hours at lower wages. If the church exhorts workers to work harder, better and more diligently in exchange for a heavenly reward (and also for an earthly one), shouldn't stockholders and management be reminded that they also have a Lord in heaven (Col. 4:1), who will judge each one according to how they have treated those entrusted to their care (Luke 12:42-46).

More than ever the church must proclaim that it is impossible to serve both God and Money at the same time (Matt. 6:24). Both rich and poor must be called to love their fellowman, and both must be challenged to pay the price of that love. This love should not be interpreted solely in terms of charity or diaconal assistance, but more importantly in terms of fairness in the marketplace and on the work floor, and justice in society. The church may be unable to change the way financial markets operate, but it nonetheless must bring God's word to bear on all areas of life.

Summary

Contextualization of the gospel for lower income workers is a must. In fact the gospel must be contextualized for every culture and every strata of society for it to make its desired impact. Every Christian worker must be culturally sensitive. If not, the workers of an established church are likely to base their decisions and even their message on their own needs, experiences and expectations instead of what God wants communicated to the target audience. God is Father, but he is not paternalistic. He provides for our needs and that opens up the possibility of freedom to reject him or to submit to him in faith. God has compassion and mercy for the sinner, but no matter how poor and disadvantaged he may be, the sinner is held accountable by God for his actions.

Jesus identified himself with suffering humanity. He was the good news from God. He ministered to both bodily and spiritual needs, but he called everyone to radical commitment to himself. He must be our example as we minister.

CAPTURE 11 – STRUCTURE OF LOWER-INCOME WORKER CHURCH

In this thesis we are proposing that traditional established Christian Reformed Church of medium to large size take upon itself the task of planting new churches among lower-income factory and service workers. This task seems to require more than any local church can do by itself. To start another church would seem to require a never-ending source of money--money for land, money for a church building, money for paving the parking lot, money to hire an evangelist, money to furnish him with housing, money for community projects, and money for diaconal aid. And because the people are poor, they may never be able to fully pay their way. Indeed, if chapels are started and maintained by the founding mother church as they were in the heyday of the Christian Reformed chapel movement, this is likely to be the result. However, we are not suggesting a repetition of a by-gone era.

Using Indigenous Church-Planting Methods

In starting a new congregation among blue-collar and lower-income workers, the established church must see itself as a mission society and the pastor must see himself as a missionary. Together they have the task of reaching a "foreign country," the world of lower-income workers. The aim is to use indigenous mission principles. In short, this means that through evangelism and discipleship training, new converts are freed from middle-class standards and expectations to build a fellowship along the lines of their own socioeconomic possibilities and expectations.

Facing the reality of a large lower-income population in China over a century ago, Presbyterian missionary John L. Nevius outlined his understanding of an indigenous approach to church planting. His principles were adopted in toto by the Presbyterian Mission in Korea in 1894 and had a profound affect on a generation of foreign missionaries about the turn of the twentieth century (McGavran 1970, 337). In a little book entitled Planting and Development of Missionary Churches, briefly summarized by McGavran (1970, 337-8), Nevius contrasts his new method with that of the old or traditional method.

. . .the Old System strives by the use of foreign funds to foster and stimulate the growth of the native church in the first stage of their development, and then gradually to discontinue the use of such funds; while those who adopt the New System think that the desired object may be best attained by applying principles of independence and self-reliance from the beginning. (Nevius n.d., 8)

Nevius then outlines the indigenous church method that is reminiscent of John Wesley's eighteenth-century revival among the English laboring class. First, each convert should remain in the situation he was in when called to the gospel (I Cor. 7:20). The Apostle Paul teaches that the missionary should not disturb the social relations of new converts, but instead "requires them to be content with their lot, and to illustrate the Gospel in the spheres of life in which they are called" (Nevius n.d., 19). New converts should not be motivated by money or an enhancement of status to become an evangelist of the foreign mission.

Second, the missionary should trust voluntary unpaid agents, both men and women, to pastor the little flock and enfold new converts through their effort and witness (Nevius n.d., 32). Before these are promoted to positions of prominence, implying full-time labor and a salary, they should be proven through the trials and difficulties of serving as unpaid volunteers (Nevius n.d., 26-27). "Paid or salaried agents should only be added as the people want them and can support them" (Nevius 1958, 64).

Third, full-time workers should be trained for this position through a course that includes both mastery of texts and practical application in the ministry as head of a small group. First, they were unpaid volunteers who led Sunday services and gave catechetical training to the young and new converts. Lay preaching, or rather, teaching differed substantially from the sermon, understood as the "logical and more or less elaborate dissertation" of the seminary-trained missionary pastor (Nevius n.d., 36). Nevius developed a manual for house-church leaders that gave general instructions for making Scripture studies, had forms of prayers and passages that were to be committed to memory. The manual also gave rules for organization, listed the duties of leaders, had forms for baptism and the Lord's Supper and contained a short essay on the duty of every Christian to make the gospel known to others (Nevius n.d., 38). For a month each year Nevius recruited advanced converts and group leaders to come to the mission station to receive intensive training in the Bible and other material relevant to the nineteenth-century Chinese situation (Nevius n.d., 39-41).

Fourth, a new mission station was started by a man who accepted the gospel and who, through reading and discussion, brought his family, relatives and friends to believe along with him. Worship was then started in this man's home under his leadership. Using this method it was possible for the leader of a house church to start another church when he led someone to the Lord in a distant place (Nevius n.d., 42-44)

It's good to think of indigenous church planting methods as practiced by missionaries in foreign countries and in different time periods. Yet we are living in a rich, technologically advanced country at the end of the twentieth century. The cultural gap between lower-income factory and service workers and the middle class is not nearly so great as between an American missionary and Chinese peasants. Nevertheless, there is a gap and that gap is much greater if the church encounters ethnics in the shadow of its spire. Somehow the established church is challenged to cross a cultural barrier to win souls for Christ. It's almost like asking how we can get from here to China?

Getting Started

Let's start out with the established Christian Reformed Church that wants to start another church among lower-income workers. The traditional, established congregation probably imagines that there is only one way of starting another church, and that is by using what Nevius calls the old or traditional missionary method of hiring an evangelist to do the work for it. This is possible if the mother church is very large and its members belong to the upper middle class. These churches are at the apogee of their life cycle and living in the glow of success. The man they hire should have training in cross cultural evangelism, should be able to gather converts from the lower and lower middle classes and train the more gifted and zealous to lead the meetings and gather in the lost. What usually happens in the traditional method is that the pastor or evangelist hired by the church becomes the pastor of the people that he leads to Christ. The training and discipleship of new converts to become unpaid lay evangelists has not been considered at all.

There are many more Christian Reformed Churches that are just holding their own. They support their minister, the Christian school and the denominational causes through the synodical quota system (about \$500 per family in 1991). They don't have monetary resources to hire another full-time pastor to engage in starting a daughter church. In such congregations the challenge to start another church will be seen as a drain of its limited resources, an investment that will not help its own life and self-preservation. In these churches the starting of a new daughter church among lower-income workers will have to go along with the renewal and revitalization of the established mother church. For the mother church to start new churches

using indigenous methods, it will need to win converts from among blue-collar and service-sector workers. These new converts will then become the resources for building the new church. But to win these converts, something new has to happen in the established church: renewal has to take place.

For this reason, I am now turning to a book on the renewal and revitalization of the established church. I have found Kennon L. Callahan's book Twelve Keys to an Effective Church: Strategic Planning for Mission very helpful. It is also a book that enjoys a great deal of prestige in home missions' circles in the Christian Reformed Church. I cite Callahan, not because he is addressing the needs of lower-income workers, but because he addresses a concern of many Christian Reformed Churches: how can our aging congregation keep our youth and attract younger families? At a minimum, responsible church leadership is concerned with the health and maintenance of their congregation. The renewal and revitalization of an existing congregation is not inimical to starting up a new church. In fact, if its eyes are open to this possibility, a revitalized church that is drawing converts to its fellowship from various walks of life will, I believe, be led naturally to plant a new church to meet the needs of its lower-income members.

Needed: A Stronger Leader Pastor-Evangelist

First of all, we must start with the leadership of the mother church, principally the pastor. In a chapter on "Strong Leadership Resources" (1983, 41-54) Callahan pleads for leaders, not enablers. He says,

Whenever the concept of enabler has been linked with nondirective counseling techniques, the local church has suffered from dysfunctional leadership. The reactive, responsive, process-centered style of leadership present in many local congregations contributes significantly to those congregations being declining or dying congregations. (1983, 42)

Peter Wagner argues for the same style of leadership in his book, Leading Your Church to Growth (1984). The pastor must not be dictatorial and the church decision-making process must be open and participatory (Callahan 1983, 55-58); yet as a servant subject to a board of elders, he must be the quarter-back of the team who knows the capabilities of the players and is able to design plays that they can execute with efficiency (Callahan 1983, 42).

It is through the vision, preaching, teaching and leadership of this type of pastor that the local church will see itself as the body of Christ, that "has the same function as Christ Himself, which was for Him to do the will of God in the world" (Piet 1970, 31). Jesus said, "For the Son of Man came to seek and to save what was lost" (Luke 19:10 NIV) and after the resurrection he told his disciples, "As the Father has sent me, I am sending you" (John 20:21 NIV). Not all of the members of the church have the same function; but all together holding the different offices and possessing a large variety of gifts form one corporate body that collectively continues the saving work of Christ in the world (Rom. 12:3-8; I Cor. 12; Eph. 4:7-16). If Jesus was the chief Shepherd (I Peter 2:25; John 10:11) who was interested in gathering sheep not already in the fold (John 10:16), he certainly wants his under-shepherds to leave the 99 in a safe place and seek to win back the one that was lost (Luke 15:3-7) and to heal the sick, bind up the injured and strengthen the weak (Ez. 34:4). The Pastor-Evangelist: Preacher, Model and Mobilizer for Church Growth, a book edited by Roger Greenway (1987), portrays the ministry of various men who not only pastor the flock already gathered, but also lead their churches in evangelism by being evangelists themselves.

A Pastor-led Visitation Program

A renewed, revitalized church may be so structured that it draws people to its fellowship like a magnet and those it draws will all be of the same social class as the present membership. Iron filings are attracted but not sawdust and wood shavings. Middle-class people may be attracted but not those of another socioeconomic class. The way to overcome this barrier is through a visitation program.

In a chapter on "Pastoral and Lay Visitation" (1983, 11-23) Callahan says that as a rule of thumb the pastor should spend one hour in visitation, divided equally between church people and the community, for every minute that he preaches on Sunday morning (Callahan 1983, 12). He is thinking of a twenty-minute sermon. In order to be a credible trainer of lay visitors the pastor should be substantially involved in visitation himself. Effective visitation programs are effective precisely because the pastor has taken a major role by actually doing visitation (Callahan 1983, 13).

How is it possible for the pastor to spend so much time in visitation and continue all of his other duties? It is impossible. That is why church consultants like Callahan recommend adding staff. When plans are made to start a new church, the temptation is to hire an evangelist to do this specialized work. That would be exactly the wrong thing to do. The head pastor of the mother church must be the pastor-evangelist. He must be the trainer of disciples. Before adding a specialist in ministry and outreach, the church should consider "a director of music, whether part-time or full-time, who develops the music components of the congregation's corporate, dynamic services of worship" (Callahan 1983, 48). Then it should consider a church secretary or church administrator and then a program director (Callahan 1983, 49). This will be much more economical than hiring second pastoral staff and it will free the pastor for preaching and working with people. It will free him for visiting for heading a visitation training program.

Organizing New Groups

As the pastor and his visiting team meet and gather in new people, the church should organize new groups. Callahan calls them "Significant Relational Groups" (1983, 35-40). New people tend to join new groups. It is easier for them to do so because the network of relationships is still comparatively flexible. In groups that are five or more years old the people have already found their place through an informal process of negotiation and of measuring and testing their gifts and talents. New groups are in the midst of this process. Older groups, even though caring and open, have their social structure set and established and it is very difficult for newcomers to find their place. People with leadership qualities can't be leaders in old, established groups; but in new groups, they will soon be recognized as leaders by the other new members. Callahan warns, "Those churches that quit starting new groups are churches that have decided to die" (1983, 37).

Just to play "fruit basket upset" by reorganizing the members into artificial fellowship groups is not what Callahan is talking about. What is in focus are new groups composed of new people, new people who have been won to Christ by various means of outreach, but principally through personal visitation.

Through its visitation and other outreach programs, the church will very likely meet people who belong to different segments of society. Hopefully the church will not shun the poor, the working class, or ethnics; nor will it shun the rich, the professional class or white-collar workers. Most of the people that come to the church will be incorporated into new fellowship and ministry groups. Most new groups should be incorporated into the fellowship of the existing

church; but when the cultural or social gap is too great, the new groups should be motivated to develop into a new, independent congregation.

If church visitors feel hesitancy on the part of the people they visit to come to the Sunday morning worship service because of social and class reasons, the church can start meetings in a home of someone in that same social economic class. The pastor should lead some of the services while gifted speakers on the visiting team should lead most of them. If the meetings are held at the same time as the Sunday morning service, the a substitute minister will have to take the pastor's place when he is preaching at the small group meeting. This shows the importance of the emerging congregation and the pastor's action proclaims to all that the small group will become an independent congregation and not remain a society within the established church structure.

If the meetings continue to draw people, the church should challenge the group to find a more suitable worship center within its means. A subsidy might be offered but it should be small and temporary. Some of the new members of this new group will also be formed into visiting teams and some of their gifted speakers will start to lead the worship services. Right from the beginning converts will be encouraged to share their musical talents during worship and in witness--no organ please. Right from the beginning the new converts should be taught that the salvation of their family, friends and colleagues and the growth of the new congregation depends upon their active participation and faithfulness in ministry and outreach.

As we have seen one temptation in starting a satellite congregation is to hire a specialist who will do the job for the mother church. Another temptation is to start a program focusing on the weaker elements of the target population. Such projects might minister to the poor through a housing program or a food and clothing distribution program. They might be a Sunday school or adolescent boys and girls' clubs. All of these programs require considerable expense and a tremendous amount of effort. Insecure church members find these programs very satisfying because they can be in control, and lead and teach without being rebuffed. However, when the poor no longer need help and the children grow up, they generally stop coming. Instead of focusing entirely upon need the church should focus on opportunity. This is competitive. It's a fight for the allegiance of people's hearts. The mother church should focus on adults through a visiting program and worship. Adult converts will be the new resources that will bring in their families and provide leadership and volunteers for the ministries that are meaningful and that are within their capabilities. They will be brought in, not as dependents upon our ministry, but as co-laborers with us in the harvest.

Ministry to indigents and children is important, but they should not form the nucleus of a new congregation. If the church starts with them, it runs the danger of creating programs and structures that cannot be "taken over" and maintained by new members, in this case, lower-income working families. So many of the chapels in the CRC chapel movement fared so miserably because they were locked into a dependency relationship with the founding mother church and required "eternal" financial assistance. When mother's patience gave out, the child was sometimes abandoned and the chapel disbanded because it did not have the leadership or financial resources necessary to maintain the ministry pattern that had been established for her. Instead, as new converts gather for worship and the study of God's word, their eyes will be opened to see the needs of their families and their community. As they grow in the faith and in number, they will be able to initiate new programs within the means that God has provided.

Pastors of Churches for Lower-Income Workers

Every body of believers needs a pastor, ideally a pastor who has evangelistic zeal or an evangelist who has a pastor's heart. Seminary training is ideally suited to prepare the majority of

candidates for pastoring established churches. However, Seminary training carries its own liability. While it prepares candidates for the ministry, it also socializes them to middle-class values and expectations. The very fact of going through eight years of post-high school education puts the pastor in another social class quite apart from the social cultural level of a working-class congregation.

During the period of the Christian Reformed Church's chapel movement many people were trained at Bible Institutes to assume pastoral functions in a chapel. Finally in 1978 Synod created the office of evangelist with restrictions so that these leaders could not slip into the regular pastorate by bypassing the rigors of seminary. Apart from the perceived threat to the established clergy, why shouldn't an evangelist who led a chapel to growth and organization be allowed to be called as its first pastor? It seems to me that the elaborate procedures for calling a minister today would prevent a man from rising too much above his capability or social standing.

If we are to take a lesson from the Brazilian Pentecostals, from John Wesley, from John Nevius and others, the best way of preparing men for pastoring newly-formed working-class churches is through discipleship training "in house" by the pastor of the mother church. As the pastor leads his church in vibrant worship and visitation evangelism, he will be able to identify talented speakers, evangelists and leaders on the visiting teams whether they be long-time members of the mother church or new converts from lower-income workers. As he works with these people, the pastor will train them to become extensions of his own ministry. They will become proficient in visiting and winning souls, speaking, leading group Bible studies and counseling. They will learn administration by being elected to a steering committee before the emerging church has a council of elders and deacons.

The discipleship, apprenticeship method of training leaders to pastor congregations of lower-income people is a proven method in many areas of the world. It was Jesus' method with his disciples, it was John Wesley's method, and it is the method mostly commonly used by Brazilian Pentecostals. Brazilian Pentecostals go out to find sinners and some of them end up being pastors of growing churches. Brazilian Presbyterian pastors go out to find churches that are able to pay the best salaries and their churches end up by losing members. Is there a lesson here for us? Most churches require seminary-trained pastors, but is seminary training necessary for all pastors? Many churches are too small and too financially weak to support seminary graduates, yet they need pastors just as well as richer, larger congregations.

As long as the emerging congregation is small and financially weak, the worker would serve while still holding down his factory job. If the emerging lower-income congregation grows and requires the full-time services of its unpaid lay worker, it could decide to pay him a partial or full-time salary. This is the stage when the new church should be organized and be emancipated to call its own pastor. If the lay leader decides that he does not want to leave the factory, and the church desires a seminary-trained leader; all will go well according to the rules of the Church Order. If, however, the lay leader would like to become the full-time pastor and the church desires the same, they face insurmountable problems with the Christian Reformed Church Order. If the candidate fills the prerequisites of synod, he could be ordained as evangelist by classis (Church Order 1990, Article 23), but he would not be allowed to pastor an organized church. Further, Article 7 of the Church Order states, "Those who have not received the prescribed theological training but who give evidence that they are singularly gifted as to godliness, humility, spiritual discretion, wisdom, and the native ability to preach the Word, may, by way of exception, be admitted to the ministry of the Word, especially when the need is urgent" (1990, 4-5). These are doors for men not trained in the seminary to enter the ordained pastoral ministry, but in practice they are tightly locked to the "uneducated" and "unlearned."

This situation could change if an unorganized chapel grew to become larger than any of the established churches through the leadership of its lay evangelist. This is possible. In 1969 a group of five blue-collar workers and their families, members of the Church of God, invited a

chicken cutter to be their pastor. He was a fiery speaker who learned how to preach by listening to powerful speakers and mastering their tapes. In only ten years their group grew to over 1,200 members (Dwyer 1991). In the process of growth, the mother church, knowing the needs of the daughter congregation, would act as a buffer to protect it from ecclesiastical rules. Officially the mother church would keep the daughter congregation under its tutelage, but in reality, it would free her to be herself and allow her to grow by following a different set of rules. If this were to happen as a result of a traditional Christian Reformed Church using indigenous principles of church planting among lower-income workers, I can envision that at some point classis would realize that the chapel should be organized as a church and that its lay worker should be ordained as a pastor even if neither fit the general pattern of Christian Reformed Churches and pastors.

Church Order Concerns

The Christian Reformed Church Order serves established congregations reasonably well, but in many ways, it has a stifling influence on missionary innovation and cross-cultural evangelism. Rules for a rural Iowa congregation cannot be the same as those for inner-city Chicago, nor the same for suburbia. In our study we have seen in Brazil and in the Wesleyan Revival that a movement of the Spirit broke with ecclesiastical rules. A new rule was put into place. That new rule was established by a dynamic leader through the conversion and discipleship of followers. Personal loyalty to the leader and messenger of God replaced impersonal ecclesiastical rules.

The danger of new rules established through personal loyalty to a leader is that people seek stability when pastors move from one church to another. There should be some continuity. In situations where the pastor-evangelists becomes very powerful there is the danger of bossism. Tele-evangelists Jimmy Swaggert and Jimmy Baker are living examples of this.

I am not prepared to go further into an area in which I am a total novice. I do pray, however, that the Spirit of Christ will lead his church and his minister to find and bring in the lost, not just to established congregations but also to new ones. The battle field is on the street, in broken homes, on the factory floor or at the cash register. We are in a fight against Satan for the allegiance of men's souls. The battle field is not primarily in the halls of synod.

Conclusion

I have tried to show in this thesis that there is a growing population of lower-income blue-collar and service-sector workers who are not widely represented in the Christian Reformed Church, but who desperately need the gospel. Because of the cultural and socioeconomic gap between them and the majority of members in Christian Reformed churches as traditionally understood, new culturally relevant congregations will have to be started.

To accomplish this demanding task traditional Christian Reformed Churches and their pastors must seek to be revitalized and renewed by considering themselves to be the body of Christ sent to continue his ministry in the world. Through dynamic, meaningful worship and a visitation program the pastor will lead volunteers from his church to win people to Christ and enfold the lost. By using indigenous church planting methods similar to that used by foreign missionaries and as exemplified by Brazilian Pentecostal churches new groups will be formed among lower-income workers. The gifts of new converts will be used in worship and ministry, and new leaders will be trained through the use of discipleship apprenticeship training. Even though problems with the Church Order loom on the horizon, what should emerge is a vibrant church composed of blue-collar and service-sector workers and their families, led by "a native

pastor" who is able to minister to its needs and lead it to growth. May God help that this vision becomes a reality. Amen.

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